



HIGHLAND GOLD MINING Ltd.

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Evaluation of efficiency of cooperation with the “EcoPartner” company

Since 2006 we have cooperated with different legal consulting companies for optimization of the company’s environment protection activity, its financial expenses in this sphere, and non-conflict interaction with local communities, the state bodies and environment protection structures during obtaining project permit documentation. Based on results of such companies services we consider the “EcoPartner” company to be the most effective one. It has great efficiency due to high professionalism and responsibility of its employees, high efficiency of rendering of a wide spectrum of services, its specialization in legal aspects, environment protection and ecological aspects of geological and mining branches in which our company works, and also due to the price policy of the company. There are several projects of our cooperation but the participation of the “EcoPartner” company in conflict resolution between the “Highland Exploration” and the Jalalabad Interregional Environment Protection Department (JIEPD) is one of the most prominent cases.

The essence of the conflict: The JIEPD has made considerable financial claims to our company based on results of the planned check of the company’s activity by the state bodies of environment protection. Part of the claims was indisputable so the company had accepted them. However most of the claims concerning infringements of the land due to the deviations from the project during technological roads construction were unreasonable and consequently they had not been accepted by the company.

The “EcoPartner” experts, with whom we have been cooperating on a contractual basis since the end of 2008, have analyzed the results of the check, the claims exposed on its basis, calculations of damages and the sums of penal sanctions. This analysis has revealed the state checking bodies’ infringements both of the checking procedures that puts in question the legality of its results and of the applied calculation techniques that discredits the volume of damages and the sum of financial claims. It became obvious that it was necessary to contest the check doubtful results and the penal sanctions exposed on their basis in a higher body – the State Agency for Environment Protection (the SAEP), and in court if needed.

The “EcoPartner” experts have accurately formulated and sent to the SAEP the legally verified counterclaims of the check results, thus initiating the contestation process. Later the whole process was under the “EcoPartner” experts’ control.

During contestation of the JIEPD claim the new scrupulous field recheck on disputable points of the planned check had been spent with participation of representatives of the “Highland Exploration”, the EcoPartner” company and the JIEPD. It is necessary to note especially high professionalism, adherence to principles and objectivity of the “EcoPartner” representative that allowed as much as possible to protect interests of the “Highland”, to avoid all distortions and abusing during the recheck. As its result the volume of the land occupied due to the deviation from the project has been lowered TWO times in comparison with the first assessment.

Results of disputable points recheck, diplomatic and legally competent advocacy of the techniques of applied damages assessment and other professional actions of the “EcoPartner” for protection of the “Highland Exploration” interests have led in total to the official revision of the planned check results and to FOUR times decrease in the initial sum of financial claims of the SAEP to the company.

The “EcoPartner” company has saved more than 600 thousands Kyrgyz soms of the “Highland Exploration” budgetary funds for further target use.

This example, along with many other cases during our cooperation, strengthens me even more in opinion that the “EcoPartner” company completely corresponds to its name as a reliable and effective partner capable to supplement organically any geological company.