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Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development
Institute

Call for Papers 10th Dialogue on Water

Governing water sustainably in mining and post-mining landscapes

Reasoning

Since its inception in 1995, the *Wasserwerkstatt1* (Dialogue on Water) provides a platform for joint discussions on water-related topics in development cooperation between academics and practitioners. Having covered a variety of topics in its history, the most recent *Wasserwerkstätten* have broadened their scope to explicitly discuss interlinkages with other sectors. We continue on that path with the tenth *Wasserwerkstatt*. To ensure accessibility for non-German speaking actors that are interested in German development cooperation, the event will be held in English.¹

The tenth *Wasserwerkstatt* will cover the topic ***Governing water sustainably in mining and post-mining landscapes*** and it will be hosted jointly by the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) and by the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe - BGR).

Governing water resources in relation to mining encapsulates some of the key questions in today's debates on sustainable development. Mining has vast economic potential, but carries high social and environmental risks. How these risks and benefits are allocated touches on issues of social equity, public health, good governance and environmental integrity. The issues span not only the local and regional scale where most impacts are felt and the national scale where most regulations are devised, but also the global level, where international NGOs and multinational mining companies are engaged in establishing norms and rules for the sector.

The potential impacts of mining on water resources are vast - acid mine draining, heavy metal contamination and leaching, breaching of dams, pollution by processing chemicals as well as erosion of river banks and sedimentation are only some of the negative impacts that mining operations are associated with. In water scarce regions the allocation of resources can also be problematic and cause conflicts between companies and local communities. Often, these communities consist of already vulnerable population groups such as indigenous people, smallholder farmers or pastoralists whose livelihoods and cultural practices are threatened by water degradation and depletion. Since women often take on the role of water providers, they also tend to be disproportionately affected by water resource degradation. Reversely, benefits from mining operations often accumulate in the hands of national and international elites. For these reasons, mining operations are often viewed critically by the public, as well as by activist researchers and advocacy groups. At the same time, mining operations can play a role in improving local water infrastructure, in particular where public finance is limited and does not allow for such investments. They also offer much needed employment opportunities in rural areas while, arguably, boosting national economies and providing resources that are needed for a variety of products and services.

Currently, multiple actors are engaged in finding solutions on how to harness the benefits from mining operations without endangering other water users' access rights, water-related practices and ecosystem integrity. Country partnerships, international development agencies but also community organizations and transnational initiatives are attempting to exchange information on best practices and cautionary tales. Yet, to a large

¹ See events under <https://www.die-gdi.de/en/nexus/>

extent, the community of specialists in mining and water tend to remain separate, both in science and in policy. Water-related paradigms such as integrated water resource management (IWRM), which promotes the coordinated development and management of water and other resources, and the community that applies it have so far largely ignored mineral resources, focusing instead on interlinkages with land use and energy production, for example. Mining-related approaches, on the other hand, tend to be either very technical when related to water, or, where they are concerned with governance aspects (like conflict-free mining or sustainable value chains), tend to pay little attention to water-related impacts.

The *tenth Wasserwerkstatt* aims to bring together practitioners and researchers from both the mining and the water communities to share experiences and to discuss how water in relation to mining and mining in relation to water can be governed in a manner that is economically viable, socially just and environmentally sustainable.

The key questions of this *Wasserwerkstatt* fall under two major headlines.

1) Which procedures and means exist of finding synergies/mitigating adverse impacts?

- Which governance mechanisms/ instruments foster an exchange between the mining sector and the civil society to reduce risks and concerns?
- Which procedural means (such as stakeholder consultations, environmental and socio-environmental impact assessments, or inclusive regional planning) foster mining operations without compromising social, economic and ecological objectives?
- What governance mechanisms and management/financing schemes are effective to deal with contamination in post-mining areas?
- To what extent can water resource protection be integrated into and transported by existing sustainability initiatives/mechanisms/certification schemes for the mining sector?

2) How does power impact mining and water governance and zero sum game situations?

- How do power and politics affect the governance of water in mining?
- Which governance arrangements and measures facilitate a balanced and equitable consideration of diverging interests and priorities in situations where win-win solutions are not possible?

In addition, we invite contributions that discuss how theory and practice speak to each other, which positive examples exist for transferring knowledge and experiences, and how and by whom they can be promoted.

Date: 8-9 October 2020

Location: Online, hosted by the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

We welcome **abstracts of no more than 300 words** on any of the questions detailed above, using any concepts, literatures and methods for unpacking the interactions between resources, infrastructures, institutions and people. Both more empirically-oriented and more theoretical contributions are invited.

All abstracts should be submitted to mirja.schoderer@die-gdi.de, no later than the **the 23rd of August**.

Please feel free to disseminate the call across your networks as you see fit.

Programme

8th October 2020

tbc

9th October 2020

Tbc

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