

Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development

Elena Armand
Russian Federation

Relationship between mining and biodiversity in Russia (past)

- Mining is still the base of the whole economic (as 20 years ago)
- It dictates not only the direction of country economic development but internal and foreign policy and prosperity of definite regions
- Biodiversity (wildlife) is protected mainly by enthusiasts and “green” NGOs (country still has tremendous biodiversity)

Relationship between mining and biodiversity in Russia (now)

- Federal legislation (91-92 y.) – Law on Entrails, Law on Nature Protection and Protected Areas
- Strict governmental control both on mining and biodiversity protection (at last all understood that both are needed)

Current Practices

- Mining companies get profit from mining
- Taxes from mining go to the federal budget and then are returned for extended exploration and mining
- Wildlife is funded through federal budget (always less than needed)
- Mining companies sometimes ready to subsidize biodiversity protection (charitable donations)

Key Challenges

- Political – mining is still the priority
- Tax system does not give the opportunities for sustainable development
- “Dirty” technologies do not allow to protect wildlife in a proper way
- State ecological control is still weak

Successful examples

- Advanced companies have their own effective environmental policies including ecological audit, ISO 14000, considerable allocations to local budgets for social/environmental programs
- Environmental insurance is incorporated into internal policy
- Nature protection may be profitable

Vision for the Future

- Environmentally sound taxation system
- Mining code (code of honor) with solicitous protection principles
- Development of economic mechanisms of sustainable development (local, regional, federal)

Nature and/or profit

