



2006 Mines Ministers' Conference

Action Plan 2006

Ministerial Priorities and Implementation Plan Projects

The 2006 Mines Ministers' Conference (MMC) held in Whitehorse, Yukon, resulted in Mines Ministers agreeing to a federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) mining Action Plan for Canada that will guide intergovernmental initiatives that are critical to the long-term future of the industry. The three themes of the Action Plan (investment climate, innovation, and capacity and skills) are essential to the industry's competitiveness, building on the 2005 MMC, which focused on taking steps to advance viable mining communities. The MMC included a policy workshop, an open session featuring stakeholder and industry presentations, and a closed session that resulted in ministerial decisions, approvals and commitments.

Mines Ministers pointed to the importance of focusing on clear priorities such as advancing the Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies and improving the regulatory process. Ministers agreed that work be undertaken to improve the efficiency of the regulatory process, and to the addition of specific timelines for project approvals, while recognizing that environmental protection must continue to be pursued in a rigorous manner. Ministers also stated that: "For Canada to remain a competitive world leader in mining, we need to focus our priorities on innovation, capacity building, improving the taxation and fiscal climate for investment, and branding Canada in international markets."

The goals of the Action Plan are to strengthen the competitiveness of the minerals and metals industry and to deliver benefits to mining communities across the country. It renews the commitment between the FPT governments to advance the agenda for responsible minerals and metals development in Canada; provides a priority framework for more coordinated decision-making amongst governments on initiatives and activities designed to foster a competitive minerals and metals sector in Canada; and commits the FPT governments to network, broker, and align resources and knowledge to enhance the development of a competitive minerals and metals sector in Canada.

INVESTMENT CLIMATE

Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies (Ministerial Priority for 2006)

Ministers agreed to re-affirm their support for the Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies Across Canada as an initiative that will benefit all regions and help to improve Canada's position in an increasingly competitive global economy.

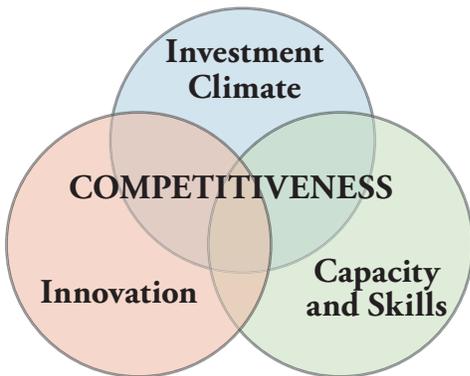
Ministers also agreed to continue to seek the necessary funding to make the CGMS a reality.

Regulatory Process (Ministerial Priority for 2006 – New Initiative)

Ministers agreed to implement the "Regulatory Issues Related to Minerals and Metals" project agreed to in the 2006 Implementation Plan of the *FPT Framework for Action* under the theme of *Investment Climate*.

Ministers also agreed to strike an IGWG Sub-Group on Regulatory Framework/Issues focused on the creation of an improved regulatory framework that is consistent, timely, predictable, effective in protecting the environment, and coordinated with all orders of government. This group will determine what regulatory streamlining efforts are being undertaken by all jurisdictions with industry through a workshop. Through this workshop, a report will be written for the 2007 Mines Ministers' Conference and proposals for specific projects will be brought forward.





Ministers endorsed the project that will see a web-based information portal developed under the umbrella of the Directors of Mines Committee to assist governments, industry and other stakeholders in facilitating sustainable mining through environmentally and socially sensitive strategies for mine reclamation and closure.

Fiscal and Taxation Policy

Ministers mandated the Sub-Committee on Taxation Issues to analyze the industry's recommendations for changes to the definitions of "Canadian Exploration Expenses" and "Canadian Development Expenses" to include costs related to environmental studies, community consultation, and exploration near existing mines.

The Sub-Committee was also tasked with analyzing industry's request for a deep-drilling tax credit of 20% and to table its findings at the 2007 MMC.

While Ministers mandated the continuance of the *Survey of Mine Reclamation Bonding in Canada* document to ensure that it continues to play a critical role in securing a uniform financial bonding system for active mine reclamation issues across Canada, it was decided that financial surety will now be tracked by the Sub-Committee on Taxation Issues.

INNOVATION

Mine Reclamation and Closure Standards, Best Practices and Guidelines (New Initiative)

Ministers agreed to implement the "Sharing Information on Mine Reclamation and Closure Standards, Best Practices and Guidelines" project agreed to in the 2006 Implementation Plan of the *FPT Framework for Action* under the theme of *Innovation*.

CAPACITY AND SKILLS

Skills and Capacity Building

Formerly named the Viability of Mining Communities initiative, work will advance on the priority of capacity and skills, including Aboriginal participation in the mining industry.

Ministers agreed to implement the "Pilot Information Sessions on Exploration and Mining for Aboriginal Communities" project agreed to in the 2006 Implementation Plan of the *FPT Framework for Action* under the theme of *Capacity and Skills*.

Ministers acknowledged the necessity to improve Aboriginal peoples' and communities' understanding of mining activities and the need to help them build their capacity to fully participate in and take advantage of the opportunities available.

Ministers agreed that a series of information sessions on mining and exploration will be delivered to interested Aboriginal communities across Canada in partnership with provincial/territorial governments, mining associations, Aboriginal representatives, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

NEXT YEAR'S MEETING IN WHISTLER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministers accepted the invitation from Minister Bill Bennett to convene from September 23 to September 26, 2007, for the 64th Mines Ministers' Conference.

