



14 February 2006

L 020

Environmental Assessment Officer  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
Yellowknife, NT

Electronic Submission

Dear Mr. Duxbury:

**Re: Gahcho Kué Project**  
**Draft Workplan for the Environmental Assessment**

De Beers has reviewed the draft Workplan and offers the following comments for the Board's consideration.

Overall, De Beers concurs with the Board's approach of conducting rigorous scoping with the view of identifying and prioritizing key issues for an assessment. It will take full participation from all parties and careful management but careful scoping may help focus the assessment on items that contribute to decision making regarding the project. We think that this should result in a reduction of the material that parties have to consider while still maintaining, if not improving, the rigour of the environmental assessment.

De Beers also considers that the draft Workplan reflects the "lessons learnt" from the Snap Lake Project Environmental Assessment. In particular, we think that there is value in face-to-face meetings to resolve technical issues, rather than attempt to resolve issues in an exchange of paperwork. This may assist in addressing issues of sustainability of the EA process itself, in terms of overload of information for parties to consider.

Ultimately, De Beers is interested in a rigorous environmental assessment process that is also efficient. We think that the draft Workplan provides a solid basis for an efficient and rigorous process but attention will have to be placed on developing the back-half of the schedule.

De Beers understands the value of thorough environmental assessment. As was the case for the Snap Lake Project, we will participate fully and openly in the assessment of the Gahcho Kue Project. We look forward to working with the parties, once again, to ensure a thorough assessment and ensure a strong foundation of information that will assist the Board in decision making.

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Sincerely,  
De Beers Canada Inc.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Dr. Robin Johnstone  
Manager, Environmental Affairs- NWT Projects

cc. Mr. Doug Scott, Senior VP, DBCI  
Mr. John McConnell, VP- NWT Projects, DBCI  
Mr. Tim Bekhuys, AMEC Earth & Environment



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