



Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency

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March 20, 2003

BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.
1102-4920 52nd Street
Yellowknife, NT X1A 3T1

The Honourable Robert Nault, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
10 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H4

The Honourable Jim Antoine
Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Government of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

**Re: Recommendations from the Traditional Knowledge and Monitoring Workshop
March 12-14, 2003**

At the Annual General Meeting of the Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency (IEMA) in October 2002, Society members passed a resolution recommending that the Agency consider establishing a Traditional Knowledge (TK) Panel to include TK in environmental management of the Ekati Mine. Based on this resolution, IEMA, in collaboration with the Environmental Monitoring Advisory Board (EMAB), hosted a workshop with participation of all aboriginal groups affected by the Ekati and Diavik mines, March 12-14, 2003. The workshop was very productive and resulted in recommendations from the Aboriginal Caucus for the creation of a Regional TK Panel.

The Board of Directors of IEMA has reviewed the Aboriginal Caucus recommendations and notes with pleasure the following features:

- The recommendation to create a Regional TK Panel was unanimous. The unity of the Aboriginal Caucus is important for the credibility of such an initiative.
- The Regional TK Panel proposed is to be regional in nature, as reflects the community concerns. E.g., caribou effects are regional, not just at mine sites. TK is similarly holistic.
- The Regional TK Panel proposed is to consist of elders and others with TK expertise representative of affected aboriginal groups. This will augment community input into environmental management at the mines.

- Membership of the TK Panel is to change based on the expertise required to deal with specific issues (e.g., caribou, fish, wolverine could each require different people).

The Agency strongly encourages BHPB, the Government of Northwest Territories and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as signatories to the Environmental Agreement for the Ekati Mine, to work towards the expedient implementation of the Regional TK Panel. IEMA would be pleased to work jointly with EMAB towards the establishment of such a Regional TK Panel.

We look forward to working together on this important issue.

Sincerely,

-ORIGINAL SIGNED BY-

Red Pedersen
Chairperson

Cc: IEMA Society Members
EMAB