Mining and Protected Areas

IUCN presentation based on paper prepared by Adrian Phillips for MMSD Meeting, 25-26 October

Aim of this presentation

- **To present a conservation perspective on mining and protected areas (PAs) and to suggest a way forward that would help to build trust between mining and conservation sectors. This will be discussed in 3 parts:**

I. **A vision for mining as a land-use in a sustainable world.**

II. **A conservation perspective on mining in PAs.**

III. **A proposed agenda for building trust between the conservation and mining communities.**

I. A vision for mining as a Land Use in a Sustainable World – what's involved?

- **An integrated development or land-use plan for the country or region.**

- **Commitment by the mining industry to best practice everywhere it operates, if necessary exceeding the requirements set by the national government concerned ("beyond compliance").**

- **A set of graded policies for varying degree of sensitivity of natural/cultural values to mining, including:**

A vision for mining as a Land Use in a Sustainable World – what's involved? (cont)

➢ **Areas in which rules will be relatively relaxed (though mining proposals should always be subject of careful prior examination through EIAs and general principles of stewardship);**

➢ **Intermediate zones where higher "hurdles" would apply (e.g. detailed EIAs, higher stewardship standards, greater investments for impact mitigation and emergency costs); and**

➢ **"No-go" areas, protected by being off limits to mining altogether -** *the topic of debate .*

II. A conservation perspective on mining and protected areas

Note:

- **There is no single perspective on conservation and mining.**

- **But broad consensus now exists around mining and PAs.**

- **see IUCN Recommendation 2.82 from the IUCN/WCC in Amman (October 2000) - available at http://iucn.org/amman/content/resolutions/index.html**

A conservation perspective on mining and protected areas (cont.)

PAs are a key entry point for conservation and mining - so:

- Introduce PAs definition, their categorization and their importance.

- Identify the importance of internationally recognised PAs.

- Describe the impacts from mining and associated activities have upon PAs.

- Set out the case for a firm policy to exclude mining from Category I – IV protected areas.

Protected Areas – Why care about them?

- **IUCN defines a PA as *"An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated for the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means"* (IUCN, 1994).**

- **PAs are essential for society. They:**

  - ◆ **protect biodiversity**
  - ◆ **provide goods (NTFP, wild meat, genetic resources)**
  - ◆ **provide ecological services (protect watersheds, soils and coastlines; carbon sequestration)**
  - ◆ **have non-material values**

Protected Areas – How to classify them?

- **There are over 44,000 PAs worldwide.**

- **They have many names at the national level**

- **And same names mean different things (e.g "National Park")**

Hence need for a categories system …..

- **IUCN categories system is based on the main objectives of management**

- **this system is used to explain IUCN's approach to mining and PAs**

Brief summary of the IUCN Protected Areas Management Categories.

- **CATEGORY I – <u>Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area</u>: PA managed mainly for science or wilderness protection thus it is essential to maintain its natural condition.**

- **CATEGORY II – <u>National Park</u>: PA managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation excluding exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of its designation.**

- **CATEGORY III – <u>Natural Monument</u>: PA mainly for conservation of specific natural/cultural which is of outstanding or unique values because of its inherent rarity.**

- **Category IV – <u>Habitat/Species Management Area</u>: PA managed mainly for conservation through management intervention so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or the requirements of specific species.**

Brief summary of the IUCN Protected Areas Management Categories (Cont.)

- **CATEGORY V – <u>Protected Landscape/Seascape</u>: PA managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation in areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital for the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.**

- **Category VI – <u>Managed Resource Protected Area</u>: PA managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems in areas containing predominantly unmodified natural system, managed to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.**

IUCN PAs Management Categories System: Important points to note:

- allows comparison and assessment of PAs systems at different levels.

- is based on management objectives

- implies varying environmental modification/ protection, (Categories I-IV the more strictly PAs.)

- Is <u>not</u> a comment on how well PAs are managed for achieving their objectives

- PAs can be established in public, private or community owned lands

- PAs may be managed by many groups apart from central governments.

- The categories of PAs are in the World Database on PAs, held by UNEP-WCMC and used to prepare the UN List of Protected Areas.

Are some PAs more important than others? PAs with international recognition.

- **ALL PAs have some international recognition under the UN List of Protected Areas. Also SOME sites are also recognised under international agreements:**

  - ◆ **The UNESCO World Heritage Convention, which identifies natural and cultural sites of "outstanding universal values".**

  - ➢ **The Ramsar Convention, which provides recognition and protection to internationally-important wetlands.**

  - ➢ **The UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme, under which a network of Biosphere Reserves.**

  - ➢ **Some areas are listed in several of the above**

Impacts from Mining to PAs – a small footprint?

- **Mining has many environmental consequences for PAs, whether operations occur in or nearby those areas, e.g.:**

➢ **Direct land take and loss of vegetation cover.**

➢ **Pollution on air, soils and water supplies, aggravated by accidents.**

➢ **Impacts due to increased access (roads, railways, pipelines, power lines, etc.) leading to illegal hunting, habitat fragmentation, invasion of alien species.**

➢ **Secondary effects of human immigration.**

➢ **Impacts on other PAs values from noise and visual intrusion.**

➢ **While the environmental impacts are the most obvious the indirect social and cultural effects may also impact on PAs values.**

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

Conservation attitudes towards mining and Protected Areas

- As the evidence of the impact of mining on PAs has grown, conservation community is now more concerned re threats

- Most conservation bodies recognise benefits of mining

- But the downside often far greater: legacy of mining can be a permanently damaged environment and a disrupted community.

- Fear that mining companies will be given access to any exploitable resource, whatever the environmental or social consequences.

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

Conservation attitudes towards mining and Protected Areas (cont.)

- **There are therefore calls for the more strictly protected areas (Categories I-IV) be treated as "no go" zones for mining. This is particularly important in relation to World Heritage sites.**

- **While some PAs are poorly managed, this is no reason to increase the pressures on them even further.**

- **Because some governments put low priority on their conservation obligations , responsible mining companies companies should not take advantage of this.**

Category I-IV Conservation attitudes towards mining and Protected Areas (final)

- **BOTTOM LINE: Many conservation interests argue that mining industry should keep out of Category I-IV protected area.**

- **BY THIS ACTION, MINING COMPANIES WOULD BAR THEMSELVES FROM ONLY ABOUT 4% OF THE WORLD'S EARTH SURFACE.**

- **Nothing would do more to improve trust and co-operation with conservation stakeholders than an industry-led policy to respect Category I-IV PAs**

III – Building Trust - A Proposed Agenda for Action

- **But will take time to get such industry-wide acceptance.**

- **Also there are some legitimate concerns re categories system**

- **So a step-by-step process is recommended**

- **<u>For the mining companies:</u>**

  - ➤ **A recognition of the "no-go" concept in relation to rare, fragile and unique ecosystems,**

  - ➤ **Not to open new mines or expand existing ones, in existing and new WH sites.**

  - ➤ **To recognise that the existence of PAs creates a special "duty of care" on mining companies.**

III – Building Trust - A Proposed Agenda for Action (cont.)

- **<u>For the conservation community</u>:**

➢ **To improve the quality of the decisions about how to assign PAs to management categories.**

➢ **Easier access by all interests to PAs data.**

➢ **Production of thematic/regional guidance on the application of the categories system.**

➢ **Further development/promotion of WCPA work on management effectiveness.**

➢ **Development, for review at WPC 2003, of a proposal for a system to certify, or verify, that a PA has been correctly categorised and that is effectively managed.**

III – Building Trust - A Proposed Agenda for Action (final)

■ **<u>For the mining and conservation sectors together:</u>**

➢ **To develop technical guidance on issues related to mining and PAs (mining in Categories V and VI, mining and exploration near PAs, management of "inherited mines" in PAs).**

➢ **To publicise case studies on offsets or trade-offs practice, leading to development of guiding principles.**

➢ **To develop strict principles, pre-conditions, procedures where it is proposed to de-designate a PA, or adjust PA boundaries, to enable mining to occur in that area.**

FINAL REMARKS

- **The programme has resource implications, but these could be found if mining and conservation interests work together to find sources.**

- **The key to progress is a commitment from the mining sector on the "no-go" concept, starting with WH sites.**

- **It is to be hoped that the mining industry can see that this modest step is essential to begin to build trust .**