

Lunar Ethics & Sustainability Institute (LESI)

White Paper: A Categorical Ban on Lunar Helium-3 Mining

Executive Summary

LESI affirms a categorical prohibition on lunar helium-3 (^3He) mining for commercial profit. This stance reflects scientific uncertainty, environmental risks to regolith and dust dynamics, threats to heritage, and equity concerns.

1. Core Principle

The Moon is a shared scientific archive and cultural monument. Stewardship should reflect intergenerational ethics and precaution.

2. Rationale for a Total Ban

No operational ^3He fusion reactors exist; lunar concentrations are low and heterogeneous; mining disturbs regolith and mobilizes dust; heritage and equity risks are substantial.

3. Policy Demands

Treaty action to ban ^3He mining; heritage protection zones; UN-backed sanctions; redirect funding to terrestrial renewables and proven fusion research.

4. Implementation Roadmap

2025–2026 coalition building and draft language; 2027–2030 treaty signatories and codified heritage zones; 2030+ compliance monitoring.

5. Conclusion

^3He mining is scientifically premature and ethically unacceptable; permanent prohibition is the only defensible course.

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