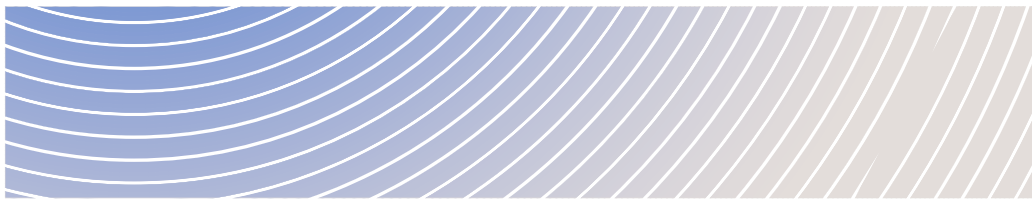


# Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan



NOVADOR GOLD MINE PROJECT

August 13, 2024



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada



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# 1. Introduction

The Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (the IEPP) outlines opportunities and methods to ensure that meaningful consultation is carried out by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) with potentially affected Indigenous communities for the Novador Gold Mine Project. Consultation will be conducted in the spirit of reconciliation, renewal of Nation-to-Nation, and respect for the [principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples](#).

Throughout this IEPP, Indigenous community(ies) refers to Indigenous Peoples who may wish to take part in the impact assessment process. This term includes Indigenous Peoples connected by Nation, Band, geographical location, community roles and other shared values and identities. Within the context of the impact assessment process, IAAC<sup>1</sup> encourages the active participation of potentially impacted Indigenous groups, Indigenous women, Elders, 2SLGBTQIA+ and youth, in a manner that best reflects their specific cultural protocols, needs, and interests.

The IEPP for this project assessment addresses:

- Crown consultation on the potential impacts of the project on the exercise of Indigenous asserted, confirmed and treaty rights, and accommodation, where appropriate;
- Engagement of Indigenous communities with respect to Indigenous Knowledge they may wish to share when considering potential impacts, or any other cultural considerations and customs that should be taken into account in project decision-making;
- Engagement with Indigenous communities in a way that encourages the participation of different parts of the community, including women, youth, 2SLGBTQIA+ and Elders;
- The general tools and processes for consulting and engaging with Indigenous communities at all stages of the impact assessment process, including comment periods on key documents; and
- The specific tools and processes for consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities that have shown an interest in elements of the impact assessment.

To complement this broader IEPP, interested Indigenous communities may develop community-specific consultation plans, to describe the community's specific objectives for consultation, or any unique features of the impact assessment and consultation process pertaining to that community.

In addition to using the consultation and engagement tools and methods identified in this plan, IAAC also plans to involve Indigenous communities and organizations interested in the impact assessment process using the tools and methods described in the Public Participation Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> The Government of Canada takes a "Whole of Government" approach to Crown consultation in the context of impact assessments to ensure that Indigenous groups are meaningfully consulted and involved in the assessment of designated projects that may adversely impact Indigenous groups and the exercise of their rights. As the Crown Consultation Coordinator, IAAC leads the Government of Canada's consultation team on impact assessments, by coordinating the participation of other federal authorities or lifecycle regulators as appropriate, enabling a 'one window' point of contact for Indigenous groups throughout the impact assessment process.



## 2. Description of the Proposed Project

Probe Gold Inc. is proposing the construction and operation of a new open-pit and underground gold mine, located about 25 kilometres east of Val-d'Or, Quebec. As proposed, the Novador Gold Mine Project would have a maximum ore production capacity of 24,000 tonnes per day with an estimated lifespan of 12.5 years. The project would include an ore processing plant, access roads, waste rock and overburden piles, and a tailings storage facility.

For more information on the Novador Gold Mine Project name or to read more information and comments received, visit the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (Registry) at [Novador Gold Mine Project](#).

## 3. Indigenous Peoples

IAAC identified the following lists of Indigenous communities that may be potentially impacted by the Project. This includes Indigenous communities where the Project may adversely impact the exercise of rights of Indigenous Peoples as recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, and Indigenous Peoples with rights or interests where an assessment of factors under section 22 of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) may be required.

The lists of Indigenous communities identified may change as knowledge of the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction and potential impacts of the Project is gained, or as the Project design develops over the course of the impact assessment process. IAAC reserves the right to modify the lists based on additional information gathered during the impact assessment process.

Although the impact assessment process is not a rights-determination process, IAAC acknowledges that the content and extent of the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate varies according to the nature of the rights (established or potential) and the severity of the Project's potential impact on these rights. IAAC's assessment of the extent of the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate is, at the time of publication of this IEPP, in its preliminary phase. IAAC wishes to complete this exercise in collaboration with Indigenous communities throughout the impact assessment process.

The Government of Canada is committed to renewing its relationship with Indigenous Peoples by implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act*. This involves the respect of rights, cooperation, partnership and carrying out impact assessments in a manner that emphasizes the need to seek free, prior, and informed consent and support self-determination. IAAC is supporting this commitment through this IEPP.



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## 3.1 List of Indigenous communities targeted by Crown consultations

IAAC will consult with Indigenous communities listed in Table 1 below to understand the concerns and potential impacts of the Project on their ability to exercise Indigenous rights, on their values, and interests and, where appropriate, to accommodate the impacts. These consultations will comprise an integral part of the work that will support the assessment of the Project.

The Indigenous communities listed in Table 1 that make up the Consultation list were informed of the Novador Gold Mine Project during the Planning Phase of the Project's impact assessment process. The Consultation list reflects Indigenous communities that IAAC understands to have a high likelihood of a potential adverse impact from the Project on their Indigenous rights. IAAC may modify the list based on additional information gathered during the impact assessment process.

**Table 1: Indigenous communities to be consulted by IAAC**

Lac Simon Anishnabe Nation
Abitibiwinni First Nation
Communauté anicinape de Kitcisakik

## 4. Engagement and Consultation Objectives and Tools

Indigenous communities have identified the objectives of the impact assessment process and tools listed in Table 2 regarding their participation in the impact assessment process:

**Table 2: Indigenous engagement approaches and activities**

Common Objectives Defined by Indigenous Communities	Implementation Methods by IAAC	Agency Engagement Tools
<b>Federal Crown Consultation and Coordination of Consultation Processes</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect the autonomy and realities of each Indigenous community in relation to others, and their freedom of association,</li> <li>• Respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular the principle of free, prior and informed consent;</li> </ul>	<p>The engagement activities will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tailored to the specific needs and desires of each community; and</li> <li>• inclusive to allow for diverse participation (e.g., accessibility of meeting locations, timing of meetings, transportation, childcare, size of discussion groups, door prizes to encourage participation).</li> </ul> <p>Provide workshops and training during the impact assessment process, as required.</p> <p>Access to adequate financial support to sustain meaningful participation of Indigenous communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual meetings, face-to-face meetings, surveys, etc.</li> <li>• When organizing face-to-face meetings, discuss location and format with communities</li> <li>• <a href="#">Participant Funding Program</a></li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration and Communication</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a positive working relationship and direct communication channel with IAAC:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consultations that respect the consultation protocols and approaches preferred by Indigenous community representatives to consult their members;</li> <li>○ Recognition that Indigenous communities are best placed to consult their members;</li> <li>○ Creating an ethical space for exchange and collaboration, in which knowledge systems can interact with mutual respect and are equal in merit.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Continuous, open and transparent communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in a format that uses simple terms and is validated by the community.</li> <li>• as far in advance as possible;</li> <li>• by including comment period deadlines in all IAAC communications;</li> <li>• following-up, by e-mail or telephone, to confirm receipt of documents and provide reminders of deadlines;</li> <li>• by sending e-mail notifications for the publication of relevant documents and notices on the Registry website.</li> </ul> <p>Sharing clear information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timetable and deadlines for the impact assessment process;</li> <li>• the availability of funding and the application process;</li> <li>• the workload expected of Indigenous communities.</li> </ul> <p>When organizing consultation activities, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• oral comments from Indigenous community members as seriously and with the same consideration as if they had been submitted in writing;</li> <li>• cultural elements, including the seasonality of activities, cultural protocols and spirituality;</li> <li>• use of Indigenous language and place names, wherever possible to encourage exchanges;</li> <li>• prior feedback from community members on IAAC presentation tools and visual (PowerPoint presentations, posters, flyers, etc.) targeting community members (elders, youth, women's groups, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mails or calls;</li> <li>• In-person or virtual meetings, information sessions or workshops;</li> <li>• Comments submitted online on the Registry website or directly by e-mail;</li> <li>• Main community communication tools (assembly, social media, newspapers, radio, etc.);</li> <li>• Post relevant documents and notices on the Registry website.</li> </ul>



	<p>If possible, IAAC will work to have key summaries and meetings held in Indigenous communities translated into English and/or Indigenous languages.</p>	
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## 5. Engagement and Consultation Approach

During the Planning phase, before issuing its opinion on 6 May 2024 on the need for an impact assessment, IAAC consulted Indigenous communities on the Initial Project Description and prepared the Summary of Issues. IAAC then forwarded the proponent this summary, which included the main issues identified by Indigenous communities, so that the proponent can explain how it wants to address them. Following receipt of the Detailed Project Description and the proponent's response to the Summary of Issues, IAAC then sought comments from Indigenous communities on draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (this document). IAAC has taken the comments received into consideration in finalizing these documents.

Indigenous Peoples listed in Table 1 who wish to develop a community-specific consultation plan with IAAC are encouraged to express their interest to IAAC as soon as possible, if they have not already done so, in order for this plan to be prepared during the Impact Statement phase.

The table below provides a description of the main phases in the impact assessment process and methods of engagement, including opportunities for collaboration between IAAC and Indigenous Peoples during the impact assessment process.

**Table 3: Table of Indigenous engagement approaches and activities**

Planned activities by IAAC	Participation/activities expected from Indigenous communities
<b>Phase 2: Impact Statement</b>	
<p><b>IAAC objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase Indigenous communities' awareness and understanding of the impact assessment process.</li> <li>✓ Provide Indigenous communities funding to support their participation for the remainder of the impact assessment process.</li> <li>✓ Encourage Indigenous communities to share their traditional knowledge and information that could inform the proponent's Impact Statement.</li> <li>✓ Obtain comments and views from Indigenous communities on the proponent's Impact Statement.</li> <li>✓ Notify communities of key steps in the process, such as the receipt of the Impact Statement and the comment period on the Impact Statement.</li> <li>✓ Identify potential impacts on the exercise of Indigenous rights, and avoidance, mitigation or accommodation measures in collaboration with Indigenous communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Up to three (3) years (excluding any extension of the time limit).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IAAC sends correspondence detailing how comments made by Indigenous communities on the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and the IEPP have been considered;</li> <li>• IAAC administers participant funding for the remainder of the impact assessment process;</li> <li>• IAAC works with Indigenous communities to implement the IEPP;</li> <li>• IAAC shares information and provides training to Indigenous communities on the impact assessment process;</li> <li>• IAAC works with Indigenous communities to develop and implement community-specific consultation plans, including the identification of partnership approaches where appropriate;</li> <li>• IAAC has dialogue with interested Indigenous communities to finalize approach to the assessment of impacts on their exercise of their rights and interests;</li> <li>• IAAC provides Indigenous communities with information on protecting confidential information;</li> <li>• IAAC posts the proponent's Impact Statement on the Registry website and sends notification e-mails to Indigenous communities;</li> <li>• IAAC works with Indigenous communities to develop partnership approaches, where appropriate, for the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous communities apply for funding to participate in the remaining stages of the impact assessment process.</li> <li>• Indigenous communities provide input on partnership opportunities and ways they can participate in the assessment process to inform the drafting and implementation of consultation plans tailored to their communities.</li> <li>• Indigenous communities who wish to do so work with IAAC to establish a collaborative approach to assessing the potential impacts of the project on Indigenous communities and the exercise of their rights.</li> <li>• Potentially affected Indigenous communities express interests to the proponent in funding to conduct studies related to the impact assessment.</li> <li>• Indigenous communities communicate their comments on the potential impacts of the project on the exercise of their rights with the proponent to inform the impact statement, and with IAAC to support its review of the impact statement. Where appropriate, these comments may include Indigenous knowledge.</li> <li>• Indigenous communities work with the proponent to gather relevant information about the project's potential positive and negative effects (direct and indirect), and discuss mitigation and monitoring measures to inform the proponent's impact assessment.</li> <li>• Potentially affected Indigenous communities who wish to do so express interest to the proponent in writing</li> </ul>



Planned activities by IAAC	Participation/activities expected from Indigenous communities
<p>review of the proponent's Impact Statement;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAAC informs Indigenous communities of the collaborative approaches put in place between IAAC and other jurisdictions and, where appropriate, of the way in which comments and information from Indigenous communities will be shared with other jurisdictions;</li> <li>IAAC holds a comment period on the Impact Statement. Comments will help determine whether the Impact Statement contains all the studies and information required in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines. Indigenous communities will also be able to share their comments on the project's effects, the avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures required, and the follow-up program;</li> <li>IAAC, where appropriate, organizes meetings between the proponent, federal authorities, Indigenous communities to discuss technical issues.</li> <li>If necessary, IAAC will request additional information from the proponent.</li> </ul>	<p>the section of the Impact Statement covering impacts on their rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous communities present their comments on the proponent's impact statement to IAAC.</li> </ul>
Planned Activities by IAAC	Participation/activities expected from Indigenous communities
<p><b>Phase 3: Impact Assessment</b></p> <p><b>IAAC objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase Indigenous communities' awareness and understanding of the impact assessment process.</li> <li>✓ Prepare IAAC's analysis and preliminary conclusions related to the project's potential impact on Indigenous communities, hold consultations on the subject, and transmit the analysis and preliminary conclusions to Indigenous communities.</li> <li>✓ Obtain comments on the draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions.</li> <li>✓ Collaborate with Indigenous communities, if they wish so, in assessing the potential impact of the project on Indigenous communities and the exercise of their rights.</li> <li>✓ Notify Indigenous communities of key steps in the process, such as the comment period on the draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Up to 300 days (excluding any timeline extension).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAAC administers participant funding throughout the impact assessment process.</li> <li>IAAC works with Indigenous communities to implement the IEPP and any community specific consultation plan, where applicable.</li> <li>IAAC assesses the impact on the exercise of Indigenous rights in collaboration with Indigenous communities that so wish.</li> <li>IAAC works with Indigenous communities to validate its preliminary analysis and conclusions regarding the project's potential impact on Indigenous communities and their rights.</li> <li>IAAC consults Indigenous communities on any proposed complementary or other accommodation measures relating to potential adverse impacts on the exercise of their rights.</li> <li>IAAC posts the draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions on the Registry website and informs Indigenous communities by e-mail.</li> <li>IAAC informs Indigenous communities of the collaborative approaches put in place between IAAC and other bodies and, where appropriate, of the way in which comments and information from Indigenous communities will be shared with other bodies.</li> <li>IAAC holds a comment period on the draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions. Comments will help finalize IAAC's recommendation to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous communities cooperate with or validate IAAC's preliminary analysis and conclusions regarding the project's potential impact on Indigenous communities and the exercise of their rights or interests;</li> <li>Indigenous communities who wish to do so participate in co-drafting the analysis of potential impacts on their rights.</li> <li>Indigenous communities provide feedback to IAAC on the adequacy of consultation throughout the assessment process.</li> <li>Indigenous communities comment on IAAC's draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions.</li> </ul>



Planned activities by IAAC	Participation/activities expected from Indigenous communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAAC sends information describing how comments received during a comment period and at meetings have been considered.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Phase 4: Decision</b></p> <p><b>IAAC objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Inform the proponent, Indigenous communities and the public about the Decision Statement issued by the Minister.</li> <li>✓ Increase awareness and understanding of the Decision Statement, including reasons for the Minister's decision or the Governor in Council's determination, and the conditions, where applicable.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Up to 30 days if the determination is made by the Minister, or up to 90 days if the Minister refers the determination to the Governor in Council (excluding any timeline extension).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAAC submits the Impact Assessment Report to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. The report includes the views of Indigenous communities.</li> <li>IAAC posts the Decision Statement on the Registry website, including the reasons for the public interest determination and conditions, where applicable.</li> <li>IAAC maintains an ongoing dialogue with Indigenous communities, informing them of the Minister's Decision Statement and providing them with opportunities to learn about next steps post-impact assessment decision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous communities may choose to make their own independent submissions directly to the Minister, to help inform the federal decision-making process.</li> <li>Indigenous communities are informed of the Minister's decision and next steps post-impact assessment decision.</li> </ul>
Planned Activities by IAAC	Participation/activities expected from Indigenous communities
<p><b>Phase 5: Post-Decision</b></p> <p><b>IAAC objectives (if the project is approved):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Post information relating to follow-up and monitoring activities and the results of the follow-up program on the Registry website.</li> <li>✓ If amendments are required, obtain comments on potential amendments to the Decision Statement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Begins after the Decision Statement is issued to the proponent and is ongoing.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAAC facilitates the transfer of the federal Crown consultation file to federal authorities, for post-decision regulatory approvals.</li> <li>IAAC posts the results of monitoring and surveillance activities on the Registry website.</li> <li>IAAC undertakes compliance and enforcement activities and posts the results on the Registry website.</li> <li>IAAC consults on possible amendments to the Decision Statement, should an amendment be required.</li> <li>Where appropriate, IAAC posts a notice of decision modifying the Decision Statement, together with the reasons for the modifications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community participation according to the timeline and activities set out in the Decision Statement.</li> <li>Indigenous communities submit comments to IAAC on possible amendments to the Decision Statement, should an amendment be required.</li> <li>Indigenous communities participate in any follow-up and monitoring programs included in the Decision Statement.</li> <li>For questions or comments about IAAC's compliance and enforcement program and policies, or if the public has reason to believe that there has been a contravention of the IAA, please report it to IAAC at <a href="mailto:compliance-conformite@iaac-aeic.gc.ca">compliance-conformite@iaac-aeic.gc.ca</a>.</li> </ul>



## 6. Participant Funding

In addition to the funding already offered during the planning phase, IAAC is offering funding to support Indigenous communities to participate throughout the impact assessment process. The opportunity to submit applications for funding will be made available to the Indigenous communities during the Impact Statement phase. This participant funding will support the Indigenous communities to comment on the proponent's Impact Statement, as well as IAAC's draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions.

For information about the activities that are eligible for funding or to apply for funding, see the Participant Funding Program National Program Guidelines and application at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/public-participation-impact-assessments/funding-programs.html>.

## 7. Federal Agencies' Roles and Responsibilities

The Permitting Plan, available at the end of the Planning phase describes the permits and authorizations that may be required for the Project to proceed.

Federal authorities identified in the Permitting Plan, as well as those with additional expert advice, will engage as needed with IAAC, proponent, Indigenous communities and other parties to clarify information requirements related to its specialist or expert information and knowledge. Throughout the impact assessment process, federal authorities may also review and analyze the proponent's Impact Statement, support and participate in IAAC's Crown consultation activities, and support IAAC and Indigenous communities in understanding, assessing and addressing impacts on the exercise of Indigenous rights.

IAAC is the federal Crown Consultation Coordinator to facilitate the impact assessment process. IAAC has collaborated and will continue to collaborate with all federal authorities and use their expertise throughout all stages of the impact assessment.

## 8. How to Submit Comments

Comments can be submitted at any time during the impact assessment process using the "submit a comment" feature on the Registry website ([reference number 86020](#)). Attachments can also be uploaded using this function.



If you have any difficulties with the submission process, please contact IAAC, using the contact information below. Comments may also be submitted through other means, including by e-mail to the consulting analyst assigned to the file or to [Novador@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:Novador@iaac-aeic.gc.ca).

Comments and other documents received by IAAC will form part of the Project file and will be posted on the Registry website, with the exception of comments or documents deemed confidential or subject to a nondisclosure clause. The [IAAC's Submission Policy](#) determines what information can be shared publicly and what information should remain private. For more information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the [IAAC's Privacy Notice](#). If you do not want your comment to be posted on the Registry website, please contact IAAC at the coordinates below before submitting your comment or document.

Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence is protected from disclosure under section 119 of the IAA, except if written consent is provided, or if the information is publicly available. In addition, Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence could be shared with certain parties if disclosure is necessary for procedural fairness and natural justice, or for use in legal proceedings. This ensures that interested persons have a fair opportunity to participate in processes that would likely affect their interests, and that they have access to all the necessary information and evidence relied on by the decision maker.

Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Novador Gold Mine Project team (contact below) before submitting the information. This will ensure that your submission is handled appropriately. Note that the Agency will consult you prior to disclosing Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence under an exception.

A summary of comments received during the impact assessment process will also be added to IAAC's Impact Assessment Report.

## 9. Contact Information

For any questions or additional information, please contact IAAC office responsible for coordinating the Impact Assessment process for this project:

### **Novador Gold Mine Project**

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

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