

Towards Sustainable Mining Mine Closure Framework

Mine Closure

The Mining Association of Canada (MAC) recognizes that access to land and a company's social license to operate depend upon responsible environmental, social and economic practices. MAC members support comprehensive engagement with communities of interest (COI) throughout the mining life cycle, as a cornerstone to building long-term community support for mining operations. MAC members believe that when mining is conducted in consultation with COI, the needs and priorities of affected stakeholders can be identified and taken into account.

Managing mine closure is an integral part of MAC's Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) Guiding Principles. MAC members commit to the following:

1. MAC members will develop and maintain mine closure plans, including post-closure activities as required, for new and existing projects ("Plans") in accordance with the following:
 - Plans (including cost and timeline estimates) will be initiated during the design phase of new projects and will be updated regularly through the mining life cycle; and,
 - Closure planning will be at a level of detail appropriate to the stage of project development and current level of understanding of site conditions.
2. Through consultation with COI, MAC members will:
 - identify values that are important to COI and develop reclamation objectives that incorporate those values;
 - evaluate a variety of potential end land uses that address the needs of users; and,
 - establish, finance and implement comprehensive closure plans that, wherever practicable, return mine sites to viable and diverse ecosystems that will serve the needs of post-mining use, recognizing that mining can permanently alter landscapes.
3. MAC members will work with communities to develop the closure plan and strategies to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of mine closure and to help them develop plans for long-term economic development.
4. MAC members will establish financial assurance for closure in accordance with applicable laws. In the absence of such laws, financial assurance may be provided by bonds, letters of credit or other financial instruments, or by self-insurance or self-guarantee.
5. Closure plans will consider temporary closure scenarios for operations expected to reopen in the future. Such scenarios will include maintenance and surveillance programs for protection of health, safety and the environment as well as preservation of all necessary infrastructure.
6. Member companies are committed to continual improvement in their closure plans including regular reviews and updates, taking into consideration new technologies and closure techniques.
7. MAC members are committed to a culture of research and innovation based on identified risks to improve closure and monitoring technologies.
8. Monitoring programs, consistent with the Closure Plan objectives and based on assessment of human health and ecological risks, will be implemented during progressive reclamation, closure and/or post-closure to provide comprehensive information on reclamation progress and success.