

London - 20 August 2003

## **Landmark 'no-go' pledge from leading mining companies**

Corporate membership of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) - comprised of 15 of the world's largest mining and metal producing companies – has signed an undertaking to recognise existing World Heritage properties as 'no-go' areas.

The announcement results from a dialogue process with IUCN – The World Conservation Union – started earlier this year. It includes an undertaking 'not to explore or mine in World Heritage properties' and a commitment to take all possible steps to ensure that operations are not incompatible with the outstanding universal values of World Heritage properties.

ICMM members recognise the role of properly designated and managed protected areas in conservation strategies and the importance of national and global protected area systems. They further recognise that, in some cases, exploration and mining development may be incompatible with the objectives for which areas are designated for protection.

ICMM is committed to working with IUCN to strengthen its system of protected area categorisation. ICMM members recognise that sufficient reform of this system will lead to recognition of categories of protected areas as 'no-go' areas and others with a multiple-use designation.

IUCN Director General, Achim Steiner, welcomed the decision. He said: "Today's announcement by ICMM sets an important precedent. By making this 'no-go' pledge, 15 leading mining and metal producing companies of the world have now created a threshold for corporate responsibility against which they and, indeed, others in the extractive industry will be assessed. While many issues and objectives remain to be addressed, this is an important milestone".

According to Francesco Bandarin, Director of UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the commitment by ICMM member companies 'not to explore or mine in World Heritage properties' is a major step forward. "It represents considerable progress since our first meetings with the mining industry in 1998. We hope that such a clear statement by the major mining companies in the world will significantly reduce direct or indirect impacts by mining on World Heritage sites all over the world," he said.

The ICMM has committed itself to work with IUCN and others in developing best practice guidance to enhance industry's contribution to biodiversity conservation, including in and around protected areas.

The ICMM is also committed to working with IUCN, governments, NGOs and others to develop transparent and fair science-based decision-making processes and assessment tools that better integrate biodiversity conservation and mining into land-use planning and management strategies.

Sir Robert Wilson, Chairman of ICMM said: "We understand that the analysis of all options for land use will sometimes mean that mining projects cannot proceed because unique and sensitive biological or cultural values would be compromised if they did. We need and intend to earn the trust of other participants in the debate so we can contribute to sustainable development."

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors**

ICMM is an industry-based organisation that has been established to provide leadership to the mining and metals industry in meeting the challenges of sustainable development. Its membership is currently comprised of 15 of the world's largest mining and metal producing companies as well as 27 industry associations worldwide.

ICMM's 15 Corporate Members are:

**Alcoa**

**Anglo American**

**AngloGold**

**BHP Billiton**

**Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold**

**Mitsubishi Materials**

**Newmont**

**Nippon Mining & Metals**

**Noranda**

**Pasminco**

**Placer Dome**

**Rio Tinto**

**Sumitomo Metal Mining**

**Umicore**

**WMC Resources**

**For further information, please contact:**

Scott Houston,  
Programme Director,  
International Council on Mining and Metals  
19 Stratford Place  
London  
W1C 1BQ  
Tel.: +44 (0) 20 7290 4932  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7290 4933  
E-mail: [scott.houston@icmm.com](mailto:scott.houston@icmm.com)  
Web: [www.icmm.com](http://www.icmm.com)

# ICMM POSITION STATEMENT ON MINING AND PROTECTED AREAS

In accordance with the ICMM Principles and the commitment to measure corporate performance against these principles, ICMM corporate members have agreed to the following recognition statements and commitments with respect to Mining and Protected Areas:

## Recognition Statements

1. The Plan of Implementation agreed to at the World Summit on Sustainable Development recognises that minerals are essential for modern living and that mining, minerals and metals are important to the economic and social development of many countries. This is often true in developing countries where, in some instances, there may also be serious issues regarding biodiversity loss in protected areas.
2. ICMM 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 reconstruction 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.
3. ICMM members recognise the role of properly designated and managed protected areas in in-situ conservation strategies.
4. 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.
5. ICMM members further recognise that, 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

9. 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.
10. 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.

### **ICMM Commitments**

1. In accordance with Principle 7 of the new ICMM Sustainable Development Framework, ICMM members will respect legally designated protected areas.
2. ICMM member companies undertake not to 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. ICMM is committed to working with IUCN - The World Conservation Union - to address application issues and to strengthen the IUCN system of protected area categorisation. ICMM recognises that sufficient reform of this system will lead to recognition of categories of protected areas as 'No-go' areas and others with a multiple-use designation.
4. ICMM is committed to working 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. ICMM will also work with IUCN and others in developing best practice guidance to enhance industry's contribution to biodiversity conservation, including in and around protected areas.