



**SÁMIRÁÐÐI**  
SAMERÁDET  
SAAMELAISNEUVOSTO  
SÁMI COUNCIL  
COHO3 CAAMOB



**SÁMIID  
RIIKKASEARVI**  
Svenska Samernas Riksförbund - SSR



**mpi**  
mineral policy institute

## **Media Release - Friday 25 Nov 2011**

### **Saami Communities reject Australian mining proposal**

Scandinavian Resources (SCR), a small, Perth based, ASX listed exploration company, was criticised today about its plans to open several mines in the middle of critical reindeer herding habitat in northern Sweden that is essential for the survival of Saami reindeer herding as a traditional indigenous livelihood.

“We are absolutely opposed to exploration and mining on our traditional lands and we will do everything we can to stop this short-term plundering of our mountains” says Ingemar Blind, Chairman of the affected Girjas Saami Community. “We also know that other stakeholders in our region are of the same opinion and have grave concerns over the environmental damage mining will entail for our sensitive arctic environment” says Tor-Erik Huuva, Chairman of the affected Laevas Saami community.

Members of Girjas and Laevas communities acted to ensure their voices were heard at the Annual General Meeting of Scandinavian Resources, which is trying to develop the mines through their subsidiary Kiruna Iron. Scandinavian Resources planned mining activities would violate fundamental human rights of the local Saami reindeer herders. Those backing Kiruna Iron also contribute to human rights violations.

Today the Saami Council has again written to Canaccord Genuity and Parety Securities – financial institutions mandated by SCR to raise financing for the mines - and advised them of the high environmental and social risks associated with the projects.

“Without the consent of local Saami communities, these projects are doomed to fail,” says Mattias Åhrén, Chief Lawyer at Saami Council. “It is also ironic that a company with backing from Australia – a country where indigenous rights are well recognised – would come to Sweden and ignore the Saami people’s right to say no to exploration and mining”.

The Saami communities are opposed to any further mining in their areas and are being assisted in their campaign by Saami organisations, such as Saami Council and the National Swedish Saami Association, and also Australian based Mineral Policy Institute.

#### **Media Contacts:**

**Mattias Åhrén**, Chief Lawyer, Saami Council +47 47 37 91 61

**Charles Roche**, Mineral Policy Institute +61 (0)450 901 714

**Mats Berg**, Media Contact, Laevas and Girjas Saami Communities +46 70 397 6977



## **Statement from Saami Communities at Scandinavian Resources AGM** **25<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

Minerals Policy Institute is authorised, on behalf of Saami Council, the National Swedish Saami Association (SSR) and the local Saami reindeer herding communities of Girjas and Laevas, to read out the following statement at Scandinavian Resources AGM in Perth Australia on November 25th, 2011:

Scandinavian Resources, through their subsidiary Kiruna Iron AB, are planning mines on the traditional lands of the Indigenous Saami communities of Laevas and Girjas in the north of Sweden. These lands are of critical importance should the two reindeer herding communities be able to continuously pursue reindeer husbandry in the Arctic.

Mining in this area would leave 20,000 reindeer without grazing lands, and Saami families and communities without access to their customary lands. Reindeer herding is the central Saami traditional Indigenous livelihood and the key component of the communities' and their members' cultural and spiritual identity and is currently under enormous pressure from extractive industrial activities in Sápmi.

Given the devastating impacts Scandinavian Resources' proposed mining activities would have on Girjas and Laevas respectively, the communities will never consent to the projects. Rather, they will fight the planned mines to the largest extent possible. The Sami Parliament, Saami Council and the National Swedish Saami Association will do their utmost to support the communities in this struggle. They are optimistic that they will win this fight, as Scandinavian Resources' planned mines violate fundamental human rights of the reindeer herders.

The reindeer herding communities hold property rights to the areas in question under both national and international law. They hence have the right to reject companies wishing to access the areas. As a key element of the Saami culture and the cultural identity of Saami reindeer herders, reindeer herding is also protected under the right to culture.

The UN Human Rights Committee's application of Article 27 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirms that mining activities rendering it seriously more difficult for reindeer herding communities to continuously pursue reindeer husbandry are prohibited.

Should Scandinavian Resources go ahead with the planned mines, investors in Scandinavian Resources and anyone purchasing products originating from the areas in dispute are complacent in human rights violations, something the Saami Council will make absolutely clear to potential investors in and customers to Scandinavian Resources.

In conclusion, we submit that pursuing the two planned mines would be very bad business for Scandinavian Resources.

**Questions:**

The Saami communities welcomed a statement by Damien Hicks, Executive Director of Scandinavian Resources, made on the 28th August 2011 that the company cannot operate in an area without the support of local communities.

Given this, will Scandinavian Resources commit to a process of Free Prior and Informed Consent of the affected Saami reindeer herding communities as a prerequisite to mining?

If so, when will this process commence? If not, how will Scandinavian Resources achieve the necessary permits and how will it explain the risks of a confrontationist strategy to shareholders and investors?