

mineral resources, as well as the construction, management, reclamation, and close-out of mine sites in their jurisdiction.

Responsibility for environmental protection and conservation is shared between both levels of government. As such, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments are key partners in the sustainable development of minerals and metals.

## Economic and Social Benefits

As one of the world's largest mining nations, Canada produces more than 60 minerals and metals. Figures for 1998 rank Canada first in world production of uranium; second in cadmium, magnesium, nickel, and zinc; third in aluminum, cobalt, and platinum-group metals; fourth in copper and gold; and fifth in molybdenum. Figures for production of nonmetallic mineral commodities in 1997 ranked Canada first in potash, second in asbestos and sulfur, and fourth in gypsum. Canada is also now a diamond producer and a major recycler of steel, copper, and precious metals, among others.

The minerals industry has been an important feature of the Canadian economy for more than 150 years. As of 1998, this multimillion-dollar sector accounted for more than 15 percent of Canada's exports, provided highly paid and skilled jobs to 367 000 Canadians, and sustained more than 100 communities as the core industry and main source of income and social benefits for many in rural and remote parts of Canada.

Mining provides one of the highest returns, in terms of average weekly earnings, of any industry in Canada. Labour productivity has increased by 22 percent in mining and by 37 percent in smelting and refining operations over the last decade. Canada's mining industry spends approximately \$100 million annually on research and development and is a world leader in environmentally safe and sustainable mining practices.

Canadian companies also make a major contribution internationally, having increased their investments in properties in other countries over the last decade. Eighty percent of the minerals produced in Canada are exported as minerals or metal products. Canada is also the largest centre for mining equity financing, providing more than 60 percent of the funds needed for mineral exploration and mine development globally.

Canada's mining industry is strongly committed to improving the environmental performance of its operations, as evidenced by its

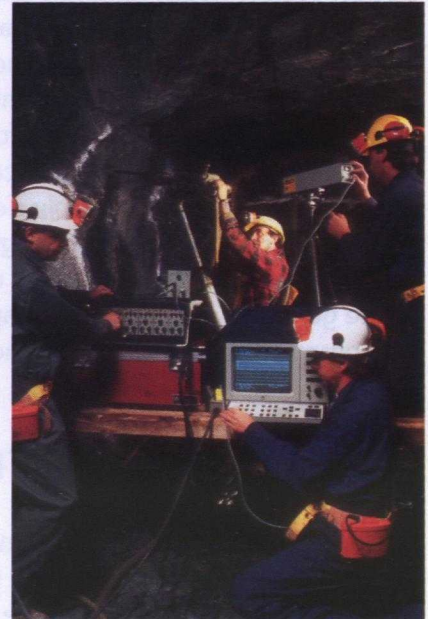


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