

About the Agency

The Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency was formed in 1997 to act as a public watchdog for the Ekati Diamond Mine™. We are governed by a Board of Directors, appointed by:

- ▶ Akaitcho Territory Government (represented by Lutsel K'e and Yellowknives Dene First Nations)
- ▶ Tłı̨chǫ Government
- ▶ North Slave Métis Alliance
- ▶ Kitikmeot Inuit Association
- ▶ Government of Canada
- ▶ Government of the Northwest Territories
- ▶ BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.

Agency Mandate

- ▶ Review, report and make recommendations on BHPB and government reports and plans
- ▶ Make recommendations on the addition of traditional knowledge and experience of Aboriginal Peoples into environmental plans and programs
- ▶ Participate as an intervenor in regulatory processes
- ▶ Provide an accessible public library of all environmental information relevant to the project
- ▶ Provide ways of distributing information to Aboriginal Peoples and the public
- ▶ Provide an effective means to bring to BHPB and governments the concerns of Aboriginal Peoples and the general public



A PUBLIC WATCHDOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
AT EKATI DIAMOND MINE™

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Agency Board of Directors and Staff

Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (back row, left to right): Audrey Enge, Jaida Ohokannoak, Tony Pearse, Bill Ross, Laura Johnston; and (front row, left to right): Scott Duguid, Kim Poole, Tim Byers, Kevin O'Reilly.



Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

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Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

Annual Report Summary 2008-09



Website: www.monitoringagency.net

For further information on the recommendations please refer to the Technical or Plain Language Annual Report available through our office or website.

THE EKATI DIAMOND MINE IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY BHP BILLITON DIAMONDS INC.

Message From the Chairperson

We are pleased to present to you this summary brochure of the 2008-09 Annual Report of the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency. One feature is a 'scorecard' of overall environmental performance at Ekati during the last year.

Our main focus over the past year has been divided between closure and reclamation planning for the mine, and a water licence renewal for the mine. The Agency has also worked with the NWT diamond mines to review and improve wildlife monitoring.

In March of 2009 the Agency had an outside review of itself, so that we could improve our performance. We invite our Society members to provide further comment.

BHPB has continued to do a good job of environmental protection at Ekati. While we do not always agree on everything, we are pleased to report that the working relationship between the Agency and the company is very good.

Please feel free to contact us with your comments on protecting the environment at Ekati or about how the Agency does its job. For a copy of our annual report for 2008-09, please visit our website or contact our office and request a printed copy.

Sincerely,



William A. Ross
Chairperson, March 31, 2009



2008-09 Recommendations

2008-09 Recommendations (for the complete recommendations and responses please see our Annual Report on our website or contact us)

1 Regulators should work together with interested parties to develop sound water quality standards for the NWT. This work is needed to help with the next water licence for Ekati diamond mine in 2013.

Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board Response:

The NWT Water Boards are developing policy and procedures for setting pollution limits for water licenses. The draft policy should be ready by the end of this year.



Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Response:

The Department has distributed a paper on tools and options for managing water quality in northern Canada. This paper recommends setting water quality objectives to guide future water use.

BHPB Response: BHP Billiton would support and participate in a NWT-wide initiative to develop a process for setting water quality objectives.

2 The Agency recommends that GNWT take the lead in coordinating a review of wildlife monitoring done by the diamond mines.

GNWT Response: GNWT will lead a workshop in Fall 2009 to review the wildlife monitoring programs for the diamond mines. The results of this workshop should improve current programs.

3 BHPB should carry out the wolverine hair snagging program in 2010.

BHP Billiton Response: BHP Billiton will continue discussions with GNWT with the aim to being involved in the program in 2010.

GNWT Response: Hair snagging is clearly the best method for understanding the number of wolverines and changes over time. GNWT agrees that all three diamond mines continue hair snagging as soon as possible.

4 BHPB should prepare a 10-year review of its use of Traditional Knowledge (TK) in its environmental plans and programs to document the lessons learned.

BHPB Response – BHP Billiton continues to invest its resources into working with the communities in which it operates to develop new, forward-looking TK initiatives based on past experience.



Below: Ekati main camp.

Environmental Performance Scorecard at Ekati for BHPB and Government Regulators

Environmental Indicator	Agency Rating	Comments
Water and Downstream Aquatic Life	<i>Acceptable</i> Better predictions are needed with options to avoid future problems.	The aquatic monitoring program is detailed and provides helpful information. A plan to better identify and avoid problems is needed. Further fish monitoring is required to understand changes in water quality and possible causes.
Wildlife	<i>Acceptable</i> Some improvements required.	New analysis of caribou data would help design better methods to monitor changes and avoid disturbances. Continued wolverine and wolf monitoring improvements are necessary. Grizzly bear monitoring should be improved. An improved air quality monitoring program should address the potential impacts to caribou from dust deposition.
Land and Reclamation Planning	<i>Substantial Improvement Noted</i> Waiting for a detailed research plan.	Much improved closure plan. More detailed research plans needed to provide answers as parts of the mine are not used. Unresolved dispute over end use of pit lakes. Aboriginal capacity-building is needed to ensure communities are better involved in closure planning.
Overall	<i>Good</i>	Ekati is operated in a manner protective of the downstream environment and of wildlife.