

Mining the Connections 2022

International Multi-Network Hybrid
Conference on mining encounters

April 25-27, 2022 - Château Laurier
Quebec, Canada



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Overview of the topics covered

Stem from a partnership between the MinErAL and AMR2D-AMEDEE research networks, the conference featured 124 papers in 25 sessions, 10 roundtables and 2 workshops. Themes included social acceptability, law, mining governance, industrial relations, technology, sustainable development, impacts of mining activities on water and issues related to mine site reclamation.

During the plenary sessions, Canadian, Guatemalan and Scandinavian Indigenous leaders shared their experiences with mining development. We had the opportunity to hear from Jenny Wik Karlsson, legal counsel for the Samidd Riikkasearvi Association in Sweden, Réal McKenzie, Chief of Matimekush Lac-John, Jerry Natanine, Executive Director of the community of Clyde River, activist Maudilia Lopez Cardona, Deputy Grand Chief of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, and Andy Moorhouse, Vice President of Economic Development for Makivik Corporation.

Based on the different stages of a mine's life cycle, the conference program began with a panel discussion on community consultation and participation upstream of the regulatory process and the resulting issues for mining exploration companies.



Réal McKenzie, Chief of Matimekush Lac-John

In parallel, a roundtable on Canada’s impact assessment processes was held, bringing together members of the Environmental Public Hearing Office, the Environmental and Social Impact Review Committee, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and the Kativik Environmental Quality Commission.

In the roundtable discussion «Mining Development, Indigenous Communities and Free, Prior and Informed Consent,» panelists from Senegal’s Ministry of Mines and Geology, the West African Economic and Monetary Union, and Women and Mining of West Africa presented case studies offering a more sustainable perspective on mining and community development.



Fabrice Colin, Principal investigator of the Amedee Network

Bringing together a panel from the academic and private sectors, the round table «Research and Innovation in Digital Science and Technology for Mining» proposed solutions for a more responsible and controlled mining activity.

In his workshop, Christophe Hanne Coulibaly of the Alliance for Responsible Mining highlighted the economic, social and environmental impacts of artisanal and small-scale mining on local populations and identified solutions to mitigate the risks.



Christophe Hanne Coulibaly, Alliance for Responsible Mining

The workshop «La mine à la croisée des savoirs anthropo-écologiques et des pratiques artistiques» (The mine at the crossroads of anthropo-ecological knowledge and artistic practices) approached mining from an interdisciplinary perspective, bringing together researchers in the social sciences and artists to dialogue together on the socio-political, scientific and artistic practices concerning mining activities.

Two panel discussions rounded out the conference. Moderated by Arn Keeling and Sarah Holcombe, the panel discussion «Aboriginal Experiences and Perceptions of Mine Closure» highlighted the asymmetrical power relations inherent in mine closure, the inseparability of ecological, social and health impacts, the opportunities that closure and reclamation offer to Aboriginal people and businesses, and the possibility that mine closure can lead to healing.

Finally, the round table «Sustainable economic diversification after primary mining activity» led by Fabrice Colin and Clément Levard, explored different avenues to move mining activity towards a social and economic model that is circular and horizontal on a territorial scale. Among the options considered, we find, for example, the valorization of elements from secondary sources, including in particular the recycling of manufactured products at the end of their life, their recovery from mine tailings, urban and industrial waste.

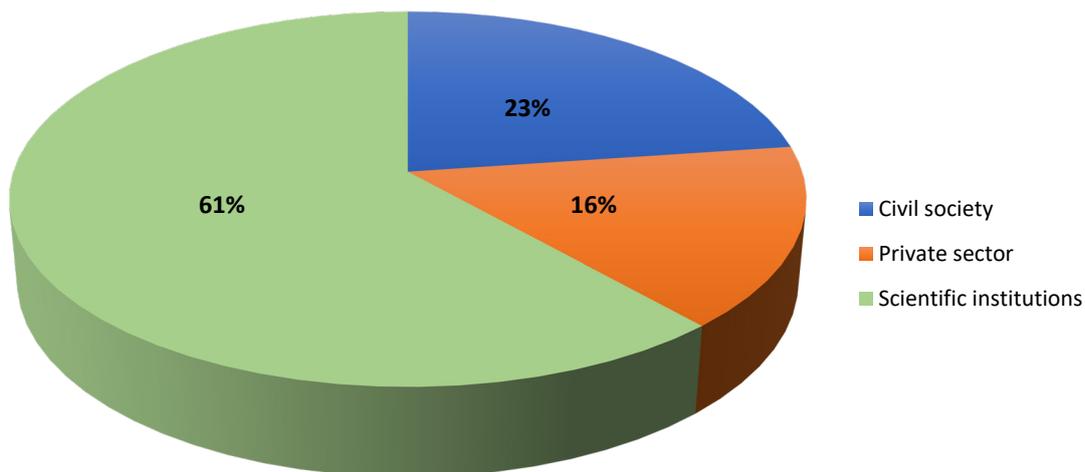


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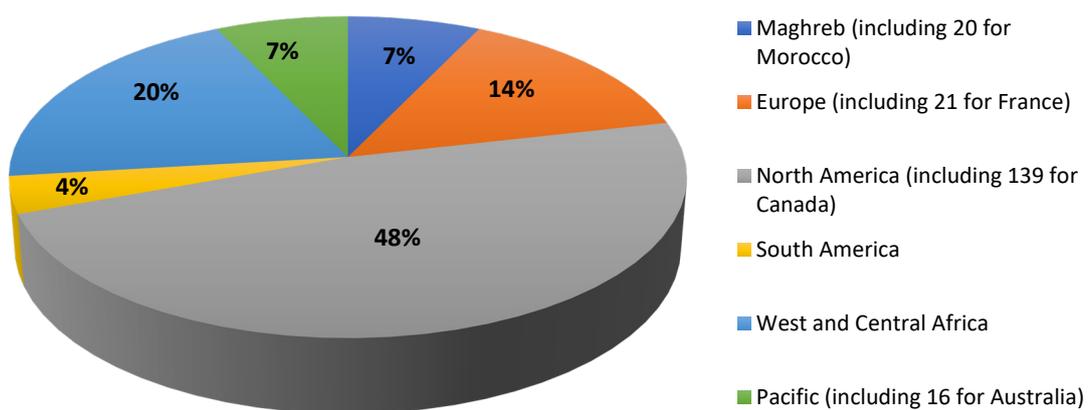
I would like to thank you all for your outstanding contribution to the success of the Conference and for the smooth running of the stay in Quebec City. I have great memories of it. I hope that we will have more of these moments together.

Key figures of the conference

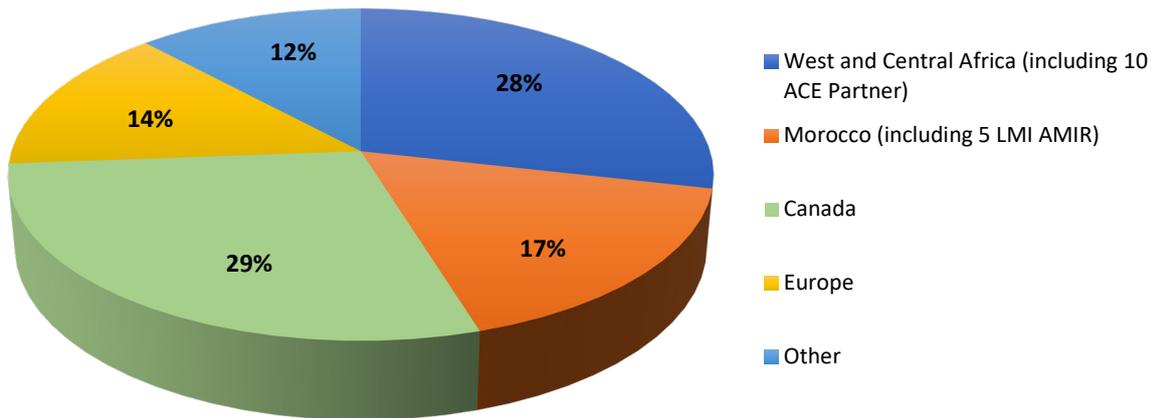
Distribution of participants



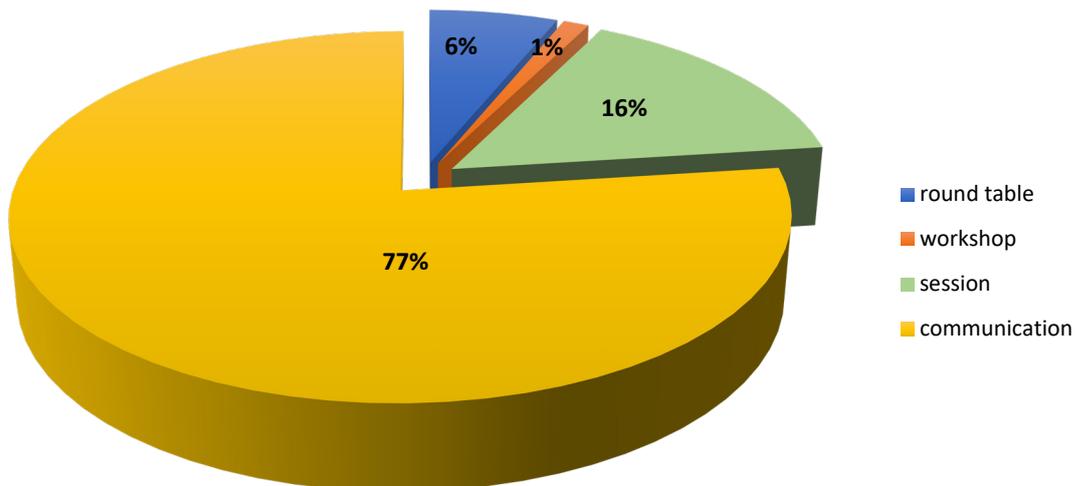
Distribution of participants by region



Distribution of PhD students



Format of the conference



Visit of former mining sites in the Thetford Mines region

After the conference, participants were able to continue their discussions on the issues surrounding mine reclamation during a field trip to Thetford Mines. The day began with a bus tour of the old mining sites.



Our guide, Jacques Longval, a former miner from the area, spoke about the economic importance of chrysotile asbestos for the Thetford Mines region, the conditions under which the fibre was mined and the health issues for workers and residents of the city. Concerns about the safety of asbestos led to the decline of this industry in the 1980s.



A visit to the Black Lake Observatory, a former mining site that is currently being revitalized, allowed us to see the footprint left by the asbestos mines on the landscape of the region, but also the various restoration initiatives that have been put in place.

One of these initiatives is phytoremediation, which consists of decontaminating a mine site by growing certain species of plants that have the ability to filter residues from the soil. A visit to the facilities of the company Englobe, which uses this process as part of its activities, allowed us to learn more about the various aspects of mine reclamation.

After lunch at a local microbrewery, we visited the Musée minéralogique et minier de Thetford Mines, where we were able to learn about the history of the Asbestos region, thanks to the various artifacts, photographs and minerals that bear witness to its mining heritage. Participants were also able to take an interactive tour of abandoned mining sites using virtual reality headsets.





Organizing Committee

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