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Environmental Monitoring Program

The amount of data collected and rigor of the study methods used bears witness to the level of environmental stewardship PT Newmont Minahasa Raya (PT NMR) observed during eight years of operation in Northern Sulawesi.

The company reported its environmental monitoring data on a quarterly basis to the Government of Indonesia. In addition to measures required by the government, PT NMR tracked other data in accordance with Newmont's own internal management systems. For example, the company drew more than 3,000 samples from the tailings discharge system from 1996 to 2004. Almost 500 seawater quality samples were collected, analyzed, and the results reported to the government. Monitoring continues throughout the closure process.

Other monitoring efforts include:

- Detoxification of tailings
- Air quality around mine site
- Surface water quality outside mining area
- Ground water quality
- Ground water quality at community wells
- Sea water quality
- Fish tissue analysis
- Fish catch survey
- Operating performance
- Climate
- Reclamation of marine benthic ecosystem
- Near shore sedimentation

Not only did PT NMR monitor the tailings site, but it continuously checked other marine sites to ensure that any effects of tailings placement were as predicted in the ANDAL, and that there were no impacts to surface water or coastal environments. Data from samples collected by other agencies — such as the Ministry of the Environment's Technical Team, the government of Northern Sulawesi, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, and Sam Ratulangi University — verified that the impacts of tailings were as predicted and did not increase the amount of heavy metals in the surface water or fish.

Analyses to date have confirmed predictions of the ANDAL and demonstrated that submarine tailings had no significant adverse impact on people or fish. The results show that the fish from Buyat Bay have not been impacted by the submarine tailings placement system, are comparable in quality to fish found elsewhere in the world and are safe to eat.

(See also Backgrounder 3 on Water and Fish Sampling and Analysis.)