

Bucim Clean Up - The Why and How

Bucim mine is an active copper mine. Disposed mining waste rock materials create environmentally hazardous conditions for residents and ecosystems in the local areas. Acid mine drainage, containing metals and sulphates reach downstream water bodies and pollute the water and soil. Flotation waste materials are discharged in a tailings reservoir and with the same material the impounding dam is simultaneously being built. Small dust particles, prone to wind erosion are transported by wind and endanger the local population in village of Topolnica.

The project intervention consists of construction of a system for collection and treatment of the waters from the mining zone and the waste-rock dump and pumping the polluted waters back into the technological process and the tailings reservoir. This prevents release of pollutants downstream, thus eliminating pollution of the rivers and soil.

Also, measures have been undertaken for protection from fugitive dust. More than 12 ha of biologically inactive bare land have been re-vegetated and a system for irrigation and wetting is under construction. The interventions are designed to prevent dust generation and minimize its propagation. Project interventions in Bucim can serve as an example of public-private partnership for other locations where historical pollution exists and where environmental liabilities have not been satisfactorily delineated during transformation of the enterprises.