



Fisheries  
and Oceans

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Fish Habitat Management  
Suite 1, 5204-50<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Yellowknife, Northwest  
Territories  
X1A 1E2

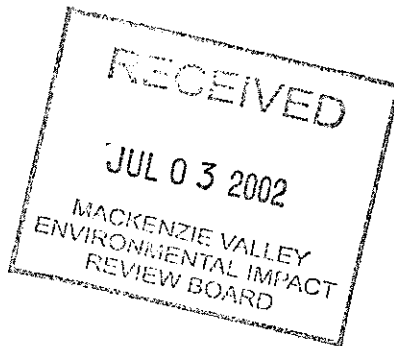
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Our file *Notre référence*

SC00163

July 3, 2002

Gordon Wray  
A/Chair, MVEIRB  
4910 50<sup>th</sup> Ave,  
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2P6



Dear Mr. Wray:

**Re: Workplan for the Snap Lake Diamond Project Review**

Responsible Ministers for the review of the DeBeers' Snap Lake Diamond Project have been invited to comment on the proposed workplan that was distributed on June 24, 2002. The following comments are submitted on behalf of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO).

The workplan specifies a series of dates for various aspects of the project review, however such an approach relies on the first target date being met. For example, the workplan identifies June 28, 2002 as the due date for DeBeers to submit their response to the Round One Information Request. Given that this due date for response has passed and no response has been submitted, it is apparent that basing the timeline on specific dates is likely to lead to continual rewriting of the workplan. DFO would like to propose an alternate approach which establishes a flexible workplan based on the actual delivery of a given task and the number of days expected to complete a task. For example, instead of setting a specific date, DFO recommends that a 45 day review period occur following receipt of the response to Information Requests (IRs), whenever DeBeers determines they are prepared to submit such a response. The workplan could specify both a fixed date and 45 days after delivery of a task, whichever is the later date.

DFO also highlights that many tasks in the workplan are not independent of each other. Some tasks cannot be met prior to delivery of previous tasks. DFO is, therefore, of the opinion that the next round of IR's and further tasks should not be initiated until all outstanding IRs have been addressed.

Finally, it has come to our attention today that DFO's letter of June 18<sup>th</sup> 2002 did not make it to the MVEIRB's office due to technical difficulties. This letter described how DFO saw no advantage to having technical sessions scheduled after the submission of reviewers' technical reports. If the technical reports are to be the reviewers' final submission on aspects of the project that have been considered and either adequately dealt with or still outstanding, such a report should only come after all opportunities to resolve issues, including technical sessions, have been held.

However, should the Review Board decide to have the technical sessions follow the submission of the Expert Technical Report, as currently proposed, the workplan should allow for the development and submission of closing comments/recommendations by reviewers. For greater efficiency, DFO recommends that the Technical Sessions precede the submission of the Technical Reports to allow for recommendations based on all available information.

Sincerely,

Julie Dahl  
Area Chief, Habitat  
DFO – Habitat Management, Western Arctic Area