



Portugal

Land-use planning methodology for the integration of mineral resources



This case is about pre-exploration legislative land use planning procedures encompassing all the stages

SCALE

Local, regional and national, but especially applied at local

TYPE OF MINING

Open-pit and underground mining

MINERAL RESOURCES

All mineral resources



In Portugal, the municipalities implement land-use planning and the Portuguese regulatory framework specifies: 1) the importance of the geological resources; 2) states the parity of all the values of the natural resources; 3) states the coexistence/compatibility with other land uses in rural soil; 4) considers the safeguarding of minerals by delimiting spaces for the exploitation of geological resources. However, this is usually interpreted very narrowly, leading mainly to the integration of the quarry licenses and the mining permits into land use plans. For this reason, to ensure the access to mineral resources, the Portuguese Mining Authority designed an approach to assist the Assessment Commission of each municipal land use plan. It considers the entire minerals value-chain, and is based on the delimitation of the following subcategories of spaces:

Consolidated Exploitation Areas: where a significant exploitation activity already exists, and further development should be addressed according to environmental good standards.

Complementary Exploitation Areas: contiguous, or not, to a consolidated area, overcoming difficulties posed by the exhaustion of available reserves. It is only applicable to private domain resources and the new exploitation area should preferably be equal in size to the rehabilitated one, already exploited.

Areas under Rehabilitation: already exploited areas where ongoing or planned landscape recovery and/or other remediation actions will subsequently allow other land uses.

Potential Areas: with demonstrated geological interest which are possibly placed in other land-use categories, according to new data and/or results gathered in updated studies. These areas are compatible with other primary uses of land as long as they do not jeopardise the eventual exploitation of mineral resources.

Steps of Land Use Municipal Plan (PDM) revision procedure

