

2020

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Environmental, Social and  
Governance (ESG) Report



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Prepared by Management and approved for publication as at April 30, 2021.

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## Acronyms

<b>CDP</b>	Carbon Disclosure Project	<b>RGMP</b>	World Gold Council's Responsible Gold Mining Principles
<b>ERM</b>	Enterprise Risk Management	<b>SASB</b>	Sustainability Accounting Standards Board
<b>GRI</b>	Global Reporting Initiative	<b>TCFD</b>	Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures
<b>ICMC</b>	International Cyanide Management Code	<b>TRIFR</b>	Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate
<b>ICMM</b>	International Council on Mining and Metals	<b>TSM</b>	Mining Association of Canada's Towards Sustainable Mining Protocols
<b>ITRB</b>	Independent Tailings Review Board		
<b>LTI</b>	Lost-time Injury		

# About This Report

Equinox Gold's approach to project development and operations is based on the philosophy that strong financial, health and safety, social and environmental performance are all equally important to our success. Responsible mining is our core focus, and sustainable practices are integral to the success of our business strategy. These commitments guide every decision we make, whether at our operations, at an exploration site or around the boardroom table.

This report outlines our commitments to responsible mining. It reflects our focus on strong Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance and our commitment to transparent disclosure so that all stakeholders are aware of our annual targets, performance and management approach regarding the material aspects of our business.

This report discusses our ESG targets, performance and initiatives for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 as well as targets and objectives going forward.

The need for reporting on ESG is greater today than ever. With \$30 trillion in investments in the U.S. evaluated using ESG guidelines, the rationale for a sustainability strategy and action plan moves beyond the ethical and social context to one that is about good business decisions. With full Board support, I am confident Equinox Gold will be able to achieve any and all ESG goals.”

— Maryse Bélanger, ESG Committee Chair

## Materiality Assessment

The scope of this report was defined through engagement with both internal and external stakeholders. Engagement with site managers and a review of our 2019 ESG performance resulted in the identification of key focus areas and priorities for the sites and their community partners. We also engaged with our top 20 institutional investors to identify topics most relevant to these investors and their clients.

Based on this feedback, and following guidance from the selected reporting standards (SASB, GRI and TCFD), we defined ten key management and reporting areas that are integral to the Company's success from both an operational and capital markets perspective.



**Business Ethics and Transparency**



**Water Management**



**Human Rights**



**Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Quality**



**Employment Practices**



**Biodiversity and Reclamation**



**Health and Safety**



**Community Engagement**



**Waste and Tailings Facility Management**



**Community Development**

# Leadership Message from Christian Milau, CEO



**Christian Milau,**  
CEO & Director

April 30, 2021

Equinox Gold was formed at the end of 2017 with the vision of creating a leading gold company – a leader in operational excellence, in environmental and social performance, and in value creation for our stakeholders.

Creating value is more than just share price growth. To be a true leader, we must create value in the communities in which we work, improving both the economic and social wellbeing of our community partners and providing tangible benefits that will last beyond the life of the mine. We must add value for our workforce, providing a safe and rewarding work environment where our team members feel appreciated and can see the effect of their contributions. We must contribute positively to environmental stewardship initiatives and global efforts to limit climate change. And we must contribute positively to society, with a corporate culture built on the core principles of respect, accountability, integrity and equity.

2020 was a year of tremendous growth for Equinox Gold, both from an asset perspective as we integrated five new projects into our portfolio, and from an internal perspective as we looked inward at our culture, our values and our long-term vision. We held numerous strategy sessions during the year to discuss what we want to achieve as a company and perhaps more importantly, how we want to achieve it. We examined and discussed the Company's policies and practices to get a clear sense of what we're doing well and where we need to improve so that we can meet our objectives and continue to foster a culture that is inclusive, compassionate and accountable.

To achieve our vision of being an industry leader, we need a commitment to implementing best practices and the internal infrastructure to track our activities,

monitor progress, assess performance and identify areas for improvement. During 2020 we engaged with both internal and external stakeholders to identify the issues that are material to Equinox Gold's success as a company, we reviewed and updated as necessary all of our corporate governance policies, and we made great strides in establishing the processes and standards with which we can track our performance.

Being able to track the Company's performance is also important to our stakeholders. While governance and strong ESG performance have always been a core focus for our team, this is the first time we have clearly articulated the Company's ESG strategy. This report summarizes the Company's responsible mining commitments and management approach to key ESG issues. Our primary reporting objectives are honesty and transparency, so all stakeholders have a clear understanding of our targets, our performance and our efforts for continual improvement.

During 2020 Equinox Gold joined the World Gold Council and the Mining Association of Canada and committed to implementing the standards and principles these organizations expect of their members. We also became signatories to the United Nations Global Compact, and our policies and practices are guided by its principles for environmental protection, human rights, labour standards and ethical business practices.

Equinox Gold's commitment to responsible mining comes from the very top, with a clearly stated vision from our Board of Directors to be a leader in responsible mining and a commitment from every member of our team to follow industry best practices and demonstrate excellence at each stage of development. The fundamental measure of our success will be the value we create over the long term for our workforce, our host communities and of course our shareholders.

After you read this report and explore additional responsible mining disclosure on our website, I invite your suggestions for ways Equinox Gold can improve both its ESG performance and disclosure. As stakeholders of Equinox Gold, we want you to be proud of what we've achieved and excited to be part of our future. Your opinions are important, and we welcome your feedback.

# Implementing Leading Industry Standards

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## Current Commitments



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## Disclosure Frameworks



# About Equinox Gold

Equinox Gold is a growth-focused mining company delivering on its strategy of becoming the premier Americas gold producer. We have quickly grown from a single-asset developer to a multi-asset gold producer and have seven operating gold mines at the date of this report, with a strong growth profile from a pipeline of development and expansion projects. We operate entirely in the Americas with a construction-ready project and early-stage exploration properties in Canada, two operating mines in the United States, two operating mines in Mexico, and three operating mines in Brazil with construction underway at a fourth project.

Our leadership team is aligned on the Company's vision to become a million-ounce gold producer with a reputation for excellence in responsible exploration, mining operations and financial management. As a Company we are committed to upholding industry best practices for environmental, safety and social performance while delivering the financial growth our shareholders expect. With an experienced management team and Board, a strong treasury, cash flow from our producing mines and a US\$400 million corporate revolving credit facility, we believe we are well positioned with both the financial strength and technical experience required to execute on our growth objectives.

As we execute on our growth strategy, our governance, policies and reporting are growing with us.



## Greenstone Project (60%)

ONTARIO, CANADA

Greenstone will be a large-scale, low-cost, long-life gold project in one of the world's best mining jurisdictions. The project is fully permitted for construction, and expected to produce more than 400,000 oz of gold annually for the first five years of its initial 14-year mine life, with 60% attributable to Equinox Gold. Construction is targeted for the second half of 2021.



## Mesquite Mine

CALIFORNIA, USA

Mesquite is an open-pit, run-of-mine heap leach gold mine located in California, USA, with a long history of successful operations and a strong environmental record. Mesquite has produced more than 4 Moz of gold since it commenced operations in 1985, with average annual production of approximately 130,000 oz over the last 10 years. Mesquite is expected to produce ~135,000 oz of gold in 2021.



## Castle Mountain

CALIFORNIA, USA

Castle Mountain is an open-pit heap leach gold mine located in California, USA that produced more than 1.3 Moz of gold from 1992 to 2004. With significant gold reserves and a Phase 2 expansion plan, Castle Mountain is expected to be a long-life flagship asset. Equinox Gold completed construction and commenced production at Castle Mountain in Q4 2020, with the expectation of producing ~35,000 oz per year during Phase 1 operations.

## Expansion

In March 2021, Equinox Gold released the results of a feasibility study for the planned Phase 2 expansion, which will increase production to well over 200,000 oz of gold per year. Phase 2 will also provide more than 400 jobs during construction and operations and extend the total mine life to more than 20 years. Phase 2 permitting will commence in the second half of 2021.



## Mercedes

SONORA, MEXICO

Mercedes is an underground gold and silver mine located in Sonora, Mexico. The mine is expected to produce ~50,000 oz of gold in 2021, with approximately 75% attributable to Equinox Gold in 2021 following acquisition of the mine on April 7, 2021. Equinox Gold is reviewing the potential to expand plant throughput and increase annual gold production.



**Los Filos Mine Complex**

GUERRERO, MEXICO

The Los Filos Mine Complex in Guerrero State, Mexico currently comprises two large open pits (Los Filos and Bermejil) and one underground mine (Los Filos). Ore from all three deposits is processed using heap leach recovery. Los Filos is expected to produce ~180,000 oz of gold in 2021.

**Expansion**

The Los Filos expansion project is underway with plans to enlarge the Los Filos open pit, add a new open pit (Guadalupe), develop a second underground mine (Bermejil), and construct a new carbon-in-leach plant to complement the existing heap leach facilities, which should increase production to approximately 350,000 oz per year.

**Aurizona Mine**

MARANHÃO, BRAZIL

Aurizona is an open-pit gold mine located in northeastern Brazil that achieved commercial production effective Q3 2019. Equinox Gold expects to extend the current 6.5-year mine life with exploration success and potential development of an underground mine to complement the existing open pit operation. Aurizona is expected to produce ~125,000 oz of gold in 2021.



**Santa Luz Project**

BAHIA, BRAZIL

Construction of the Santa Luz Mine is underway with first gold pour targeted for Q1 2022. As a past-producing mine, the majority of site services and infrastructure is already in place, resulting in low initial capex of \$103 million to produce ~100,000 oz of gold per year over an initial 9.5-year mine life, with potential to extend the mine life or increase production by developing an underground mine to complement the existing open pit.



**Fazenda Mine**

BAHIA, BRAZIL

Fazenda has been in operation for more than 25 years within the Maria Preta mining district in Bahia State, Brazil. Fazenda is primarily an underground operation with ore processed in a carbon-in-leach plant. Fazenda is expected to produce ~62,500 oz of gold in 2021.



**RDM Mine**

MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL

RDM is a conventional open-pit mine with a carbon-in-leach plant, located in Minas Gerais State, Brazil. RDM is expected to produce ~57,500 oz of gold in 2021.



# Environmental, Social And Governance (ESG) Strategy

Equinox Gold's ESG strategy includes engagement with a variety of stakeholders, the adoption of adequate governance frameworks and the implementation of protocols and systems to ensure we understand and adequately manage the environmental and social impacts of our business. This strategy includes identifying the most salient ESG issues, management approaches for these issues, monitoring of performance and continual improvement. Moreover, wherever possible, we aim to identify opportunities to strategically contribute to environmental stewardship efforts and to add long-term value to the communities and regions where we work.

In the spring of 2020, our Board of Directors (Board) and Executive team held a series of ESG strategic

planning meetings to review the Company's performance, clarify its long-term objectives and set future targets. These meetings culminated in the clear objective, with the full support of the Board and Executive team, to become an industry leader in ESG through the implementation of best-in-class governance frameworks, best practices in environmental and social performance, and comprehensive reporting.

As a result of this directive, we implemented several initiatives during 2020 that have set the framework for the Company to achieve its ambition of becoming an industry ESG leader. Additionally, the Company adopted five internationally recognized initiatives to guide and improve performance:

Adopted Initiatives and Standards	Description
<b>United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)</b> <a href="https://www.unglobalcompact.org/">(https://www.unglobalcompact.org/)</a>	The UNGC is a call to companies to align their business with sustainability principles. The UNGC supports companies to do business responsibly by aligning their strategies and operations with ten principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take strategic actions to advance broader societal goals, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with an emphasis on collaboration and innovation.
<b>Mining Association of Canada's Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) Protocols</b> <a href="https://mining.ca/towards-sustainable-mining/">(https://mining.ca/towards-sustainable-mining/)</a>	TSM is a globally recognized sustainability program that supports mining companies in managing key environmental and social risks. TSM requires site-level assessments and is mandatory for all companies that are members of implementing associations. Through TSM, eight critical aspects of social and environmental performance are evaluated, independently validated and publicly reported against 30 distinct performance indicators.
<b>World Gold Council's Responsible Gold Mining Principles (RGMPs)</b> <a href="https://www.gold.org/about-gold/gold-supply/responsible-gold/responsible-gold-mining-principles">                     (https://www.gold.org/about-gold/gold-supply/responsible-gold/responsible-gold-mining-principles)                 </a>	The ten RGMPs set out clear expectations for consumers, investors and the downstream gold supply chain as to what constitutes responsible gold mining. The RGMPs require companies to make a public commitment to align with the principles, develop internal systems, report publicly on status of conformance and obtain external assurance.
<b>International Cyanide Management Code for the Manufacture, Transport, and Use of Cyanide in the Production of Gold (Cyanide Code)</b> <a href="https://www.cyanidecode.org/about-cyanide-code">                     (https://www.cyanidecode.org/about-cyanide-code)                 </a>	The Cyanide Code focuses exclusively on the safe management of cyanide and cyanidation mill tailings and leach solutions. While this is a voluntary industry program for gold and silver mining companies, it was developed by a multi-stakeholder steering committee under the guidance of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the International Council on Metals and the Environment (ICME).
<b>Mining Safety Roundtable</b>	The Mining Safety Roundtable is a collaborative group of senior health and safety leaders from some of the world's major mining companies. The group is committed to eliminating fatalities and major incidents by sharing strategies and best practices that address industry hazards and risks.



# 2020 Targets and Results

As part of the business planning process, several targets were compiled that are reflective of material and priority ESG issues for Equinox Gold. These targets were set with a vision to guide Equinox Gold through

2020 and also form the basis for future improvement. The Board ESG Committee also reviewed and approved the Company's ESG targets for 2020, the majority of which were achieved.

## 2020 Targets & Results

Category	Targets	Results
Safety	Achieve zero fatalities Achieve a Lost-time Injury Frequency Rate of 0.95 or less <sup>1</sup> Achieve a Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate of 4.82 or less <sup>1,2</sup>	Achieved Achieved Achieved
Social	Achieve zero business interruption because of social conflicts at our operations Support community healthcare and testing during COVID-19	Not achieved Achieved
People	Communicate vision and values to expanded team and operations Achieve zero business interruption because of union conflicts at applicable operations Harmonize profit sharing plan at Brazil sites	In progress Achieved Achieved
Environment	Achieve a Significant Environmental Incidents Frequency Rate of 1.65 or less <sup>1,3</sup> Provide tailings management disclosures to the Church of England / Principles of Responsible Investment Conduct an Energy and Greenhouse Assessment workshop for management	Achieved Achieved Achieved
Governance	Establish a corporate-wide Enterprise Risk Management system Review and, where appropriate, enhance compliance policies and programs Establish an Internal Audit department	Achieved Achieved Achieved
Targets & Reporting	Identify and join key industry organizations to align with and adopt ESG principles Engage with key stakeholders to understand reporting priorities Commence quarterly online reporting	Achieved Achieved Achieved

1. Per million hours worked.
2. Equinox Gold uses Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate as its baseline for reporting since TRIFR records all injuries except those requiring only minor first aid treatment and is the most comprehensive assessment of a mine's safety performance.
3. Significant incidents would include cyanide spills outside of normal containment area, wildlife fatalities due to cyanide, death of species with special protection status, any incidents that trigger regulatory reporting, abnormal monitoring results that result in a breach of relevant regulation or permit conditions, or cyanide detected in surface or ground water.

# 2020 Performance Highlights



## ENVIRONMENT

No off-site environmental impacts recorded



## COMMUNITIES

More than 40 communities directly benefit



## SAFETY

All safety targets met, 25% better than target for TRIFR<sup>1</sup>



## HEALTH

More than 18,000 tests performed and no production days lost due to COVID-19 \*



## ESG PLANNING

Over 500 ESG planning hours for senior team



## ENERGY & GHG

Conducted energy and GHG management workshop with sites and senior team



## LEADERSHIP

Adopted leading international standards and principles to drive improved performance and disclosure



## COLLABORATION

Joined Mining Association of Canada, World Gold Council and Mining Safety Roundtable for industry peer collaboration

\* Does not include days lost due to government mandated shut downs at Los Filos and RDM.

# Governance

Equinox Gold's success as a company, in both the public markets and the communities in which we operate, is based on sound corporate governance and ethical business practices. We understand that having a reputation for strong governance strengthens community support and reduces permitting and operational risk.

The Company's policies are intended to provide a common framework that guides conduct and behaviour across international operations, ensuring that all of our employees, consultants and representatives act responsibly and in accordance with laws and regulations.

The acquisition of Leagold Mining Corporation (Leagold) in March 2020 brought five new mines to Equinox Gold, each with unique legal and regulatory environments. With the expanded portfolio of assets came new community partners and stakeholders, and the increased scale and market visibility brought new shareholders to the Company, each with their own objectives and expectations.

Following the acquisition, Equinox Gold completed a comprehensive review of corporate policies and practices to ensure the Company's policies are appropriate for the size and stage of our business and reflect the key elements of effective corporate compliance. Equinox Gold will continue to review its corporate governance policies at least annually for compliance with applicable laws and to ensure they appropriately reflect the risks relevant to our business.

The following policies and frameworks are currently in place at Equinox Gold:

- Code of Conduct and Business Ethics
- Anti-bribery and Anti-corruption Policy
- Insider Trading and Use of Inside Information Policy
- Communications and Corporate Disclosure Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Environment and Climate Change Policy
- Diversity Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- "Say-on-Pay" Advisory Vote Policy
- Executive Compensation Recovery Policy
- Share Ownership Policy
- Majority Voting Policy
- Advance Notice Policy

All of Equinox Gold's policies are regularly reviewed to ensure adequacy and continuous improvement and are available for review on the Company's website at [www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Corporate-Governance](http://www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Corporate-Governance).

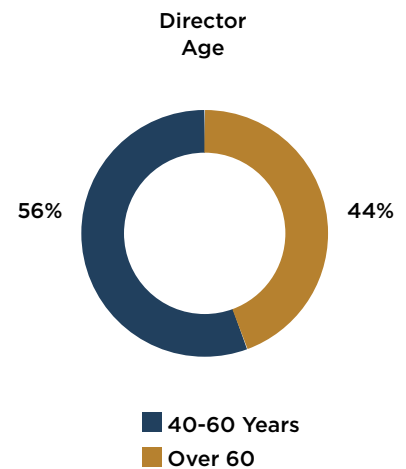
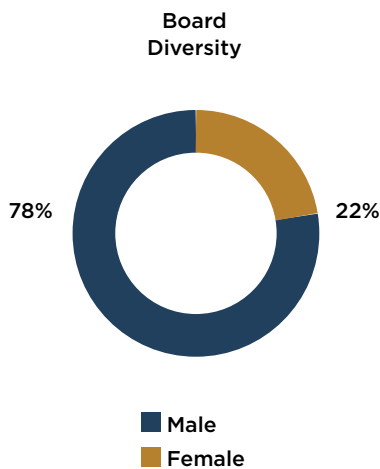
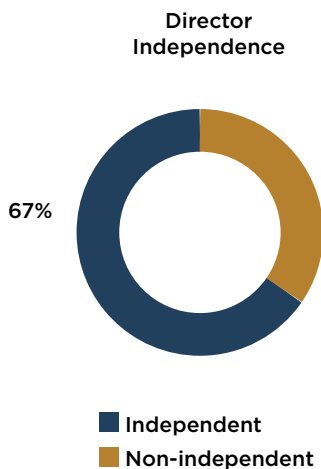
### Board Governance

Equinox Gold carefully considers director nominations to ensure our Board has the skills and expertise required to oversee our activities and advise on corporate strategy. We also ensure the majority of our directors are independent to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

The Board has developed and approved written position descriptions for the chair of the Board, the chairs of the Board's committees, the Lead Director, and the Company's CEO so that the individuals understand their responsibilities and what is required to adequately fulfill their roles. Directors are encouraged to communicate with Management, auditors and technical consultants, to keep themselves current with industry trends and developments and changes in legislation, to attend related industry seminars and to visit the Company's operations.

During 2020 the Company established a Diversity Policy as part of our efforts to create a diverse and inclusive corporate culture that solicits multiple perspectives, free of bias and discrimination. The Diversity Policy sets a target of achieving at least 30% representation of women on the Board by 2025.

Details on our current Board composition and the expertise of each Director are available at [www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Directors](http://www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Directors).



Equinox Gold has established three Board committees responsible for oversight in their area of expertise:

- The **Audit Committee** serves as an independent and objective party to ensure the Board is fulfilling its financial oversight responsibilities by reviewing the financial reports and other financial information provided by the Company to regulatory authorities and shareholders, the Company's systems of internal controls regarding finance and accounting, and the fairness of transactions between the Company and related parties, and also by overseeing internal audit, the Company's auditing, accounting and financial reporting processes, and the Company's enterprise risk management framework.
- The **Compensation, Nomination and Governance Committee** ensures the Board has the appropriate skill set to oversee the Company's activities, that executive compensation is appropriate for the Company's size, financial situation and stage of development, and that the Board is fulfilling its governance oversight responsibilities. It also reviews annual corporate and senior executive goals and objectives.
- The **Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Committee** oversees the Company's policies, standards, accountabilities and programs for ESG related matters, including environment, health, safety, community engagement and development, ethical behaviour, human rights and employment practices to ensure the Company is applying best practices and meeting its ESG objectives and obligations.

Each Committee has a written charter describing its purpose, organization, powers and responsibilities. The Committee charters are reviewed annually to ensure they remain appropriate for the Company and are consistent with market best practices and applicable laws. All Committee charters are available on the Company's website at [www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Corporate-Governance](http://www.EquinoxGold.com/Company/Corporate-Governance).

## Compensation

Equinox Gold's compensation philosophy is to incentivize and reward management and employees to deliver on well-defined goals that are intended to increase long-term value for all of the Company's stakeholders. At the beginning of each year, the Company sets corporate objectives that flow into the personal objectives of each team member, who are then compensated based on a combination of corporate and personal performance.

Executive compensation is linked to ESG performance to ensure the Company's leadership team and site managers stay focused on safety, environmental protection and social performance. In 2020, 17% of the corporate incentive plan was linked to ESG performance, with 10% tied to health and safety performance and 5% to environmental performance. The corporate incentive plan for 2021 is even more focused on ESG, with 8% of the incentive plan linked to health and safety performance and 10% to environmental performance and ESG disclosure, including the objective of developing and disclosing greenhouse gas emission targets.

As defined in the Equinox Gold Say-on-Pay Advisory Vote Policy, the Board solicits shareholder feedback on the Company's approach to executive compensation. Say-on-pay is intended to enhance accountability for the Board's compensation decisions by giving shareholders a formal opportunity to provide their views on the Board's approach to executive compensation. The Board takes the voting results into account when considering future compensation policies, procedures and decisions and in determining if there is a need to modify any aspect of the Board's engagement with shareholders.

# Business Ethics and Transparency

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold's leadership team understands that trust must be earned, and our success in the public markets and the communities in which we operate is based on our reputation for keeping promises and upholding ethical business practices. We are committed to maintaining high environmental, safety and social standards while delivering the financial growth our shareholders expect.

Equinox Gold is committed to upholding high ethics and business conduct standards in all of the countries in which we operate. Our Code of Conduct and Business Ethics summarizes the standards of business conduct and ethics that guide our Company actions across all operations. The Code of Conduct and Business Ethics has been adopted to assist all directors, officers and employees of the Company and its subsidiaries, as well as any third party working or acting on the Company's behalf, in making decisions regarding the affairs of the Company. The [Code of Conduct and Business Ethics](#) was revised in early 2021.

The Company's [Anti-bribery and Anti-corruption Policy](#) sets out our expectations for compliance with anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws in the countries in which we do business, and should be read together with the Code of Conduct and Business Ethics . All of Equinox Gold's directors, officers, employees, contractors and third parties with whom we do business must comply with applicable laws when acting on behalf of Equinox Gold, and we encourage these individuals to report any known or suspected breach of this policy or the Code of Conduct and Business Ethics.

Equinox Gold's [Whistleblower Policy](#) describes how to report any accounting concerns as well as any other known or suspected conduct relating to the Company that may be improper, illegal or unethical, any safety concerns, or any breach of the Code of Conduct and Business Ethics. The Whistleblower Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation against any person who reports complaints or provides assistance during investigations against alleged unlawful or unethical behaviour, and outlines the procedures to investigate incidents. Upon receipt of a report to the Whistleblower Hotline, the Audit Committee investigates the allegations and takes appropriate action should the investigation confirm misconduct.

## **2020 Performance**

As part of a 2020 review of and updates to Company policies, Equinox Gold revised its Whistleblower Policy and consolidated its Whistleblower Hotline services into a single provider for all operations. During the year Equinox Gold received five submissions to the Whistleblower Hotline; four were resolved following investigation and one remains under investigation.

The Company also adopted a new Anti-bribery and Anti-corruption Policy and held training sessions to ensure the workforce is aware of its obligations and understands how to report any concerns.

A significant accomplishment in 2020 was the establishment of an Internal Audit department along with a formal Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process. Equinox Gold's ERM process involves the identification of risks that may have a significant effect on the Company's objectives, assessing them in terms of likelihood and magnitude of impact, determining a response strategy, and monitoring progress. Ultimately this process is designed to identify potential events that may adversely affect achievement of the Company's strategic business objectives and to proactively manage risks. In 2020 the Company established an ERM Charter and formed an ERM Management Committee that reports to the Board Audit Committee. Moreover, the newly formed committee performed extensive interviews of corporate and site senior management teams to create a risk inventory and identify ways to mitigate enterprise-wide risks, and also adopted a formal risk management reporting methodology.

## **Next Steps**

During 2021 Equinox Gold will roll out Code of Conduct and Business Ethics training to its entire workforce and will continue to review the existing policies and compliance programs to ensure they adequately serve the Company and address business risks.

The Company will also continue with implementation of its ERM process by harmonizing its risk management process across the mine sites, selecting and implementing a risk management software application and conducting an Internal Audit review of mitigation, compliance and effectiveness for selected key risks.

Looking forward, we will also develop a framework for managing business conduct throughout our supply chain as a means to ensuring our suppliers conduct their business ethically and responsibly as a condition of doing business with Equinox Gold.

# Human Rights

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold recognizes that all individuals are entitled to the same rights and opportunities, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national or social origin, religion or other status. Equinox Gold respects the rights of indigenous and traditional peoples and upholds internationally recognized human rights both in the workplace and in the communities affected by our mining activities. The Company has formalized commitments to indigenous and human rights in its Code of Conduct and Business Ethics and is committed to taking adequate measures to ensure we do not cause, and are not complicit in, human rights abuses either directly or through our business relationships.

Human rights are highly interconnected with other ESG issues such as unfair or inequitable employment issues, child and forced labour, security at the mine sites and in host communities, and the long-term economic sustainability of host communities after mine closure.

Equinox Gold recognizes its responsibility to comply with applicable laws and regulations as well as internationally recognized standards to protect the rights of workers and communities across its business activities.

## 2020 Performance

In 2020, Equinox Gold committed to the implementation of significant actions to ensure every member of the team is upholding the fundamental human rights, cultures, customs and values of our employees and host communities. Most notably, we have committed to the World Gold Council's Conflict Free Gold Standard and its Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Human Rights and Conflict, which commit us to respect the human rights of our workforce, local communities, vendors and suppliers. As a member of the World Gold Council, Equinox Gold is committed to implementing these principles over the next three years.

## Next Steps

Looking forward, we will be developing the processes and management tools to ensure effective implementation of the World Gold Council Conflict Free Gold Standard and the Principle on Human Rights and Conflict. In 2021, we will:

- Conduct a gap analysis against the Conflict Free Gold Standard requirements
- Commence development of a human rights due diligence framework by conducting human rights assessments at our operations



# Employment Practices

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold has approximately 6,000 employees and contractors working in offices and on mine sites in Canada, the USA, Mexico and Brazil. Our objective is to have a highly talented workforce with ethnic and gender diversity that reflects the regions and communities where we operate. At the site level, we strive to have the programs in place to train and hire local community members and to provide education and training opportunities that support local employees to advance their career within the Company.

We uphold the World Gold Council Responsible Mining Principle on Labour Rights, working to ensure our operations are free from discrimination or abusive practices and that employees and contractors are treated with respect. We respect the rights of all workers, including freedom of association and collective bargaining, and strive for collaborative relationships with the unions that represent our workforce in Brazil and Mexico.

Diversity, inclusion and equal opportunity have always been at the core of the Company's talent management strategy across our operations. We are committed to an inclusive work environment and diversity at all levels of the Company, including the representation and inclusion of historically under-represented groups. We believe a workforce with diverse backgrounds and experiences promotes innovation, improved performance and more effective decision making.

Equinox Gold recognizes the importance of recruiting and retaining top talent. All employees take part in regular career development reviews, and we make significant efforts to be an employer of choice in the regions where we operate.

The leadership, employees and contractors at our mine sites are almost entirely from local communities,

reflecting the diversity of the regions where we work. Our small corporate office in Vancouver, Canada is also reflective of minority groups in the city, with approximately one-third from diverse ethnic backgrounds and approximately 25% of senior roles held by women.

## 2020 Performance

The global conversation during 2020 about inclusion and diversity prompted a review of our Diversity Policy and our Code of Conduct and Business Ethics to ensure they adequately communicate and support our desire to be inclusive of all groups. During 2020, senior management worked to better understand our management approach at the mine site level, to formalize our inclusion and diversity procedures and practices, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

**Equinox Gold is committed to open debate and dialogue as we examine the Company's policies, and more importantly our practices, with regard to inclusion and diversity.**

## Next Steps

Equinox Gold's human resources and employment priorities in the short term will focus on inclusion and diversity. During 2021, the Company will:

- Review hiring practices to identify and remove barriers to minorities and women
- Participate in a multi-company collaborative program to develop a process to eliminate systemic barriers to gender inclusion in the workplace

# Health and Safety

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold's top priority is the safety of our workforce and local communities. We are committed to achieving excellence in the management of occupational health and safety and understand our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment for our employees and contractors. We believe that health and safety must be everyone's responsibility and are committed to identifying and mitigating health and safety risks and hazards before accidents happen. Our goal is to achieve a culture of zero harm.

Equinox Gold's culture of shared responsibility encourages team members to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of their co-workers. Equinox Gold maintains and trains health and safety teams at each site that are responsible for identifying and managing all potential risks to our sites, the surrounding communities and the environment. Each site has a customized Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan that identifies potential emergency situations that could pose a risk to people, the environment or infrastructure. These plans describe the appropriate course of action for each emergency situation and the protocols to prevent and mitigate both on- and off-site safety or environmental impacts.

Each site also has a Crisis Management Plan, with a corresponding Crisis Management Plan at corporate head office, that supports the site and executive teams in managing a serious event. We use the Incident Command System, which is a common international system that allows external responders to work within a common and well-understood structure to ensure smooth communications and proper documentation of the incident.

## 2020 Performance

Equinox Gold implemented a number of important health and safety initiatives during 2020, including:

- Developing the Equinox Gold Health & Safety Management Standards
- Formalizing reporting guidance and requirements for all sites
- Setting expectations for workforce behaviour using the Equinox Gold Life Saving Rules
- Joining the Mining Safety Roundtable to benchmark our activities and share current best practices with other member companies
- Defining and achieving performance targets based on incident frequency rates
- Promoting the reporting of High Potential Near Miss Incidents across the organization to allow key learnings
- Providing guidance and support to sites to ensure effective management of the COVID-19 pandemic

**In 2020, we completed construction and commissioning of the Company's newest mine, Castle Mountain in California, with no lost-time injuries, all while managing through the COVID-19 pandemic.**

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A key accomplishment during 2020 was the marked increase in site reporting of “near-miss incidents,” which allows us to investigate and identify root causes of potential safety risks so we can mitigate the risk before an injury occurs. All incidents are investigated and, for significant incidents, the information is shared among all mine sites, emphasizing key learnings and mitigation strategies.

Equinox Gold’s 2020 health and safety performance data are reported quarterly on the Company’s website at [www.EquinoxGold.com/Responsible-Mining/People](http://www.EquinoxGold.com/Responsible-Mining/People). We recognize our responsibility for the safety of every member of our workforce, whether they are employees of the Company or a contractor. Therefore, our health and safety performance data include both employees and contractors.

The Company also established a Chairman’s Safety Award based on safety excellence to enhance the Company’s current safety programs. The award recognizes the mine site team that demonstrates exemplary safety performance by looking out for their own wellbeing and the safety of their colleagues, and encourages camaraderie and some friendly competition between the mine sites.

Equinox Gold’s Castle Mountain Mine received the 2020 Chairman’s Safety Award. During 2020 the Castle Mountain team completed construction and commissioning and achieved production with a Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate of zero, all while managing the additional health and safety challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Castle Mountain team committed itself to achieving these high standards from the start of construction in October 2019, holding daily toolbox talks, conducting frequent safety inspections and risk assessments focused on high-risk activities, and maintaining consistent communication that placed the safety of each individual as the ultimate priority for every activity and every shift.

### Next Steps

Some of the Company’s health and safety objectives going forward include:

- Implementation of the Equinox Gold Health & Safety Management Standards
- Implementation of the Towards Sustainable Mining Health and Safety Protocol across all sites
- Implementing the Towards Sustainable Mining Crisis Management Protocol including undertaking a crisis desk-top exercise at each site and at corporate head office so that all members of the crisis management teams understand their roles and responsibilities should a crisis occur
- Performing a gap analysis against Responsible Gold Mining Principle for Safety and Health

# Environmental Management

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold is committed to achieving excellence in environmental management and stewardship. We recognize that many of the topics considered material to our stakeholders are affected by our environmental management practices. We adopt international standards, principles and best practices to prevent and mitigate the environmental impact of our activities. Wherever possible, we look for opportunities to contribute to environmental stewardship initiatives and scientific research.

**We take all potential environmental impacts of our activities very seriously and have robust management systems, policies and safeguards in place to ensure these risks are correctly managed.**

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The Company's environmental management processes are intended to protect the long-term health and viability of the natural environments surrounding our mine sites or affected by our activities. We:

- Promote the reduction in usage of raw materials as well as the reuse or recycling of waste streams
- Strive to prevent and mitigate impacts to biodiversity through research, partnerships and land management processes
- Foster and maintain a culture of environmental responsibility within the workplace
- Perform progressive reclamation activities during the life of each mine, and regularly update closure plans to take into consideration the interests of host communities
- Have systems in place to ensure all environmental incidents are reported, investigated and remediated

- Resource our site teams so they are equipped to manage any conceivable environmental emergency
- Ensure the safe and responsible management and storage of tailings during the mine life and after mine closure

Equinox Gold's operations use environmental management systems that conform with ISO 14001. These systems ensure compliance with legal obligations and other commitments, a proactive risk-management approach to identify and mitigate risks prior to performing activities, and the implementation of monitoring programs to ensure these mitigations are effective. The systems also include auditing and annual review processes that promote continual improvement.

We seek to maintain a culture of avoiding harm to the environment by meeting or exceeding the relevant international standards that guide our systems and processes, and by training our workforce to be aware of their individual responsibilities for environmental protection.

An important component of our environmental management system is the reporting of any environmental incident. Equinox Gold uses a rating system that allows any incident to be classified as "Low," "Minor," "Moderate," "Major" or "Catastrophic." At Equinox Gold, we have defined a "significant" incident as one that is "Moderate" or above using the classification scale. We have also clearly defined incidents that we consider Moderate so we can better gauge our performance. These incidents include:

- Cyanide spills outside of normal containment area
- Wildlife deaths due to cyanide
- Fatality of species with special protection status according to the local jurisdiction that requires external reporting

- Environment-related external non-compliance that requires external reporting
- Hydrocarbon spills that trigger requirement to report to regulatory authorities
- Other spills that trigger requirement to report to regulatory authorities
- Confirmed abnormal monitoring results demonstrating:
  - a breach of relevant regulation or permit conditions related to an exceedance of a contaminant of interest with regard to water, air or soil testing
  - cyanide discovered in surface or ground water that is not a cyanide facility as defined in the International Cyanide Management Code

Having a clear, easy-to-follow classification system allows any employee or contractor to record a wide variety of environmental incidents, including regulatory non-compliance or non-conformance with internal procedures, and encourages reporting of all incidents so action can be taken to prevent recurrence.

### 2020 Performance

Equinox Gold implemented a number of important environmental initiatives during 2020, including:

- Formalizing the Equinox Gold Environment and Climate Change Policy
- Formalizing reporting guidance and requirements for all sites
- Defining performance targets associated with environmental incidents

Equinox Gold holds itself to a very high environmental standard. We report all “significant” environmental incidents and our threshold for significance using the classification system noted is very low compared to the majority of our peers, which encourages our workforce to be extra vigilant in their efforts to prevent environmental incidents.

During 2020, there were no Major or Catastrophic incidents recorded at any of our sites. There were 21 Moderate (significant) incidents, of which the majority were wildlife mortality at Los Filos. These were reported to regulators and mitigating action plans have been implemented, including re-location strategies for reptiles that are frequently found in the area. Other significant incidents included seven cyanide-related wildlife fatalities, three cyanide spills, and three regulatory non-compliances as a result of administrative errors. All of these incidents were investigated for root causes and action plans have been implemented to prevent recurrence.

Equinox Gold’s environmental performance data are reported quarterly at [www.EquinoxGold.com/Responsible-Mining/Environment](http://www.EquinoxGold.com/Responsible-Mining/Environment).

### Next Steps

Some of the Company’s environmental objectives going forward include:

- Implementing the Towards Sustainable Mining Protocols and the Responsible Gold Mining Principles
- Increasing the number of reporting indicators across the organization to include key performance indicators for water, climate change and biodiversity
- Implementing a system whereby key environmental risks at each site are identified and their mitigating actions reported on a quarterly basis

# Mine Waste and Tailings Facility Management

## Our Approach

The management of mine waste and tailings is one of the most important and topical issues facing our industry. As a result of two recent highly publicized tailings disasters in Brazil, there is heightened tailings facility scrutiny globally from all stakeholders, including regulators and our employees, host communities and investors. Equinox Gold adheres to all local and federal regulations as well as international standards to ensure our waste and tailings are safely managed.

At the date of this report, Equinox Gold has ten tailings storage facilities (TSFs). Nine of these are located in Brazil with the remainder in Mexico. The Company has waste rock facilities at each of its operations.

Equinox Gold supports the objective of the International Council on Mining and Minerals' Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, which is "zero harm to people and the environment with zero tolerance for human fatality."

Equinox Gold has committed to the Towards Sustainable Mining program developed by the Mining Association of Canada. The objectives of the Global Industry Standard are aligned with the Towards Sustainable Mining Tailings Management Protocol, namely to "continually work towards minimizing harm" which "encompasses both physical and chemical performance and risks associated with tailings facilities," including:

- Zero catastrophic failures of TSFs
- No significant adverse effects on the environment or human health

For most mining companies, a TSF failure is often the greatest risk from a public safety and environmental perspective. Other risks include uncontrolled seepage associated with poorly designed or improperly managed tailings dams. Monitoring is performed at all of our TSFs to observe internal water levels within the dams and foundations and to watch for lateral movement of the dams. The data are compared against normal operating parameters by our Resident Tailings Engineer and, in the event of any significant deviation, the Engineer of Record and the National Mining Agency, a federally governed department responsible for overseeing the safe operation of all TSFs in Brazil, are alerted. The Accountable Executive Officer – our Vice President of Technical Services – and Equinox Gold's Chief Operating Officer are also notified of any significant deviation and the results of any investigations that are conducted. In Brazil, at each of our mines with operating TSFs, an audible early warning system has been installed to provide an alert to people who live within 10 kilometres downstream of the TSF, which complies with new National Mining Agency regulations.

We are currently evaluating the use of integrated filtered tailings as a preferred method for disposal, where feasible. We will continue to investigate this and other alternatives for current and future operations.

We are acutely aware that even minor incidents or perceived issues related to tailings and waste management can affect the Company's social license to operate. Equinox Gold engages openly with community members and interested external parties on issues associated with our tailings and waste management facilities to help alleviate potential concerns.

One of the key situations covered in Equinox Gold's Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans and Crisis Management Plans is the potential for a TSF failure. Each site identifies and monitors potential emergency situations at all stages of the TSF life cycle that could pose a risk to people, the environment or infrastructure, and the site-specific Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan describes measures to both prevent and respond to emergency situations.

### 2020 Performance

Waste and TSF management was a key focus for Equinox Gold during 2020, particularly following the merger with Leagold that introduced several new tailings and waste management facilities to the Company's portfolio. During 2020 the Company:

- Established an Independent Tailings Review Board (ITRB) for the Aurizona Mine in Brazil
- Prepared a disclosure document that describes the Company's approach to TSF management and additional information requested by the Church of England Pensions Board and the Principles for Responsible Investment. The Company's response to the request for information concerning tailings dam management is available [on our website](#)
- Committed to the World Gold Council's Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Environmental Stewardship, which addresses tailings and waste management
- Performed a gap analysis against the Towards Sustainable Mining Tailings Management Protocol

### Next Steps

With robust policies and management procedures in place, the Company's tailings and waste management focus during 2021 will include:

- Periodic ITRB meetings to review and provide recommendations regarding the performance, management, planning, construction and safety of TSFs at Aurizona
- Contracting independent engineering reviews of the other TSFs in Brazil
- Reviewing and strengthening, where necessary, our systems and processes through alignment with the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management. Equinox Gold expects to have completed the review in 2021 and, where practical, to have aligned with the standard by the end of 2023
- Commencing training and implementation of the Towards Sustainable Mining Tailings Management Protocol, which aligns with and in some areas exceeds the requirements of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management
- Continuing to investigate alternative disposal techniques, such as thickening or filtering of tailings, to not only increase overall stability of the tailings but also dramatically decrease water use

# Water Management

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold's water management strategy is focused on protecting the quality of local water resources and minimizing the amount of fresh water used to maintain operations. Through effective water management, our sites can reduce their environmental footprint and mitigate potential impacts to local wildlife, livestock and communities. Our water management strategy also includes planning for the effects of climate change, with the potential for longer dry seasons, flooding and intense weather events.

The interrelationship of water management with multiple key aspects of our business such as regulatory compliance, production, geotechnical stability, tailings management and environmental stewardship makes this topic an essential component of our ESG efforts and strategy.

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Many mining activities require water, from the processes used to extract gold from ore to dust suppression on haul and access roads. Water scarcity therefore represents a risk for our operations, and we strive to reduce our fresh water use and to recycle water where possible.

It is important that local communities and regulators understand the Company's needs with regard to water use and quality. It is also important for the Company to understand the cultural significance, needs and water-related issues faced by our local communities. For this reason, our standards encourage the discussion of shared goals related to the water catchments in which we operate.

Our environmental management systems require our sites to carefully manage chemicals used in the mining and processing of ore and to monitor water quality in both surface and groundwater sources, since contaminants can travel in dust and become mobilized by water. Our goal is to eliminate or mitigate the impact of operations on local water quality, and we have procedures in place to reduce dust and ensure that any water-borne contaminants are either contained on site or treated to appropriate water quality standards before discharge.

The majority of Equinox Gold's sites are zero-discharge sites, which means no water impacted by operations leaves the site, and is instead either stored for later use or reused in processing. Many of our mines operate in arid and semi-arid regions where water from precipitation is generally low, or they have a distinct wet and dry season that can provide challenges for water availability during extended dry seasons and water management during the rainy season.



## 2020 Performance

During 2020 Equinox Gold committed to implementing a number of water stewardship and management standards to ensure the Company is adhering to industry best practices. During the year, Equinox Gold:

- Committed to and completed a gap analysis against the Towards Sustainable Mining Water Stewardship Protocol
- Committed to the World Gold Council's Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Water, Energy and Climate Change
- Became a signatory to the International Cyanide Management Code, which requires the implementation of monitoring programs for detection of cyanide in both surface and groundwater
- Progressed toward International Cyanide Management Code certification for all operating sites

## Next Steps

Starting in 2021, the Company will undertake several initiatives to identify and implement opportunities for additional water conservation and water quality management, including:

- Auditing monitoring programs to ensure Equinox Gold sites are compliant with regulatory obligations and other commitments, which includes the International Cyanide Management Code. These programs include quality and consumption parameters relevant to the sites
- Implementing the Towards Sustainable Mining Water Stewardship Protocol and the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Water, Energy and Climate Change, focused on reviewing site water balances and community outreach regarding water management issues
- Identifying and implementing opportunities for water conservation in tailings facilities and heap leach pads
- Setting baseline measurements and water-related key performance indicators

# Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Quality

## Our Approach

Energy use and subsequent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have become a focus for Equinox Gold, the mining industry and society at large. Investors are focused on understanding the risks to their portfolios in relation to climate change, both physical (e.g. sea-level rise impacting sites close to the coast) and transition risks (e.g. increased costs of energy driven by carbon taxes or cap-and-trade programs). Local communities, governments and investors expect Equinox Gold to contribute positively to the global fight against climate change.

The all-encompassing nature of climate change is causing increased stakeholder demand across all industries to become more efficient with energy derived from hydrocarbons and to move toward decarbonizing operations by reducing reliance on hydrocarbon fuels where possible. For our Company to have the greatest impact, we must become as energy efficient as possible and seek low-carbon or renewable energy alternatives at our operations.

Equinox Gold has dedicated resources to understanding the physical risk to our sites and supply chains from climate change, as well as the impacts and risks posed by government regulations during the transition to a lower carbon economy. We have also gathered baseline data so we can better understand our carbon footprint and compare our emissions intensity with those of peer companies.

Currently, our mines view efficient use of fuels and power as an important part of cost management. Our strategy is to maximize efficiency at the site level as a first step. We use a systematic approach to identify

the main sources of energy use and consequent GHG emissions at mine sites, set reduction targets and review and report on progress. Once a site is as energy efficient as possible, we will investigate the most practicable alternative energy sources for that site.

**From pumping water, to haul trucks, to grinding and processing ore in our mills and plants, energy efficiency will continue to be an important consideration in everything we do.**

Equinox Gold is committed to sourcing power from renewable sources whenever feasible. At sites where grid power is not sourced from green energy options (e.g. hydro or solar) we are reviewing the potential to install our own clean energy power source, for example installing solar power plants at Castle Mountain and some of our Brazil sites. We are also upgrading to energy-efficient trucks at some sites and implementing systems to monitor and more efficiently manage fuel consumption.

Air quality is also an important consideration to Equinox Gold, particularly since many of our mines are located in areas that are semi-arid or have a lengthy dry season, which can result in dust concerns. We closely monitor dust emissions at all of our operations and use strict enforcement of speed limits in tandem with application of dust suppressants to ensure good air quality for the Company's workforce and local communities.

## 2020 Performance

Equinox Gold made significant progress in 2020 toward optimizing energy efficiency and establishing energy and GHG management strategies at our mine sites. During the year, Equinox Gold:

- Coordinated an Energy and Greenhouse Management Assessment Workshop involving senior management and site representatives to help form a strategic plan to reduce energy consumption and GHG emission intensity company wide
- Committed to the Towards Sustainable Mining Energy Protocol and the GHG Emissions Management Protocol and completed a gap analysis against both protocols
- Committed to the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Water, Energy and Climate Change
- Commenced modelling of the physical and transitional risks that form part of the Task Force on Climate Related Disclosures (TCFD)
- Complied with all laws and regulations related to air quality
- Switched from powder to pebble lime at Castle Mountain to eliminate fugitive dust from lime handling

## Next Steps

During 2021, Equinox Gold will focus on implementing the action plans established during its Energy and Greenhouse Management Assessment Workshop and identifying opportunities to reduce energy consumption and emissions at its mine sites.

Objectives for 2021 include:

- Commencing work toward establishing science-based targets in accordance with the Paris Agreement
- Implementing the Towards Sustainable Mining Energy and GHG Emissions Management protocol and the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Water, Energy and Climate Change
- Commencing reporting following TCFD recommendations including reporting to the Climate Disclosure Project
- Investigating opportunities to implement green power sources or carbon offset programs at all mine sites
- Setting site-specific and corporate-level short-term GHG emission intensity targets
- Finalizing modelling of climate change risks that will assess physical and transitional risks under several global temperature scenarios
- Fleet upgrades at the Mesquite Mine to introduce vehicles with reduced diesel particulate as well as reduced GHG emissions
- Improving roads to reduce dust by sealing and capping roads where possible, or treating roads with approved dust suppressants

# Biodiversity and Reclamation

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold is committed to preventing or mitigating the impact of mining activities on habitat and species loss, and promoting conservation of local biodiversity. Beyond adherence to all local and federal regulations, the Company follows additional voluntary standards and special consideration is given to fragile ecosystems, local threatened species and critical habitat. We are committed to progressive site remediation and our closure plans focus on agreed end land uses in consultation with local regulators and communities.

Unlike more persistent land-uses such as a housing development, mining is a temporary land use and its impacts can be addressed progressively through operations and during closure, when the land is returned as closely as possible to its original state. Reclamation of mining-affected areas is important from the perspective of public safety as well as ensuring environmental impacts are not long-term liabilities for the Company, governments or local communities.

Equinox Gold operates near a range of important ecosystems including the Amazon Preservation Area in Maranhão (Brazil), agricultural lands in Guerrero (Mexico) and the Mojave National Preserve in California (USA). Equinox Gold carefully manages all of its activities to minimize and mitigate both short- and long-term impacts on the flora and fauna in these areas. We develop a baseline inventory of flora and fauna to understand the biota of significance, both ecological and cultural. With this understanding we develop management plans to mitigate or eliminate harm where possible.

All Equinox Gold sites consider long-term closure plans at each stage of development to ensure successful reclamation when operations cease. Relevant best practices we have adopted include salvaging closure materials such as topsoil, developing a seed bank by collecting and preserving seeds, creating on-site nurseries for native plants that will be transplanted to their original locations upon closure, and spreading fallen vegetation to prevent erosion and protect seeds and seedlings to help re-establish plant populations during reclamation.

Equinox Gold seeks to partner with local communities, NGOs, government or academia to achieve positive biodiversity outcomes in the areas in which we operate.

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## 2020 Performance

In addition to ongoing biodiversity protection and progressive reclamation activities at our mine sites, Equinox Gold undertook a number of new initiatives during 2020 including:

- Committing to the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Biodiversity, Land Use and Mine Closure
- Committing to and performing a gap analysis against the Towards Sustainable Mining Biodiversity Management Protocol
- Installing additional plant nurseries dedicated to growing local flora for reclamation activities
- Partnering with an organization near Castle Mountain to transplant Joshua Trees into their community
- Partnering with the Californian Big Horn Sheep Conservation Society to install watering points for big horn sheep within the Castle Mountain mining lease

## Next Steps

Going forward, Equinox Gold intends to:

- Complete a gap analysis against the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Biodiversity, Land Use and Mine Closure
- Implement the Towards Sustainable Mining Biodiversity Management Protocol
- Review Closure Plans at each site and commence reporting of indices that reflect progressive reclamation
- Actively seek partnerships with organizations that are focused on positive biodiversity outcomes, including environmental NGOs and academic institutions

# Community Engagement

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold believes that understanding the different needs, expectations and concerns of our local communities through transparent and ongoing dialogue is the best approach to mitigate risk and generate long-term value for all stakeholders. We know that being transparent and working alongside host communities is the right path forward as it creates the trust and collaborative relationships we need for an enduring social license to operate.

Our approach to community engagement is aligned with the Company's commitment to the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Working with Communities. We engage in early, frequent and transparent dialogue with local communities and other interested parties as a means to build trust and provide a space for collaboration and commitment. In our engagement practices, we consider vulnerable groups and communities that may be at heightened risk of marginalization in the identification, assessment and management of significant social, environmental and economic impacts associated with our business.

Our site teams have dedicated community liaisons to ensure we understand the things we are doing well and where we need to improve, so that we can seek collaborative solutions. Our operations also have well-established feedback mechanisms that give communities a voice in the way we conduct our business.

**We strive to maintain strong and long-term relationships by engaging frequently with host communities to discuss our activities, report on environmental performance and discuss any concerns.**

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## 2020 Performance

During 2020, Equinox Gold continued to meet regularly with community leaders and community interest groups at all of our sites to discuss issues, seek collaborative solutions and implement cooperative strategies for maximizing employment opportunities, local business development and infrastructure improvement. In 2020 the Company committed to implementing the Towards Sustainable Mining Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol and continued to look for opportunities to increase collaboration and engagement with local communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant health and safety challenges during 2020, and also provided new opportunities for Equinox Gold to engage with its community partners and demonstrate its deep commitment to the health and wellbeing of both its workforce and local communities. The Company's crisis management team rapidly implemented preventive measures to limit COVID-19 exposure and transmission and help protect the health and safety of the Company's workforce and local stakeholders. The Company also recognized the importance of its contribution to the economic wellbeing of its workforce, suppliers and local communities, and worked hard to keep its mines operating as effectively as possible while mitigating the risk of exposure to neighbouring communities.

Despite our best efforts of engagement and dialogue, in the fall of 2020 we experienced a significant business interruption at the Los Filos mine in Mexico, when the leadership of the Ejido of Carrizalillo organized a blockade of the operation from September through December. Equinox Gold representatives met regularly with the Ejido to listen to their concerns and find a mutually beneficial solution to this conflict. We also held open discussions with the community at large as we believe that by having constructive, transparent and respectful dialogue and working through these issues together, we are able to build stronger relationships so the mine can operate effectively and all stakeholders, including our workforce, contractors, suppliers and community partners can continuously participate in the benefits of an operating mine. With consensus reached on the majority of items, the blockade was removed near the end of December and Los Filos resumed operations. Final consensus was reached in early April 2021 and Los Filos signed an updated social collaboration with the Ejido of Carrizalillo, with certain clarified provisions that will facilitate improved implementation.

### Next Steps

Equinox Gold's community engagement priorities going forward include:

- Publishing a Social Responsibility Policy aligned with international best practices in social performance, including community and stakeholder engagement
- Establishing a management system approach that will standardize engagement practices and processes across all sites
- Starting implementation of the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Working with Communities and the Towards Sustainable Mining Aboriginal and Community Relations Protocol

# Community Development

## Our Approach

Equinox Gold's objective is to leave a positive legacy of improved infrastructure, skills development and healthy, sustainable communities. We believe that mining projects should provide significant and long-term economic benefits and social development opportunities to local communities, ensuring that value generated locally benefits the communities affected most by our operations. We preferentially hire and procure locally and invest significantly in local infrastructure, health care, education, cultural and community programs. We also work with communities and governments to put programs in place that will help these benefits to continue well beyond the life of our mines.

We meet regularly with local community leaders and interest groups to discuss common issues, seek local solutions and implement collaborative strategies with the aim of improving the quality of life for community members. Beyond strategic investments to improve local infrastructure, Equinox Gold promotes and supports education with scholarships and training programs, and also supports health campaigns, sports programs and cultural events.

As with community engagement, our approach and initiatives on community development are aligned with the Company's commitment to the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Working with Communities, which includes aspects of social investment and contributions to community socioeconomic advancement while treating our neighbouring communities with dignity and respect.

## 2020 Performance

Equinox Gold continued to invest significantly in community development activities during 2020, despite some restrictions due to COVID-19. The mine sites supported youth education, sports programs and cultural activities and assisted with infrastructure improvements such as road maintenance and refurbishment of important community structures including schools and health care facilities. The sites also contributed significantly to local health care during COVID-19, working with health care authorities to run COVID-19 prevention education campaigns and ensuring that health care facilities had both the supplies and the medical staff needed to treat and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the communities.

**In 2020 Equinox Gold assisted in the construction of a community centre for the Mezcala community, close to our Los Filos Mine, and completed construction of a new school for the Aurizona community near our Aurizona Mine.**

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The mine sites also continued to partner with government and other organizations to invest in solutions to critical issues such as food, education, income, health and the environment. At Aurizona we have continued the Integrated and Sustainable Agroecological Production program, which promotes entrepreneurship and training in agricultural practices and provides access to markets to provide income and revenue alternatives for artisanal miners. Our Partnership Program at the Fazenda Mine in Brazil supports local associations by supporting community development projects. More than half of the projects supported so far are employment and income generation projects, contributing to the diversification of local economies and development of productive activities other than artisanal mining.

### Next Steps

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our local communities, Equinox Gold will continue to focus on its contribution to the economic wellbeing of our workforce and local suppliers and will continue to partner with community leaders and health care providers to support the most vulnerable within our local communities.

Once the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, Equinox Gold will once again run local training programs in a wide range of skills with the objective that graduates can access employment opportunities at our mines or in the wider employment markets.

During 2021 Equinox Gold also intends to:

- Commence implementation of the Responsible Gold Mining Principle on Working with Communities and the Towards Sustainable Mining Aboriginal and Community Relationships Protocol across all of our sites
- Continue to look for opportunities and partnerships to support community development in the regions where we operate

# COVID-19 Response

## Protecting our workforce, our communities and our business

Confronted with a global health crisis, Equinox Gold took early precautionary measures at its mine sites and offices to proactively manage issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Company’s crisis management team rapidly implemented preventive measures to help protect the health, safety and economic wellbeing of the Company’s workforce and local communities, and implemented business continuity protocols so the Company’s mines could continue to operate as effectively as possible.

Each of the Company’s operations has implemented preventive measures in collaboration with the Company’s employees, contractors, host communities and governments to limit COVID-19 exposure and transmission as much as possible. Designated site teams respond to daily changes, circumstances and

directives and continue to enforce stringent operational and safety procedures in accordance with guidelines outlined by the World Health Organization, the US Centre for Disease Control, consulting health professionals, and the local, state and federal governments at each of our sites.

The Company has established routine COVID-19 testing at all of its sites with the objective of identifying carriers early so they can self-isolate before inadvertently spreading the virus to others. All individuals who test positive, regardless of whether they show any symptoms, are asked to immediately self-isolate for two weeks and can only return to work once they have tested negative for COVID-19 and been cleared for work by a health professional. Workers from outside the region must test negative for COVID-19 before commencing their journey to site to start work.

### Equinox Gold COVID-19 Preventive Measures

Health & Safety	Business Continuity	Workforce Support
Travel restrictions	Government engagement	Regular communication
Remote work policies	Contingency plan with suppliers	Education programs
Restrictions to site access	Alternate supply routes	Job protection
Enhanced medical protocols	Stockpiling critical supplies	Protect high risk personnel
Enforced physical distancing	Enforced safety protocols	Mental health services
Increased cleaning, sanitizing	Fortified cash reserves	Transition assistance
Proactive testing, early isolation		Financial planning
Community education programs		

# Looking Forward

Transparency and stakeholder engagement are key aspects of Equinox Gold's ESG Strategy. This ESG report is our initial step towards comprehensive sustainability reporting as a means to consistently and regularly share critical information about our governance frameworks, social and environmental management approaches and ESG performance.

Our website also includes important ESG information and disclosures, and we are committed to publishing select ESG performance data concurrently with quarterly financial reporting, allowing our stakeholders to regularly assess the Company's performance across a range of metrics. We will be expanding the range of performance metrics during the coming year.

Going forward, we will review and consolidate our sustainability reporting process, including a revised materiality assessment to ensure adequacy, relevance and timeliness of information shared. Performance metrics will remain aligned primarily with the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board Metals & Mining Standard and the Global Reporting Initiative standards, including the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures.

We are always listening. Feedback from all stakeholders on this report and our reporting process is welcome through [ir@equinoxgold.com](mailto:ir@equinoxgold.com) or by calling 1.833.EQX.GOLD (1.833.379.4653) x119 in North America or 1.604.558.0560 x119 if International.

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