

Rio Tinto launches ore sorting demonstration project at its Havre-Saint-Pierre mine

12.06.2025 | [Business Wire](#)

[Rio Tinto](#) is investing CA\$7.6 million in an industrial demonstration project to assess the integration of an ore sorting technology at its Lac Tio mine located in Havre-Saint-Pierre. The Government of Quebec will contribute CA\$2.5 million to this initiative through its Support Program for the Scale-up of Mineral Processing or Primary Transformation for Critical and Strategic Minerals, administered by the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests.

The project aims to test a technology that will allow the sorting of ore directly at the source based on titanium and scandium content, two minerals considered critical and strategic, even at low grades. By separating commercially exploitable rock from waste rock more efficiently, this method could reduce the amount of material transported between the mine and Rio Tinto Iron and Titanium Quebec Operations' Metallurgical and Critical Minerals Complex in Sorel-Tracy, contributing to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and the costs associated with transporting and processing ore.

Rio Tinto Iron and Titanium and Diamonds' Managing Director Sophie Bergeron said: "The use of ore sorting technology represents a tangible opportunity to optimise our processes right from the extraction stage, allowing us to maximise value from our resources, while reducing the emissions associated with transporting and processing ore. The support from the Government of Quebec highlights the key role that Rio Tinto plays in the critical and strategic minerals production essential to the energy transition. It's also a unifying project for our employees, the community of Havre-Saint-Pierre and the community of Ekuanitshit, with whom we share a desire to evolve our practices in a responsible manner."

Minister of Natural Resources and Forests and Minister Responsible for the Bas-Saint-Laurent Region and the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Region Maité Blanchette Vézina said: "Our government is proud to support Rio Tinto Iron and Titanium in its ore valorisation project. In addition to encouraging innovation through the creation of new processes or the improvement of existing ones, this type of initiative helps accelerate the transformation of critical and strategic minerals in Quebec, reinforcing the province's position as a global leader. In a complex geopolitical context and growing global demand for minerals, we must seize these opportunities to advance Quebec's mining projects."

This full-scale industrial demonstration will also allow the assessment of potential optimisations of the ore pre-treatment process at the Sorel-Tracy plant, improve mineral resource management, and explore options for accessing parts of the deposit that were previously considered unprofitable. This has the potential to allow consideration of a review of the mining plan and extension of the mine's lifespan.

The project will be deployed in two phases. In 2025, the activities will focus on engineering, the commissioning of the ore sorting circuit and technological validation. In 2026, additional equipment will be integrated to automate the process and produce multiple batches of enriched ore.

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Category: RTFT

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Die URL für diesen Artikel lautet:

<https://www.rohstoff-welt.de/news/695256--Rio-Tinto-launches-ore-sorting-demonstration-project-at-its-Havre-Saint-Pierre-mine.html>

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