



**MOUVEMENT  
PRO CHRYSOTILE**

**THE FEDERAL REGULATORY APPROACH FOR ASBESTOS  
SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZES THE REVIVAL AND FUTURE OF OUR  
REGIONS**

**SCIENCE IS CLEAR:**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE VARIOUS TYPE OF ASBESTOS FIBRES MUST BE RECOGNIZED, *AND THE DRAFT REGULATION DOESN'T.*

BY EXCLUDING THE USE OF MINE TAILINGS IN THE AREAS OF CONSTRUCTION AND LANDSCAPING, WITHOUT CONSIDERATION, **IT JEOPARDIZES THE REGION'S ECONOMIC REVIVAL AND ITS VERY FUTURE.**

# INDEX

## PAGES

1. Ensuring a mining legacy	1
2. There are concerns...and for good reasons!	4
3. The huge challenges ahead	6
4. Promises that must be kept	9
5. Forging ahead with support from the community.	13
6. Annex	21

# 1. Ensuring a mining legacy

- Over more than **130** years, **hundreds of millions of tonnes** of mine tailings have been accumulated close to mining sites.
- These solid and variously shaped mineral fragments, from which commercial chrysotile fibres have been extracted, create huge accumulations (or **waste piles**).
- The mine tailings namely contain various types of metals and minerals, such as **magnesium, nickel, chrome** and **cobalt**.
- The metals and minerals found in those mine tailings have many **exceptional qualities**. Namely, they are :
  - High-performance;
  - light and malleable;
  - corrosion-resistant;
  - durable (recyclable).

1.

## Ensuring a mining legacy (2)

- The exploitation of mine tailings piles offers **huge economic opportunities** in terms of creating :
  - **new businesses;**
  - **high-quality jobs;**
  - **collective wealth.**
- Our regions have the scientific knowledge and master the technologies that are needed to valorize and safely develop the mine tailings piles, **without any discernable risk for people's health.**
- This **unique, precious expertise** must be preserved and enhanced.
- The exploitation of mine tailings piles thus represents a **rare opportunity** for the concerned regions and their communities which were hard hit by the **mines and mills' closings** and the **loss of thousands of jobs.**

1.

## Ensuring a mining legacy (3)

- Existing projects aim at optimizing those **abundant and easily accessible resources** through the extraction of high value-added products .
- Our regions' **invaluable scientific and technological knowledge** must be used wisely and allowed to deploy fully.
- Strong expertise, based on the mastery of **new, cutting-edge technologies** must be leveraged.
- *As our regions are working towards ensuring their own future , a federal draft regulation **endangers the opportunities of a sound and sustainable recovery** for our communities and our regions.*

## 2. **There are concerns...and for good reasons!**

### **Consultation Document - 3.1.2.2 Mining Residues**

*«The regulations will not prohibit the processing of mining residues to extract metals (...), or to produce products or materials that do not contain asbestos .*

*The mining residues could not be used to manufacture a product containing asbestos as the manufacture, sale, offer for sale and export of products that contain asbestos would be prohibited.*

*The use of mining residues for construction and landscaping activities would be prohibited. »*



2.

## There are concerns... and for good reasons! (2)

- **Banishment** in the **construction, renovation** and **landscaping** industries portends **serious problems** for the **communities** and **potential investors**.
  - Serpentine mine tailings have been widely used for decades as **backfill material** in **road** as well as commercial, industrial, institutional and residential **building construction**.
- The Federal approach creates **vagueness** and causes **uncertainty** that compromise essential investments for the implementation of **recuperation, exploitation and revaluation projects** which are essential for the economic revival of our communities and our regions.
  - Which **logic** can justify such **depossession**?
- The Federal Government must imperatively **avoid creating a regulatory mess** that would be devastating for our communities and our regions' future.



### 3. **The huge challenges ahead**

- Communities, businesses, socio-economic actors, investors and local authorities will need to overcome **major obstacles** rising on their horizon.
- The Federal government is about to create an **enormous collective problem, even more serious than that of pyrite** (or pyrrhotite) that would adversely affect, in an important way, the value of a **very large number of properties** which, in many cases, make up the largest part of a **family's patrimony**.
- It will become practically **impossible to build on a multitude of lots** that were bankfilled with mining residues without being subjected to an endless series of measures and interventions.
- Authorizations, permits, derogations will be a **constant source of obstacles** which will translate into **exorbitant fees** for people who will have to deal with banned and illegal landfill.
- Hence, a proliferation of **totally senseless situations!**

### 3. The huge challenges ahead (2)

- The Government's proposed approach is **clearly abusive**, as the announced ban won't protect the people's health or the environment..
- On the one hand, it seems to authorize access to mine tailing piles, but on the other it quickly prohibits their recuperation, valorization and exploitation.
- We are in the process of building a tower of Babel which will **needlessly complicate everything** and, above all, become a weapon of choice for activists who will never hesitate to use it to **harass developers and systematically and frivolously oppose their projects**.
- The regulations attempt to **do indirectly what elected officials promised not to do directly**, and they could **poison the social climate** in our communities and our regions.

The Canadian Government must imperatively make sure that its proposed regulations on asbestos will not, in any way, become an obstacle or limit the valorization and the exploitation of the mine tailings piles.

## 4.

# Promises that must be kept

- The Federal government clearly stated its intention to ban asbestos and asbestos-containing products but he also unequivocally stated its **concerns for Quebec's mining regions.**
- On December 14, 2016, during a conference call, the Minister of Science (Kirsty Duncan) and the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie (Marie-Claude Bibeau), **verbally confirmed** to the Reeve of the Appalaches RCM (Paul Vachon) and the Thetford Mines Mayor (Marc-Alexandre Brousseau) that :

*« The objective of the modification to the regulations doesn't in any way concern the transformation or valorization of the mine tailings in the Thetford and Asbestos regions. ».*

**SDE of the Thetford Region**

Press release, April 21 2017

## 4. Promises that must be kept (2)

- **The Honourable Kirsty Duncan  
Minister of Science of Canada**

*« We are aware of Quebec's preoccupations. I have talked with the Mayors of both mining communities (...), I have talked with the MNA. We understand Quebec's long mining history and we are sensitive to the importance of economic development. **The ban will not include the mine tailings.** »*

*« Ottawa doesn't exclude banning mine tailings »  
Le Devoir – December 16, 2016*

## 4. Promises that must be kept (3)

- **The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau**  
**Minister of International Development and La Francophonie**  
**Member of Parliament for Compton-Stanstead**

*« I am very aware of the issues faced by our region (...). A distinction [must be] made between the exploitation of asbestos itself and its use in insulation or other materials and the revalorization of mine tailings. In my opinion, there is truly an important difference that must be stated. »*

« Asbestos : Marie-Claude Bibeau Is Reassuring »  
*La Tribune – December 12, 2016*

*« The proposed modifications to the regulations are not directed at those mine tailings. What is important is to ensure that the new products that will become available on the market do not contain any asbestos. »*

« Ottawa bans the use and importation of asbestos in Canada »  
*ICI Radio-Canada – December 15, 2016*

# 1. Promises that must be kept (4)

- **The Honourable Kirsty Duncan  
Minister of Science of Canada**

Justin Trudeau's government (...) **will not prevent the Quebec cities of Asbestos and Thetford Mines from revalorizing asbestos mine tailings**, namely to produce magnesium.

The Minister of Science, Kirsty Duncan, said she understood that Quebec has "a long history" of asbestos exploitation and that she would not keep the province from taking advantage of the "multiple opportunities created" by the valorization of the tailings.

*"Asbestos to be banned in Canada by 2018 "*

*Le Soleil, December 15 2016*



## 5. Forging ahead with support from the community

- **Mr. Laurent Lessard**  
**Quebec Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Alimentation**  
**Minister responsible for the Centre-du-Québec region**

*« If the Federal [government] wants to go there they will find us, [the] two regions, in their way, every day. (...)*

*"If the Federal government goes as far as avoiding the transformation of mine tailings, well there is a problem."*

"QUEBEC – OTTAWA. Asbestos, New Bone of Contention? Two Quebec Ministers Caution the Federal Government Against a Total Banishment"

*Le Devoir - December 15, 2016*

5.

## Forging ahead with support from the community (2)

- **Mr. Jean-Marc Fournier**  
**Quebec Minister responsible for Canadian Relations and**  
**the Canadian Francophonie**  
**Government House Leader**

*« At the very least, I expect that the federal authorities will **consult the targetted communities.** »*

"QUEBEC – OTTAWA. Asbestos, New Bone of Contention? Two Quebec Ministers Caution the Federal Government Against a Total Banishment"  
*Le Devoir* - December 15, 2016

## 5. Forging ahead with support from the community<sup>(3)</sup>

- **Ms Karine Vallières**  
**Member of the National Assembly for Richmond**  
**Parliamentary Assistant to the Quebec Premier (youth)**

*"The des Sources RCM's Fund for Economic Diversification gives our local organizations efficient development tools and levers that respond to their needs. Fully in line with the Fund's objectives, the Centre for Mining Innovation's **factory pilot-project** helps attract new businesses to our region and allows already established ones to **innovate by developing new products, namely by using our region's unique resource, that is our mine tailings.**"*

**Quoted from a press release issued by the  
Cabinet of the Minister responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises,  
Regulatory Streamlining and Regional Economic Development of Quebec  
Issued June 27, 2015**

## 5. Forging ahead with support from the community<sup>(4)</sup>

- **Karine Vallières**  
**Member of the Quebec National Assembly for Richmond**

Work at the mini-pilot plant to extract products from mine tailings could start in August. .

*"This is a first in Quebec".*

"Asbestos Centre for Mining Innovation : a 4 M\$ project"  
*La Tribune – June 27, 2017*

# 1. Forging ahead with support from the community (5)

- **Luc Berthold**

**Member of Parliament for Mégantic - L'Érable at the House of Commons of Canada**

*"There was no written guarantee ensuring permanent access to the mine tailings. (...) If the region isn't behind us, we won't have the government's ear on the issue of the future regulations that will ban asbestos in all its forms. We are facing a bulldozer. We must fight for us, for our youth."*

- **Marc-Alexandre Brousseau**

**Mayor of Thetford Mines**

*I look forward to **science and facts** regaining the upper hand in this file. (...) We must make **their position uncomfortable** with strong arguments countering their unclear reasons . (...) I hope that the rest of the process will bring **more consideration for our community**. We only want **common sense** to prevail.*

« Thetford Mines réclame un accès aux haldes »

*La Tribune – 25 janvier 72017*

5.

## Forging ahead with support from the community<sup>(6)</sup>

- **Alain Rayes**  
**Member of Parliament for Richmond-Arthabaska at the House of Commons of Canada**

*We quickly need **clarification!** (...) These people are looking for investors and when there is **vagueness**, such as the one we are experiencing, people don't want to take financial risks, and this adds to the stress this situation creates for those people who've been working on this for a very long time. (...) There has been **no consultation**. We want the Minister to listen to the **community's concerns**.*

"Asbestos Ban : the Asbestos and Thetford Mines regions call for an emergency meeting."

*ICI Radio-Canada Estrie – December 13, 2016*

5.

## Forging ahead with support from the community (7)

- **Luc Rémillard**  
**Director General, Economic Development Society of the**  
**Thetford Region**

*(...) [T]he city's economic diversification plan must also bank on its mining past. The region wishes to valorize the tons of mine tailings left by decades of asbestos mining in the region.*

***"There is an important mining liability that can be exploited."***

"A Salutary Entrepreneurial Wake-Up Call"  
*Les affaires – May 6, 2017*



5.

## Forging ahead with support from the community (8)

- *"Without minimising the importance of public health issues related to the past exploitation of asbestos, the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) considers that all factors must be taken into consideration and that **current scientific knowledge clearly establish that, from a health and environmental standpoint, it is now widely recognized that encapsulated chrysotile asbestos can be exploited safely.**"*

*" The Federal government must **start listening to the regions' economic actors** who could suffer the consequences from its decision to ban asbestos in Canada ", said *Stéphane Forget*. "The transformation of asbestos containing mining residues represents an **economic development opportunity** for regions looking to diversify their economy"*

**Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec**

Press Release published December 15, 2016

## 6.

# Annex

- **Survey by the Institut national de la santé publique of Chaudière-Appalaches**

The public health report on dangers associated to asbestos states that the **probability of new cancer deaths caused by the presence of chrysotile asbestos fibres**, the main type of asbestos fibres found in Thetford Mines, is of **1 every 35 years**. By comparison, 30 residents die every year of lung cancers mostly attributable to cigarette smoking, which amounts to more than 1 000 deaths every 35 years, according to the enquiry.

"Low Risks in Thetford Mines"  
*ICI Radio-Canada* – December 11,  
2009

## 6.

# Annex (2)

- **Georges Beaudoin, géo. (Ph. D.), Josée Duchesne, ing. (Ph. D.), Tomas Feininger (Ph. D.), Réjean Hébert, géo., ing. (Ph. D.), professors, Department of Geology and Geological Engineering, Laval University**

*"In the current public health debate we are especially worried by the fact that such **confusion around fibrous minerals**, commonly called asbestos, continues to reinforce **preconceived ideas**. Obviously, many interlocutors are neither sufficiently competent nor expert enough to differentiate the minerals in question. A number of studies have demonstrated that **amphiboles remain in the body 10 times longer than chrysotile**. Others have established that **the quantity of chrysotile fibres must be several hundred times higher for them to induce a risk similar to that of certain amphiboles**. Notwithstanding the scientific proofs which differentiate their health impact, chrysotile and amphiboles are still being wrongly amalgamated under the name of asbestos*

*We find particularly regrettable that the Institut national de santé publique du Québec -doesn't make such distinction."*

"Asbestos and Chrysotile: Apples and Bananas!"  
*Le Soleil*, March 25, 2010