

# **Standards for Large-Scale Mining: What Communities Need to Know**

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**for**

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**“How am I to get in?” asked Alice**  
**“*Are* you to get in at all?” said the**  
**Footman, “That’s the first question**  
**you know.”**

# What do we mean by Best Practices?

- ✓ **Governments**
- ✓ **Industry**
- ✓ **Investors and insurers**
- ✓ **Civil society, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, etc**

# Avoid Risk

- Risk of increased social conflict
- Risk of negative economic impacts
- Risk of environmental damage that outlives the mine
- Risk of abusing Human Rights, including Indigenous Rights

# Best practices related to:

**Access to Information**

**Community Decision Making**

# Access to Information

The basics:

- Socio-economic baseline studies
- Specialized social impact assessments: gender; economic; peace and conflict; indigenous; health and safety, etc.
- Raw data as well as compiled reports
- to men and women and marginal groups
- in culturally appropriate forms, locally accepted languages, as well as English
- with sufficient time for public review and response

# **Access to Information**

## **1. Disclosure of Risk**

- **All known risks and their magnitude**

## **2. Independent Review**

- **Of all key reports and their raw data**

# **Access to Information**

- **Case studies from British Columbia both of which benefitted from review by an independent panel:**
- **Kemess North Copper-Gold Mine Project**
- **Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project**



# **Kemess North Copper-Gold**

**The Panel considered the project from five sustainability perspectives:**

- Environmental Stewardship**
- Economic Benefits and Costs**
- Social and Cultural Benefits and Costs**
- Fairness in the Distribution of Benefits and Costs**
- Present versus Future Generations.**

# Kemess North Copper-Gold

- **Key findings:**
  - 1) benefits accrue for only a relatively short period (two years of construction and 11 years of mining production);**
  - 2) adverse effects include the loss of a natural lake with important spiritual values for Aboriginal people, and the creation of a long-term legacy of environmental management obligations at the mine site to protect downstream water quality and public safety. These obligations may continue for several thousand years.**
  - 3) that it may be difficult for Aboriginal people to increase their share of Project benefits, although as the region's primary residents and users, they would experience first-hand any impacts on traditionally used resources.**



# **Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project**

## **A major Gold-Copper Mine:**

- 13.3 million ounces of gold and 5.3 billion pounds of copper.**
- The company projected an economic benefit to British Columbia and to Canada of more than 5 billion dollars over the 20 + year life span of the mine**
- The mine was to provide 2,000 direct and indirect jobs in an area where forestry has been devastated by the mountain pine beetle and unemployment among First Nations populations is over 20 per cent**
- The project had already been approved by the BC gov.**

# **Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project**

**Panel findings of significant adverse effects on,  
among others:**

- Fish and fish habitat - “ ... there has been no experience with re-creating an ecosystem in which all these components function together on a self sustaining-basis.”**
- Use of land and resources for traditional purposes by the Tsihlqot'in; their cultural heritage; aboriginal rights and title**



# Community Decision Making

- A major source of conflict around mines is based on communities trying to protect values of importance to them – social, cultural, livelihoods, environment – values that cannot necessarily be substituted for by benefits from the mine or by development projects or alternative livelihoods.
- This social conflict constitutes risk to communities, but also to corporations
- It can be avoided.....



# Community Decision Making

Communities are expressing their opposition to large scale mining in a range of ways:

- In the Philippines through municipal and provincial mining moratoriums
- In Latin America through *consultas* or referenda



# Community Decision Making

## Free Prior and Informed Consent

Indigenous peoples globally now have enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples Rights the right of providing, or withholding, their Free Prior and Informed Consent for: “any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.”

**THANK YOU**