



(From left to right): Bill Slater, Marc Casas, Ron Allen, Kim Poole, Jesse Jasper
(Kneeling): Tim Byers, Emery Paquin, and Jamie Mistry

WHO WE ARE

The Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency is the public watchdog that oversees the environmental management at the Ekati Diamond Mine.

As part of the Ekati environmental agreement, signed in 1997, IEMA was established to be an independent monitor of the environmental programs and overall performance at the mine.

IEMA has 7 Directors, each appointed by our society members: 4 from the Indigenous governments and organizations (Akaitcho Treaty 8 [Łutsel K'e and Yellowknives Dene First Nations], Tłı̄cho Government, Kitikmeot Inuit Association and North Slave Métis Alliance) and 3 jointly appointed by the Government of NWT, Government of Canada and the mine owner.

WHAT WE DO

IEMA listens to concerns and helps share information about the mine with Indigenous communities and the general public. Society members and the public are kept up to date about activities at the mine through our annual reports, brochures, videos, workshops, community visits and our website.

IEMA Directors provide a technical review of environmental management plans and monitoring programs at the Ekati mine and provide recommendations to the mine owner and government regulators about how best to protect the environment around the mine.



2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT

Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

A PUBLIC WATCHDOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AT EKATI DIAMOND MINE

Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

For further information on the Agency's recommendations and details on 2022-23 events, please refer to our annual report available on our website or in our office.



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IEMA has identified 6 recommendations for the company which we believe would help improve the environmental performance at the Ekati mine.

Our recommendations are grouped into 3 categories: air quality management, closure planning and reclamation activities, and wastewater containment areas.



IEMA is concerned that the current methods used to minimize the amount of dust particles generated off the haul roads are not effective and recommend the Ekati mine consider alternative techniques such as Envirokleen. In addition, the GNWT recently made updates to their Air Quality guideline which should also be reflected in the Ekati mine's current air quality programs.



Ekati's closure plan outlines the company's strategies to close and reclaim the mine when active mining ends. IEMA believes that it is urgent to advance the planning for closure. Expectations for post-closure environmental conditions must be more clearly defined. Detailed designs and plans must be developed, beginning with designs and plans for mine facilities that are no longer in operation.



The Long Lake Containment Facility (LLCF) is one of 3 tailings containment areas on site. There are several dams that retain tailings (or fine processed kimberlite) and water. IEMA recommends the management of these dams should follow industry best practices. Operation, Maintenance and Surveillance manuals are also required for many areas on site and should be reviewed and updated regularly.

IEMA has identified 1 recommendation to the GNWT:



In recently years, IEMA has noticed a decrease in the number of Water Licence and Land Use Permit inspections completed onsite by GNWT Inspectors. We believe these inspections are important to ensure the company is operating the mine as required by their Licence and Permits.

Water Licence Renewal

In November 2022, the Ekati mine applied to renew its Type A Water Licence. Interested parties reviewed the proposed changes, followed by a Technical Workshop held in March 2023 and a Public Hearing in June 2023. The updated Water Licence was sent to the Minister for approval before the current licence expired in late 2023. Some of the main topics discussed during the Technical Workshop include the term of the licence, updates to the monitoring programs, adjusting water use allowances and the identification of Dam and Containment structures based on current Standards.

Planning for Closure

When the Ekati mine eventually ends its active mining operations, the company must have a plan to close the mine and restore the land as close as possible to conditions before mining activities started. That means, the land and water must be safe for use by people and animals. Ekati's closure plan was last approved in 2018. Since then, the company has held workshops and developed components of the plan to help advance key elements in closure planning. An updated version of the entire closure plan was due at the end of 2022. The plan was submitted, however it did not include key bits of information that are expected for a mine that has been operating for over 25 years. IEMA is concerned about the lack of progress made towards developing the closure plan but is hopeful that improvements can be made.

Wildlife Updates

Ekati's wildlife management plan is being updated as part of planning for the new Point Lake Project. Several meetings were held with community representatives and technical experts to help refine the plan. The company also proposed a new study that involves analyzing the movement of collared caribou near the mine site. The main goal is to determine if the mine has any effect on caribou behaviour, and if so, what factors are influencing their behaviour. Initial results from the study are expected in 2024.

Point Lake Project Updates

The Point Lake Project received Minister approval in May 2022. In June 2022, the Ekati mine started the first stage of dewatering Point Lake. Stage 2 was continued in summer 2023 and completed in the fall. Once the lake is completely dewatered and the required Design Plan is approved, the Ekati mine can start building the laydown pad and the rock piles. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2024.

Did you know?

The Ekati mine is planning to test a new technology called 'underwater remote mining' that uses a remote controlled crawler to mine kimberlite ore at the bottom of existing pits. A test run is scheduled for the Lynx Pit in 2025.

