Due diligence for responsible construction

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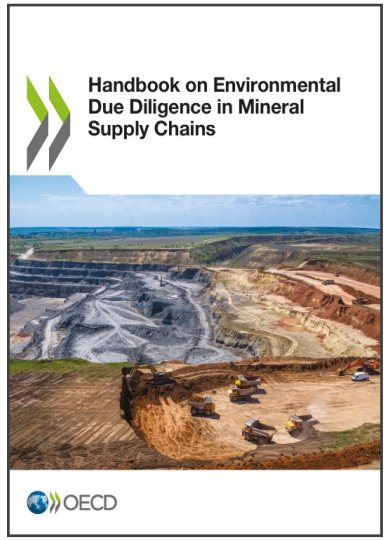
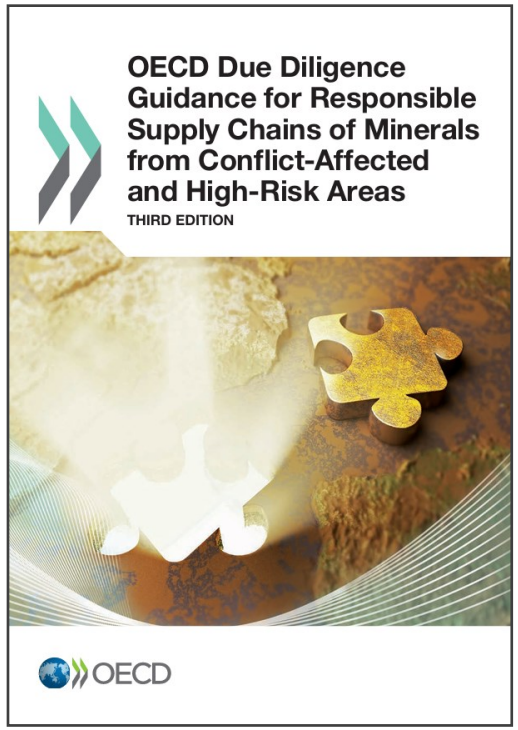
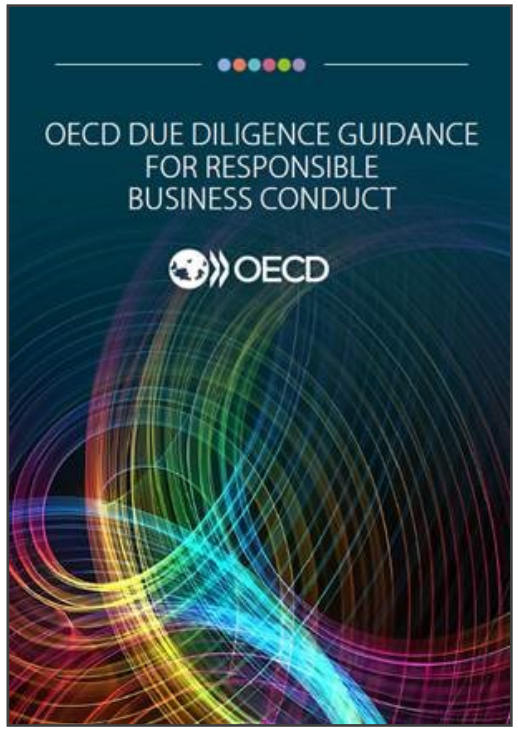
OECD CENTRE FOR
RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT

Companies operating in sand and silicate supply chains can implement due diligence based on OECD standards

- Rooted in existing OECD Recommendations:
- Support tool to help companies implement existing guidance; does not represent new guidance

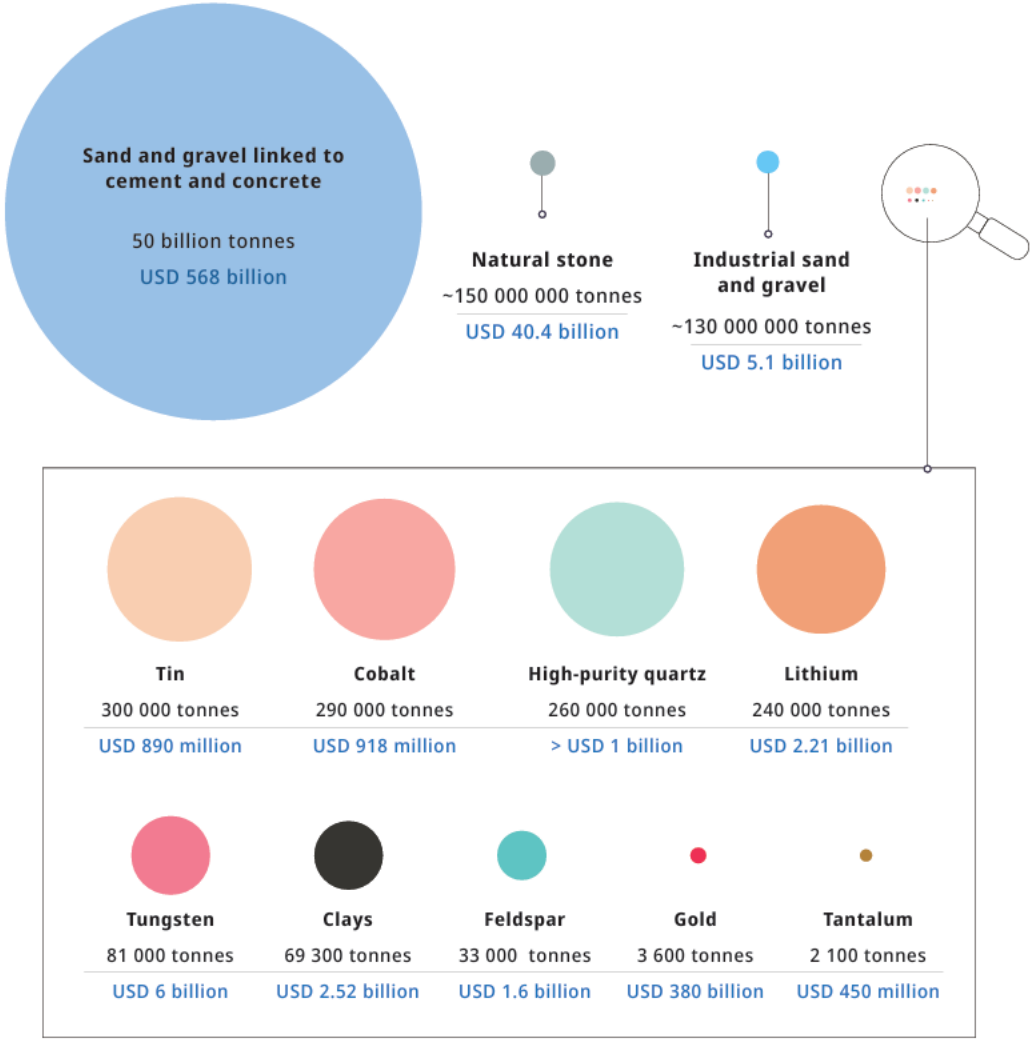


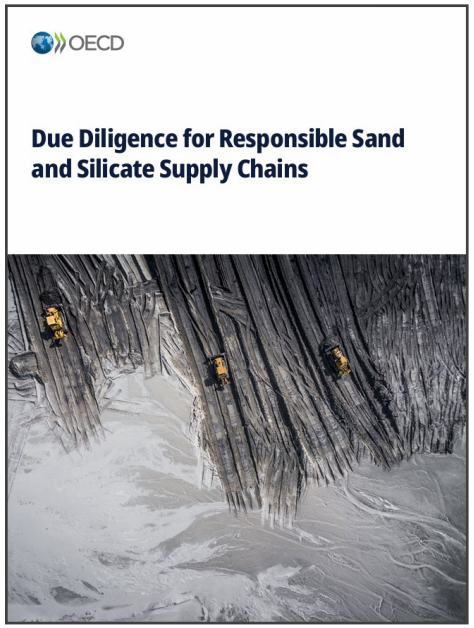




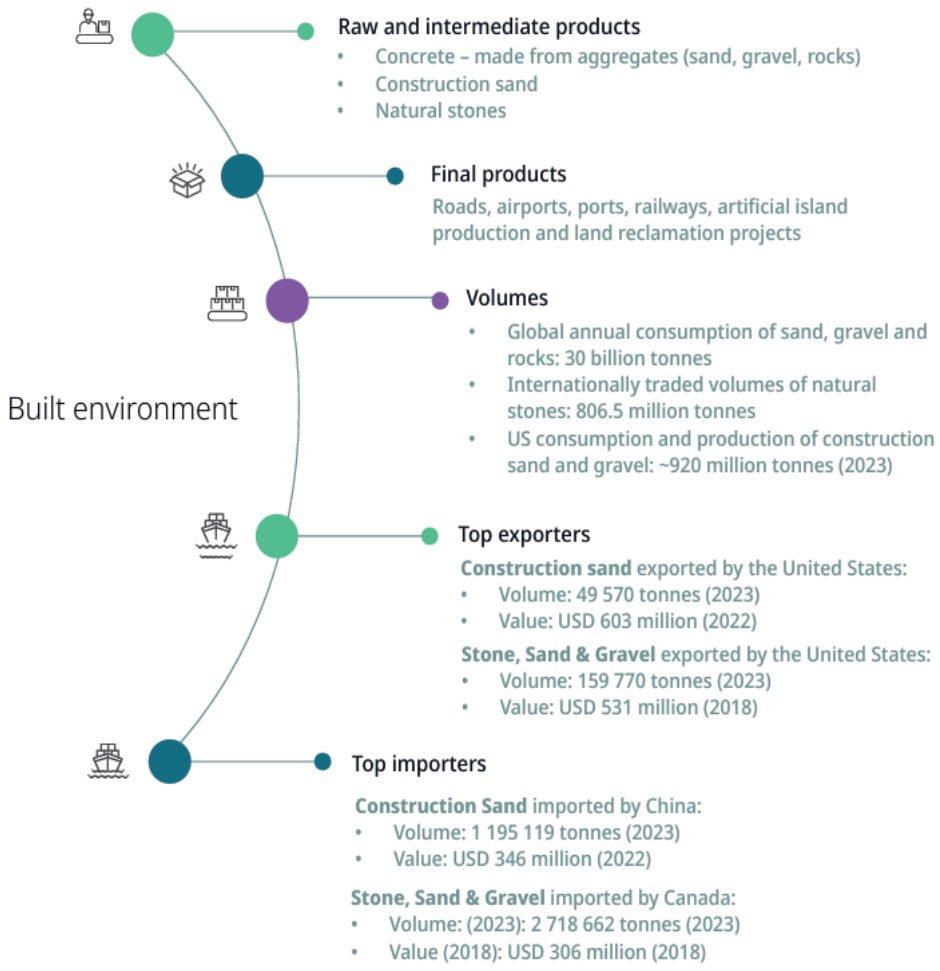
Sand and silicates are the two most extracted materials globally

- Sand and silicate extraction is taking place in almost **every country**
- Artisanal, small-scale and industrial extraction
- Global annual consumption amounts to **70 000 times** the combined volumes for cobalt, lithium, gold, tantalum, tin and tungsten
- The sand and silicate market is estimated to amount to **USD 600 billion** annually
- The sector is just over **1.5 x** larger than the **value** of annual gold production while being more than **a million times larger in volume**





Sand and silicates are the building blocks of modern life

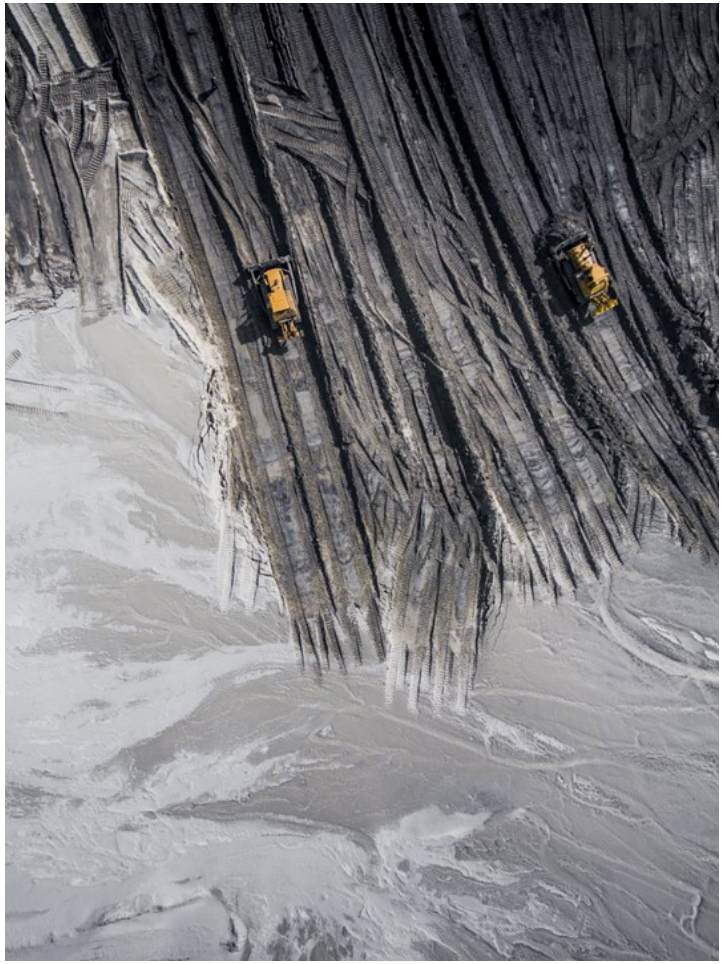


Data sourced from UN Comtrade and USGS. Figures are approximate and may vary by customs classification and reference year. Discrepancies between volume and value may be explained by differences in HS codes.

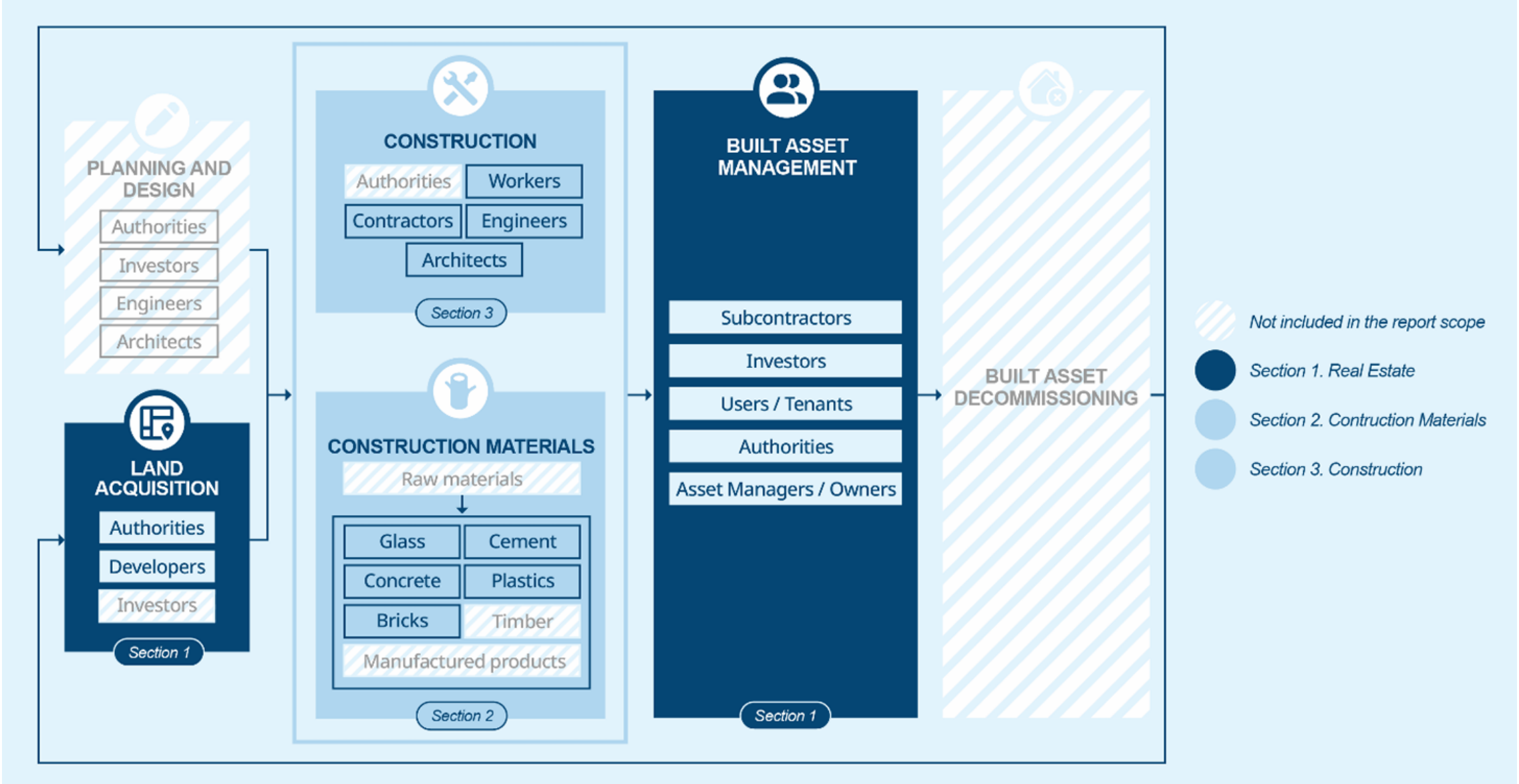
- A large **variety of end-uses**: construction, housing, infrastructure, ceramics, glass, paint, concrete, etc.
- The **construction sector** is the largest user of sand and silicates and accounts for **13% of global GDP**
- Importance of **local consumption**
- **ASM in sand and silicates** supports the livelihoods of millions of people. Examples include the artisanal production of construction material and ASM aggregate quarries
- **1 – 2%** of global sand and silicate output is **traded internationally**

Scale of risks and impacts linked to sand and silicates sourcing

- Unsustainable **extraction exceeding replenishment rates**
- **Environmental risks** including biodiversity loss, climate change risks, water depletion, and air, water and soil pollution
- Significant impacts from extraction in **marine and freshwater systems** where sand and silicates play a direct role in the functioning of ecosystems
- **Human rights abuses**, including forced and child labour, corruption, financial crime and conflict finance are reported
- Most **conflict-affected and high-risk areas** have some relationship with sand and silicates production
- Extensive **informal extraction** posing challenges for governance, regulatory oversight and illicit trade
- **Occupational health and safety** concerns, including silicosis risks
- **Lack of freedom of association**
- Adverse impacts on **communities and Indigenous Peoples**

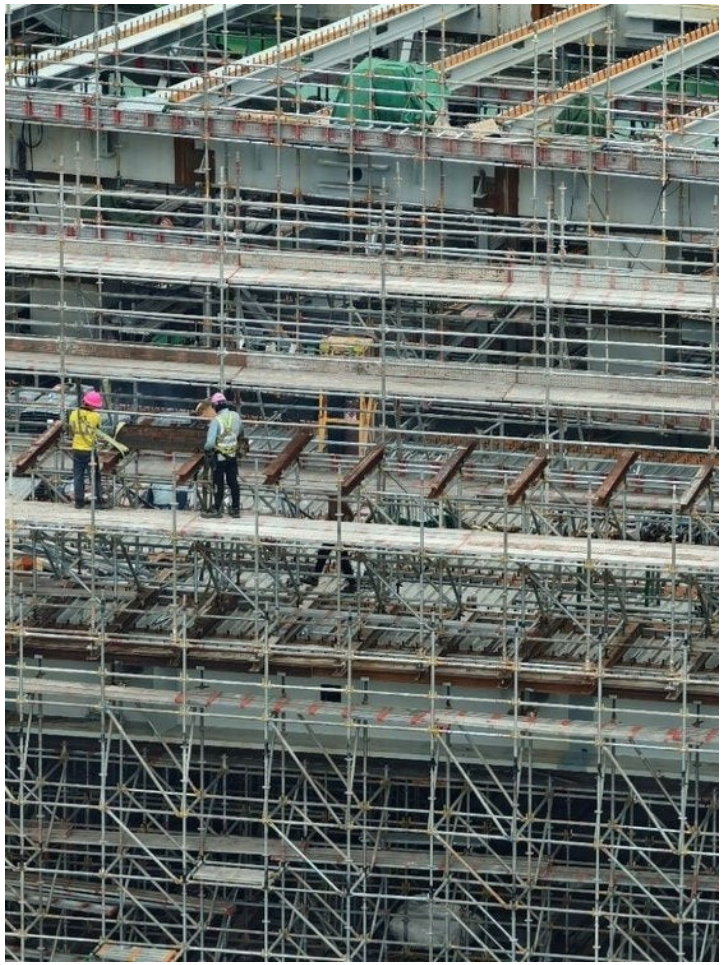


Due diligence essentials for responsible construction (2026)



Salient impacts

	Construction material	Real Estate	Construction
Environment	Depletion of natural resources Air pollution & climate change Soil & water contamination Depletion of water	Climate change Biodiversity & ecosystem impacts Land rights	Land & soil degradation Water & air pollution Resource consumption & waste Noise pollution
Society	Forced & child labour Health & safety impacts Lack of freedom of association Poor working conditions, including wages	Exploitation of low-skilled workers Affordability, accessibility, inclusivity	Poor working conditions Health & safety impacts Worker rights Socio-economic impacts
Governance	Support for non-state armed groups Bribery & corruption	Corruption and tax evasion Data privacy and confidentiality	Corruption



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Responsible sand and silicate sourcing

- Map material flows and extraction contexts
- Screen for ecosystem-sensitive sourcing
- Adapt risk mitigation to supply chain structure
- Leverage existing sustainability initiatives
- Collaborate on sector-specific initiatives
- Address cumulative and systemic environmental impacts
- Promote circularity and resource efficiency
- Technological tools facilitating due diligence

Thank you

If you have any questions, please reach out to Cäcilie Le Gallic (cacilie.legallic@oecd.org)