

Bench Marks calls for more inclusive negotiations

October 2008

The Bench Marks Foundation has called on the Department of Mining and Energy (DME) to include more stakeholders when it sits down to review the Mining Charter next year.

The Mining Charter is coming to an end of its initial timeframe and Bench Marks Foundation has proposed that the definition of the term 'stakeholders' needs to be broadened and become more inclusive of South Africa's different communities.

"The definition of 'stakeholders' should include affected communities, women's groups, The Human Rights Commission, NGOs, environmental lobbyists, HIV/Aids lobbyists and faith based organisations.

"Such widening of the scope of participants will allow for a charter or a code that is not only inclusive but will effectively address the wide range of mining impacts that fell between the cracks in the original Mining Charter", said John Capel, Bench Marks Foundation's Executive Director.

Formerly known as the Broad Based Socio Economic Charter for the Mining Industry, the Mining Charter was implemented four years ago with the aim of transforming South African mining industry.

"The limits of the original Charter stemmed from the fact that it was pushed through post haste and involved only the government, the industry and unions. It would be a great pity if this time around the opportunity to be more inclusive is missed," Capel said.