

## THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

*The shift of mining responsibilities from the Secretariat of State-owned Industries to the Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development is expected to escalate the deregulation process.*

In early 1995, the government of Ernesto Zedillo announced that the *Secretaría de Energía, Minas e Industria Paraestatal (SEMIP)*, Secretariat of Energy, Mines and State-owned Industries, would be dismantled. Mining is now part of the mandate of the *Secretaría de Comercio y Fomento Industrial (SECOFI)*, Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development. *SECOFI* has set up a new mining division to handle this responsibility.

The duties of the new mining division are set out in an Executive Decree dated December 28, 1994. Among other things, they include:

- formulating and conducting national policy for the mining sector
- fostering utilization of mineral resources
- granting mining contracts, concessions, assignments, permits and authorizations

Most observers believe that this reorganization will accelerate the modernization process throughout the mining sector.

The *Consejo de Recursos Minerales (CRM)*, Mineral Resources Council, has a mandate to conduct the geological survey of Mexico and to maintain an inventory of mineral resources. With the help of financing from the World Bank, the *CRM* has implemented a computerized geographical information systems (GIS) designed to provide information on mining properties. The database includes historical information covering 150,000 current and expired concessions. This data will allow more effective evaluation of potential projects, particularly since it includes the names of previous concession holders.

Chambers and associations in the mining industry include the *Cámara Minera de México (CAMIMEX)*, Mexican Mining Chamber, which acts as a communication and consulting channel between mining companies and the federal government. Other major associations are the *Asociación Mexicana del Cobre (AMECOBRE)*, Mexican Copper Association and the *Asociación de Ingenieros de Minas Metalurgistas y Geólogos de México (AIMMGM)*, Association of Mining Engineers, Metallurgists and Geologists of Mexico.