

Contents

List of flowcharts	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Introduction	1
1. OVERVIEW OF MINING AND ITS IMPACTS	3
1.1 Phases of a Mining Project	3
1.1.1 Exploration	3
1.1.2 Development	3
1.1.2.1 Construction of access roads	3
1.1.2.2 Site preparation and clearing	4
1.1.3 Active mining	4
1.1.3.1 Open-pit mining	4
1.1.3.2 Placer mining	5
1.1.3.3 Underground mining	5
1.1.3.4 Reworking of inactive or abandoned mines and tailings	5
1.1.4 Disposal of overburden and waste rock	5
1.1.5 Ore extraction	5
1.1.6 Beneficiation	6
1.1.7 Tailings disposal	6
1.1.8 Site reclamation and closure	7
1.2 Environmental and Social Impacts of Mining	8
1.2.1 Impacts on water resources	8
1.2.1.1 Acid mine drainage and contaminant leaching	8
1.2.1.2 Erosion of soils and mine wastes into surface waters	9
1.2.1.3 Impacts of tailing impoundments, waste rock, heap leach, and dump leach facilities	10
1.2.1.4 Impacts of mine dewatering	11
1.2.2 Impacts of mining projects on air quality	12
1.2.2.1 Mobile sources	12
1.2.2.2 Stationary sources	12
1.2.2.3 Fugitive emissions	12
1.2.2.4 Incidental releases of mercury	13
1.2.2.5 Noise and vibration	13
1.2.3 Impacts of mining projects on wildlife	13
1.2.3.1 Habitat loss	14
1.2.3.2 Habitat fragmentation	14
1.2.4 Impacts of mining projects on soil quality	14
1.2.5 Impacts of mining projects on social values	15
1.2.5.1 Human displacement and resettlement	15
1.2.5.2 Impacts of migration	15
1.2.5.3 Lost access to clean water	16

1.2.5.4	Impacts on livelihoods	16
1.2.5.5	Impacts on public health	16
1.2.5.6	Impacts to cultural and aesthetic resources	17
1.2.6	Climate change considerations	17
2.	OVERVIEW OF THE EIA PROCESS	19
2.1	What Is The Purpose of the EIA Process?	19
2.2	Who Prepares an EIA?	20
2.3	Stages of the EIA Process	21
3.	REVIEWING A TYPICAL EIA FOR A MINING PROJECT	25
3.1	Evaluating the Executive Summary	25
3.2	Evaluating the Project Description	26
3.2.1	Project alternatives	26
3.2.1.1	Alternative siting of mine facilities	26
3.2.1.2	Alternative ore beneficiation methods	26
3.2.1.3	Alternative methods of tailings disposal	29
3.2.1.4	The no-action alternative	31
3.3	Evaluating the Environmental Baseline	32
3.3.1	Characterization of mined materials	32
3.3.1.1	Mineralogy and whole rock analysis	32
3.3.1.2	Acid generation potential - static and kinetic testing	34
3.3.1.3	Contaminant leaching potential short- and long-term leach tests	34
3.3.1.4	Identification of contaminants of concern	34
3.3.2	Characterization of existing climate	35
3.3.3	Characterization of existing seismic conditions	35
3.3.4	Characterization of existing surface water quality	36
3.3.5	Characterization of existing surface and groundwater quantity	37
3.3.6	Characterization of existing air quality	37
3.3.7	Characterization of existing soil quality	38
3.3.8	Characterization of wildlife	38
3.3.8.1	Characterization of terrestrial species	38
3.3.8.2	Characterization of aquatic species	39
3.3.8.3	Characterization of habitats critical to ecological processes	39
3.3.9	Local socio-economic baseline	40
3.4.	Evaluating Potential and Predicted Environmental Impacts	41
3.4.1	How to understand and evaluate environmental impact matrices	41
3.4.2	Impacts on water quality and quantity	43
3.4.2.1	Water pollutant releases from pit lakes	46
3.4.2.2	Water pollutant releases from tailings impoundments	46
3.4.2.3	Water pollutant releases from waste rock dumps	47
3.4.2.4	Assessing the significance of water quality impacts	47
3.4.2.5	Impacts of surface water diversions	47
3.4.3	Impacts on air quality	48
3.4.4	Impacts on global climate	49
3.4.5	Impacts on ecological processes	49
3.4.5.1	Impacts on vegetation and soil quality	50
3.4.6	Impacts on wildlife	50
3.4.7	Social impacts	51

3.4.7.1	Cost-benefit analysis	52
3.4.8	Impacts on public safety	52
3.4.8.1	Dam break analysis	52
3.4.8.2	Traffic	53
3.4.9	Cumulative impacts	53
3.4.9.1	Impacts of related or connected actions	54
3.5	Evaluating Proposed Mitigation Measures and Contingency Plans	55
3.5.1	Protection of water resources	55
3.5.1.1	General measures regarding acid mine drainage	55
3.5.1.2	Water management	57
3.5.1.3	Stormwater, sediment and erosion control	58
3.5.1.4	Management of waste rock dumps	59
3.5.1.5	Management of open pits and pit lake prevention	60
3.5.1.6	Management of wet tailings impoundments	60
3.5.1.7	Management of leach facilities	60
3.5.2	Protection of air quality and noise levels	61
3.5.2.1	Control of fugitive dust emissions	61
3.5.2.2	Control of noise and vibrations	63
3.5.3	Management of hazardous materials	63
3.5.3.1	Cyanide use	63
3.5.3.2	Mercury management	64
3.5.3.3	Storage of fuel and liquid substances	65
3.5.4	Protection of wildlife	66
3.6	Evaluating the Environmental Monitoring Plan	67
3.6.1	Water quality monitoring	67
3.6.1.1	Surface water quality monitoring	68
3.6.1.2	Groundwater quality monitoring	68
3.6.1.3	Water quality monitoring parameters	68
3.6.2	Air quality monitoring	69
3.6.3	Vegetation and soil quality monitoring	69
3.6.4	Monitoring impacts on wildlife and habitat	69
3.6.4.1	Monitoring of key species	69
3.6.4.2	Monitoring habitat loss	69
3.6.5	Monitoring impacts on affected communities	70
3.6.5.1	Community health	70
3.6.5.2	Promised investments for socio-economic development	70
3.6.6	Monitoring of threats to public safety	71
3.7	Evaluating the Reclamation and Closure Plan	72
3.7.1	Conceptual versus actual plans	72
3.7.2	Post-mining land use and reclamation objectives	72
3.7.3	Reclamation schedule	73
3.7.4	Reclamation and closure of specific mine facilities	73
3.7.4.1	Overburden and waste rock piles	73
3.7.4.2	Open pits	75
3.7.4.3	Wet tailings impoundments	76
3.7.4.4	Leach and dump piles	78
3.7.5	Revegetation	79
3.7.6	Financial assurances for reclamation and closure	80
3.7.6.1	Timing of provision of financial assurances	81

3.7.6.2	Adequate forms of financial assurances	83
3.7.6.3	Adequate amounts of financial assurances	84
4.	HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE EIA PROCESS	85
4.1	Understanding the Regulatory Framework	86
4.2	Understanding Public Participation Rights and Opportunities	87
4.3	Access to Information and EIAs	88
4.4	The Importance of Participating as Early as Possible	88
4.5	How to Prepare Effective Written Comments	89
4.6	How to Participate Effectively at Public Hearings	89
4.7	Challenging Adverse Decisions Made During the EIA Process	90
4.7.1	Administrative review	90
4.7.2	Judicial review	91
4.7.2.1	Standing to sue	92
4.7.2.2	Scope of judicial review	92
4.8	Enforcing Promises, Commitments and Conditions Related to the Project	93
4.8.1	Promises contained in the EIA	93
4.8.2	Conditions contained in the grant of environmental clearance	93
	Glossary	95
	References	101
	Appendix - EIA Review Checklist	107