

# MINERAL SECTOR IN FINLAND – THE NATIONAL ROLE OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF FINLAND

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Finland is among the few European countries where issues related to the mineral sector are of top priority in the context of national economic development. Finland now follows its mineral strategy. According to its main targets, the government pushes forward infrastructure investments which are necessary for establishing new mines, as well as making a significant contribution to training mine employees. One key area of the Finnish mineral strategy is to create and put more efforts to R&D operations and expertise. This is to put Finland ahead when talking about sustainable mineral industry by year 2020. Besides, Finland is regarded by the world export communities as the hub of mineral exploration and mine development in Europe. A number of new mines have recently opened, or are under construction, and about 40 companies are in exploration. In the latest Fraser Institute mining industry report Finland was ranked fifth in the combined policy mineral potential index. In addition to the good discovery potential, Finland is regarded as a country with favorable and safe investment environment.

## **Introduction**

Finland's government's ministerial working group on climate and energy policy began preparing the Natural Resource Strategy in December 2009. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy of Finland started a mineral strategy project as a part of this work. The goal of the project was to create suggestions for developing the sector and improving competitiveness while taking into account sustainable development, material-efficiency and decreasing overall environmental impacts. The work was completed in October 2010 when the Finnish Mineral Strategy was submitted to the Minister of Economic Affairs, Mauri Pekkarinen. The project assessed extensively Finnish and international preconditions for development over the medium term and until 2050. The vision 2050 of mineral policy aims that Finland will be a global pioneer in the sustainable utilization of minerals, and the mineral sector will be one of the foundations of the Finnish national economy.

The well-planned and sustainable utilization of Finland's mineral resources secures the national raw material supply and creates the preconditions for balanced regional development long into the future. Through mineral sector competence, Finland can promote a globally resource-efficient and responsible mineral economy, as well as new international business activities.

## **GTK's role in the minerals sector**

The Geological Survey of Finland (GTK) produces and disseminates geological information for use in promoting systematic, sustainable use of the national geological endowment. GTK studies and maps the Earth's crust, inventories mineral and ore resources, provides a national geological information service, performs contract services for external clients and participates actively in international projects. GTK operates under Finland's Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

GTK is responsible for acquisition and management of geoscience information in Finland, with a particular emphasis on to providing high quality data to the exploration and mining sector. Through a comprehensive mapping and research program, GTK also identifies and documents areas with mineral potential, in order to encourage follow-up exploration and exploitation by the private sector, with the aim of supporting sustainable use of both bedrock resources and surficial deposits. All GTK discoveries are offered to the private sector through an open tendering process arranged by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Neither the Finnish Government nor GTK have any role in the downstream development of mineral deposits.

GTK offers the minerals industry expertise in Fennoscandian economic geology, as well as confidential, client-tailored exploration services, including geophysical surveys and modern chemical, mineralogical and mineral processing laboratory services, both within Finland and worldwide.

**Geoportal**

An improved geo-information system is vital for the management of natural resources regarding development of the national economy, especially through attraction of increased foreign direct investment. Furthermore, the geo-information system strengthens monitoring of the environment and evaluating geo-hazards. Presently the system includes both GTK produced data and data from external sources. All maps and publications are in digital format. The information flow from field to end users is properly controlled and the information is accessible to users through network.

One of the main duties of the Geological Survey of Finland (GTK) is to promote mineral exploration and mining in Finland. It is done via Internet Active Map Explorer service (figure 1) where all available geoinformation (geology, geophysics, and geochemistry) is accessible to all users. GTK has many development projects abroad and one of them is a cooperation project with the State Geological and Subsurface Survey of Ukraine and the Ukrainian State Geological Research Institute in order to create Geoportal in Ukraine.

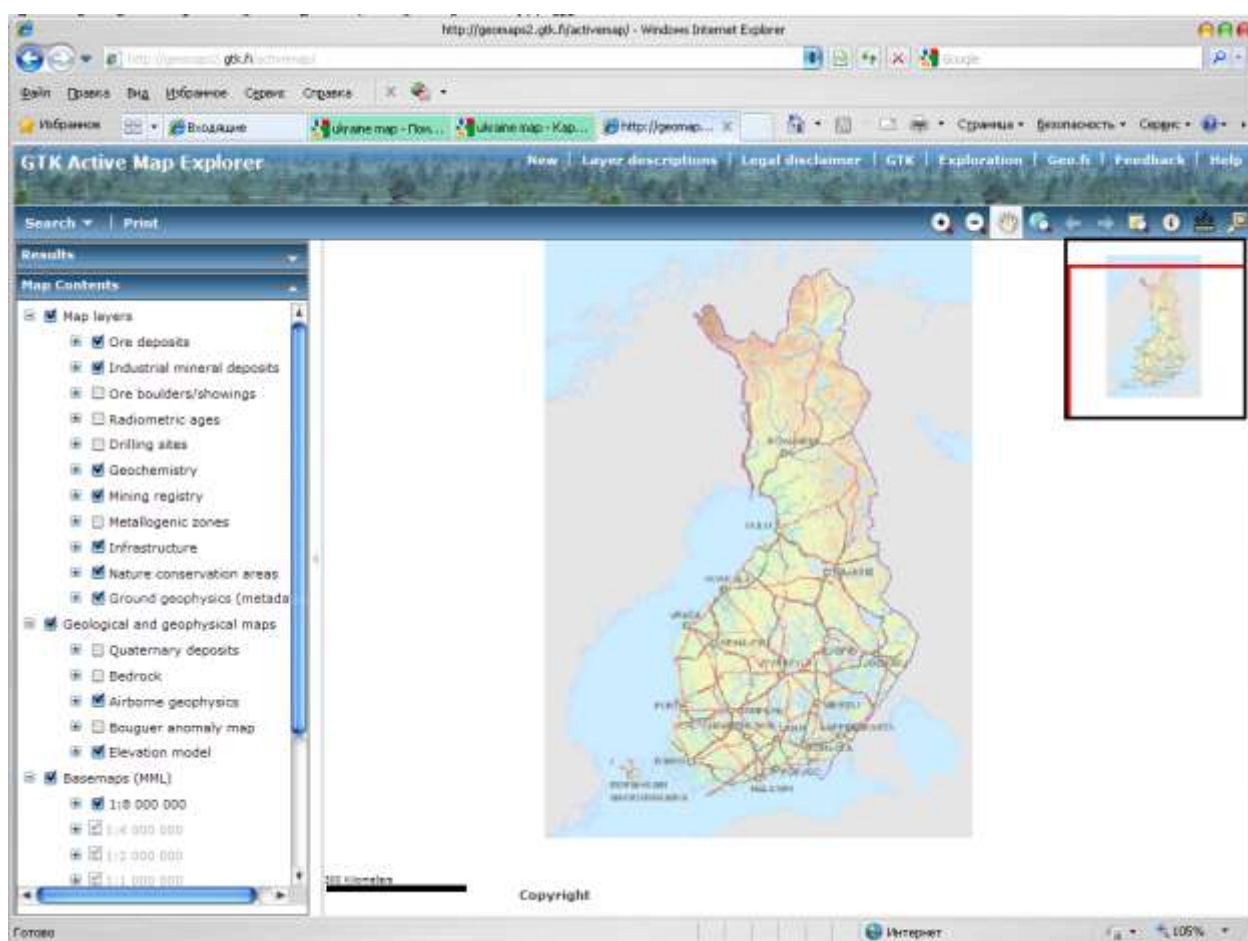


Figure 1. GTK's Active map explorer service for users.