

Mining and Protected Areas

POSITION STATEMENT

September 2003

All ICMM member companies commit to implement and measure their performance against a set of 10 sustainable development principles. Where members have sought greater clarity on some of the key challenges facing the industry, ICMM has developed supporting position statements.

OVERVIEW

ICMM recognizes the tensions that exist around access to, and competing uses of, land. In this position statement ICMM addresses the importance of biodiversity conservation, the need for properly designated and managed systems of protected areas and integrated approaches to land use planning.

BACKGROUND ON ICMM PRINCIPLES AND POSITION STATEMENTS

All ICMM member companies are required to implement the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework. This includes commitments to: implement 10 principles throughout their businesses; to report in line with the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and Mining and Metals Sector Supplement; and to obtain independent external assurance that the ICMM commitments are being met (this framework is described in detail at www.icmm.com).

The ICMM principles of particular relevance to mining and protected areas are:

- **Principle 6:** Seek continual improvement of our environmental performance
- **Principle 7:** Contribute to conservation of biodiversity and integrated approaches to land use planning.

In accordance with the principles, ICMM has also developed a number of position statements which further elaborate ICMM members' commitments to particular issues. Company members are obliged to comply with these statements, by incorporating them into their operational practices.

This position statement sets out ICMM company members' approaches to mining and protected areas, not to explore or mine in World Heritage properties and to working with the IUCN to address application issues and to strengthen the IUCN system of protected areas categorisation.

RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

ICMM members recognize:

- 1 The Plan of Implementation agreed to at the World Summit on Sustainable Development recognizes that minerals are essential for modern living and that mining, minerals and metals are important to the economic and social development of many countries. This is often true in developing countries where, in some instances, there may also be serious issues regarding biodiversity loss in protected areas
- 2 that member companies have made considerable progress in reducing the environmental and biodiversity impacts of their operations and many have become leaders in the development and application of state of the art land rehabilitation and ecosystem reconstruction techniques. Today, other avenues are being actively pursued to enhance contributions to biodiversity conservation, including assessments and conservation of unique flora and fauna, research and development and supporting protected area site management programs
- 3 the role of properly designated and managed protected areas in in-situ conservation strategies
- 4 comprehensive and representative lists of various types of designated protected areas are important to ensure that ecosystems, habitats and species are protected from damage and loss, particularly those which are remarkable in terms of richness, rarity, sensitivity and are relatively unmodified by human influence
- 5 in some cases, exploration and mining development may be incompatible with the objectives for which areas are designated for protection, even after all technically and economically feasible steps to reduce adverse impacts have been considered

- 6 national and global systems for the evaluation, designation, classification and management of areas listed for protection are needed to ensure consistency of approach to land access decisions
- 7 such systems should be transparent, rigorous, based on scientific and cultural understanding, backed by legal controls, and should contribute to the equitable resolution of different land-use, conservation and development objectives
- 8 an understanding of the mineral development potential of areas proposed for listing for protection, including World Heritage properties, as well as the availability of clean mining and processing technologies should be some of the factors considered in assessments and related decision-making processes
- 9 the decisions taken over the evaluation, designation, management and modifications of protected areas should also be based on the principles of sustainable development and take into account the opinions of and consequences for local communities, including indigenous peoples, and the regions involved. Development opportunities, if forgone, should be addressed by alternative plans for poverty alleviation and social development
- 10 of the existing international systems of protected area designation only that of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines currently meet all of these requirements sufficiently for ICMM member companies to recognise existing World Heritage properties as 'No-go' areas.

COMMITMENTS

In addition to existing commitments under the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework, ICMM company members commit to:

- 1 respect legally designated protected areas
- 2 not explore or mine in World Heritage properties. All possible steps will be taken to ensure that existing operations in World Heritage properties as well as existing and future operations adjacent to World Heritage properties are not incompatible with the outstanding universal value for which these properties are listed and do not put the integrity of these properties at risk
- 3 through ICMM, work with IUCN – The World Conservation Union – to address application issues and to strengthen the IUCN system of protected area categorisation. ICMM recognizes that sufficient reform of this system will lead to recognition of categories of protected areas as 'No-go' areas and others with a multiple-use designation
- 4 through ICMM, work with IUCN, governments, intergovernmental organizations, development and conservation NGOs and others to develop transparent, inclusive, informed and equitable decision-making processes and assessment tools that better integrate biodiversity conservation, protected areas and mining into land-use planning and management strategies, including 'No-go' areas
- 5 through ICMM, work with IUCN and others in developing best practice guidance to enhance industry's contribution to biodiversity conservation, including in and around protected areas.

ICMM

The International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) was established in 2001 to act as a catalyst for performance improvement in the mining and metals industry. Today, the organization brings together 19 mining and metals companies as well as 30 national and regional mining associations and global commodity associations to address the core sustainable development challenges faced by the industry. Our vision is one of member companies working together and with others to strengthen the contribution of mining, minerals and metals to sustainable development.

ICMM
35/38 Portman Square
London W1H 6LR
United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7467 5070
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7467 5071
Email: info@icmm.com

www.icmm.com