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To:  
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[GSPD](#)  
Consultation on mineral exploration and mining  
Friday 15 October 2021 13:47:50

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Dear GSPD,

Thank you for the opportunity to input on this.

Our background is working with mineral exploration, mining, oil and gas and renewable energy companies throughout Europe and further afield to design projects wanted by both the investors in the companies and the host communities.

As you may imagine, we have had many a challenge.

We have been undertaking projects in Ireland since 2016.

Having gone through the Draft Policy Statement on Mineral Exploration and Mining in Ireland and associated SEA Environmental Report and AA Natura Impact Statement, the area which may need most building still is in the area of addressing social impacts. This in turn touches on the environment assessments as relationships with communities often benefit from doing participatory impact assessments. The approach we have seen working best is to animate proactive engagement between the host community community and the explorer/developer to a point where win-win co-design becomes possible.

To give some idea of what we are talking about, we have recently completed a year long study part funded by the SEAI on how to earn local support for wind energy projects in Ireland. It is available here: <https://www.astoneco.com/earning-local-support-energy-projects-ireland>. We submit this as part of our submission - to be considered as a piece of work needed for exploration and mining in Ireland to support the strengthening of the social side of the policy you are developing. The aim at the end is to have a more successful industry while meeting more fully the sustainable development policies within Ireland and the EU.


Section 1 gives an overview, section 2 a situation analysis, section three a literature review for earning a social license, section 4 The Guide and section 6 case studies where the Guide is being applied. We can organise a presentation should this be useful for you and your team, and look then at what the differences might be for exploration and mining.

Wishing you the best with the policy - great to see positive movement in this area.

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Managing Director  
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[www.astoneco.com](http://www.astoneco.com)



Earning local support for energy projects: <https://www.astoneco.com/earning-local-support-energy-projects-ireland#>

Co-implementing successful outcomes through stakeholder engagement: assessment & strategy, capacity building, co-design and joint projects.

Engagement that works: <https://www.routledge.com/Smart-Engagement-Why-What-Who-and-How/Aston-Knight/p/book/9781910174180>