
Urgent: Risk briefing and call to action for Rio Tinto financiers on the Simandou iron ore project

28 October 2025 at 14:25

Dear Giulia,

Many thanks for your email and insights shared. We will circulate internally to relevant teams.

The Bank's consistent practice is not to comment on information relating to clients or specific transactions. Santander is supporting the transition to a low carbon economy, while recognizing that an orderly and just transition depends on economic growth to finance the required investments and in governments setting the policy frameworks that support and incentivise the market to drive change. The bank has set sustainable finance and portfolio alignment targets for 2030 across a range of material high emitting sectors, and our plans towards delivering on our alignment targets inform our portfolio management (for more detail please see our 2024 annual report). We have been supporting the build-out of renewable energy capacity for decades, but our role is also to work with clients and encourage their transition goals from brown to green maintaining energy security.

We operate under strict policies that govern our financing decisions, and that are reviewed periodically. As reflected in these policies, we conduct both financial and Environmental & Social risk assessments, including human rights considerations. This is articulated in our environmental, social and climate change risk management policy, which defines the standards for investing in and, providing financial products and services to, companies and customers in oil & gas, power generation and distribution, mining and metals, and soft commodities. It dictates prohibited activities and those that require special attention for the aforementioned sectors.

Santander is also a signatory to the Equator Principles framework and has applied these principles to project-related transactions (especially project and export finance) since 2009 according with its scope. As part of our due diligence under the Equator Principles, we assess and ensure that projects identify and manage environmental and social risks and impacts correctly and that they maintain a sound relationship with local communities according to international standards. We pay special attention to, and ensure the correct management of, these situations as potential impacts of projects on communities:

- Involuntary resettlement/displacement (physical or economic) of people.
- Risks to the health and safety of neighbouring communities.
- Impacts on indigenous communities. In these cases, the project must obtain free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) under IFC Performance Standard 7.

Finally, all of this is underpinned by a strong governance for these matters, including a Responsible Banking, Sustainability and Culture Committee within our Board of Directors at group level.

Best regards,

