**APPENDIX**

**DETAILS ABOUT THE METHODOLOGY**

Vanthuyne had been conducting research in Eeyou Istchee since 2011 (Vanthuyne 2021, 2019, 2017), when she was invited in 2013 by Rodney Mark, then Chief of Wemindji, to document his community’s experience with mining. Together with the Cree community’s Chief and Council, Vanthuyne decided to more specifically examine how it was able to exercise its sovereignty now that Eleonore had been built on its territory. With funding obtained in 2014 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Council (grant 4030-2014-00635), this collaborative research project was submitted to Wemindji’s Chief and Council, as well as the University of Ottawa’s Research Ethics Board for approval, which were both obtained in 2015. When signing their consent forms, research participants had the option to be identified or not in the publications. Therefore, only the research participants who have accepted to be identified are named in this article.

In total, Vanthuyne and Gauthier spent 6 and 4 months in Wemindji, respectively. During that time, they visited Eleonore, participated in mine related and non-related activities in the Wemindji, Val d’Or and Montreal, and had numerous informal conversations with various actors. Within Wemindji, Vanthuyne and Gauthier spoke to more than one hundred individuals, both those who identify as male and female, Cree and non-Cree, with different ages, socio-economic backgrounds, as well as community statuses (Cree elected and non-elected authorities, such as the *nituuhuuchimaauch*; Cree and non-Cree band council employees; and other Cree and non-Cree community residents). They also conducted formal interviews with 37 of these individuals. At Eleonore, they spoke to approximately ten employees, including male and female, Cree and non-Cree, with different socioeconomic backgrounds and employment statuses. Vanthuyne and Gauthier’s observations and conversations were recorded through daily notetaking, while interviews were audio-recorded and translated verbatim. These conversations and interviews were mostly conducted in English, but some were conducted in French when it was the interlocutor’s first language.

Data analysis was iterative. Vanthuyne roughly categorized the data she collected during her first month of fieldwork in 2015. She then refined this categorization grid following the identification of emergent themes through continuously reviewing her or her assistants’ fieldnotes, interview transcripts, and the related academic and non-academic literature. This non-academic literature included relevant legislation and agreements, governmental and non-governmental reports, policy documents as well as local newsletters. In 2018, and again in 2019, Vanthuyne conducted detailed coding work with QDA Miner to organise the research data more systematically.

As initially agreed with Wemindji’s Chief and Council when permission was sought to conduct the research, both the Council and the *nituuhuuchimaauch* residing around the mine were regularly consulted about the project’s methods of data collection and analysis, as well as the research findings and dissemination venues. This allowed us to ensure that they were considered appropriate and valid from their perspectives. These consultations included the publication of this article, which was only submitted to this journal after being revised by elected authorities and the concerned *nituuhuuchimaauch*, who then agreed to have it published.

**DETAILS ABOUT THE JAMES BAY AND NORTHERN QUEBEC AGREEMENT**

Signed in 1975, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) created a land management regime for the Cree according to which they have: property rights over 1.4 percent of their territory (Category 1 lands); exclusive rights to hunt, fish, and trap on 15 percent of their territory (Category 2 lands); and preferential hunting, fishing, and trapping on the remaining 83.6 percent (Category 3 lands). As a result, most of Eeyou Istchee was opened up to mining development. Although sections 5, 22, and 24 of the JBNQA protect certain Cree rights to lands and resources, Lapointe and Scott (2019) explain that these rights are to some extent eclipsed in category 2 and 3 lands by rights granted to mining entrepreneurs under the free mining system. In those lands, mining claims can be acquired without “notice to, consult with, or obtain[ing] consent from the affected Cree” (Lapointe and Scott 2019, 96). Besides, “once acquired, these claims confer full ownership of the subsurface mineral rights on their holders”, and it is only “when exploration projects reach their more advanced stages” that the Cree “can formally voice their concerns and suggestions through the environmental and social impact assessment and review procedure set forth in section 22 of the JBNQA”.

On the other hand, however, the JBNQA established an income security program and a social and environmental regime, which aimed to protect *Iiyiyiuituwin* (Peters 1999). The Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Support Program provides basic income to every individual who spends at least 120 days on the land, while the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment is a mechanism through which the Cree can express their concerns about any development related legislation, regulations or projects that would affect Eeyou Istchee.

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