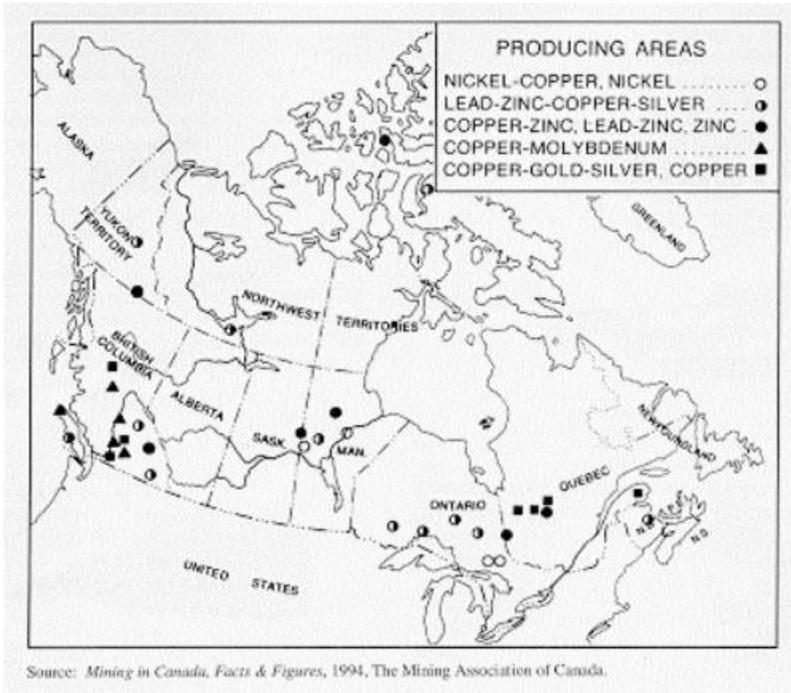


# Mining in Aboriginal Homelands



Extraction of base and precious metals has, for many years, been important to the economy of the territorial North. Nevertheless, mines and mineral-related infrastructure have not attracted the level of attention in Ottawa that has been reserved for northern oil and gas development. This is changing rapidly. The business pages of our metropolitan newspapers now buzz with stories of "world-class" mineral finds in Labrador, the NWT, and elsewhere.

Distinguishing stock market hype from geological and economic reality is sometimes difficult, but important mineral developments in the Slave Geological Province north of Yellowknife, in northern Quebec, and in coastal Labrador seem soon to occur. Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP) Diamonds Inc. intends to develop a huge diamond mine on the tundra at Lac de Gras, 300 km northeast of Yellowknife. A public review of this project is now under way. Kennecott Canada plans a second diamond mine in the same region. Diamond Fields is moving quickly to develop its Voisey's Bay nickel, copper, and cobalt find near Nain, Labrador, and the Raglan zinc deposit in northern Quebec may soon be developed.

There is some irony in the timing of these likely developments, for industry believes itself to be less welcome in Canada now than in the past. It has started a public relations and political campaign to "keep mining in Canada," trying to persuade government to simplify regulations, broaden access to land for exploration, limit areas set aside for ecological reasons, and generally to look more favourably upon mineral exploration and development.

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The federal government is responding. The Northern Minerals Policy of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is soon to be amended, as is the Mines and Minerals Policy of Natural Resources Canada. The antiquated Yukon mining legislation is to be amended comprehensively. In a time of severe budgetary constraint, Ottawa, Yellowknife, and Whitehorse see royalty and taxation revenue from producing mines, and many northerners anticipate the jobs they expect mines to generate.

But how do aboriginal peoples view increased mineral exploration and development in their homelands? Will they have any influence on the scale, pace, and timing of development? How might they benefit? Can development of minerals—a finite resource—contribute to economic, social, and environmental sustainability?

CARC initiated the Northern Minerals Programme (NMP) in late summer 1995 to address these questions in the Slave Geological Province. This research and advocacy programme is enabling CARC to intervene in the environmental assessment of BHP's proposed diamond mine and to participate in federal mineral policy processes. But mineral-related issues are not unique to this region. Other jurisdictions share similar questions, concerns, and opportunities. In light of this, Robert F. Keith, a long-time member and a past chair of CARC, talked about these issues with aboriginal peoples from Labrador to Yukon. This issue of Northern Perspectives reports what he heard.

An important task before us now is to ensure that the documented concerns of aboriginal peoples are addressed in policy and legislative processes. We also must ensure that the principle of sustainability is upheld in these processes and is fully reflected in new and amended policies and legislation.

## **Aboriginal Communities and Mining in Northern Canada**

*by Robert F. Keith*

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### **Introduction**

Aboriginal communities across northern Canada face important issues and real opportunities as mineral exploration and development enter a period of significant, perhaps unparalleled, expansion. From Labrador to Yukon, mining activity is reaching unprecedented levels. Major deposits of valuable ores have been found. And caught up in the staking and development "rush" are aboriginal communities whose pathways to the future are anything but clear.

In response to mining issues in the NWT, CARC launched its Northern Minerals Programme (NMP) in 1995. Initially the work focused on the Slave Geological Province (SGP), an area to the east and north of Yellowknife, where mining companies put forward several proposals to develop diamond, lead-zinc, and gold ore bodies.

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But there are several aboriginal communities outside this area that also face critical issues. At the request of the Walter and Duncan Gordon Charitable Foundation, CARC undertook to meet with aboriginal people across the North. The objectives of this phase of the work were

- to identify mining-related issues, opportunities, and needs of aboriginal communities across much of northern Canada;
- to identify ways in which CARC's Northern Minerals Programme could be expanded to include the concerns of other aboriginal communities across Canada; and
- to co-operate with those communities to develop projects to meet their expressed needs.

Discussions were held across the North from September to November 1995. In some cases several communities were represented at the sessions. The following meetings were convened:

- Deh Cho First Nations, Lidle Koe (Fort Simpson), NWT
- Yukon First Nations, Whitehorse, Yukon
- Labrador Inuit Association, Nain, Labrador
- Innu Nation, Utshimassit (Davis Inlet), Labrador
- Innu Nation, Sheshatshui, Labrador
- Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), Montreal
- Makivik Corporation, Montreal
- Inuvialuit Organizations, Inuvik, NWT

In addition, discussions were held with Inuit and Dene groups at the West Kitikmeot/Slave Study workshop in Cambridge Bay, NWT, from 25 to 28 September 1995, and in Sudbury, Ontario, from 14 to 16 November 1995 at the conference entitled "Aboriginal Communities and Base Metal Mining in Canada."

Aboriginal communities face the prospect of mineral development with a mixture of hope and apprehension. There is hope that real and lasting benefits will come to their communities at this time of significant economic problems. At the same time there are deep concerns about the adverse impacts of mining on the land, the wildlife, the waters and, as well, on the beliefs, values, and very identity of the people.

From these many hours of discussion in which both the issues and opportunities were clearly revealed, CARC believes that its partnership with aboriginal communities and organizations will advance knowledge and understanding of this complex set of issues and make possible practical approaches to enhance the prospects for building sustainable communities.

### **Themes, Issues, and Opportunities**

Discussions with aboriginal communities across northern Canada revealed a number of key issues and opportunities related to mineral exploration and development. The breadth and depth of the

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issues suggest systemic problems in the way in which we design and carry out mineral exploration and development in Canada in so far as these activities affect aboriginal peoples.

### ***Theme - Managing for Development: Regulatory Issues***

Aboriginal organizations repeatedly stated that Canada's current regulatory systems for mineral exploration and development are inadequate and that legislation, some of which is decades old, fails to address today's technologies and the pace and scale of contemporary mining. Aboriginal and environmental interests believe new approaches to legislation and regulations -- ones that are consistent with principles of sustainability -- are required. Specifically, three sets of issues emerged from this theme.

#### ***Issue 1. Notification, Consultation, and Consent***

From Yukon to Labrador, and from the northern regions of provinces to the High Arctic, aboriginal communities stated that one of the truly significant issues is the lack of notification, consultation, and consent for exploration and development. In virtually all jurisdictions there were reports of the failure of industry and governments to provide reasonable, and in some cases legally required, notification of access to, and use of, lands and waters that are part of the resource base that sustains aboriginal communities. In some cases, even a land-claim settlement has not guaranteed that governments or industry will follow established legal processes for permission for access to land and resources. Where land-claims settlements are under negotiation, or are likely to be, there is a great fear that lands staked and claimed by mineral interests will be alienated from the land-selection process in subsequent negotiations. At issue is the time-honoured "free entry" system of land disposition -- a system that many argue has kept pace with neither modern mineral technologies nor environmental protection and conservation strategies. There is broad support among aboriginal organizations and communities for new and imaginative approaches to the re-design of the policies and regulations for access and use during exploration and development.

#### ***Opportunity***

CARC's Northern Minerals Programme has begun research on the "free entry" system and, in particular, on the issues of notification, consultation, and consent. In light of the views from aboriginal communities from across northern Canada there is a need to augment that programme to include the concerns of aboriginal peoples in other jurisdictions in Canada.

#### ***Issue 2. Regulating the Impacts of Exploration***

The need to regulate the impacts of exploration is a key issue everywhere. Most jurisdictions have few or no regulations pertaining to exploration and a limited capacity for inspection and surveillance. Our discussions not only identified instances of environmental impacts, especially on wildlife and habitat, from exploration activities but also revealed that communities believe exploration brings unacceptable social and cultural impacts.

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The Yukon Mining Advisory Committee is currently reviewing its mineral regulatory regimes, including those for managing the impacts of exploration. A discussion paper containing new regulatory approaches proposes a four-level classification of exploration activities and associated impacts and sets out regulatory requirements for each. The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society-Yukon and the Yukon Conservation Society have received a legal analysis of the suggested changes indicating that while the proposed regulations contain some improvements, important deficiencies still remain, especially with respect to impacts of mining in environmentally significant and heritage areas. Aboriginal interests have called for a review of approaches to regulating exploration and development across several jurisdictions.

### *Opportunity*

The Yukon initiative, along with analyses for the NWT, Labrador, and Quebec, could be the basis of a comparative analysis, not only with one another, but also against principles and practices for sustainability. CARC has already planned for regulatory analyses in the Slave Geological Province and could readily extend the analyses to include other jurisdictions.

### **Issue 3. Regulations based on Traditional Knowledge and Science**

While several aboriginal groups are attracted to the economic development potential of mining, and recognize the inevitability of trade-offs, they believe that mining activities can accommodate improved levels of protection for land, water, fish, and wildlife through "stipulations" attached to licenses, permits, and authorizations for the various stages of mineral development. An environmental information base is needed to determine the appropriate stringent and binding conditions.

### *Opportunity*

Documented traditional knowledge (TK) could assist measurably in the development of the kinds of "stipulations" people speak of. Using TK to create regulatory requirements for resource development is a project that could combine the strengths of CARC's experience in regulatory matters with aboriginal perspectives on using TK in resource management to form the basis for an innovative contribution.

This issue also calls for a focused effort on the part of the northern scientific community to develop measurable protective limits for the impacts of industrial activity, including the concept of "zero-discharge," in ways that could apply to the mining industry in northern Canada.

### **Theme - Managing for Development: Negotiated Agreements**

Most aboriginal communities are not opposed, in principle, to mineral exploration and development. They believe there are significant direct and indirect socio-economic opportunities

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for their people. Several communities that have negotiated impact and benefit agreements with mining companies have important lessons to share.

#### ***Issue 4. Negotiating Impact and Benefit Agreements***

Mining activities are seen by many to bring job opportunities, training, and preferential hiring programmes; financial transfer payments, royalties, and equity participation; new business development and contract arrangements; and compensation for declines in harvests of wildlife and fish. As mineral exploration and development expand across the North, more and more communities will consider negotiating impact and benefit agreements with mining companies.

#### ***Opportunity***

There is widespread interest among communities and organizations in exchanging experiences on impact and benefit agreements and, in particular, the processes and pitfalls of negotiating with industry and governments. An overview of existing agreements, combined with discussions, is seen as one way in which to develop a set of principles or guidelines that could benefit many communities and organizations. The work CARC proposes to do on economic sustainability and mining in its Northern Minerals Programme provides an opportunity to address these ideas.

#### ***Theme - Knowledge and Information***

Many aboriginal people are confident of the knowledge they possess about the land, the wildlife, and their societies and they recognize that it will be necessary to undertake regional studies to document that knowledge if it is to play a central role in public decision making. At the same time, they are also aware of the need for science that contributes directly to the analysis of important public issues. The principles of the West Kitikmeot/Slave Study, a five-year baseline research programme that links traditional knowledge and science, are widely supported.

Aboriginal people want to become more knowledgeable about the many aspects of mineral exploration, development, and operations. Of particular concern is their ability to identify and assess potential impacts and benefits. As well, aboriginal organizations share the view that the mining industry lacks the necessary understanding of aboriginal cultures, customs, traditions, and economies to carry out its activities in ways that respect the people and minimize adverse impacts. Reference was made to the cultural sensitivity training conducted with petroleum companies in the Mackenzie Delta-Beaufort Sea region a decade or so ago.

#### ***Issue 5. Regional Baseline Studies***

Environmental regulations triggered at the project proposal stage require proponents to gather local and regional data; however, the overall result is less than adequate when measured against the standard of proper "baseline" data and information. In contrast, the West Kitikmeot/Slave Study-a broadly-based partnership-is significant in its commitment to document aboriginal peoples'

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traditional knowledge of environments, cultures, and economies. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act requires cumulative impact assessments as part of a comprehensive EIA (environmental impact assessment) and it is argued that an analysis of cumulative effects requires a "baseline." Notwithstanding the conceptual and methodological difficulties that scientists have with baseline studies, gathering and documenting traditional knowledge and appropriately directed science can add substantially to such assessments. This is consistent with the Whitehorse Mining Initiative Accord, signed in 1994 by senior representatives of industry, governments, aboriginal organizations, and environmental groups.

### *Opportunity*

As part of the Northern Minerals Programme's approach to policy analysis, it would be appropriate to design knowledge and information policy that could be applied broadly across Canada to help devise regulations using traditional knowledge, as well as science, as suggested in issue 3. This would enhance the prediction, avoidance, and mitigation of adverse impacts of development.

### **Issue 6. Understanding Mining**

Aboriginal people in all areas of the country argue that the lack of familiarity with mining practices makes the identification and assessment of impacts difficult. They see themselves at a distinct "information" disadvantage relative to industry and governments in negotiations on environmental assessment, mitigative stipulations, benefits, and compensation. This is particularly so for those who have yet to negotiate land claims and therefore lack the financial resources to engage experts over extended periods of time.

### *Opportunity*

Not unexpectedly, the organizations with the legal force of a land claim seem better able to bring industry to the negotiating table, pointing to the need for the expeditious settlement of land claims and agreements on self-governing arrangements. Empowering communities and thus "leveling the playing field" should be an achievable goal. And the exchange of experiences among aboriginal organizations and communities about various impact and benefit negotiations and multi-stakeholder partnerships may also be an appropriate goal for this project.

### **Issue 7. Understanding Aboriginal People**

The view is widely held among aboriginal communities that the mining industry and governments have little understanding of the values, traditions, customs, wildlife management strategies, and knowledge that underpin aboriginal societies. Whether industry representatives either fail to sense real beliefs and feelings in community information sessions or choose to overlook them, it would appear that the ideals of the Whitehorse Mining Initiative Accord have not permeated the industry. Some of the participants in this project referred to instances of both overt and implicit racism on the part of individuals in industry.

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## *Opportunity*

Cross-cultural awareness programmes for members of the mining industry and for some in governments, possibly modeled on programmes developed for the petroleum industry in the Western Arctic, may be useful awareness tools.

## **Theme - Northern Assessment and Planning**

The growing pace of mineral exploration and development across Canada is focusing attention on environmental assessment and planning processes. Few mines have been subjected to full EIA reviews, including public hearings. The BHP project at Lac de Gras, NWT, is under review now and may be the first northern project to complete the full review process. Many aboriginal communities across Canada report significant impacts from exploration programmes and are concerned about the social, cultural, and economic impacts of all stages of mining. As well, there is concern everywhere for the land, the water, the wildlife, and an overall sense of cultural well-being. Important questions also have been raised about the independence of aboriginal assessment procedures where the aboriginal community is negotiating impact and benefit agreements. These and other issues raise questions about regional and resource plans and planning systems, including visions for the future. Environmental assessment (EA) procedures are not well suited to a systematic and priority-based analysis of alternative land and resource uses due to the absence of comprehensive and longer term land-use and resource plans.

## **Issue 8. Protecting Societies**

Universal concern for the social, economic, and cultural impacts from all stages of mineral development is juxtaposed against a keen interest by aboriginals in participating in the benefits of economic development. For many aboriginal people, the challenge to integrate "culture and economics" means trying to infuse resource development decisions with the customs, traditions, and values of their societies. For others, the challenge is to plan in ways that limit the "boom and bust" swings in market economies. For still others, the issue is to prevent social pathologies and all the socio-psychological problems these conditions bring upon communities, especially among children. As women, in particular, give testimony to these cultural issues, there is a sentiment in some quarters that women can and should play more central roles in development decision making.

After the miners are gone, people from the various northern regions will remain and still will need to find ways to sustain themselves and their families. CARC's NMP research team has centred on the concept of "healthy communities," believing that environmentally sustainable development depends on sustainability in social, economic, cultural, and political (self-governing) realms. This suggests that both social impact assessments and socio-cultural community planning should be part of the overall mineral development process.

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## *Opportunity*

The Northern Minerals Programme will attempt to assess the state of both these concerns in the Slave Geological Province (SGP). As aboriginal communities in other jurisdictions wish, these initiatives could be expanded to examine cultural, economic, and social issues outside the SGP.

## **Issue 9. Protecting Environments**

People everywhere spoke of environmental protection -- protecting the land, protecting wildlife and habitat, protecting communities and their cultures, protecting the futures of their grandchildren, protecting important harvesting areas and environmentally significant regions and processes, and protecting their sacred places. All of these are intertwined. Many communities depend significantly on caribou for food, and all acknowledge the challenge that mining brings to the calving grounds, river crossings, migration routes, and wintering sites. These concerns were raised for the Porcupine, Bluenose, Bathurst, Kaminuriak, Melville Peninsula, and George River herds.

## *Opportunity*

The interest of these communities and organizations coincides with that of CARC's Northern Minerals Programme. There clearly is an opportunity to broaden the focus on environmentally significant and protected areas to include an examination of comparative regional approaches to protection and management through sustainable use of renewable resources.



The diamond mine in the Sakha Republic, Federation of Russia

## **Issue 10. Impact Assessment Processes**

Discussion about the institutions and processes for environmental impact assessment brought out a number of differing views depending upon regional circumstances. In Yukon, the "Development Assessment Process" (DAP), in the view of First Nations, could give them an even greater role than they have under either the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act or the Yukon environmental

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assessment processes. At present, however, negotiations seem stalled, and with a deadline of February 1997 for completion, doubts are growing about DAP's future.

For the Inuvialuit, the screening and review procedures developed under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984) are believed to serve the region quite well. The current mining initiative at Darnley Bay, should it come before the Screening Committee and Review Board, will raise the possibility of mine development impacts on caribou calving to the south of the community of Paulatuk, outside the proposed national park. Similar concerns may be faced by the Inuit to the east of Bathurst Inlet, where the Boston gold deposit, located in the calving grounds of the Bathurst herd, is being explored. It is important to distinguish here between difficult issues and the ability of the assessment processes to deal effectively with those issues. In dealing with assessment, the focus of CARC's investigation will be the process rather than the "difficult choices" among activities and impacts.

In those jurisdictions with claims-based EIA structures and procedures, the issue of the independence of the EA bodies from the political and administrative arms of aboriginal society has been raised. Of particular interest is whether reaching an impact and benefits agreement before an EA decision constrains the range of choices the EA body can consider. The resolution of this issue may not mean that all impact and benefit agreements must await EA decisions, but some clarification of roles, responsibilities, timing, and co-ordination is needed. As more land claims are settled, with new EA organizations and processes, the issues of independence and rigorous analysis will continue to be raised.

Another EA issue that surfaced in the Western Arctic is the harmonization of EA processes where development proposals transcend land-claim boundaries. In addition, there is the task of harmonizing aboriginal EA processes with those of federal and territorial/provincial jurisdictions.

### ***Opportunity***

EA systems across the North and their capacity to deal with mining issues should be reviewed. Recommendations for change that would foster principles of sustainability are called for.

### ***Issue 11. Resource and Land-use Planning***

Integrated land-use and resource planning regimes are absent across the North. Authorities within both aboriginal organizations and all levels of government attempt, on an ad-hoc, case-by-case basis, to deal with mining development proposals.

Related to the inadequacies of planning regimes are the information deficiencies referred to in the discussion of "regional baseline studies."

There are examples of regional and community planning from which useful lessons can be drawn. The Wildlife Management Advisory Councils under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984) have

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taken steps to link sustainable use of wildlife resources, habitat protection, environmental assessment, and resource development. Each of the individual communities of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region has prepared a "conservation plan" for local and regional planning. In the Deh Cho region of the NWT, work to develop community and regional resource and land management plans and regimes is currently threatened by fiscal cutbacks to the Arctic Environmental Strategy. The proposed Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act is also intended to harmonize land-use planning and land and water management in the Gwich'in and Sahtu claims areas, although how this initiative will deal with transboundary projects involving jurisdictions outside these two claims areas remains unclear.

### ***Opportunity***

There is a need to clarify many transboundary issues, a growing number of which involve mineral exploration and development. The settlement of land claims and the resolution of boundary overlaps among aboriginal interests is an important part of this wider problem.

### ***Theme - Other Economies***

The need to protect and preserve traditional economies and wildlife harvesting through impact and benefit agreements, improved regulations, and better use of knowledge and information were all identified as important. For a growing number of aboriginal communities, however, other economic possibilities, especially tourism projects, are seen to be threatened by encroaching mineral exploration and development.

### ***Issue 12. Mining and Tourism***

While many of the regions visited are seeking to diversify their economies through tourism development, this is particularly important in Yukon. Tourism, along with mining and government expenditures, accounts for the major portion of the formal economy of Yukon. A number of First Nations' tourism packages developed to attract an outdoor sporting and naturalist clientele may be threatened by mineral exploration and development. The conflict between mining and tourism will require creative and careful management involving land ownership, land-use plans, and legally enforceable use designations.

### ***Opportunity***

Within the framework of sustainability, CARC's research proposes to examine how mining affects other economies. The interest of some aboriginal communities in tourism offers a "case study" opportunity that could be integrated into CARC's Northern Minerals Programme.

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## Next Steps

Through its Northern Minerals Programme, CARC intends to pursue many of the opportunities outlined here, in co-operation with interested aboriginal communities. A number of projects follow from these opportunities:

### 1. **Regulatory Reviews**

The "free entry" system of land disposition is not working for aboriginal people. Issues for regulatory investigation include

- permit requirements for staking claims, performing exploration work, developing a mine, and generally accessing and using lands and waters;
- land-use permits;
- freshwater and marine water uses;
- historic and cultural sites protection;
- environmentally significant areas protection; and
- royalties, taxation, and subsidies.

### 2. **Linking Traditional Knowledge to Planning, Assessment, and Research**

CARC intends to support aboriginal organizations in their efforts to document traditional knowledge and to enhance its role in regulatory processes, impact assessment, community and regional planning, resource management, and regional baseline studies.

### 3. **Negotiating Impact and Benefit Agreements**

A number of aboriginal organizations that have successfully negotiated impact and benefit agreements have indicated their willingness to share their experiences with others. CARC will assist aboriginal people to exchange such ideas and develop guidelines that could assist aboriginal organizations to prepare for and conduct negotiations.

### 4. **Understanding Each Other**

CARC intends to seek ways to assist aboriginal communities to know more about mining, including the phases of development, the ores themselves, mining technologies, the impacts and benefits that can be expected, and mitigation strategies. Workshops and "handbooks" are two possible approaches.

Most communities report that mining people know little about their traditions, customs, management practices, and needs as distinct cultures. A review of cross-cultural seminars and workshops that were organized for the oil and gas industry a decade ago could be the basis for assisting aboriginal organizations to develop workshops and other cross-cultural exchanges with industry and government.

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## **5. Healthy Communities: Impacts and Benefits**

If sustainable communities are to be a primary goal of northern society, it is essential to empower communities and involve them as meaningful partners in the environment-development process. How mining contributes to this goal will be a measure of its real contribution to the North. CARC's research team is committed to an investigation of many of these questions. As a part of the Northern Minerals Programme, CARC is prepared to examine existing habitat protection measures and their adequacy to deal with the impacts of mining.

## **6. Environmental Assessment and Mining**

With the prospect of several more mines being developed across the North, there is a need to review current and proposed EA regimes based on principles of sustainability. As well, a careful documentation of the ongoing assessment of the BHP/Diamet project in the NWT would afford additional insights into mining and sustainability.

## **7. Tourism and Mining: The Other Economies**

People believe that tourism could be seriously impaired by extensive mineral exploration and development. Case studies of mining and tourism fit well into CARC's research on alternative economic opportunities.

## **In Conclusion**

Aboriginal people believe that the Whitehorse Mining Initiative Accord, signed in 1994 by industry, aboriginals, governments, and environmentalists, has had too little effect on the way industry and government "do business." If this accord is to become a meaningful instrument in northern minerals policy, a full and frank evaluation of performance to date is needed. CARC proposes to do such an evaluation.

Sustainable development is possible only when partnerships are created to co-operate on designing and building the future. If mining is to contribute to sustainable futures in the North, one of the most important challenges will be building effective partnerships that respect diverse cultural, social, and economic traditions.

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# Concerns of Aboriginal Peoples

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## **Consent**

*The exploration programmes, not only in the Voisey's Bay area, but throughout much of the Innu lands, have proceeded without the consent of the Innu people ... and the rapid pace has given rise to concerns, fears, and deep resentment among the Innu.*

Chief Katie Rich  
Utshimassit Band Council

## **Regulating Impacts**

*What is the long-term perspective for mining? We seem to be giving away mountains and getting borrow pits in return.*

Chief Herb Norwegian, Fort Simpson

## **Traditional Knowledge**

*Good baseline research acknowledges the cyclical and variable patterns to the natural world and human societies. A one- or two-season "snapshot" picture of an area is not acceptable. While there are limits to traditional knowledge ... there remains, among the elders and active hunters and fishermen, an in-depth understanding of baseline conditions for many years back.*

Chelsey Andersen  
Labrador Inuit Association

## **Regional Baseline Studies**

*Already the exploration programmes have caused environmental change and communities are experiencing several impacts. The "baseline " is changing as the weeks and months of exploration work pass, making it all that more difficult to establish true conditions prior to impact.*

Chief Katie Rich  
Utshimassit Band Council

## **Understanding Aboriginal Culture**

*The feeling among Innu is that governments and the mining industry fail to understand, and accept, the fundamentals of Innu life and culture.... It*

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*is time for governments and industry to stop asking Innu to "move to their side of the table all the time.*

Daniel Ashini, Director, Innu Rights and  
Environment, Sheshatshui

### **Social Disruption -- Wildlife Dwindling**

*Large numbers of transient workers during further exploration and construction of facilities are a threat to the stability of the community. The expectation [is] for escalating levels of social problems.... Wildlife populations are dwindling and ... action is needed now to avert the kinds of crises characterized by the loss of the plains bison and more recently the collapse of the eastern cod fishery and the dwindling salmon stocks on the west coast.*

Chief Joe Johnson  
Kluane First Nation

### **Caribou-Environmental Protection**

*While most of the (Bluenose caribou) herd's calving range is in the proposed national park to the east of the community of Paulatuk, there are years when calving does occur to the west of the park on what are likely to be prime exploration, and possibly development, lands.*

Joey Amos, Vice-chair  
Inuvik Community Corporation

### **EA Process**

*At the heart of the matter is the question of whether impact and benefit agreements between Aboriginal organizations and resource companies for a particular project can, in any way, constrain or limit the kinds of decisions the EA body may take.*

Makivik Corporation

### **Mining and Tourism**

*...tourism is linked to cultural experience and the opportunity for non First Nation people to learn about Yukon cultures, customs, and traditions. Mining, if not managed well, will provide only short-term opportunities and limit further chances for a sustainable tourist programme.*

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## **These comments are taken from discussions held between CARC and Aboriginal peoples.**

### **Principles and Goals of The Whitehorse Mining Initiative**

The Mining Association of Canada took a suggestion for a multi-stakeholder process to the mines ministers of all senior governments at its annual conference in Whitehorse in September 1992. Representatives of five sectors of society-the mining industry, senior governments, labour unions, aboriginal peoples, and the environmental community-agreed to participate. A Political Accord was signed on 12 September 1994 endorsing the following principles and goals. The provinces of Newfoundland, Quebec, and Alberta and the Assembly of First Nations did not sign the accord.

Overlap and  
Duplication

Our Principle

Elimination of unnecessary regulatory duplication and overlap, with appropriate checks and balances, will aid the effective protection of the environment and achieve greater efficiency in regulating the mining industry.

Our Goals

To continue to establish cooperation agreements among jurisdictions for the development, administration, and enforcement of environmental standards to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory system and to reduce the unnecessary industry regulatory compliance costs.

To streamline the permitting and compliance processes to minimize the time and costs to meet the requirements of the various regulatory regimes.

To develop processes such that each new mining project is subject to single timely environmental assessment by an appropriate single lead agency, which results in only one set of recommendations that meet the requirements of all jurisdictions.

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Environmental  
Protection

Our Principle

Environmentally responsible mining exploration, development, operations,

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operations and public policies are predicated on maintaining a healthy environment and, on closure, returning mine sites and affected areas to viable, and, wherever practicable, self-sustaining ecosystems that are compatible with a healthy environment and with human activities.

#### Our Goals

To ensure minimal environmental impact during mining exploration, development, and closure by voluntary and regulatory means, including the use of appropriate environmental effects monitoring.

To ensure that comprehensive reclamation plans that return all mine sites to viable, and, wherever practicable, self-sustaining ecosystems are developed, and are adequately financed, implemented, and monitored in all jurisdictions.

To ensure that the responsible governments maintain a balanced regulatory framework

To ensure that the responsible governments maintain a balanced regulatory framework for mine reclamation that is stable over time, harmonized across jurisdictions, and based on standards that meet the needs of a sustainable society. And that changes to the framework be made through a measured, consultative, and predictable process with appropriate phase-in periods.

To develop techniques through interdisciplinary research that minimize or prevent adverse environmental impacts, and that return disturbed sites to viable, and, wherever practicable, self-sustaining ecosystems.

To provide a regime for mine reclamation financial assurances at current and future mines which ensures adequate funds for full reclamation and a means of financial assurance that is reasonable, flexible and responsible.

To establish in each jurisdiction an acceptable means of identifying responsible parties to undertake reclamation of old mine sites that pose a health, safety, or environmental problem.

To establish in each jurisdiction funding means for reclaiming old mine sites where responsibility cannot be assigned. Reclamation should begin with those sites

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posing the greatest risk.

To encourage the exploration of old mine sites which, if successful, may lead to potential environmental clean-up opportunities through redevelopment.

To ensure the development of site-specific reclamation standards which, wherever practicable, work toward the establishment of the original ecosystem but which, when justified by specific circumstances, take into account the possible need for on-going management and the possibility of other desirable uses.

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Planning and  
Environmental  
Assessment

Our Principle

Environmental assessment is an essential tool for identifying potential environmental impacts of proposed projects, determining their acceptability, and evaluating potential mitigation and remediation measures, thus enabling economic activity to proceed while safeguarding the health of the environment.

Our Goals

To ensure that project-specific environmental assessments are effective, efficient, and well defined, and are conducted in the broader context of:

- an integrated land-use planning process, and
- government policies and programs.

To ensure that the terms of reference and scope of environmental assessments are ecologically relevant and are decided upon early in the process.

To have environmental assessment processes which are formally structured, credible, balanced and fair.

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\*Principles and goals concerning business climate, financing, taxation, government services, and attracting and retraining skilled workers are excluded.

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