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Pillars of Colombia's Mining Policy:

1. Mine Resources Management

The Ministry of Mine and Energy seeks to improve the mining institutional effectiveness, in order to be perceived as a stronger and more responsible institution.

2. Improvement in the productivity and competitiveness of the Mining Sector

—Small local scale Mining—. The Ministry of Mine and Energy, aims for a more profitable, organize and safe mining development. It is working for the harmony and balance of the mining development with nearby communities to the operation area, including ethnic groups. Also, working hand by hand with the environmental authorities inspires the mining development to prevent and minimize the environmental impact.

3. Advertisement of the Mining Country

The Ministry of Mine and Energy, searches to strengthen the bonds of trust with companies, investors and the international and national banks, to facilitate the dialogue with experts on international mining knowledge and create new opportunities for the development of the mining industry in Colombia.

New Mining Policy Strategy: Global Product concept

"In America, small-scale mining has been a means of surviving prevailing precarious economic conditions and for the discovery and marketing of significant metallic reserves."

See *Policy for Improving Productivity and Competitiveness in the Mining Sector*, p.33

"During the previous decade, Colombian mining activity has shown a notable growth in volume and in the value of production. To this end, its contribution to the overall growth of the Colombia economy has been significant. It has resulted in the need to adopt an Integrated Mining Policy and indicator in line with the National Plan for Mining Development. The result of this policy has been to design a general program aimed at mobilizing and converting what, up to now, has been called informal mining into means of production whereby business development can be more competitive and profitable, as well as less damaging both socially and environmentally; that is, more sustainable." www.simco.gov.co In this context, the Directorate of the Ministry of mines and Energy (MME) leads the preparation of Environmental Monitoring Strategies (Evaluaciones Ambientales Estratégicas) (EAE) that seek to anticipate and manage possible risks originating in the operation and growth of regional mining activity in relation to ecological, biological, social, political and environmental factors. Environmental Monitoring Strategy workshops were undertaken in thirty one mining districts nationwide in the second half of 2008.

Bearing this in mind, and in order to guarantee the effective operation of the strategy, four regional workshops were undertaken in the first half of 2008. In these sessions, the Environmental Monitoring Strategy methodology, to be applied in the regions, was validated. The workshops, in which the MME, the Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development (MAVDT), Ingeominas, and regional autonomous corporations all participated, covered all national territory. Environmental Monitoring Strategy application in Mining Districts (DM) resulted in reaching the prospective strategic planning for reducing the social, political, economic, and environmental, impact of mining. This seeks to protect individuals, ecosystems and society in general.

One example of Environmental Monitoring Strategy is the development of a working group composed of the above mentioned entities, on the Bogotá plateau. Known as the Program for the Utilization of Sustainable Minerals on the Plateau (Programa de Aprovechamiento Sostenible de Minerales de la Sabana) (PASM), it has already started operating. One product of its efforts is the Agreement between the Cundinamarca Regional Autonomous Corporation (CAR) and the MME for a budget of Col\$338 million earmarked for contracting professionals in mining and biology in order to develop and carry out follow-up to the proposals. According to the agreement, reached in July 2007, a workshop will be established to draw up a "Single code for joint action between environmental and mining entities". Participating in this were (among others) the MME, the Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development, the Cundinamarca Regional Autonomous Corporation, Corpoguavio, the District Secretary for the Environment, the Cundinamarca regional government, Ingeominas, and the Bogotá Special Department for the Prevention of and Action in Emergencies (Departamento Especial de Prevención y Atención de Emergencias de Bogotá) (DEPAE).

Furthermore, certain studies were engaged. The first of these focused on supporting the Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development



"One of the sectors in Colombia that attracts more foreign investment is the mining sector"

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in amending Resolution 1197/04, which outlines suitable mining zones on the Bogotá plateau. The second, concerned with listing abandoned mining works that represent an environmental danger to the Bogotá plateau, provides a working base for the reinforcement of a normative and regulatory framework for Colombian mining environmental liabilities.

Another example is the Program for the Sustainable Exploitation of Coal Reserves in the central region of the Cesar Department. This was undertaken in order to create a clear global view of geological, mining, environmental, and social, factors in the Jagua de Ibérico area. The development of this project was headed by UPME, with the participation of the MME, the Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development, Ingeominas, Corpoesar, municipalities, and community leaders, as well as mining companies (including Drummond, Glencore, Geominas and the Argos Group). The study included a diagnosis of the zone, identifying problems surrounding coal in central Cesar and analyzing key issues regarding interdisciplinary participation. Other questions brought to light were:

- A model for development based on the relationship between mining and other economic activities in the area
- The challenge of employment
- The social role of the land
- Environmental management: air, noise, subterranean and surface water, wildlife, geomorphology in relation to abandoned mines, and the changing local and global climates
- Social management: health, education, violence, resettled populations, and urban and territorial development
- Institutional development: policies and public participation in Cesar, institutional challenges regarding mining management in central Cesar, loading capacity, public information regarding decision—making, planning management, public ethics and institutional capacity

Apart from the above examples, it may be said that the mining sector has recorded an extraordinary advance in the implementation of environmental norms and has been one of the first sectors to introduce environmental management mechanisms such as Environmental Monitoring Strategies for the planning and fulfilling means to allow the reduction of environmental impact due to mining exploitation. Tools for the identification an evaluation of such impact is necessary for the nation.

The above clearly demonstrates that, for the MME, the correct handling of both mining and environmental matters is essential. In this way, mining activity may develop within the standards of social and environmental sustainability that are required by the nation in order to be competitive.

Finally, but no less importantly, the MME works towards standards of responsible mining, that achieve productivity without environmental damage. The great commitment for both environmental and mining authorities is to work hand in hand for the implementation of these policies, as well as searching for alternatives that will resolve doubts shown by environmental authorities. In this way, mining can fulfill the criteria for sustainable development.

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