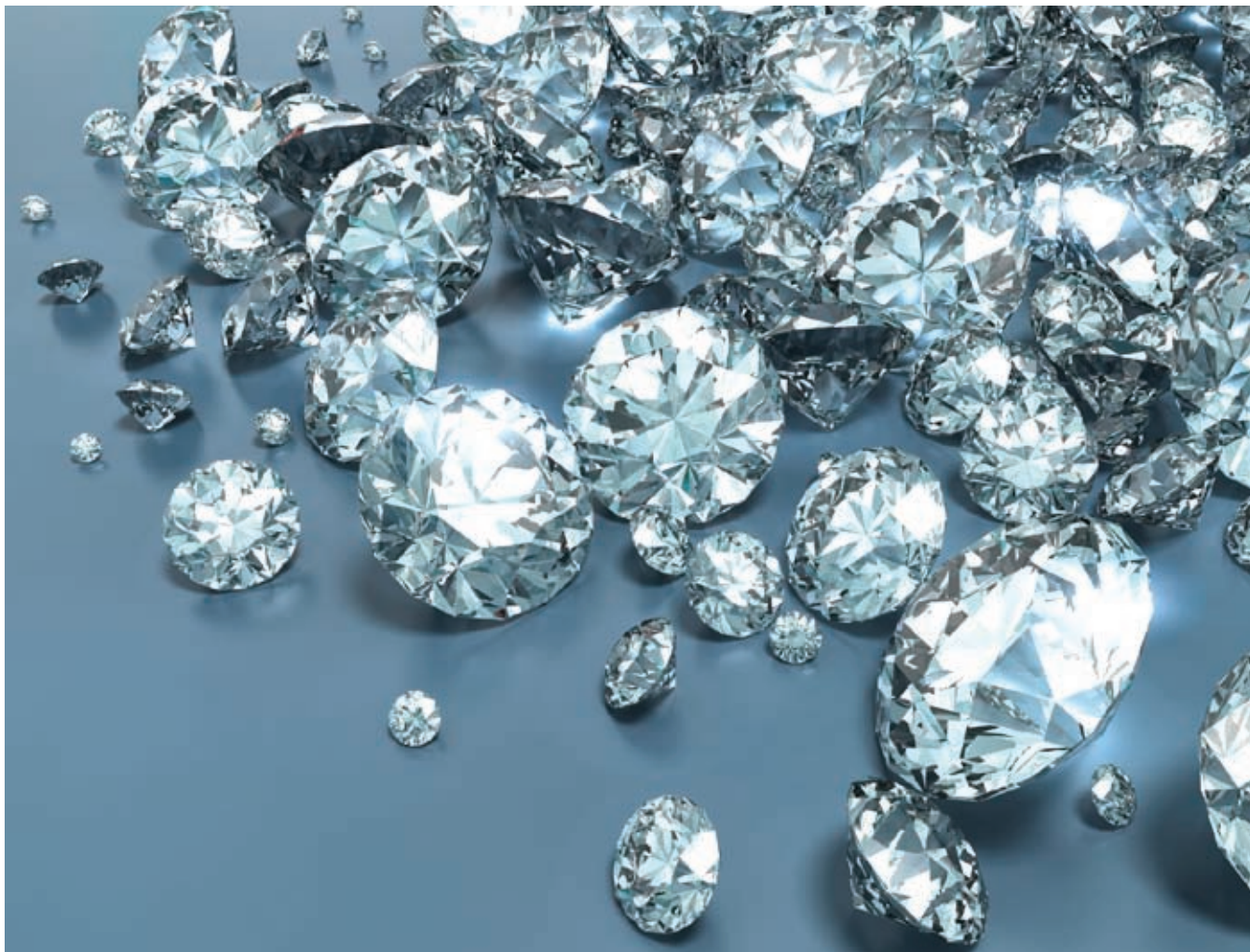


Canada: A Diamond-Producing Nation



The Canadian diamond mining industry employs about 2,650 people in mine operations and more than 1,500 on-site workers.

By [Natural Resources Canada](#)

For many years, the thought of finding [diamonds in Canada](#) was little more than a prospector's dream. But that dream became a reality following the discovery, in the 1990s, of several world-class diamond-bearing deposits in [Canada's north](#).

[Diamond exploration](#) began in Canada as early as the 1960s, but major kimberlite discoveries were not made until the 1980s. In 1991, the first economically viable diamond deposit was discovered in the [Lac de Gras](#) area of the [Northwest Territories](#). Canada became a diamond producer in October 1998 when the [Ekati diamond mine](#) opened about 300 kilometres northeast of [Yellowknife](#). By April 1999, the mine had produced one million carats. And by 2003, Canada had become the [world's third largest diamond producer](#) on a value basis after [Botswana](#) and [Russia](#).

Canadian Diamond Industry

[Canada's diamond industry](#) has now become an industry worth in the range of \$1.5–2.0 billion, with all indicators pointing to the potential for future growth. Canadian diamond production in 2007 was about 17 million carats, which represents a significant increase over the 13.2 million carats produced in 2006.

[Diavik](#), Canada's second diamond mine, began production in January 2003. During its projected 20-year life, average diamond production from this mine is expected to be eight million carats a year and to peak at 11 million carats — about six percent of the world's total supply.

[Ekati](#)'s average production over its projected 20-year life is expected to be three to five million carats a year, which represents about three percent of world production by volume.

[Snap Lake](#), which is located in the Northwest Territories about 220 kilometers northeast of Yellowknife and is fully owned by [De Beers Canada](#), started production in early autumn 2007

and is expected to produce about 1.5 million carats a year in full production. The Snap Lake deposit is unique in that the diamondiferous kimberlite is in the form of a dyke rather than the more common carrot-shaped pipe. The kimberlite that is to be mined over the project's life is estimated at 18.3 million tonnes, with a grade of 1.46 carats per tonne.

The [Victor Project](#), Ontario's first diamond mine, began development in January 2006 and came into production in spring 2008. The Victor pipe has mineable reserves estimated at 27.4 Mt, averaging 0.23 ct/t. While the ore grade is low, the value of the diamonds extracted, at about \$440 per carat, is one of the highest in the world. At full capacity, the mine is expected to produce about 600,000 carats a year over a 12-year open-pit mine life.

Together with these mines, advanced mining projects, such as [Gahcho Kué](#) in the Northwest Territories, [Foxtrot](#) in Quebec, [Fort à la Corne and Star](#) in Saskatchewan and the numerous advanced exploration projects across Canada, ensure prosperous times to come for the economies of many regions.

Cutting and Polishing

Canada has a small diamond manufacturing industry. In 2007, there were six diamond manufacturers operating across Canada, located in Yellowknife (Northwest Territories), [Vancouver](#) (British Columbia) and [Matane](#) (Quebec). These cutting and polishing factories employ about 150 workers. The largest of these facilities has an output of up to 1,200 carats a month.

Employment

The Canadian diamond mining industry employs about 2,650 people in mine operations and more than 1,500 on-site workers, through contractors, in support industries such as maintenance, catering and transport. Aboriginal persons comprise in general 30 to 40 percent of the workforce at mines.

Kimberley Process for Rough Diamonds

The [Kimberley Process](#) was initiated by [South Africa in May 2000](#) to develop an international certification scheme for rough diamonds to help prevent conflict diamonds from entering legitimate markets. Conflict diamonds originate in areas controlled by rebel groups and are often used to fund military action that targets governments.

[Canada was a key player](#) in the development of this initiative and, since its inception on January 1, 2003, has been a leader in the implementation of the process to control the conflict diamond trade internationally. Canada passed legislation to control the import, export and transit of rough diamonds in Canada. By participating in the Kimberley Process, Canada is doing its part to halt the devastating impact that trade in conflict diamonds is having on peace, security and sustainable development in affected countries.

Diamonds and Sustainable Development

Canada's diamond industry is part of a minerals and metals industry that is one of the world's largest producers and exporters. This highly productive and technologically advanced sector provides a source of stable, high income for northern, remote and Aboriginal communities.

Canadian mining companies are also leading the way in integrating sustainable development in their activities in Canada and abroad. The Canadian mining industry was the first in the world to develop and adopt a national environmental policy. On the international front, some of Canada's major mining companies are involved in projects ranging from delivering health, water and electricity services to reintegrating workers in their communities.

[Natural Resources Canada](#) advances the Government of Canada's commitment to the sustainable development of our natural resources by contributing to their economic importance and to a strong society and communities through knowledge, innovation, technology and international leadership.

By integrating our economic, social and environmental goals, we can ensure a high quality of life and build the Canada we want, for ourselves and for future generations.

For more detailed information on diamond mining in Canada, visit the [Canadian Minerals Yearbook](#) site to access the latest review on diamonds. ■

Links and References

- [Blood Diamonds and the Kimberly Process: Five Years later](#)
- [Canada's Diamond Rush](#)
- [Canadian Diamond Code of Conduct](#)
- [City of Yellowknife](#)
- [City of Vancouver](#)
- [De Beers Canada](#)
- [Diamonds Adding Lustre to the Canadian Economy](#)
- [Diamonds around the World](#)
- [Diamond Cutting Vocabulary](#)
- [Diamond Exploration in Canada](#)
- [Diamonds \(Earth Sciences Sector\)](#)
- [Diamonds Glitter on Quebec Horizon](#)
- [Diamonds: Still Shining Brightly for Canada's North](#)
- [Ekati Diamond Mine](#)
- [Formation of Diamonds \(animation\)](#)
- [Future of Russia's Diamond Exports Shines Brightly](#)
- [Gahcho Kué](#)
- [Government of the Northwest Territories](#)
- [Growth and Diversification of the Diamond Industry](#)
- [International Kimberley Process](#)
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- [N.W.T. Diamond Facts](#)
- [Overview of Trends in Canadian Mineral Exploration](#)
- [South Africa's Role in the Kimberley Process](#)
- [The Sparkling History of Botswana](#)
- [The Star and Orion South Kimberlites, Fort à la Corne](#)
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