



Minerals and Metals Sector *Update*

Proposed International Metals in Soils Project

Metals in soils and their potential health and environmental consequences are of increasing concern to many communities worldwide. The Minerals and Metals Sector (MMS) is working towards an internationally coordinated research effort designed to eliminate and/or minimize the uncertainties pertaining to the potential health and environmental impacts of metals in soils. A significant milestone in the initiative was the International Workshop on Metals in Soils: Science Gaps and Regulatory Issues, held last February in Ottawa. MMS hosted the three-day event that included 65 participants from North America, South America and Europe representing industry, academia, consultants and regulators. The goals of the workshop were to evaluate the current state of the science, identify the data gaps, and outline research needs. Discussions focused on understanding the geochemical dynamics, long-term fate, toxicity and bioavailability of metals in soils, developing the use of exposure and modeling data, and considering methodologies and approaches for characterizing risk. The workshop proceedings are expected to be released soon, from which a detailed research proposal will be developed. Following preparations and review of the proposal, governments and industry will be approached to determine their interest and willingness to contribute to project funding.

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New Gold Technology Increases Profit

CANMET Mining and Mineral Sciences Laboratories (CANMET-MMSL) recently completed work for a gold mining property in Mali partly owned by a Canadian company. The objective of the project was to optimize gold extraction by applying CANMET-MMSL technology to modify the plant circuit. The overall level of gold extraction was increased by 4% (an additional 16 000 oz per year) with substantial economic benefit for the operation, which has an annual throughput of 5 million tonnes (t) at an average grade of 3.0 g/t gold.

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Minerals and Metals Sector Publications Available On-Line

MMS publishes a wide range of publications that provide comprehensive statistics and information on the minerals and metals industry, including the *Canadian Minerals Yearbook* (www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/cmy/pref_e.htm), *Nonferrous Metals Outlook* (www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/pubs/nfo_e.htm) and *Overview of Trends in Canadian Mineral Exploration* (www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/pubs/explor_e.htm). For a complete listing of the Sector's publications and reports, visit our web site at www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/prod-serv/pubs_e.htm.

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