Position statement on mining and protected areas

September 2003
ICMM members recognise that they have a significant role to play in creating a safer and more sustainable mining and metals industry. Through their commitments they work together, alongside governments and local communities to improve quality of life beyond the provision of the minerals and metals that sustain modern living.

All member companies are represented on ICMM’s council by their CEO.

**Our members**

- African Rainbow Minerals
- AngloAmerican
- AngloGold Ashanti
- Antofagasta Minerals
- Barrick
- BHP Billiton
- Codelco
- Freeport-McMoRan
- Glencore
- Goldcorp
- Gold Fields
- Hydro
- JX Nippon
- Lonmin
- Mitsubishi Materials
- MMG
- Newcrest Mining
- Newmont
- Orano
- Polyus
- Rio Tinto
- South32
- Sumitomo Metal Mining
- Teck
- Vale
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Overview

ICMM company members recognise 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.

2

Background on ICMM principles and position statements

All ICMM member companies implement the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework as a condition of membership. This includes commitments to implement 10 principles throughout their businesses, to report in line with the Global Reporting Initiative’s (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Framework and to obtain independent external assurance that the ICMM commitments are being met (this framework is described in detail at www.icmm.com/member-commitments).

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

- Principle 6: Pursue continual improvement in environmental performance issues, such as water stewardship, energy use and climate change.
- Principle 7: Contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and integrated approaches to land-use planning.

In accordance with the principles, ICMM has also developed a number of position statements that further elaborate member commitments to particular issues. Company members 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 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to address application issues and to strengthen the IUCN system of protected areas categorisation.
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Recognition statements

ICMM members recognise:

1. 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 restoration 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 programmes.

2. The role of properly designated and managed protected areas in in-situ conservation strategies. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. While companies will seek to implement the commitments outlined in this position statement, they cannot be responsible for the actions of external parties (such as illegal miners) that might undermine their mitigation or conservation efforts.

‘National & 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.’
Commitments

In addition to existing commitments under the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework, ICMM member companies commit to:

1. Respect legally designated protected areas and ensure that any new operations or changes to existing operations are not incompatible with the value for which they were designated.

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. To ensure that potential adverse impacts on biodiversity from new operations or changes to existing operations are adequately addressed throughout the project cycle and that the mitigation hierarchy is applied.

4. Through ICMM, work with IUCN, governments, intergovernmental organisations, 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.

‘ICMM member companies commit to respect legally designated protected areas and ensure that any new operations or changes to existing operations are not incompatible with the value for which they were designated.’
ICMM is an international organisation dedicated to enabling a safe, fair and sustainable mining and metals industry. Bringing together 25 mining and metals companies and over 30 regional and commodities associations we strengthen environmental and social performance.

We serve as a catalyst for change; enhancing mining’s contribution to society.