MINING AND PROTECTED AREAS

A Mining Industry Perspective

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MMSD Biodiversity Workshop

London, 25th – 26th October 2001

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Note:

These views are personal contributions to the debate, not Rio Tinto's policy. I have no mandate from the mining industry or any subset of it to speak on its behalf.

The Need to Find a Better Way

- Rising population = increasing need to maintain integrity of ecosystems

- Rising population + poverty = continuing pressures on ecosystems including protected areas

- Rising population + poverty alleviation = continuing demand for mineral commodities

- Sustainable progress in development will require the reconciliation of diverse societal needs

- To meet demand, mining needs access to land

- Existing positions are sincerely held, well articulated, based in experience and different

- Building trust is an essential first step

- The vision is surprisingly similar in both communities

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The Mining Industry Perspective - 1

- Decisions on access to land for development should be informed by good science and information and take place in a fair, transparent, consistent and objective process
- Protected areas (PAs) are an essential part of conservation strategy, and some are unsuited to mining or any other development
- Current systems for assessing, listing and designating PAs are inconsistent and do not adequately accommodate development aspirations
- Much management of PAs is ineffective in the face of pressures from many directions

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The Mining Industry Perspective - 2

- **Mineral development can create enormous economic benefits which can facilitate wider social and economic development**

- **Mineral development potential must be a routine part of PA assessments**

- **The state of best practice in environmental management and community relations in the mining industry should remove much of the concern over the risk of harm to protected areas**

- **Other development pathways can involve greater harm to the environment, biodiversity, traditional cultures and protected areas**

- **The Industry's record in biodiversity management and conservation is undervalued**

- **Actions to offset unavoidable minimum biodiversity losses should be factored into decisions on mining projects**

Actions to Build Trust
1 – The Mining Industry

- Accept the concept of areas where any mining would be inappropriate
- Accept current World Heritage sites as areas where it will not seek access for exploration or mining
- Consult IUCN on any projects in or near PAs I-IV
- Recognise that operating in or near PAs makes delivery of high environmental and social performance especially important
- Support PA mangers and management objectives
- Develop processes for the independent verification of environmental and social performance
- Strengthen S&EIA processes and report on outcomes
- Support ICMM as an advocate of high standards, including outreach to other sectors of the industry

Actions to Build Trust
2 – The Conservation Community

- Carry out a thorough overhaul of the IUCN PA system
- Develop effective mechanisms to review PA status and to propose action where values are being lost
- Set up rigorous and consistent processes for designation, de-designation and boundary changes
- Ensure that all stakeholder views are included in the assessment of proposals for listing of PAs, including govt ministries and industries
- Work with others to resolve the problems of ineffective management of PAs
- Consider mineral development as an option for the recovery of PAs being degraded by poverty pressures

Actions to Build Trust
3 – Governments

- Consult all stakeholders when making proposals for all PA designation including IUCN listing
- Set up integrated land use and development plans with clear conservation objectives and project assessment criteria, and with fair and transparent processes for reaching decisions on development options
- Ensure that all relevant government departments are involved in land access decisions and processes
- Commit or access sufficient resources for the management of PAs
- Address the issue of secondary development around mining projects

Actions to Build Trust
4 – Joint Actions

- Establish IUCN/UNEP/ICMM working group

- Analyse experience of mining interactions with PAs

- Identify Best Practice and Lessons Learned, and prepare guidelines from these

- Involve other groups in the process, including development organisations and artesanal miners

- Start in IUCN areas V and VI, but consider how principles might be applied to other PA categories and systems