

Water Stewardship

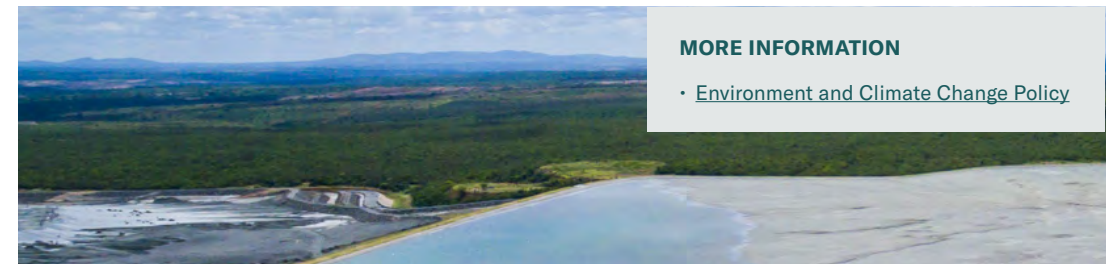
WHY THIS TOPIC MATTERS TO EQUINOX GOLD

Water is an important resource in mining. Two of the main uses are in processing to extract gold from ore and for dust suppression on haul and access roads. Water scarcity therefore represents a risk for our operations, and we strive to reduce our freshwater use and to reuse water where possible. Water is also a critical resource for our host communities and for the flora and fauna surrounding our mines. Ensuring access to clean water is one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG #6) that is relevant to, and supported by, our business.



Our Approach

Water and effluent management are core components of our sustainability efforts and 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.



MORE INFORMATION

- [Environment and Climate Change Policy](#)

Managing Water Risks and Impacts

Water management is a focus for many aspects of our business, including production, regulatory compliance, geotechnical stability, tailings management and environmental stewardship. Our site teams are responsible for adhering to our Environment and Climate Change Policy and related procedures to understand and address water-related risks and impacts at the local and catchment levels. 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Water withdrawn by the sites varies depending on the type of process used to extract gold from the ore, the size of the mine, the climate and the geographic location.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

As part of our water management strategy, we reuse water (also known as 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 constantly reuse water through our heap leach pads and reclaim water from our TSFs. Through our Environmental Management System, we 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 our eight sites are zero-effluent discharge sites, which means no water impacted by processing 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 excess water inventories in areas with a positive water balance.

We continually assess compliance with our permitted water allocations and carefully manage chemicals used in the mining and processing of ore. We monitor water quality in both surface and groundwater sources to detect if any mine-related contaminants have impacted or may impact water bodies outside our approved mining areas. 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 that any water-born contaminants are either contained on site or treated to appropriate water quality standards before any effluent is discharged.

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. During 2023, Aurizona and RDM will undertake certification audits, Fazenda will go through a re-certification audit and Greenstone will undergo a “pre-operational” certification audit.

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.

Our Performance in 2022

58%

water reused in processing operations

10.1Mm³

total water withdrawn and collected

8.3m³

average of water used per ounce of gold produced

- Achieved a Level A rating for at least 75% of TSM Water Stewardship protocol indicators
- Expanded our water collection metrics to include water used and reused
- Remained in compliance with all water management permits

As a result of a company-wide focus on enhancing our water management practices, we achieved our 2022 target to earn a TSM Level A rating for at least 75% of the indicators of the Water Stewardship protocol across all operations. We will continue this work in 2023 with the objective of achieving at least a Level A rating for 100% of the Water Stewardship protocol indicators, with a longer-term plan of achieving a Level AA or AAA rating.

We are committed to ensuring good water management is in place at all our sites. Prioritizing the conservation of freshwater by reducing surface and underground water withdrawal, and increasing the reuse and

recycling water where possible decreases our environmental footprint.

Of the water used at our processing operations in 2022, 58% was recycled (reused) effectively decreasing freshwater consumption. Our water sources are groundwater (water wells), surface water (rivers and lakes), external sources (third party), as well as mine dewatering. Of the total, during 2022, 18% of our water was withdrawn from surface sources and 47% was groundwater, while 35% was collected from mine dewatering. We discharged 95% of the water collected by mine dewatering back to the environment, and the remaining 5% was sustainably used for dust control and heavy equipment washing.

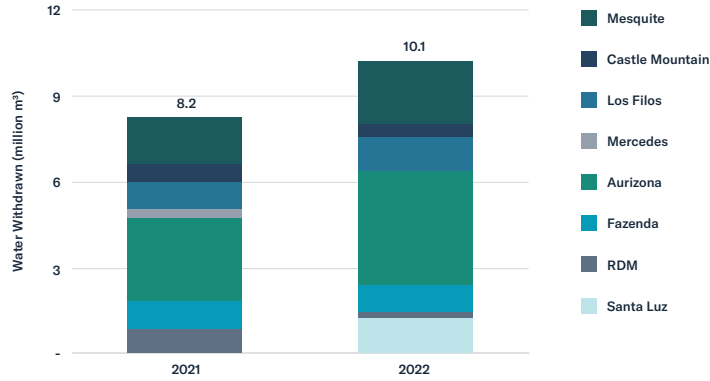
In 2022, the area where Mesquite is located was classified as High Baseline Water Stress according to the World Resources Institute's Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas. Of the total water withdrawn and collected this year, Mesquite accounted for 21% (2.1 million m³).

Water use intensity is a measure of how much new water was used in our mines per ounce of gold produced. In 2022, water use intensity rates across the Company ranged from 1.9 m³ per ounce of gold produced at Los Filos to 30.5 m³ per ounce of gold produced at Santa Luz. Water use 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. Los Filos uses less water than other heap leach processing mines because the region has a distinct wet season that supplements water used for processing, decreasing reliance on groundwater sources.

In the following charts, we show water indicators from our producing sites. Mercedes is not included as Equinox Gold sold this asset in April 2022. Some of these indicators are reported for the first time; therefore, there is no comparison with 2021.

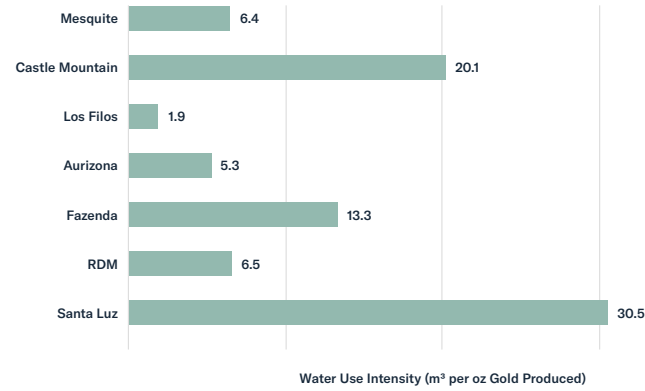


2021 AND 2022 WATER WITHDRAWAL BY SITE

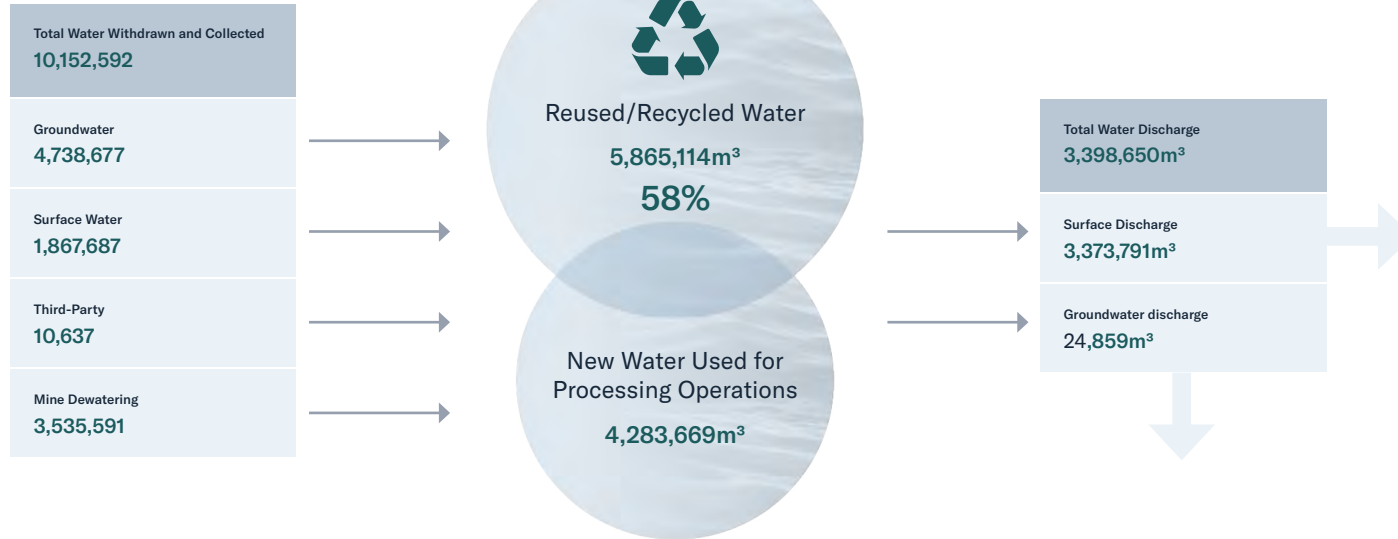


The indicator reported in 2021 has been updated to include mine dewatering. Please note that 2021 data includes Mercedes but not Santa Luz as we are including here only producing mines in the year reported.

2022 WATER USE INTENSITY BY SITE (M³ PER OZ GOLD PRODUCED)



2022 WATER USAGE (M³)



PRIORITIES FOR 2023

- Achieve TSM Level A rating for 100% of the indicators of the Water Stewardship protocol.
- Continue to focus on minimizing freshwater consumption and water use efficiency per ounce of gold produced.
- Develop a company-wide water stewardship strategy.