

Air quality

Dust and air quality is an ongoing issue for many mining companies, and many parts of the mining process create dust, including vehicle movement, crushing, blasting and waste rock dumps. High levels of airborne dust can cause problems for workers and local communities and their livestock, including breathing issues and eye irritations. If not carefully managed, significant amounts of airborne dust can contribute to occupational health issues and has the potential to harm our social license to operate.

We follow IFC guidelines to monitor and manage air quality on and near our sites. On site and community monitoring is done via a network of dust monitoring stations and controls points. Monitoring stations are checked weekly to assess airborne particulate counts. In accordance with IFC guidelines, we aim to ensure airborne particulate levels are less than 500mg/m²/day. Data from monitoring stations is reported to the relevant authorities, and also helps to inform and prioritise our dust suppression activities.

One of our biggest sources of dust is vehicles moving on and around the mine and minimising the dust picked up by vehicles is one of the most important ways we can ensure air quality on site and in the community. For example, we regularly spray the haul roads and other high use roads with molasses, which acts as a dust suppressant. We also have a number of water trucks that spray roads with water to suppress dust. A number of these water trucks are now community owned and operated which helps to ensure a prompt response to dust in the community.

Elsewhere on site we have fitted water sprayers to conveyor belts to minimise dust generation throughout production. These efforts are further complemented with dust reduction activities, including planting of vegetation in exposed areas and on waste dumps and by running speed awareness courses in the community to limit dust pick up generated by vehicles.

This year we have also tried to use our positive relationship with the Malian government to encourage the adoption of low sulphur fuels across the country's mining industry. This has been shown to significantly reduce harmful diesel particulate matter in mining. We have started using low sulphur fuel at our underground operation in Mali.

