

MINING AND PROTECTED AREAS

Position Statement

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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.

Relationship between the ICMM Mining Principles and Position Statements

All ICMM company members are expected to implement the ICMM [Mining Principles](#) as a condition of membership. Incorporating comprehensive environmental, social and governance requirements, robust site-level validation of performance expectations and credible assurance of corporate sustainability reports, ICMM's [Mining Principles](#) seek to maximise benefits to host communities and minimise negative impacts to effectively manage societal challenges.

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.

Since 2003, [Position Statements](#) have been developed to clearly articulate member commitments on a number of critical industry challenges. [Position Statements](#) are endorsed by the ICMM Council and include specific commitments that members must implement, alongside the [Performance Expectations](#).

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.

RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

ICMM members recognise:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

COMMITMENTS

In addition to existing commitments under the ICMM [Mining Principles](#), ICMM company members 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 is an international organisation dedicated to a safe, fair, and sustainable mining and metals industry. Bringing together 27 companies – and 36 regional, national, and commodities associations – we support mining with principles to sustainably manage the natural resources of our planet, and enhance the wellbeing of local communities.

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