

Webinar FRDO / CFDD

Impact batteries on lower- and
middleincome countries and the way
forward

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Context: batteries

- Cobalt, lithium, graphite, nickel, manganese, aluminium, copper,...
- Production process: extraction
 - Material and energy intensive
 - Mostly lower and middle income countries
- Belgium import
 - Cobalt: DRC (86,6%) & Congo-Brazzaville (11,8%)
 - Lithium: Chili (85,1%) & Argentinië (4,5%)
- Copper, lithium, cobalt...: already problematic

Mining: environmental and climate impact

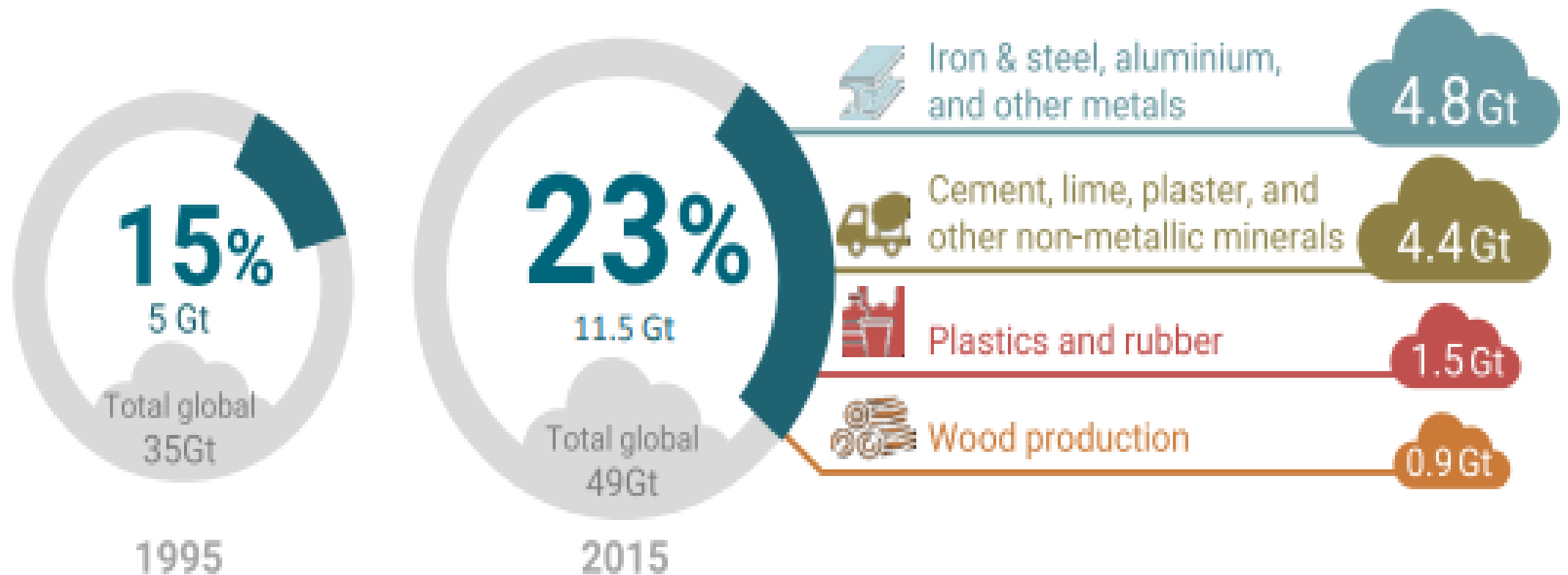
- Biodiversity loss
- Specific impacts related to deep sea mining
- Pollution: air, soil, water
- Climate footprint
- Water shortage
- Disasters
- ...

Lithium exploitation and water shortage



Source: Dossier Minerals for the Energytransition (2020)

Underexposed: emissions from extraction



Source: International Resource Panel – UNEP (2020)

Mining: social and human rights impact

- Social impacts: health, water stress, ...
- Decent work: labor rights, safety..
- Human rights violations: forced displacement, violence
- Conflict
- Loss of livelihood
- Food insecurity
- ...

Decent work: labor rights, safety..



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VECHT MEE TEGEN ONRECHT

(Foto: Afrewatch 2020)

2019: Brumadinho dam disaster



Inequality and resource exploitation

- Extractivism
 - Economic model based on resource-extraction and export of raw materials // diversification
- ↑ Inequality between and within countries
 - Unequal distribution of revenues
 - Concentration: 150 mining corporation / 85% RME
 - Illicit financial flows
 - Political and economic elite
 - Unequal distribution of costs

Prospect

- High importance of recycling for mobility
 - Near future: ↑ extraction
- Need for absolute reduction in material use

--> Energy transition that leaves no one behind

- Climate policy in line with SDG's
 - Material goals and circular strategies
 - National Energy and Climate Plan

Way forward

- Reduce the need for extraction
 - Mobility shift
 - Energy- + material efficiency & recycling
 - Priority for materials used for green transition
- Ensure respect for human rights and environment
 - Human rights regulation for companies + liability
 - Regulation mining sector at international and local level

Low-carbon and low-resource mobility

- Core reinforcement
- Fiscal transition
- Alternatives to individual car use
 - Quality public transportation
 - Soft modes
 - Safe cycling infrastructure, shared bikes, e-steps....
 - Emission-free car sharing
 - Urban action plans, support car-share providers, adapted parking policy
- Encourage companies to evolve towards services
 - Mobility as a Service

Recycling and circular strategies

SUSTAINABLE BATTERIES



Extraction and regulation

- IRMA, Fair Trade Gold, EITI, ICMM...
- Conflict minerals
 - European Directive
 - Specific focus
 - Tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold
- > Mainly voluntary initiatives
- > Low compliance
- > Energy minerals not included in hard law

HR and environmental due diligence

- Due diligence human rights and environment
 - European (and/or Belgian) legislation
 - Effective complaints and sanctions mechanism
- Regulation mining sector at international and local level
 - International governance
 - Social and environmental liability
 - Precautionary principle

Thank you

Sources and further reading:

- 11.11.11, Broederlijk Delen, BBL, Catapa, Fairfin, Justice&Paix (2020). 'Dossier: Mineralen voor de Energietransitie'
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- Transport&Environment (2021). 'Due diligence rules for batteries: making them work for the environment and communities.'
- IRP (2020). Resource Efficiency and Climate Change: Material Efficiency Strategies for a Low-Carbon Future. Hertwich, E., Lifset, R., Pauliuk, S., Heeren, N. A report of the International Resource Panel. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya.