

Philippine Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative**97th MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GROUP (MSG) MEETING**

20 March 2025, Thursday | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Online Meeting

MINUTES OF MEETING**Attendees:****NAME****AGENCY**

Director Nenito Jariel	Department of Energy (DOE)
Dir. Maricor Ann D.G. Cauton	Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)
Engr. Romualdo Aguilos	Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)
Mr. Reymark Tablanza	Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)
Atty. Ronald Rex S. Recidoro	Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP)
Atty. Kiril Caral	Petroleum Association of the Philippines (PAP)
Atty. Francis Ballesteros	Philex Mining Corporation
Atty. Joan Adaci-Cattiling	OceanaGold Corporation
Ms. Beverly Besmanos	Bantay Kita
Prof Maria Aurora Tabada	Visayas State University
Atty. Avril De Torres	Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development
Mr. Jeffrey Carin	Father Saturnino Urios University Foundation, Inc.
Mr. Joel Chester Pagulayan	Oxfam Pilipinas
Ms. Jeanira Godio-Okubo	PILIPINA, Baguio-Benguet Chapter
Ms. Arlene Sevilla	Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College
	Assembly of Masses and Basic Sectors for Unity and Harmony—Initiatives for Normalization and Advancement for Human Security (AMBUH-INAH)
	Tawi-Tawi Alliance of Civil Society Organizations, Inc. (TACOS)
Ms. Mary Ann Dizon-Rodolfo	PH-EITI Secretariat
Mr. Albert A. San Diego	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Rhea Mae B. Pamatmat	PH-EITI Secretariat
Mr. Amiel De Guzman	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Rhoda H. Aranco	PH-EITI Secretariat
Mr. Job G. Besmonte	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Andrea Denise Samson	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Shaina Gem P. Cardenio	PH-EITI Secretariat

Mr. Lloyd Rainiel C. Bonsol	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Aliyah Mae Gozon	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Jollie Anne M. Las Piñas	PH-EITI Secretariat
Ms. Malene Skensved	PH-EITI Secretariat

Agenda:

- I. Call to order**
- II. Approval of the agenda of the 97th meeting**
- III. Approval of the minutes of the 96th meeting**
- IV. Matters arising from previous meetings**
- V. Main Business**
 1. Progress update on the Amended FY 2022 Country Report (Consultant's Revision)
 - Contextual Information Chapter
 2. Progress Updates on the FY 2023-2024 Reporting Cycles
 3. Draft 2025 Work Plan
 4. Draft Data Sharing Agreement with Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
 5. Terms of Reference for support to the Opening Extractives programme in the Philippines
- VII. Other Matters**
 1. Update on NCIP Engagement, March 4, 2025
 2. Update on Participation in the 62nd EITI Board Meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, March 12-14, 2025
 3. Women in Extractives Forum, March 18, 2025
- VI. Summary of Agreements**
- VII. Setting of the Next Meeting**
- VIII. Adjournment**

Proceedings:

I. Call to Order

The 97th PMulti-Stakeholder Group Meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. on March 20, 2025. The meeting was Chaired by Director Nenito Jariel of the Department of Energy.

II. Approval of the agenda minutes of the 97th MSG meeting

The Chair presented the provisional agenda, which was moved and approved.

III. Approval of the agenda of the 97th MSG meeting

The Chair then moved on to the approval of the 96th MSG meeting minutes, with the Secretariat explaining that the minutes had been circulated the previous night for review. One of the Civil Society Organization (CSO) representatives then spoke up, stating that he had a correction regarding the representation of their CSO in the MSG. He clarified that the membership is the Father Saturnino Urios University Foundation, Inc., not the university. The FSUU Foundation is a separate CSO entity.

The MSG members agreed to a one-week period to review and submit comments on the minutes of the 96th meeting, after which they would approve the minutes through a referendum, so that they would have an approved set of minutes for the 98th MSG meeting where they would also need to approve the minutes for this 97th MSG meeting.

The Chair welcomed the new MSG CSO representatives—Professor Tabada, Atty. Torres, Mr. Pagulayan, and Mr. Karim. Each was given the opportunity to introduce themselves and express enthusiasm for their roles. The Chair encouraged them to participate in onboarding sessions, offering both group and individual options based on availability, and to coordinate their schedules with the Secretariat.

The Chair proceeded to the approval of the minutes and inquired whether the minutes of the 95th meeting had been circulated. The Secretariat confirmed that they had been shared two days prior. When asked if any comments had been received, the response was none. To allow more time for review, the Chair proposed extending the comment period until February 28, 2025. Members were encouraged to submit any feedback to the Secretariat. Formal corrections would be considered approved automatically, while any substantive issues would be raised for MSG discussion in the next meeting.

IV. Matters arising from previous meetings

No.	Item	Agreements	Incharge	Timeline	Remarks
96.1	MSG Governance	The MSG members agreed to a one-week period for reviewing and submitting comments on the 95th MSG Meeting Minutes. Any substantial comments will be addressed in the next meeting.	MSG/Secretariat	Completed	No comments received. 02/28/2025- Deadline
96.2	Gender and Development	The MSG asked to incorporate gender responsiveness in the Terms of Reference of the energy transition study, and in other PH-EITI documents and programs. The Secretariat committed to including gender impacts in both small- and large-scale mining and expressed appreciation for the input.	Secretariat	Ongoing	The Secretariat initially integrated a gender-sensitive approach into the Terms of Reference for the Energy Transition Study by incorporating gender-related considerations into draft interview questions assessing the conditions of women in mining-affected areas. Additional efforts included organizing a forum, developing gender-sensitive survey forms, and adopting a more inclusive approach to working reports, evaluations, and feedback assessments.

96.3	Subnationalization	The Secretariat will continue reaching out to the subnationalization consultants for the results of their fieldwork. The findings will be presented to the MSG once received.	Secretariat	Completed	With the termination of USAID-funded projects, the Secretariat will take over the work, beginning March 24-28, in conjunction with the 2025 stakeholder dialogues.
96.4	Country Report	The MSG approved to use the same reporting templates for the FY 2023 - 2024 Report Cycle	MSG	Completed	The reporting templates from previous cycle will be used in the current report
96.5	Country Report	The MSG approved that the target scope for the Oil and Gas sector will remain to be producing service contracts identified by DOE	MSG	Completed	The same target scope will be used in the reconciliation process
96.6	Country Report	The MSG agreed to proceed with traditional reporting, but the Secretariat may include elements of the risk-based approach in the TOR for the report consultants.	MSG/Secretariat	Completed	These elements have already been incorporated into the consultant's draft Terms of Reference, which will be presented at the next IC meeting.
96.7	MSG Governance	The MSG agreed to conduct an MSG-level assessment on the risk-based approach. This type of reporting will be implemented once guidelines are issued by EITI International and the	MSG	Ongoing	The MSG and National Secretariat will be participating in the EITI Asia Regional Meeting on the new ToR for EITI reporting.

		MSG has been adequately capacitated.			
96.8	MSG Governance	The agenda for the next MSG meeting will include a presentation on the implications and advantages of the risk-based approach in reporting, to assess its impact on the Philippines' status as an implementing country and its effect on the industry sector.	MSG/Secretariat	Ongoing	The National Secretariat will provide updates after attending the EITI Asia Regional Meeting on new ToRs for EITI reporting on March 19, 2025.
96.9	Stakeholder Engagement	The MSG recommends reaching out to mining companies operating in IP ancestral domains to explore cost-sharing arrangements for engaging with IPs.	MSG/Secretariat	Completed	(1) During the NCIP TWG meeting, the NCIP expressed support for initiatives aimed at engaging ICCs/IPs, which may be implemented through subnational activities, roadshows, and other related events. (2) PH-EITI has sent a reference document to NCIP outlining the necessary information to provide a list of IP organizations with Ancestral Domains (AD).
96.10	MSG Governance	The Secretariat will circulate the signed copy of the MOU with the NCIP to the MSG.	Secretariat	Completed	The Secretariat already circulated the MOU agreement in the NCIP last February 21, 2025.

96.11	MSG Governance	The MSG agreed to use the MOU as a platform to deliberate on whether NCIP or IPO representatives should have seats within the MSG. The MSG agreed to invite the NCIP to participate in future MSG meetings with observer status.	MSG/Secretariat	Ongoing	NCIP will be invited to the 98th MSG meeting.
96.12	2025 Work Plan	The MSG agreed to postpone the discussion of the 2025 PH-EITI work plan to the next meeting, which will be held face-to-face.	MSG	Completed	Due to the EITI International deadline, the discussion and approval are included in the 97th MSG meeting agenda.

The Secretariat discussed the matters arising from the 96th MSG meeting held last February 21, 2025

96.1 The Secretariat reported that the MSG members had agreed to a one-week period for reviewing and submitting comments on the 95th MSG meeting minutes, but the Secretariat did not receive any comments until the given deadline. Which resulted in it being completed.

96.2. The Secretariat reported that the MSG asked them to incorporate gender-responsive approaches in the PHEITI's work, and the Secretariat committed to including gender impacts in their activities. The Secretariat integrated gender considerations into the energy transition study and adopted more inclusive practices in their work. Tagging this activity as ongoing.

96.3. The Secretariat will continue reaching out to the subnationalization consultants to obtain the results of their fieldwork, which will be presented to the MSG once received. This has already been completed as the USAID-funded INRM project was terminated, and the Secretariat will now take over the work starting next week in conjunction with the 2025 Stakeholder Dialogues, after speaking with the consultant who is willing to submit her work on the terminated project.

96.4 The Secretariat reported that the MSG approved the use of the same reporting templates for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 reporting cycle. The Secretariat will utilize the reporting templates from the previous cycle in the current report, marking this task as completed.

96.5. The MSG approved that the target scope for the oil and gas sector will remain the producing service contracts identified by DOE, and the same target scope will be used in the reconciliation process. This task is tagged as completed.

96.6. The MSG approved to proceed with traditional reporting but the Secretariat may include elements of the risk-based approach in the TOR for the consultant's report. These elements have already been incorporated in the draft TOR, which will be presented at the next IC meeting. Tagging this as completed.

96.7. The MSG agreed to conduct an MSG-level assessment on the risk-based approach. This type of reporting will be implemented once guidelines are issued by EITI International and the MSG has been adequately capacitated. The MSG and National Secretariat attended the Asia Regional Meeting on the new TOR for EITI reporting. This will be discussed first in the IC meeting next week. The Secretariat tagged this as ongoing.

96.8 The agenda for the next MSG meeting will include the presentation on the implications and advantages of the risk-based approach in reporting to assess its impact on the Philippine status and the implementing country, and its effect on the industry sector. The Secretariat would like to further discuss this in the IC meeting first, and did not include this in this MSG meeting.

96.9 The Secretariat reported that the MSG recommended reaching out to mining companies in IP ancestral domains to explore cost-sharing for engaging IPs. The NCIP expressed support for initiatives to engage ICCs/IPs through subnational activities and events. The PHEITI Center provided NCIP a document outlining information needed to get a list of IP organizations in ancestral domains. Tagging this task as completed.

96.10 The Secretariat already circulated the signed copy of the MOU with the NCIP to the MSG on February 21. Tagging this as completed.

96.11 The MSG agreed to use the MOU as a platform to discuss whether NCIP or IP representatives should have seats in the MSG. The MSG also agreed to invite NCIP to participate in future MSG meetings as an observer, starting with the 98th MSG meeting, tagging this as an ongoing task. The Chair noted that the invitation to the NCIP for the 98th

MSG meeting indicated it should be a face-to-face meeting, which he felt was more appropriate.

96.12 The MSG agreed to postpone the discussion of the 2025 work plan. But due to the EITI international deadline, the discussion and approval of the draft work plan were included in the agenda for the 97th MSG meeting, tagging this as completed. The Chair remarked that discussing the 2025 work plan would be very difficult to do online, and he believed they should have a physical meeting to exchange ideas and comments on the plans and programs for the MSG. The Chair stated that while the work plan discussion was included in the agenda for the current meeting, he was unsure if they could have a productive discussion on it today. The Secretariat responded that they could first send the draft copy of the work plan in advance to EITI International, if the MSG members agree. The Secretariat suggested they could then send the revised work plan after the 98th MSG meeting in April.

One of the CSO representatives stated that she was not comfortable with sending a copy of the work plan that had not been reviewed by the MSG. She noted that the deadline was no later than March 31st. She expressed that they were in a bind, and she did not know how the others felt, but she was not comfortable, even if they said they would send a revised draft, because in the first place, they had not gone through it. She explained that it was different to go through it individually versus as a body, where they would have to agree among themselves as CSOs, industry, government, and the MSG as a whole. A representative from the industry agreed with the position. She said they should not submit the work plan, as there was still time, even if it was not much, and it was their job to review it before the deadline. She echoed the sentiment that they should not submit without the review.

Another representative from the industry agreed that they may need a little more time to review the document. He also wondered if they could include the summary of issues and concerns raised during their previous round table discussions, as for him, the document they had drafted at their last activity was very good and would be an integral part of their work plan. He stated that they needed to address the issues raised by stakeholders during their roundtable discussions.

One of the CSO representatives also requested information on the status of the previous work plans, like the 2023-2024 plans, to know if they were implemented or partially implemented. He explained that he wanted to compare the previous plans to the current work plan, so they could proceed with the 2025 work planning without duplication or redundancy.

The Chair then asked the Secretariat to provide the 2023-2024 work plan, as they had a new set of MSG members. The Chair acknowledged that a good performance evaluation would ensure they did not duplicate what had already been achieved, which the Secretariat agreed upon and promised to send the previous 2023-2024 workplan and the draft 2025 workplan on the day after the meeting.

96.13 The Secretariat reported that, recognizing the importance of the matters to be discussed, the MSG instructed the Secretariat to adjust the time allocated in the agenda for the next MSG meeting.

96.14 The Secretariat reported that they had circulated the notice and invitation for the 98th MSG meeting on capacity development activity and retreat on February 24th. They had included the notice and invitation for the 97th meeting, rather than the notice on the deadline. However, the Secretariat noted that the deadline for the training needs assessment (TNA), as requested by an MSG member, was due on the same day. As of now, they have received responses from nine (9) members. The Secretariat expressed hope that they could finalize the deadline by tomorrow and the final program by next week.

V. Main Business

1. Progress Update on the Amended FY 2022 Country Report (Consultant's Revision)

The Secretariat presented the progress update on the amended fiscal year 2022 country report. They had circulated the summary of changes and the consolidated report for the fiscal year 2022 country report last Friday, March 14, 2025.

The presentation focused on outlining the changes made to the contextual information chapter, as the reconciliation report had already been discussed previously and received no further comments from the MSG.

The consultant added information that was planned but not included in the first draft, such as monitoring of new contracts in the non-metallic sector and updates on energy sector data and environmental research.

The consultant revised and clarified certain data on the reconciliation chapter, particularly those related to the mining fiscal regime.

The consultant aligned the details of reconciliation payments in the contextual chapter to ensure consistency with the reconciliation chapter.

The consultant omitted some unnecessary details and integrated previously circulated reports from other consultants covering gender and employment data, subnationalizing extractive transparency, and the industry outlook.

Lastly, the consultant made minor formatting adjustments for uniformity and updated footnotes, tables, and chart numbers.

The Secretariat requested the MSG members to provide any additional feedback or comments on the changes made to the contextual information chapter. They also noted that the detailed summary of changes had been circulated last Friday.

A CSO representative wanted to clarify that the document sent was the already complete report for contextual information. She had read it and just wanted to check if there was a comparison, as it seemed the writers of the report had met the requirements. She mentioned that the report was a bit late, so it was not very exciting to read. She hoped the next report would be more updated, perhaps covering 2024-2025.

A representative from the government then asked if the updated information on the Mining Fiscal Regime was included, as he had not been able to attend the recent plenary and wanted to know where that information was obtained.

Another representative from the government asked about the vetting process for the report. Secretariat explained that it was just the Secretariat that reviewed it, and it was then shared with the MSG members, without a line-by-line review between the Secretariat and MSG.

The MSG members then discussed the need to thoroughly review the report line by line, as it was just an outline. Secretariat clarified that the full report was shared, and this was a revision based on issues and concerns raised at the previous MSG meeting. There was further discussion on whether the recent risk-based approach was incorporated, and the Secretariat explained that the traditional reporting approach was maintained for the 2023-2024 fiscal years, with some initial steps towards a risk-based approach.

One of the CSO representatives raised a technical concern regarding the inclusion of references in the report that were more recent than the 2022 fiscal year it covers. The Secretariat acknowledged that this issue had been previously raised and clarified that there was an agreement to include relevant updates from 2023-2024, provided that appropriate disclaimers are included to distinguish them from the official reporting period.

The MSG members continued to discuss the review process and timeline for providing comments on the report. A representative from CSO suggested that the CSO members read the report carefully, as the contextual chapter provided important updates on the extractives sector.

The same government representative reiterated his concern about the status of the Mining Fiscal Regime, and the Secretariat clarified that the current status as of February 2025 was included in the report.

After further discussion, the MSG members approved the 2022 Country Report, subject to any substantial comments they may provide to the Secretariat.

One of the CSO representatives suggested that, now that the 2022 Country Report has been approved, it would be helpful for the Secretariat to develop social media posts providing general information about the report in both English and Filipino. He noted that this would help inform CSOs, communities, and other stakeholders about the report's key findings and outcomes. The same CSO representative reiterated that it would be good for stakeholders to at least see that there has been progress, particularly in terms of transparency and responsiveness.

2. Progress Update on the FY 2023-2024 Reporting Cycles

The Secretariat provided a progress update on the reporting cycles for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. The FY 2023 reporting cycle began in November 2024, followed by the FY 2024 cycle in January 2025, with both reports targeted for publication by December this year.

Regarding legal document submissions, the Secretariat requested companies to submit their BIR taxpayer waiver and SEC certificate of which are essential for forwarding the information to the BIR. Drawing from previous experiences where delays were encountered, the Secretariat emphasized the urgency of securing these waivers as early as possible.

As of the last update, 55 projects have submitted complete documents for FY 2023, and 54 for FY 2024. Additionally, 10 projects have provided advanced soft copies for FY 2023, and 5 for FY 2024. However, a significant portion, approximately 42% to 47%, has yet to submit any documents.

The Secretariat is actively following up with the concerned companies and has requested the support of the MGB and COMP in reaching out to their member companies. The goal is to achieve a 92% participation rate this year.

The Secretariat also encountered challenges with outdated or unresponsive contact details for several companies, such as Pacific Prime, Rosario Manobo, and Orophil Stonecraft. These companies, which had also not participated in previous cycles, appear to be under care and maintenance and have not responded to recent communications.

Regarding the online reporting system (ORETool), the Secretariat, with the support of the DOF CMIO, has revamped the old platform. The new tool is now 98% complete, with the remaining 2% focused on bug fixes. The Secretariat plans to pilot-test the system and conduct orientation sessions for mining companies in the coming weeks.

During the discussion, a CSO representative sought clarification on how the Secretariat verifies the operational status of mining companies, specifically whether the information on whether a company is under commercial operation or care and maintenance is officially provided in writing by the MGB or conveyed verbally. She recommended securing formal written documentation from the MGB to ensure accuracy, noting a previous case where a company claimed to be under care and maintenance but was later found to be operating.

The Secretariat responded that it relies on the directory provided by the MGB, which lists the operational status of mining companies per fiscal year. However, it was noted that the online list shared by the MGB may not reflect the most recent updates. The Secretariat acknowledged this concern and expressed willingness to request the latest information from the MGB.

To support the Secretariat's follow-up efforts, another CSO representative offered to share updated contact details for Rosario Manobo Mining Corporation. She mentioned that Bantay Kita has connections with the company, which operates as a joint venture with tribal chieftains, and suggested this could be a more effective avenue for obtaining updates than relying solely on the MGB's data.

3. Draft 2025 Work Plan

The MSG agreed to defer the discussion of the 2025 draft work plan to the next MSG meeting, as it had previously been agreed that the draft would first be reviewed by MSG members. The Secretariat noted that the draft had already been circulated multiple times via email.

4. Draft Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) with Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

One of the CSO representatives suggested that the Secretariat provide new CSO members

with sufficient context and rationale behind the proposed Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). She recommended outlining the background of PH-EITI's Beneficial Ownership (BO) initiative, the necessity of the DSA with the SEC, and the reasons for its current review. This would enable new CSO representatives to offer meaningful suggestions or recommendations.

The Secretariat explained that there have been previous discussions on this matter and that the DSA is also part of PH-EITI's compliance with Requirement 2.5 of the EITI Standard, which mandates the disclosure of beneficial ownership information. The draft DSA aims to enhance and streamline access to corporate information. Under existing procedures, companies that voluntarily disclose their BO information are typically requested by PH-EITI to provide a waiver, similar to how financial data is managed. With the DSA in place with the SEC, this process would be simplified—especially in cases involving suspicious companies where additional information is required.

The same CSO representative noted that while PH-EITI has been actively working on BO disclosures, CSOs have also been undertaking their own initiatives, with increased mobilization, especially in light of the upcoming elections. These efforts are intended to critically assess both government and industry compliance with BO disclosure requirements. The CSO added that studies conducted by their partner organizations have highlighted the difficulty of accessing BO information due to data privacy laws. Given these challenges, PH-EITI's efforts toward BO transparency are a significant step forward and demonstrate the government's commitment to this important agenda. She emphasized that sharing these developments with CSOs is vital to showcasing the government's ongoing work in promoting transparency and accountability.

A government representative then asked whether the shared draft of the DSA had been reviewed by the legal team. The Secretariat responded that the draft originally came from a 2022 version recommended by the SEC, which they have recently updated. It is currently being circulated for comments, including from the DOF legal team. At this stage, the Secretariat is seeking feedback from MSG members on whether they wish to add or modify anything in the draft. However, the draft will still undergo review by the DOF Legal Affairs Office before it is formally submitted to the SEC.

An industry representative raised a concern regarding the scope of the DSA. He specifically referred to Article 2, Paragraph 2, which states that the SEC agrees to share data on corporations and other licensed entities, including beneficial ownership information. He pointed out that the provision appears overly broad and seemingly applies to all corporations without limitation.

One of the CSO representatives responded that this might be because some companies outside the extractive sector could still be beneficial owners. Beneficial ownership needs to be traced to the ultimate level, and the required level of detail is often embedded across multiple layers of ownership, which may extend beyond the extractive industry. In some cases, the beneficial owner could be a holding company.

The Secretariat added that, even if the SEC shares the information to PH-EITI, the consent of the concerned companies would still be required prior to its publication.

5. Terms of reference for Support to the Opening Extractive Programme in the Philippines

A representative from the industry expressed uncertainty about what more could be developed regarding the reporting guidelines for beneficial ownership (BO). He noted that the SEC guidelines were already quite clear, specifying ownership thresholds and other parameters. He asked whether BO determination should be based on the ability to elect a majority of directors, personal ownership, influence, or other criteria. The Chair acknowledged his comments.

Another industry representative emphasized the importance of the MSG developing a clear and shared understanding of beneficial ownership and defining their own objectives, rather than simply adopting the rationale set by the International Secretariat. He questioned the materiality of BO to the MSG, suggesting it appeared to be a more localized concern, focused on understanding political influence, rather than solely about tracking illicit financial flows. He argued that the MSG should craft a context-specific mechanism for BO transparency, as the recommended registry approach may have limitations. He concluded by stressing the need for the MSG to first build its internal capacity and clarify its intended outcomes before setting directions and objectives for BO work.

A CSO representative agreed but proposed a more localized and targeted approach to capacity building on BO. She shared that in their attempts to discuss BO with communities, the focus often shifted to concerns about how it impacted their livelihoods rather than ownership structures. To make the discussions more relevant, she recommended inviting researchers like Prof. Cielo Magno to present case studies on the beneficial ownership of specific mining companies. This, she said, would help the MSG better understand the local implications. She also suggested piloting the use of BO data in a specific mining site or company to demonstrate its relevance, instead of presenting it in broad terms. Additionally, she encouraged the MSG to consider findings from other CSO studies on BO transparency to help shape a more grounded and community-informed advocacy strategy.

An industry representative added that while large-scale mining companies generally disclose their beneficial ownership, the bigger challenge lies in small-scale mining, where financial flows and ownership structures are often opaque. He noted that despite the sector generating substantial profits, miners themselves receive minimal compensation, and in many cases, operations are informal or illegal.

Another CSO representative agreed with the points raised, emphasizing the importance of first identifying the specific challenges related to beneficial ownership (BO) disclosure within the Philippine context. She highlighted concerns such as the potential influence of individuals with connections to mining operations or policy-making—including legislators—and how these relationships could affect decision-making and policy development in the sector. She stressed that identifying and prioritizing these key issues is essential for effectively addressing BO concerns.

The Chair acknowledged that several important points had been raised by the MSG members regarding BO disclosure and requested the Secretariat to document all comments and suggestions made during the discussion.

The Chair then inquired about the timeline for finalizing the Terms of Reference (TOR). A representative from the Secretariat responded that they would appreciate receiving comments on the TOR by the following day. The Chair confirmed with the MSG members if this timeline was acceptable, to which the members agreed. The Secretariat added that the comments and issues raised during the meeting could be incorporated into the TOR.

VII. Other Matters

1. Update on NCIP Engagement, March 4, 2025

The Secretariat explained that following the ceremonial signing on February 20, they had met with key divisions of the NCIP to discuss the creation of a Technical Working Group (TWG). The proposed structure had the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) as the TWG chair, with NCIP as the co-chair, and the TWG secretariat being a collaboration between PH-EITI and NCIP.

The Secretariat also highlighted efforts to include NCIP as a member of the PH-EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG), as outlined in the amendments to Executive Order 147. It was agreed that NCIP would participate in MSG activities, but would require formal invitations via email to ensure proper representation. NCIP also emphasized the need to clearly define the rules and responsibilities to ensure effective participation in MSG activities.

However, NCIP noted that including Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs) as TWG members could be challenging, as no single body represents IPOs, and each region has different perspectives and cases. NCIP agreed to provide a list of IPOs related to mining and conduct a pilot test with PH-EITI to engage and gather information on royalties. NCIP also proposed including provincial or regional mining regulatory boards in the TWG, as these bodies are already involved with multiple agencies, such as the Environmental Management Bureau, Forest Management Bureau, and Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

The next steps included identifying relevant IPOs for participation, conducting training sessions to explain PH-EITI's goals and data collection process, developing a monitoring tool for IP royalty payments, and creating a centralized database to streamline data collection and reduce duplication. Additionally, the Secretariat would provide documentation explaining the criteria for selecting pilot sites and establish a structured approach to effectively involve IPOs in consultations.

The Secretariat acknowledged that engagement with NCIP had been long-standing, with the most recent interaction occurring in 2015-2016. This previous engagement had resulted in discrepancies in reporting, as not all regions had been submitting reports to EITI.

A CSO representative suggested that instead of focusing on IPOs for participation, the Secretariat should engage directly with the NCIP regional offices, which already have established structures. She recalled that during a previous EITI conference, the Regional Director of NCIP Region 11 had presented their proposed framework for monitoring royalties, which included community resource management and monitoring schemes. She believed that piloting this approach in specific regions, such as Region 11 in Mindanao and Region 13, where there is a significant mining presence, would be more effective.

She also mentioned that Bantay Kita, a civil society organization, had already begun piloting royalty monitoring and management in Region 11 and had produced a community resource guide on understanding FPIC and community-based negotiations, as well as on establishing IP wealth funds. She emphasized that the key was to engage with the NCIP regional offices, as they already have dedicated teams, including regional directors and lawyers, who are familiar with the issues related to royalty monitoring and management.

The Chair acknowledged the suggestion and confirmed that NCIP would be invited to the 98th MSG meeting in April. The agenda would include discussions on how to engage them as members of the MSG and follow up on the initiatives mentioned by Bon.

2. Update on Participation in the 62nd EITI Board Meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, March 12-14, 2025

The Secretariat provided an update on their participation in the 62nd EITI Board Meeting held in Arusha, Tanzania, on March 12-14, 2025. She highlighted several key points from the meeting:

- The World Bank has agreed to support PH-EITI's Extractives Transparency Week, a weeklong event scheduled for September 2025. This event will include capacity-building activities and is part of a regional initiative involving other Asian countries implementing EITI.
- The World Bank also shared strategies and tips for submitting new project proposals, as they now have a new funding source, EGPS 3. Many countries are vying for this funding, especially since previous funders, like the USA, have withdrawn.
- Regarding validation, PH-EITI will undergo re-validation on July 1, 2026. New ratings and methodologies will be introduced, which will incorporate comments and inputs from the Philippines. She also mentioned that 12 countries had requested extensions for submitting their reports, and 6 of those 12 had been granted partial mainstreaming approval. She suggested that PH-EITI could also request a partial mainstreaming approach, as they have good data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau that could be submitted.
- The Secretariat also attended side events on artisanal and small-scale mining, as well as extractive risk governance challenges for the energy transition.

In terms of the way forward, the Secretariat proposed expanding the focus beyond financial transparency to include environmental, social, and linguistic aspects, as these are now part of the new EITI standards. She also emphasized the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation for impact assessment and to explore risk-based transparency and financial accountability approaches, despite the challenges involved.

3. Women in Extractives Forum, March 18, 2025

Last Tuesday, the PHEITI hosted the Women in Extractives Forum at the Lepanto Building. The event was organized in collaboration with the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), and Lepanto Mining Corporation.

A total of 124 participants attended the forum, including 91 women and 33 men. The breakdown of participants was diverse: 48 from the government, 45 from the industry, 5

from civil society organizations, 12 from the academe, 10 from the media, and 4 from development partners.

The forum provided several key takeaways. Participants emphasized the importance of supporting women's education to address gender imbalances in the extractive sector. They also stressed the need for more leadership opportunities for women, which can inspire change and promote more inclusive policies in the industry.

The amplification of indigenous women's voices was highlighted as a critical step toward creating a more inclusive governance structure. Incorporating intersectionality into gender inclusivity efforts was seen as essential to ensure that no one is left behind, especially indigenous peoples and marginalized communities.

Sustaining the momentum for gender equality was recognized as vital for driving long-term, meaningful change. Collecting gender-sensitive data was emphasized as crucial for identifying gaps and driving policy reforms in the extractive sector. Utilizing gender-disaggregated data was seen as an important means of ensuring that women's voices are prioritized in governance and decision-making.

Participants also acknowledged the important role companies can play in fostering inclusivity by adopting gender-sensitive policies and practices. Integrating gender perspectives into environmental governance was identified as a way to address the diverse needs of women and marginalized groups.

Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive. Participants found the forum's content and relevance to be highly valuable, and the speakers were well-received. While the format was generally praised, there were suggestions for improvement, such as extending the event duration and enhancing the readability of print materials.

Overall, the Women in Extractives Forum was regarded as a great success, leaving participants feeling inspired and motivated to continue advocating for greater gender equality in the industry. The PHEITI chair congratulated the organizers and mentioned that they had also sent their female mining engineer and geologist to participate in the event.

In other updates, the Secretariat informed MGB that it has been designated to serve as Chair of the TWG under NCIP, with NCIP as co-chair. MGB acknowledged this but noted they would need to obtain approval from their superior before formally accepting the role.

VIII. Summary of Agreements

Agreements	Responsibility Center	Timeline
The MSG members agreed to one week for reviewing and submitting comments on the 96th MSG Meeting Minutes. Any substantial comments will be addressed in the next meeting.	MSG and Secretariat	March 27, 2025 previous plans
The MSG agreed to allow more time for reviewing the draft 2025 work plan and to hold a face-to-face discussion during the 98th MSG meeting, scheduled for April 23-25, 2025. The Secretariat will also circulate the previous work plans along with updates on their progress.	MSG and Secretariat	Circulation along with updates on their progress: March 24-28, 2025
The MSG has officially approved the amended FY 2022 Country Report. As part of the process, the MSG will conduct a further review of the report and provide any additional comments to the Secretariat.	MSG and Secretariat	March 24-28, 2025
The MSG to provide contact information for Rosario Manobo Mining Corp to facilitate their follow-up regarding the company's participation in the reporting cycle	MSG and Secretariat	March 21, 2025
The MSG recommended that the Secretariat develop publicity materials in social media featuring general information about the FY 2022 country report.	Secretariat	April 4, 2025
The MSG recommended that communication with companies reporting to the PH-EITI, particularly those with problematic contact and updated operational status, should be made in written form to ensure formality and proper documentation.	Secretariat	March 28, 2025
The MSG has approved the draft Data Sharing Agreement with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). This agreement aims to facilitate secure and efficient data exchange, supporting enhanced transparency and accountability in the sector.	Secretariat	
The MSG has approved the Terms of Reference (TOR) for support to the Opening Extractives program in the Philippines with a recommendation of providing a clear definition of the BO disclosure mechanisms' objectives to ensure its effective and appropriate application and piloting localized Beneficial Ownership (BO) reporting.	Secretariat	

Agreements	Responsibility Center	Timeline
The MSG proposed initiating a pilot program in Region 11 and collaborating with the NCIP regional director who has already established a royalty monitoring tool or mechanism	Secretariat	
The MGB to inform the Secretariat regarding its acceptance of the chairmanship of the TWG with NCIP.	MGB and Secretariat	March 24, 2025
The Secretariat to circulate the new composition of MSG committees to the MSG.	Secretariat	Shared with MSG members on March 20, 2025

The Chair requested that the Secretariat indicate the timelines for each agreement. The Secretariat responded that they will send the recording and summary of agreements later, and will finalize the details.

A representative from the government inquired about the venue for the next MSG meeting. The Secretariat clarified that it will be held in Manila, but the specific venue is still being finalized and will be posted.

The Chair asked about the timeline, using the comments on the TOR and meeting minutes as examples, and inquired if there was an agreement on the deadlines. The Secretariat stated that the details will be provided along with the summary of agreements.

The Chair opened the floor for any other comments from the MSG members. A CSO representative suggested specifying that one of the pilot regions for the NCIP engagement will be Region 11, as they have an existing royalty monitoring framework.

The Secretariat confirmed that they will coordinate with the MSG on the agenda for the NCIP engagement, including the pilot region.

Regarding the next meeting, the Secretariat informed that it will be held from April 23-25, with the 98th MSG meeting on April 24. The venue and final program are still to be announced. The Secretariat also reminded the members who have not submitted the training needs assessment to do so by the deadline tomorrow, to finalize the program.

IX. Adjournment

The Chair thanked all the MSG members for their active participation in the 97th meeting and adjourned the session at 12:00 nn.