



Gerdau's Várzea do Lopes Iron Ore Mine Completes IRMA Audit

***Brazilian Mine achieves IRMA Transparency when audited
against the world's only equally governed mining standard***

On **9 October 2025** the Initiative for Responsible Mining (IRMA) released the audit report of Gerdau's Várzea do Lopes iron ore mine against the IRMA Standard for Responsible Mining. The Várzea do Lopes Mine is located in Brazil's Minas Gerais state in the municipality of Itabirito. Independent audit firm SCS Global Services assessed the Várzea do Lopes Mine at IRMA Transparency when measuring its performance against the Standard's best practice social and environmental criteria.

IRMA Transparency means that the operation has been independently audited against all relevant requirements in IRMA's Standard and has publicly shared its audit scores and the basis for auditors' findings. By sharing such extensive information, a mine provides diverse stakeholders with the information needed to understand the mine's operations and encourage improvement as needed. The full audit report is available on the [Várzea do Lopes Mine audit page](#) on the IRMA website.

As the IRMA Standard is [recognized](#) and adopted around the globe, these audits are important steps in a deepening dialogue between mining companies and those affected by their operations. Because the IRMA process is always improving from the experience of the most recent audit, audit results should be reviewed and interpreted accordingly.

On July 17, 2025, Gerdau [announced](#) the signing of an agreement for the full transfer of mining rights related to the operation of the Várzea do Lopes Mine, located in Itabirito (MG). The new holder of these rights is Várzea do Lopes Mineração S.A., a company controlled by the same partners of Avante Participações e Negócios Ltda.

IRMA Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance

With this transaction, the new holder of the mining rights assumes full responsibility for the operation and production of iron ore at the Várzea do Lopes Mine.

This initiative is part of Gerdau's process of reorganizing its mining assets, aiming to concentrate its own mining operations in the Miguel Burnier asset, located in Ouro Preto (MG).

Including the Várzea do Lopes Mine, [26 industrial-scale mines worldwide are within the IRMA independent assessment system](#). After an initial self-assessment, a participating mine engages a third-party audit firm — trained and approved by IRMA — to conduct a detailed independent evaluation, including on-site visits to the mine and nearby communities. Following the release of the initial audit, a surveillance audit checks on the mine's performance. Three years after the initial audit, the operation is fully audited again.

The independent IRMA system is the only global mining standard that provides equal power to the public sector (communities and Indigenous rights holders, mine workers, and environmental and human rights advocates) alongside the private sector (mining companies, mined materials purchasers and investors).

For More Information:

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- Várzea do Lopes Mine audit packet: <https://responsiblemining.net/varzea-do-lopes-packet>
- Várzea do Lopes Mine IRMA audit page: <https://responsiblemining.net/varzea-do-lopes>
- Announcement of Várzea do Lopes Mine ownership change: <https://www2.gerdau.com.br/noticias/comunicado-reorganizacao-dos-ativos-minerais/>