

NGO Monitor: Some NGOs May Be Doing More Harm Than Good in the Mining Industry

Jerusalem, Israel Jul 17, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - As the race for critical minerals accelerates, driven by the clean energy transition and geopolitical competition, a pressing question is emerging: Are some NGOs doing more harm than good in their effort to promote accountability and human rights?

The new report by [NGO Monitor](#), “[Resource Extraction in Africa and the Controversial Role of NGOs](#)”, explores this question, examining how civil society activism shapes the global mining landscape and revealing some troubling consequences.

While NGOs advocate for accountability, human rights, and environmental protection, these activities have raised concerns regarding selective advocacy, regulatory capture, and funding dependencies that can prioritize narrow political agendas and distort policymaking.

These dynamics create an uneven regulatory landscape. Western firms face heavy scrutiny, while authoritarian state-owned enterprises operate freely. This has enabled China and Russia to dominate critical minerals at great risk to global supply chains and Western security interests, while undermining oversight, human rights, and environmental safeguards.

The report highlights several case studies, including that of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Dan Gertler, the sanctioned mining investor. The report examines the role of NGOs, such as the Sentry and the Congo is Not for Sale Coalition (CNPAV), in lobbying for and seeking to maintain sanctions, even after it became apparent that this policy was discouraging Western investment and enabling China to consolidate control of the DRC’s cobalt sector.

The report recommends that, to recalibrate the industry and strengthen accountability, governments must embrace a pluralistic approach by opening the closed circle of NGOs currently influencing mining policy. They must enhance good governance and transparency mechanisms and expand scrutiny on actors, including Russia and China. Addressing these challenges is essential not only for fostering sustainable and equitable resource management but also to safeguard Western economic and security interests.

Download the full report here:

<https://ngo-monitor.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/May-2025-Extractive-Industry-and-NGOs-Report-.pdf>

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About NGO Monitor

Founded in 2002, NGO Monitor is a globally recognized research institute promoting democratic values and good governance. We work to ensure that decision makers and civil society operate in accordance with the principles of accountability, transparency, and universal human rights. We publish fact-based research and independent analysis about non-governmental organizations (NGOs), their funders, and other stakeholders, primarily in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. NGO Monitor is a project of The Institute for NGO Research, a recognized organization in Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (since 2013). For more info, visit <https://ngo-monitor.org/>

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