



AEGT: Our Project Objectives and Approach

African Extractivism and the Green Transition (AEGT) is a six-year (2023-2029) project funded by a Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The project studies the dynamics of critical minerals' extraction, beneficiation, and regulatory innovations in four leading African mineral exporters – the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The project includes political scientists, economists, anthropologists, sociologists, legal scholars, historians, policy analysts, and advocates from a diverse collection of research organizations across Canada, Europe, and Southern Africa to address key research and knowledge gaps and support public debates and policy-making initiatives in Southern Africa, and beyond.

This interdisciplinary research and advocacy network is entrusted with the mandate to work closely with regional and local stakeholders on three key objectives: (i) generating high-quality research that bridges evidence and knowledge gaps in areas such as artisanal and small-scale mining, taxation, industrial linkages, and evolving global regulatory frameworks to translate African critical mineral policy debates into action; (ii) supporting more inclusive policy-making by amplifying the voices of diverse mining interests and social groups who have historically been excluded from such spaces; and (iii) facilitating the cross-border sharing of research, experiences, and policy innovations.

In pursuit of these objectives, we leverage AEGT as a catalyst for strengthening local capacity in mining research and the co-creation of knowledge on key policy issues, as well as its dissemination within and beyond Africa and Canada. The partnership's approach is international and multidisciplinary, founded on a collaboration between two Canadian university partners, four African core partners, and several associated institutional partners with specialised interests. Together, they will anchor the project in its priority thematic areas: (1) *Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining*; (2) *Revenue, Equity, and State Services*; (3) *Productive Linkages and the 'Infrastructures' of Extraction*; and (4) *Regional and Transnational Contexts of Regulation*.

Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity towards Differentiated Mining Interests and Stakeholders

The Partnership's approach is rooted in designing and implementing research that reflects the diversity of its membership and research areas, adopting an inclusive and comparative framework. Building on previous engagements and research with local partners, AEGT seeks to address the urgent need for studies that are sensitive to—and develop targeted strategies for—capturing a diversity of domestic mining interests. By challenging the traditional hierarchy in knowledge creation and policy-making among both state and non-state actors, AEGT advocates for the co-creation of knowledge among all members of the partnership, including senior and emerging scholars, civil society networks, NGOs, and marginalized mining stakeholders such as small-scale miners, youth, and women-owned mine supply businesses. With critical mineral extraction becoming an increasingly urgent issue in Southern Africa, we believe that the meaningful inclusion and participation of these diverse stakeholders in policy decision-making is essential for achieving equitable and sustainable growth.



Project Launch Workshop - Intercontinental Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia, 12 February 2024



AEGT's New Research Proposals

In late 2024 we launched an inaugural call for research proposals. We are now excited to announce that the Partnership has approved eight studies spread across all four countries and our project's four research clusters. Please find the details on all of our studies on the Partnership's website: <https://www.aegt.ca/aegt-study-clusters> In this newsletter issue, we feature two of the recently approved research proposals.

Project title: "Upgrading in the battery value chain: possibilities in the Copperbelt"

Project Leaders: Patience Mususa and Ben Radley

Research Cluster: Productive Linkages and Infrastructures of Extraction

Country Focus: DRC and Zambia



Patience Mususa



Ben Radley

This project focuses on the state-led strategy for critical minerals-based sustainable development which has emerged in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia in recent years. The main focus is the bilateral effort underway since 2021 to develop a regional battery value chain. A key aim of this research is to better understand the conditions, opportunities and local stakeholder expectations surrounding the upgrading of the Central African Copperbelt's battery value chain. Research will begin with extensive desktop study followed by intensive fieldwork involving interviews and focal group discussions with a diverse collection of state and non-state stakeholders in both countries.



David Szablowski

Project title: "The EU Battery Regulation, Policy Space and Global Value Chain Formation in Southern Africa"

Project Leader: David Szablowski

Research Cluster: Regional and Transnational Contexts of Regulation

Country Focus: European Union

This project examines the EU's Battery Regulations (EUBR) and investigates how they will shape policy space and extractive governance in the project countries. The EUBR, designed to ensure sustainability and ethical sourcing in the EU battery supply chain, is expected to have significant global effects on mineral extraction. In the initial phase of research, the study will assess the EUBR's evolving due diligence framework, and consider the opportunities for African stakeholders arising from the EUBR's grievance mechanisms.

Critical Minerals Podcast Series

We Invite You to Check Out Our New Podcast Series!

<https://www.aegt.ca/podcasts-and-webinars>

In the first episode, AEGT Project Director Richard Saunders (Department of Politics, York University) chats with Harshita Choudhary, one of our undergraduate research assistants, to provide an introduction to the Project. Prof. Saunders notes that the foundations for the AEGT were put in place over six years of research collaboration among African and Canadian partners and researchers, in work that was focused on regional initiatives around 'resource nationalism' in Southern Africa. With the surge in global demand for renewable energy minerals, the earlier collaborative research placed its members in a strong position to investigate the specialized terrain of critical minerals. Don't miss this deep dive into the journey that brought us here!





AEGT Critical Mineral Seminar Series

In January 2025 the AEGT launched a monthly Critical Mineral Seminar Series (CMSS) to help communicate Project findings and foster wider dialogue and knowledge-sharing among researchers, policymakers and stakeholders working on critical minerals. Hosted at York University, the CMSS takes the form of hybrid seminars and roundtables led by African, Canadian and international researchers. Please visit <https://www.aegt.ca/news-events> to find a schedule of upcoming events and a record of past seminars. We welcome wide participation in the CMSS and would be delighted to hear your suggestions for future events!



On January 15th we were delighted to launch the series with "Harnessing Lithium for a Just and Sustainable Energy Transition: Implications for Communities and Producer States", a roundtable featuring colleagues from the Lithium Frontiers research project. Led by Professors Craig Johnson (Guelph), Teresa Kramarz (Toronto) and Donald Kingsbury (Toronto-Scarborough), and including the participation of graduate researchers Miriam Shaftoe and Faris Malecki, the seminar presented the preliminary findings of a 5-year SSHRC-funded study exploring the politics of lithium extraction in Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Canada, and Chile. The presentations sparked a lively and engaging discussion around the contradictory local development implications of lithium in South America and Canada, which foregrounded the complex political landscape surrounding lithium extraction. Evidence provided by the presenters raised challenging questions around political actors' competing development claims in the context of a global just energy transition, with particular attention given to issues of Indigenous sovereignty and resistance in extraction-hosting communities.



On February 10th we had the pleasure of welcoming Professor Sara Ghebremusse (Faculty of Law, University of Western Ontario), to speak on "Extracting Accountability: Access to Remedy and Canadian Mining in Africa", with Professor Emeritus Pablo Idahosa (York) contributing as discussant. Dr. Ghebremusse considered the case of Canadian transnational mining corporates and their African mining subsidiaries, and the experiences of African victims of abuse in their attempts to claim legal remedy in Canada and in their home countries. Ghebremusse drew on compelling case study evidence from Tanzania to show that getting a legal case heard in Canada can prove to be a significant challenge, due to a parent company's limited liability, the question of *forum non conveniens* (involving appropriate jurisdiction), and numerous difficulties involving the framing of claims. Despite early hopeful signs that Canadian courts might be a fruitful venue for the pursuit of justice for harms incurred in Africa, recent decisions suggest that the space for such challenges may be diminishing.

Upcoming Webinar

Please join us on March 20th for our next seminar, "Environmental assessment, extractivism and the rise of critical minerals in Canada", featuring Professors Emilie Cameron (Carleton), Rosemary Collard (Simon Fraser), and Jessica Dempsey (UBC), with Professor Gabrielle Slowey (York) contributing as a discussant.

Please Register to attend: <https://tinyurl.com/vc89cukt>

