



Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences
Koninklijke Academie voor Overzeese Wetenschappen
Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer

International Conference Strategic minerals, mining and society in the D.R. Congo



April 2-4, 2025

**Palace of the Academies,
Hertogsstraat - 1 - Rue Ducale,
Brussels (Belgium)**



Rationale

Industrial mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) started in the early 20th century and has known ups and downs along with the price of metals, and the world demand. In the last decades, the need for strategic metals for IT and green tech has caused a rush for copper, cobalt, tantalum and, more recently, lithium. Besides, gold mining also develops in many parts of the country. Since the turn of the 21st century, artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) have coexisted with industrial exploitation, by major mining companies and commodities traders. Mining and mineral processing in DRC have a profound impact on mineworkers and citizens, society and the geosphere.

Some of these impacts have been documented, such as labour issues around artisanal and small-scale mining or water pollution, but the narrative on mining in the DRC is highly influenced by unnuanced and mediatized accounts. This conference aims to bring together scientific research from multiple disciplines to take stock of the impact of mining and mineral processing so far, and identify the major challenges for the near future. The energy transition and technological innovations as well as geopolitical

shifts and the presence of China in turn have a profound impact on the Congolese mining sector, which needs to be understood.

The added value of this conference is to bring together research from disciplines such as anthropology, social and political sciences, economy, earth and environmental sciences, toxicology, medicine in an attempt to learn from each other and create more positive outcomes for humans and nature in the DRC.

The Academy welcomes concise, informative and updated talks and posters in all these disciplines. Different viewpoints from various disciplines are most welcome. Speakers are encouraged to present talks that are understandable to a broad multi-disciplinary audience.

The organisers invite proposals for contributions (posters, talks) by 08/01/2025, to be sent to:

contact_raos@kaowarsom.be

Submitted proposals will include a title, author(s) with affiliations, and an abstract of max. 300 words (a template is available on the conference website). Proposals will be peer-reviewed and acceptance

will be notified to the authors by 15/02/2025. English is the preferred language though contributions in French will also be accepted.

Registration fee for the 3 days is:

- 100 € for participants affiliated to a university and/or a research institute.
- 30 € for the members of the RAOS.
- 10 € Participation is free for students and PhD applicants (a scan of the student card is required).
- A video link can be provided for free to overseas participants who could not attend the meeting in Brussels. Registration for obtaining access is required.

Link registration

Contributions will be published in a peer-reviewed volume of the Proceedings of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences; more information will be available by 30/04/2025.

Practical aspects

1st day: start at early PM, with a keynote lecture (Humanities); then 15' + 5' talks

2nd day: full-day starting with a keynote lecture (Environmental health and medical sciences); 15' + 5' talks; poster session (13.00 – 16.00); viewing of documentaries + discussion (16.00 – 18.00); evening: informal get together with walking dinner and opportunities for networking

3rd day: half-day starting with a keynote lecture (Natural sciences); then 15' + 5' talks and wrap-up

1st day – 2 April 2025

- 01:00-01:30 Introduction
- 01:30-02:00 Keynote geology & technology
- 02:00-03:00 QA
- 03:00-03:30 Coffee break

- 03:30-04:30 Research presentation geology & technology
- 04:30-05:00 QA
- 05:00-05:10 Concluding remarks

2nd day – 3 April 2025

- 08:45-09:00 Opening remarks
- 09:00-09:30 Keynote environment
- 09:30-10:00 QA
- 10:00-10:30 Coffee break
- 10:30-11:30 Research presentation environmental science
- 11:30-12:00 QA
- 12:00-01:00 Lunch break
- 01:00-01:30 Introduction
- 01:30-02:00 Keynote health science
- 02:00-03:00 QA
- 03:00-03:30 Coffee break
- 03:30-04:30 Research presentation health science
- 04:30-05:00 QA
- 05:00-05:10 Concluding remarks

3rd day – 4 April 2025

- 08:45-09:00 Opening remarks
- 09:00-09:30 Keynote social science
- 09:30-10:00 Documentary 1
- 10:00-10:30 QA
- 10:30-11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30-12:00 Research presentation social science
- 12:00-12:30 Documentary 2
- 12:30-1:00 QA
- 1:00-3:00 Closing remarks, lunch and further interactions

Related documentaries

Quentin Noirfalisse – “Cobalt, l’envers du rêve électrique”

Peter Tom Jones – “Made in Europe, from mine to electric vehicles”

Roy Maconachie, Simon Wharf & Bossissi Nkuba – “Cobalt Rush”

