



REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE ICGLR REGIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE AFP ANALYTICAL LABORATORY POST- BGR SUPPORT

Introduction

1. Following the submission of the first virtual meeting report of the ICGLR Regional sub-committee on the management of the AFP project assets to the 29th meeting of ICGLR Regional Committee on Natural Resources held in Juba, South Sudan in November 2024, the Committee stated, under its 4.8 recommendation, that the report be sent back to the subcommittee which was composed by Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, for further consultation specifically on the AFP analytical laboratory, with the addition of DRC as a member and Angola as an observer. Additionally, it was decided that AMGC be invited to the work of the subcommittee to share its preferred option on financial capacity to run the analytical laboratory.
2. In this perspective, the subcommittee held a second virtual meeting on **8th April 2025** to review the report of the first virtual meeting and to discuss on the proposed way forward on the future management of the AFP analytical laboratory based on the proposals of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the African Mineral and Geosciences Centre (AMGC) on the management strategy and financial sustainability, following their expression of interest to host the AFP analytical laboratory at the end of BGR support. It should be noted that the analytical laboratory is currently hosted by the AMGC in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.
3. The meeting was attended by the Regional Committee member from Burundi and the Director of Laboratory in the Burundi Mining Authority, the Regional Committee alternate member from DRC and the Director General of the National Geological Survey of Congo, the representative of the Regional Committee member of Rwanda, the

representative of the Regional Committee member of Tanzania from the Geological Survey of Tanzania, the Regional Committee member from Uganda and the Regional Committee member from Zambia and Chair of the meeting. The Director General of the AMGC and a technical team of the Centre attended the meeting. Angola was not in attendance. The ICGLR Coordinator of the Technical Unit on Natural Resources and key ICGLR secretariat staff also attended the meeting.

4. Agenda items:
 - Introduction
 - Review of the report of the 1st meeting of the sub-committee
 - Presentation of the AMGC on the management strategy and financial sustainability of the AFP analytical laboratory
 - Presentation on the management strategy and financial sustainability of the AFP analytical laboratory by the ICGLR Member States interested in hosting the laboratory namely DRC and United Republic of Tanzania
 - Discussion and Conclusion
5. The ICGLR Secretariat started the meeting and invited all participants to introduce themselves and this allowed the Chair to review the attendance and noted the quorum of the meeting. The meeting agenda was adopted.
6. The meeting participants discussed the following:

(a) Report of the previous sub-committee meeting

The ICGLR Secretariat presented the report of the first virtual meeting of the sub-committee held on 8th August 2024. The point which was raised concerned the equipment of the AFP sample preparation laboratory set up in Kigali, Rwanda by BGR in 2012 that was meant to be transferred to the Republic of Uganda. The representative of Rwanda updated the subcommittee that the equipment is now registered as property of Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB) and has been installed in the RMB Geoscience Laboratory for use. The meeting noted that the Republic of Rwanda had not responded to a Note Verbale from

the ICGLR Secretariat of the ICGLR to the Government of the Republic of Rwanda to release the equipment of the sample preparation laboratory for transfer to the Republic of Uganda. DRC recalled that the relocation of this equipment was decided after deliberating on the future management of AFP project assets post BGR support where Rwanda stated that the equipment should be relocated to Uganda as their AFP preparation laboratory was no longer functional.

(b) Presentation of the management strategy and financial sustainability plan of the regional AFP laboratory of the AMGC

AMGC presented its serious concerns that it was not involved from the beginning of the work of the subcommittee to decide on the future management of the AFP regional laboratory although it was a party in the joint management of the laboratory according to the Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding signed between the AMGC, the ICGLR and BGR in 2014. Then, the AMGC suggested a partnership with the government of Tanzania for the future management of the AFP regional laboratory and that the latter provides professional staff through the Geological Survey of Tanzania for the joint management of the laboratory. Regarding the financial plan, the AMGC is planning to provide AFP and non-AFP services to generate financial resources required for the sustainability of the laboratory. It also invited the Democratic Republic of Congo to join the AMGC as a full member to pave a way for collaboration in the management of the AFP regional laboratory. The AMGC stated that it is risky to move the AFP laboratory equipment to another location as it is highly sensitive according to the equipment maintenance technician. The meeting was also informed about the communication problem between the Laser Ablation (LA) and the Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) which are the two machines that are crucial in delivering the analytical data of the AFP method and based on which the AFP method can be utilized by external stakeholders.

(c) Presentation of the management strategy and financial sustainability plan of the regional AFP laboratory by Tanzania

The Republic of Tanzania stated its interest to host and manage the AFP regional laboratory via the Geological Survey of Tanzania on behalf of the region. Its geographical location, the existence of an internationally certified laboratory (with ISO standards) in the Geological Survey of Tanzania as well as the technical expertise in running analytical services of minerals make the institution suitable to host the AFP regional laboratory. On financial basis, the government of Tanzania stated that it is financially capable of servicing the equipment and to put in place all the necessary conditions for the equipment to be functional.

(d) Presentation of the management strategy and financial sustainability plan of the regional AFP laboratory by DRC

The Republic of DRC informed the audience of its interest to set up its own laboratory to be managed by the National Geological Survey of Congo for analyzing 3T and extending its services to other minerals and to provide such services to the region instead of acquiring them externally. It requested technical assistance from the ICGLR Secretariat regarding the analytical services that this laboratory could provide in the future. The DRC representatives also raised the issue related to the full analysis of AFP samples sent to AMGC through ICGLR Secretariat, where they had not yet received the analytical results of those samples.

Meeting Resolutions

7. After a thorough discussion on the presentations above and considering the point of view of every participant in the meeting, it has been resolved that:
8. The Republic of Rwanda would need to officially respond to the Note Verbale of the ICGLR Secretariat on the status of the equipment of the AFP preparation laboratory setup in Rwanda in 2012 which were supposed to be transferred to the Republic of Uganda according to the recommendation of the previous meeting of the subcommittee.

9. After consideration of the presentations by AMGC, the Republic of Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo on their respective management strategies and financial sustainability plans of the AFP regional laboratory, the Republic of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Zambia supported the proposal of the government of Tanzania of managing the AFP analytical laboratory through the Geological Survey of Tanzania (GST) and to take on the equipment on behalf of ICGLR because of the full commitment of the Government of Tanzania, the geographical location, technical expertise and financial capacity in servicing the equipment.
10. It was, however, brought to the attention of the subcommittee that consideration be given to the risk of moving the AFP laboratory equipment from AMGC in Dar-es-Salaam to GST in Dodoma due to the high technical sensitivity of the equipment. The AMGC recalled the communication issue between the LA machine and ICP-MS machine which constitute the main equipment that provides necessary analytical data for AFP.

Way Forward and Action Points

11. The meeting resolved that this report be tabled for consideration at the upcoming 30th ICGLR Regional Committee meeting this April 2025.
12. It was also resolved that the Conference Secretariat should envisage to provide sufficient time slot during the upcoming Regional Committee meeting to the Member States to further deliberate on the institutional and technical requirements for the smooth functioning and sustainability of the AFP regional laboratory currently hosted by the AMGC in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. It is worth noting that the Laser Ablation (LA) and the Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) are not communicating to provide necessary analytical data for AFP. It would be necessary to replace them with new LA-ICP-MS equipment to obtain AFP data or to use them separately for other non-AFP related services.

13. DRC also recalled that the main objective of the AFP regional laboratory which was to provide necessary data on the origin of minerals for the transparency of mineral sector and for the future use of AFP by external stakeholders such as ICGLR Audit committee should not be diverted and this could be achieved by integrating the AFP tool in ICGLR third-party audits as provided for in the ICGLR Regional Certification Mechanism Manual.

**CHAIRPERSON OF ICGLR REGIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON AFP
REGIONAL LABORATORY
REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**