

13th PACIFIC SCIENCE CONGRESS, VANCOUVER, CANADA

August 18-30 1975

Land-based resources and their management

Abstract by LATHAM Marc and JAFFRE Tanguy - ORSTOM - NOUMEA, NEW CALEDONIA

MINING EFFECTS ON BOTANICAL AND PEDOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT IN NEW CALEDONIA

Open pit nickel mining in New Caledonia destroys vegetal cover and creates soil damage.

On the mountains, mining prospects and exploitation generally involve mechanical removal of vegetation or its destruction by fire. Large amounts of earth are moved to reach the mineralized. These "steriles", sometimes very important, are pushed in a more or less rational way out of the exploitation area. The soils of these mountains are very fragile and their fertility is concentrated in the upper horizons. The recolonization of such areas by vegetation is often slow and sometimes even uncertain.

In the alluvial plains, located at these mountains' base, unfertile fine deposits can be observed. These alluvia impoverish soils and can modify the floristic composition of the system. Because these plains are fertile, it is very important to protect them.

For this purpose we must select the sterile's spots. Moreover it is important to restore the vegetation by means of pioner plants to avoid erosion.

15 OCT. 1975  
O. R. S. T. O. M.  
Collection de Référence  
n° 7770 Peda