

Memorandum 2/11/2018

MB4: Contributions through responsible mining to biodiversity conservation in the Arctic

This memo provides a summary of reports submitted on the session MB4 organized at the Arctic Biodiversity Session in Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12 organized by the Warwick Mostert, Anglo American.

Attendance: 75

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment recommendation themes most prominently addressed in the session:

- Ecosystem-based Management
- Mainstreaming biodiversity
- Improving knowledge and public awareness
- Addressing stressors

Key points raised in the session that were important to note:

- There needs to be a focus on respecting each other when engaging with indigenous communities.
- Debeers has an entire governance community that communicates back to communities regularly
- Habitats are very different when it comes to restoration. For example, restoring peat lands after development activities stop is very different from restoring forest lands. The scale or effort needed (e.g. costs) and the time it takes (e.g. years vs decades).
- The importance of collaboration and communication, with all relevant stakeholders, earning trust through partnership were emphasized.
- There is a need to improve efforts to adhere to regional and national plans.
- Efforts to "re-imagine" mining are needed, i.e. moving towards making contributions and improvement, and going from an extractive to a developing industry.
- When developing company strategies for sustainable development frameworks it is important that they saturate the whole chain, from CEO to operations.
- Lots of information/data are collected before, during and after operations, which needs to be shared.
- Different kinds of biodiversity offsets dependent on type and size of area affected. Protection likely more useful in forested areas, while restoration is possible in peatland areas. Do biodiversity offsets have to be national, or could compensation be made in another country e.g. along a flyway, so as to focus on areas where actions might come to better use? Although interesting this could be problematic as countries have regulations to follow.
- Good examples were provided from Ni Xadi Xa in the Northwest Territories where it was demonstrated how co-management with Indigenous and Local communities can lead to fruitful collaboration, e.g. on monitoring schemes for, among other things, environment.

Recommendations/actions identified for how to deal with the issues raised in the session:

- On the land monitoring, including through Traditional Knowledge directly involving community members, is the ultimate ideal.
- The community “owns it” and then feeds directly into the overall reporting and monitoring programs of the mine operator
- Perhaps we can think of offsets in a more creative way, thinking International. That is, if you do a project in one place, perhaps you can do offsets in other countries but still benefiting Arctic species e.g. wetlands and Arctic Migratory Birds.

Take home message from the session:

- Collaboration and involvement of all relevant and affected stakeholders is a prerequisite for lessening conflicts and negative impacts, as well as increasing the possibility of gaining better knowledge and insights.
- When thinking about offset of activities, you need to do your calculations right to know the results.
- Respect, communicate with and include local people, especially by hiring them to engage in mining work.
- Knowing the valued ecosystem components by the community is essential before doing anything.