

participation in a wide range of voluntary initiatives aimed at pollution prevention, emission reduction, and energy efficiency.

Canada's Minerals and Metals Policy

Canada's policy on the sustainable development of minerals and metals was adopted in 1996. Underlying the policy is recognition that the economic and social benefits generated through mineral development are not all consumed by the current generation. Because of the longevity of mining projects and the ability of many minerals and metals to retain their physical properties through repeated use, current investments in human and physical capital benefit future as well as present generations.

Five main principles provide the basis for Canada's minerals and metals policy: life-cycle management, risk assessment and risk management, safe use, science and technology, and recycling.

Sustainable Development of Minerals and Metals

Sustainable development in the context of minerals and metals is considered to incorporate the following elements:

- finding, extracting, producing, adding value to, using, re-using, recycling, and, when necessary, disposing of mineral and metal products in the most efficient, competitive, and environmentally responsible manner possible, using best practices
- respecting the needs and values of all resource users and considering those needs and values in government decision making
- maintaining or enhancing the quality of life and the environment for present and future generations
- securing the involvement and participation of stakeholders, individuals, and communities in decision making.

Life-Cycle Management

Life-cycle management is an essential part of environmental stewardship. It provides the overarching framework for realization of the other aspects of the policy and is closely linked to risk assessment and the principle of safe use. In managing minerals- and metals-related health and environmental issues, the principle of life-cycle management, for both process and product life cycles, plays an essential role.