

## The Mining Association of Canada and The Copper Mark collaborate to enhance Accountability, Transparency, and Credibility

**OTTAWA & CHELTENHAM, March 26, 2024** – The Mining Association of Canada (MAC) and The Copper Mark are pleased to announce a new collaboration on an important pilot project to enhance the assurance processes of both Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) and the Copper Mark standards.

TSM and the Copper Mark have always been committed for their standards and assurance processes to provide accountability, transparency, and credibility for their users. Both standards have also been committed to leadership in equivalency and alignment in the mining standards space. At the heart of this commitment are the initiatives' assurance processes, whereby companies' and sites are independently verified by external assurance providers.

As part of this pilot, MAC and the Copper Mark are **merging their respective assurance processes** for pilot testing by MAC members undergoing TSM verification in 2024, with the Copper Mark secretariat managing the assurance process on behalf of MAC. MAC expects nearly all of its members' facilities undergoing verification in 2024 to do so, which represents approximately 30 facilities in 2024.

In TSM's case, the merged assurance process adds new features, including:

1. Mandatory site visits for operating facilities undergoing verification.
2. Prior review for completeness by the Copper Mark secretariat of verifiers' assurance plans.
3. Inclusion of a media scan to inform assurance plans.
4. Minimum standards for employee interviews during the verification process.
5. Completion of a gap assessment by verifiers of any performance below TSM Level A and publication of action plans by facilities to address those gaps.

In the case of the Copper Mark, the pilot will improve the Copper Mark's understanding of the important role played by national panels in TSM in Canada and elsewhere, through:

1. TSM's requirement of an independent TSM Oversight Process will continue but will be managed by Copper Mark secretariat.
2. The Copper Mark staff will also join as observers of MAC's national Community-of-Interest panel, including the post-verification review process.

Verification results will be disclosed publicly on the TSM website by MAC consistent with TSM's usual processes, as well as on the Copper Mark website. More information on this pilot will soon be available on the TSM and the Copper Mark websites.

According to Pierre Gratton, President and CEO of MAC, "TSM and the Copper Mark have established a close working relationship and already collaborate on cross-recognition of their respective protocols / standards, implemented through integrated audits joint training and accreditation of assurance providers. We have learned from each other over the past few years, helping each to develop and refine tools, processes and policies such as assurance processes, conflict of interest policies or assessment reports. This pilot takes this relationship to an exciting new level."

TSM and the Copper Mark are building on comparable levels of market recognition of their systems, often engaging with the same stakeholders. TSM and the Copper Mark believe this closer collaboration will significantly strengthen the value proposition for companies and their facilities implementing either TSM or the Copper Mark or both and for customers seeking to buy responsibly produced materials.

According to Michèle Brülhart, Executive Director of the Copper Mark, "The Copper Mark is built on the principle of collaboration to increase efficiencies and reduce the implementation burden for the users of our assurance framework. The close collaboration with TSM in the past years on areas such as standards, training and integrated audits has shown the large similarity in our respective approach and complementarity of our programmes. In particular, we look forward to engage more directly with TSM's strong mechanism to drive change at the national level through the Community-of-Interest panel and to further connect our respective networks of stakeholders. This pilot is an exciting opportunity to bring together the best of two frameworks for the benefits of companies implementing our standards and customers seeking to source responsibly."

In addition to the pilot, MAC and Copper Mark are looking for opportunities to cross-fertilize their stakeholder networks by looking for ways to enhance representation across their governance bodies. The results of this year's pilot will be evaluated with a view to informing opportunities for deeper collaboration and integration of the Copper Mark and TSM in 2025 and beyond, including potentially extending this collaboration with other TSM partners around the world.

The strengthening relationship between MAC and the Copper Mark has accelerated in part because of the work underway on the development of a converged mining standard that also involves the ICMM and the World Gold Council.

The convergence process has made evident the similarity of TSM and the Copper Mark's approach to assurance and highlighted the high degree of complementarity between the two frameworks, in particular with regard to their scope, stakeholder engagement and recognition in the market. MAC and the Copper Mark believe that this pilot project will help inform the development of a converged assurance process for the new converged standard.

The merging of the features of both TSM and the Copper Mark's assurance processes provides a practical example of how convergence can serve build upon, and not weaken, the individual standards of partners. Both TSM and the Copper Mark agree to add features to their respective assurance process with a view to strengthen the overall approach applied to their participating companies and sites.

### **About The Copper Mark**

The Copper Mark is the leading assurance framework to promote responsible practices across the copper, molybdenum, nickel and zinc value chains. We work with companies and organisations throughout these metals' value chains to enable them to better understand and meet the increasing demands for independently verified responsible practices, and to contribute positively to sustainable development. Please visit <https://coppermark.org/>

### **About MAC**

The Mining Association of Canada is the national organization for the Canadian mining industry. Its members account for most of Canada's production of base and precious metals, uranium, diamonds, metallurgical coal, mined oil sands and industrial minerals and are actively engaged in mineral exploration, mining, smelting, refining and semi-fabrication. Please visit [www.mining.ca](http://www.mining.ca).

### **About TSM**

TSM is a globally recognized sustainability program that supports mining companies in managing key environmental and social risks. TSM was the first responsible mining standard in the world to require site-level assessments with external verification and is mandatory for all companies that are members of implementing associations. Through TSM, critical aspects of social and environmental performance are evaluated, independently validated, and publicly reported against 34 distinct performance indicators. Please visit <https://tsminitiative.com/>

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