

## **Environmental impacts of oil shale mining and processing in the past, today and the future**

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Oil shale mining and processing like any other heavy industry has environmental impacts and influences on local communities. Based on 100 years of Estonian oil shale use, these impacts are well understood. In parallel, relevant legislation has been developed to control **and regulate the industry's environmental impacts. There are three major stages of the oil shale industry:** (1) mining and fuel preparation; (2) thermal processing; and (3) upgrading. In all stages environmental impacts exist in connection with water use, air emissions and solid residuals. Additionally, remediation and rehabilitation of depleted mines is an important topic. Continuously developing Estonian legislation based on European Union law and relevant to international guidelines regulates each stage through environmental permits and limit values. Over the years there has been a great deal of investment in managing the environmental impacts and protecting environmental quality. All investments in the oil shale industry have long term impacts and therefore there is a good understanding of the impacts and how technological development influences those impacts. Enefit activities have reduced environmental impacts and assured continuous conformity with environmental legislation. Cooperation with local communities and supporting local development will give additional support and sustainability for the industry. The existing regulations for industrial oil shale developments and their environmental impacts can be managed in all oil shale deposit locations.