



Our Approach

Water stewardship is an integral component of our ESG strategy. We aim to protect the quality and quantity of regional water resources and to conserve and reuse water as much as possible during our mining activities.

All our mines have developed water resource and water quality monitoring programs focused on surface water and groundwater quality to mitigate potential impacts of our operations. To ensure effective and transparent water resource management, the mines have teams that communicate and report water management strategies, oversee environmental compliance and develop strategies to mitigate socio-environmental impacts. In 2023 we released a Water Stewardship Report to document the activities underway at each site and to set the path to development and implementation of a comprehensive corporate water stewardship strategy that is aligned with the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) Water Stewardship Framework and the TSM Water Stewardship protocol.

Managing Water Risks and Impacts

Equinox Gold uses a water balance to understand the various inputs and outputs of water at each site. This requires an in-depth understanding of the hydrology, climate and hydrogeology of the site as well as the production needs of the mine. Water withdrawn by the sites varies depending on the type of process used to extract gold from the ore, the size of the mine, the climate and the geographic location. Many of our mines operate in arid and semi-arid regions, or in regions with a distinct wet and dry season. We store water to mitigate water scarcity during the dry season, and in the rainy season we have to manage excess water and storm events.

Minimizing Consumption, Maximizing Reuse

A key component of our approach is to reuse water (water recycling) as much as possible. This helps reduce overall consumption, lessens our dependence on community water sources and enhances water security for our operations. We reuse water that has percolated through our heap leach pads and reclaim water from our TSFs. Through our environmental management system, we continually assess compliance with our permitted water allocations, track how much water we withdraw and consume at each site, and work to improve our water-use efficiency per ounce of gold produced.

Monitoring Water Quality and Effluent Discharge

We also work to protect water quality through effluent management. Seven of Equinox Gold's eight projects are zero-effluent discharge sites, which means no water impacted by operations leaves the site and excess water is instead either stored for later use or evaporated. Where we are required to discharge water, we ensure water quality complies with permitted standards before discharge. We also use evaporators to reduce excessive water inventories in areas with a positive water balance.

We carefully manage chemicals used in the mining and processing of ore. Contaminants can also move through the air in dust particles or become mobilized in water. To eliminate or mitigate the impact of our operations on local water quality, we have procedures in place to reduce dust and ensure any water-born contaminants are either contained on site or treated to appropriate water quality standards before any

effluent is discharged. We also monitor water quality in both surface and groundwater sources to detect if any mine-related contaminants have affected water bodies outside our approved mining areas so we can take appropriate action to mitigate the issue and prevent recurrence.

Monitoring programs to detect cyanide in both surface and groundwater are required by the International Cyanide Management Code (ICMC), of which Equinox Gold is a signatory. Our Mesquite, Los Filos and Fazenda mines are certified in compliance with ICMC, with the latter completing re-certification in 2023. Aurizona undertook its certification audit in 2023 and received partial certification, while Greenstone completed a "pre-operational" gap analysis. In 2024, we expect Aurizona and Castle Mountain to become fully certified. Greenstone is to be certified by 2027 based on the three year timeframe following achieving commercial production.

Adapting to Climate Change

The effects of climate change may impact both our mine water balance and our structures, such as water storage and tailings storage facilities. We are adapting to the potential impacts of climate change by regularly updating our storage facility design parameters to account for increasingly intense rainfall events. We also design our drainage systems and water structures with a significant amount of contingency for added assurance that our site structures will remain stable even through extreme weather events.

Collaboration with Communities

To address our shared interests in water management, Equinox Gold meets regularly with local stakeholders to address water-related concerns and challenges.





Water Stewardship Strategy

In 2023, we developed and launched our inaugural Water Stewardship Strategy, which sets the stage for future work and decision-making related to water. In 2023 we also issued a standalone Water Stewardship Report. Going forward, we plan to publish all water-related disclosures in our annual ESG Report and accompanying appendices.

We intend to build on our current water stewardship practices over the next two years by focusing on the following initiatives:

- **Benchmarking:** In 2024, we will benchmark the performance of Equinox Gold at a corporate level, which will involve a comparison of corporate commitments and public disclosure from members of our peer group in addition to looking at the water stewardship strategies of mining industry leaders. Benchmarking against both groups allow Equinox Gold to understand where we sit relative to our peers and to evaluate what steps should be taken to be considered a leader for water stewardship. We will also undertake benchmarking at the asset level to evaluate how each mine's water use intensity compares to similar operations (similar size, processing flowsheet and climate location).
- **Water management optimization and target development:** An evaluation of the water consumption of each asset will be conducted during 2024 based on a review of each asset's water balance and discussions with site personnel. This evaluation will involve identification of the site's major water uses and opportunities for improving water management practices. In addition, the team will document how the mine sites are engaging with neighboring communities and water users at the catchment level to identify opportunities for increased collaboration. The results of this phase of investigation will inform the development of Equinox Gold's water stewardship targets, which will be applied to our operations in 2025.
- **Performance reporting:** We will publicly report our performance against the new water stewardship targets starting with the 2025 calendar year.