Towards Sustainable Mining and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

What are the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

In 2015, the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a call to action on key global challenges related to "*peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future*".

The Sustainable Development Goals — sometimes referred to as "the SDGs" — cover issues like poverty, health, gender equality, decent work, inequality, and other shared priorities.

For more information, see
sdgs.un.org/goals

What is *Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM)?*

- A **globally recognized sustainability program** that helps mining companies manage their environmental and social responsibilities and evaluate their performance

- A **mandatory requirement for companies** in the mining associations around the world, offering tools to drive continuous performance improvements

TSM Area of Focus: Communities and People

Four of the Towards Sustainable Mining protocols measure mining companies' performance in improving relationships with communities and protecting the safety and health of workers.
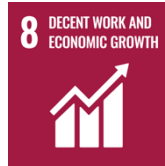
The **Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #11 — *Sustainable Cities and Communities* and #17 — *Partnerships for the Goals*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Prioritize opportunities for communities to benefit from mining through local procurement and employment, or contributions to local development initiatives

- Collaborate with Indigenous communities in areas like education, employment, business opportunities, and economic development project
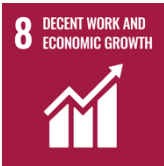
The **Safety and Health Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal # 3 – *Good Health and Well-being* and #8 – *Decent Work and Economic Growth*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Promote workplace health through training and management systems that prevent fatalities, injuries, and illness

- Uphold labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for employees and contractors, with a goal of 'zero harm'

The **Preventing Child and Forced Labour Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #8 – *Decent Work and Economic Growth*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Verify that no form of forced labour is used at their operations and, in areas of greater risk, introduce measures to monitor workforce recruitment and labour used in supply chains

- Prevent child labour by verifying that the company's workforce meets the minimum age requirements set out by the International Labour Organization

The **Crisis Management and Communications Planning Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #11 – *Sustainable Cities and Communities*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Reduce the potential for human and economic losses by putting in place plans and systems to manage a possible crisis

- Contribute to mine site and community resiliency in the face of disaster

TSM Area of Focus: Environment and Climate Change

Four of the *Towards Sustainable Mining* protocols measure mining companies' performance in managing impacts on the natural environment and responding to global climate change. The **Biodiversity Conservation Management** Protocol contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #15 – *Life on Land.* Companies implementing this protocol:

- Assess the environmental impacts of their activities to preserve the benefits that healthy ecosystems provide to humans

- Reduce harm to natural habitats and halt the loss of biodiversity, including through collaboration on research initiatives

- Work with communities and organizations to integrate biodiversity into local planning and development processes

The **Tailings Management Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #3 – *Good Health and Well-being,* #6 – *Clean Water and Sanitation,* #9 – *Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure,* and #12 – *Responsible Consumption and Production.* Companies implementing this protocol:

- Promote safe working environments by identifying and responding to potential hazards resulting from tailings at the mine site

- Improve water quality and protect water-related ecosystems by minimizing the release of hazardous chemicals and materials

- Develop reliable and resilient infrastructure for tailings management, including by strengthening adaptability to climate-related hazards and natural disasters

- Manage mine waste in an environmentally sound manner to minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment

The **Water Stewardship Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goals #6 – *Clean Water and Sanitation* and #12 – *Responsible Consumption and Production*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Improve water quality by reducing the release of hazardous chemicals in wastewater

- Address water scarcity through more efficient water use, including reuse and recycling

- Partner with local communities and other water users to restore water-related ecosystems and to support local water-related programs

The **Climate Change Protocol** contributes to Sustainable Development Goal #7 – *Affordable and Clean Energy*, #9 – *Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure,* and #13 – *Climate Action*. Companies implementing this protocol:

- Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, and use energy more efficiently

- Invest in innovative clean technologies and upgrade energy-related infrastructure

- Improve resilience to climate-related risks by putting in place climate adaptation measures

Learn More

For more information on *Towards Sustainable Mining* and copies of each of the protocols, visit: mining.ca

For more information
visit **mining.ca**

The Mining Association
of Canada
L'association minière
du Canada