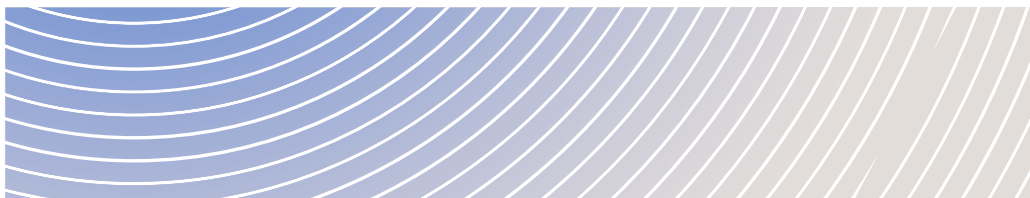


# Planning Phase Engagement Report



STRANGE LAKE RARE EARTH MINING PROJECT

April 28, 2025



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada



# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Project context.....	1
1.2 Report content .....	2
<b>2. Consultation and engagement during the Planning phase .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. How input was used .....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Identifying key issues and proponent response .....	4
3.2 Inform the decision of whether to require an impact assessment .....	5
3.3 Inform preparation of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.....	5
3.4 Informing preparation of the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan .....	6
3.5 Informing preparation of the Public Participation Plan .....	6
<b>4. Next steps .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5. Stay informed .....</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1 Stay informed about the impact assessment of the Novador Gold Mine Project .....	8
5.2 Stay informed about the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and other assessments .....	8



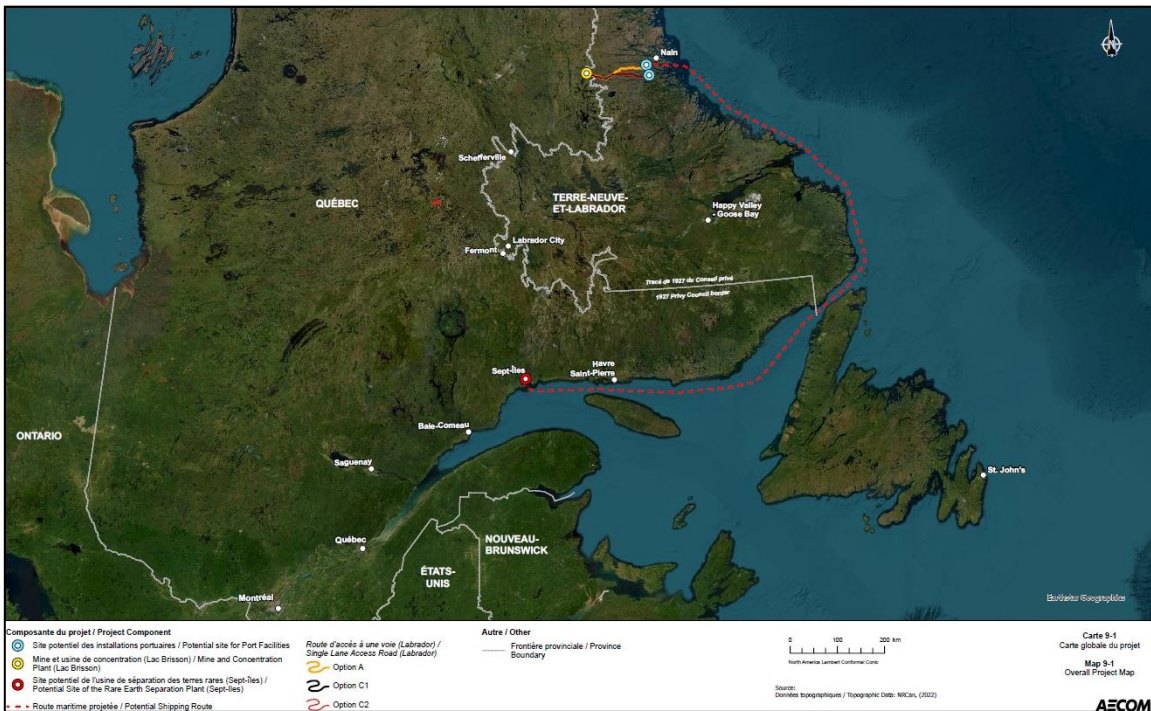
# 1. Introduction

On October 6, 2023, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) commenced the planning phase of an impact assessment of the Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project proposed by Torngat Metals Ltd. During the Planning phase, IAAC engaged Indigenous communities and the public. This report explains how the input provided by Indigenous communities and the public was used by IAAC.

## 1.1 Project context

Torngat Metals Ltd. is proposing the construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of an open-pit rare earth mine, located approximately 235 kilometres northeast of Schefferville, in Quebec. The mine would have a production capacity of up to 36,000 tonnes per day and a lifespan of 30 years. As proposed, the project would include a 1,500-metre airstrip at the mine site, as well as a new metal mill with an ore input capacity of 17,000 tonnes per day, waste rock and tailings piles, and associated buildings. The project would also include a road of approximately 170 kilometres between the mine site and the new port facilities on the Labrador coast.

Figure 1: Global project map



Source: Torngat Metals Ltd., 2024



The [Planning phase](#) for the impact assessment process of the project started on October 6, 2023 and was completed on November 8, 2024. IAAC extended the 180-day time limit for the planning phase by 89 days to facilitate cooperation and alignment of the environmental and impact assessment processes between IAAC and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Planning phase is the first of five phases of the federal impact assessment process under the [Impact Assessment Act](#) (Figure 2). The Planning phase was used to identify key issues related to the project, decide whether an impact assessment is required, understand how Indigenous communities and the public would like to participate in the impact assessment process, and plan the assessment.

**Figure 2: Planning phase within the impact assessment process**



Source: Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, 2025

---

## 1.2 Report content

This report provides information about comment periods and other consultation and engagement activities conducted by IAAC during the Planning phase. It explains how the input received from Indigenous communities and the public was used to help target key issues, inform the process, and develop associated documents.

Information on [next steps](#) in the impact assessment process, as well as how you can [stay informed](#) is also included in this report.



## 2. Consultation and engagement during the Planning phase

In October 2023, IAAC initiated a comment period on the [Summary of the Initial Project Description](#) and invited comments from Indigenous communities, the public and federal authorities on the Project. As part of this comment period, IAAC held four virtual information sessions and used other means of engagement, such as publications on social media and local newspapers, so that Indigenous Peoples and the public could learn about the Project, the impact assessment process, and how to submit comments. IAAC also participated in in-person information sessions in the communities of Nain and Hopedale, at the request of and in collaboration with the Nunatsiavut government.

In August 2024, IAAC initiated a second public comment period to seek input on the [Draft Joint Impact Statement Guidelines](#) and [Draft Public Participation Plan](#). Three virtual information sessions were held to support public participation. At the community's request, IAAC also organized a face-to-face workshop with the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. In addition, IAAC collaborated with Indigenous communities to prepare an [Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan](#) for the Project.

In total, IAAC received 88 written comments from federal authorities, Indigenous communities, a municipal authority, non-governmental organizations, and members of the public. This includes comments received outside of the formal comment periods. Written comments were posted on the [project page on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry](#) (the Registry) for transparency, subject to exceptions related to privacy, security or confidentiality<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> For additional information on which comments remain private and how IAAC protects individual privacy, please refer to IAAC's [Submission Policy](#) and [Privacy Notice](#).



## 3. How input was used

---

### 3.1 Identifying key issues and proponent response

IAAC identified key issues drawing from comments received from Indigenous communities and the public through consultation and engagement activities. The following are examples of key issues identified related to effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse impacts on the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*:

- effects on fish and fish habitat, including fish species at risk;
- effects on migratory birds, including migratory bird species at risk;
- impacts on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and on the physical and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples; and
- changes to the health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples.

Following the issues raised by Indigenous communities and the public, IAAC has developed and sent to the proponent a [Summary of Issues](#). On May 30, 2024, the proponent submitted a [Detailed Project Description](#) and a [Responses to Summary of Issues](#) in which they provided answers related to these issues. The proponent has indicated in these two documents their intention to:

- carry out several communication and consultation activities with the various stakeholders involved;
- develop community investment programs and strategic partnerships to address social and economic priorities identified by Indigenous communities, particularly in the areas of education and cultural preservation;
- implement the best practices and most reliable measures right from the design stage of its facilities to avoid any risk of contamination; and
- set up an engagement program that will include group discussions with different segments of Indigenous Peoples that may be affected differentially by the project, particularly Elders, youth, or women.

Following the submission of the detailed project description, the proponent defined some elements of the project such as the alignment of the road and the construction of a new marine terminal in Voisey's Bay. The proponent has also committed to include in its impact assessment:

- an evaluation and comparison of the various options for mine layout and infrastructure, such as the various storage areas and the landfill, to select the one that minimizes potential impacts and improves acceptability, while meeting operational needs;
- justification of the control methods adopted for contamination from tailings piles;
- an emergency response plan;

- specific avoidance and mitigation measures, if species at risk are sighted during baseline surveys; and
- a cumulative effects analysis in accordance with the Policy Framework for Assessing Cumulative Effects under the *Impact Assessment Act*.

---

## 3.2 Inform the decision of whether to require an impact assessment

On June 6, 2024, IAAC issued an [Opinion on Whether an Impact Assessment is Required](#). In issuing this opinion, IAAC took into account the fact that the carrying out of the Project may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct or incidental adverse effects, including effects on fish and fish habitat, migratory birds, and impacts on Indigenous peoples (changes to health, social, and economic conditions, physical and cultural heritage, and current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes). IAAC also considered the comments received.

---

## 3.3 Inform preparation of the Joint Impact Statement Guidelines

The Impact Statement Guidelines describes the information and studies that a proponent is required to include in its Impact Statement. Input from Indigenous communities and the public informed IAAC's preparation of [Joint Impact Statement Guidelines for the project](#).

In addition, the following modifications to the guidelines were inspired by comments received during the second comment period on the draft version of the document:

- consideration of the areas with archeological potential in the project's location;
- importance of maximizing the project's positive impact and aiming for the social acceptability of Indigenous communities potentially affected by the project;
- importance of the precautionary principle in cases where there may be irreversible damage to the George River caribou herd;
- importance of considering marine fish when discussing contaminant levels in traditional foods with Indigenous communities;
- importance of cooperating with Indigenous communities to select and define valued component; and
- consideration of the effects of the increase in human presence and activity on wildlife species of importance to Indigenous Peoples.



---

## 3.4 Informing preparation of the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan

An [Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan](#) (IEPP) describes opportunities and methods for meaningful engagement and consultation with potentially affected Indigenous communities throughout an impact assessment process. IAAC worked collaboratively with Indigenous communities to prepare the [IEPP for the project](#).

During the Planning phase, Indigenous communities identified objectives and tools for Indigenous consultation related to the project, which were summarized in the IEPP. For example, IAAC has been advised that excessive consultation leads to fatigue and increased stress. To the extent possible, consultation processes should be aligned to avoid duplication of consultation activities and facilitate community participation. IAAC and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador have aligned their public consultation periods during the Planning phase. IAAC and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador look forward to further alignment in the next steps.

Several Indigenous communities have requested individualized consultation plans for their community, outlining their specific consultation objectives. IAAC will collaborate with these Indigenous communities to develop these individualized plans during the Impact Statement phase. All the consulted communities have also asked to be involved in assessing the project's impact on their rights. These assessments may cover health and socio-economic conditions, current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, cultural and physical heritage, or the exercise of Indigenous or treaty rights, including cumulative impacts on the exercise of rights.

Comments provided by Indigenous communities helped refine IAAC's understanding of how the communities may be impacted by the project and the potential nature of these impacts. IAAC has considered those comments during the development of the IEPP.

---

## 3.5 Informing preparation of the Public Participation Plan

A [Public Participation Plan](#) describes the plan for engaging the public throughout an impact assessment process. Comments from the public were used to inform preparation of the [Public Participation Plan for the project](#).

Public comments helped IAAC determine the participation preferences of stakeholders involved in the impact assessment process. For example, some participants indicated that in-person meetings should be held during the impact assessment process to allow for discussion of specific issues. In addition, comments suggested using social media to share updates and announcements about the assessment process.



## 4. Next steps

On November 8, 2024, IAAC issued the [Notice of Commencement of an Impact Assessment](#) for the project and provided the proponent with the final Joint Impact Statement Guidelines and plans. The impact assessment of the project then entered the [Impact Statement phase](#) (Figure 3), during which the proponent collects information and conducts studies as described in the Joint Impact Statement Guidelines to prepare an Impact Statement.

**Figure 3: Impact Statement phase within the impact assessment process**



**Source: Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, 2022**

IAAC will continue to lead consultation and engagement activities with Indigenous communities and the public during the Impact Statement and Impact Assessment phases of the process. As part of future consultation and engagement, Indigenous communities and the public will be invited to provide their views on the proponent's Impact Statement as well as on IAAC's Draft Impact Assessment Report and Draft Potential Conditions.



## 5. Stay informed

---

### 5.1 Stay informed on the impact assessment of the Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project

- To find out the latest on the status of the impact assessment of the Stange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project, including information about future opportunities to provide comments, consult the [project page on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry](#).
- You can also request to be added to the email distribution list for the Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project by sending an email to [StrangeLake@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:StrangeLake@iaac-aeic.gc.ca).

### 5.2 Stay informed about the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and other assessments

- For general information about IAAC and the impact assessment process, including how to get involved, refer to [IAAC's website](#).
- For information about other assessments, refer to the [Canadian Impact Assessment Registry](#).
- You can also subscribe to the Canadian [Impact Assessment Registry notification service](#) to receive a personalized email when new content is posted.
- To receive news and alerts issued by IAAC delivered directly to your *Really Simple Syndication* (RSS) reader, you can subscribe to IAAC's [RSS Feed](#).