

Glossary with mining terminology

This glossary provides definitions of terms used in the PART 1 'QUESTIONNAIRE to be completed for each mining site'. The definitions are based on the Glossary of the International Network for Acid Prevention (INAP) (<http://www.inap.com.au>). INAP definitions were slightly modified where appropriate. Definitions of 'mining waste', 'hazard', 'mining activities', 'primary in situ processing', 'toxic substances and preparations', 'closed', 'active' and 'temporarily suspended' were developed by the JRC PECOMINES project.

You are welcome to suggest changes into these working definitions and especially encouraged to discuss case-by-case if one or another site should be included or excluded in the frames of this project.

Active

A mine is active if it has an owner and mining activities are carried out on the site.

Backfill

Backfill is the material used to fill voids created by mining excavation.

Closed

A mine is closed if licensed mining activities are finished for the mine. The site can be non-partly or fully rehabilitated.

Deposit

Any sort of earth material that has been accumulated through the action of wind, water, ice, or other agents. Mineral deposits.

Excavation

Extraction of solid earth material from the ground for mineral mining.

Gangue

Part of the ore deposit which constitutes worthless material that has to be mined along with the ore minerals and then separated from them latter.

Hazard

The intrinsic property of a dangerous substance or physical situation, with a potential for creating damage to human health and/or the environment (96/82/EC).

Host rock

Host rock is the rock that surrounds the mineral deposit. Also called as country rock.

Hotspot

The mining site is an environmental 'hotspot' if there are significant proven or potential environmental impacts associated with the site.

Mineral deposit

Mineral deposit is a naturally occurring accumulation of minerals that may be economically valuable.

Mineral processing

Treatment of ore for recovery and/or concentration of valuable minerals prior to shipment to a smelter or refinery. Mineral processing includes crushing, grinding, screening, concentration and dewatering. Milling, mineral dressing, ore dressing, beneficiation.

Mining activities

The activities of prospecting, extraction and primary in situ processing of minerals.

Mining site

Mining site is the location of mining operation including the area or areas of excavation and adjoining areas or nearby facilities for materials handling, processing and waste disposal.

Mining waste

Any substance or object resulting from exploration, mining, quarrying, and physical and chemical treatment of minerals, as set out in 2001/118/EC, which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard.

Overburden

Overburden refers to both unconsolidated material and bedrock on the top of mineral deposit that is removed in order to access the deposit during surface mining.

Primary in situ processing

Conditioning and enrichment of the useful constituents of the extracted mineral(s) by physical, chemical and biological treatments within the licensed, spatially defined mining site.

Processing plant

A facility where mineral processing is carried out. Mill, concentrator

Surface mine

Surface mine is a surface depression created by the excavation of near surface mineral deposits. Also called as open cast mine, open cut mine, open pit mine or quarry.

Tailings

Tailings is ground rock waste product that remains after the desired minerals have been removed from the ore.

Tailing dam

Tailings dam is a structure constructed to create a tailings pond for storing mining tailings and process water.

Tailings pond

Tailings pond is the place for storing tailings resulting from ore processing.

Temporarily suspended

A mine is temporarily suspended if it has an owner but no mining activity is carried out at the present.

Toxic substances and preparations

Substances and preparations which in low quantities cause death or acute or chronic damage to health when inhaled, swallowed or absorbed via the skin (92/32/EC, 1999/45/EC).

Underground mine

Underground mine is an anthropogenic underground excavation. Also called as underground workings or galleries.

Waste rock

Waste rock is rock with insufficient amount of the economically valuable elements to warrant extraction, but which has to be removed to allow physical access to the mineral. Waste rock can be stored for further processing; the stored rock is called stockpile.