

# MINING CERTIFICATION EVALUATION PROJECT

## BACKGROUND

This is the second of a series of regular updates on the Mining Certification Evaluation Project (MCEP).

The MCEP is a joint R&D exercise with participation from the mining industry, NGOs, labour, government agencies, the financial and accounting sector and research institutions. It aims to evaluate whether independent third party certification of environmental and social performance can be applied to the mining sector, by undertaking a policy research project in the Australian context.

## PROJECT PROGRESS

The main activity since the last Canary has been developing a set of Working Principles for the MCEP. The first draft has drawn on a large literature review, and listed in Box 1 are some of the key initiatives that have been used.

### Box 1 – Selection of key references for developing MCEP Principles:

- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Principles and Criteria ([www.fscoax.org](http://www.fscoax.org))
- Dupont Supplier Criteria (copy available on request)
- Principles for the Conduct of Company Operations within the Minerals Industry, ([www.mpi.org.au/reports/principles\\_for\\_conduct.html](http://www.mpi.org.au/reports/principles_for_conduct.html))
- Rosenfeld Sweeting, A. and Clark, A.P. (2000) *Lightening the Lode: A Guide to Responsible Large-scale Mining*. Washington DC: Conservation International.
- Dudley, N. and Stolton, S. (2002) *To Dig or Not to Dig?* WWF Discussion Paper. Gland, Switzerland: World Wide Fund for Nature.
- Oxfam Community Aid Abroad Mining Ombudsman ([www.caa.org.au/campaigns/mining/](http://www.caa.org.au/campaigns/mining/))
- Australian Minerals Industry Code for Environmental Management ([www.minerals.org.au/sustainable\\_development/the\\_code.htm](http://www.minerals.org.au/sustainable_development/the_code.htm))
- Mineral Policy Centre publications 'Six Mines Six Mishaps' and '14 Steps to Sustainability' (<http://www.mineralpolicy.org/publications/books-reports.php3?nav=4>)
- Best Practice Environmental Management in Mining series ([www.ea.gov.au/industry/sustainable/mining/bpem.html](http://www.ea.gov.au/industry/sustainable/mining/bpem.html))
- Minerals Resources Forum – range of references from the Corporate Social Responsibility area ([www.natural-resources.org/minerals/generalforum/csr.htm](http://www.natural-resources.org/minerals/generalforum/csr.htm))
- MMSD Project outputs ([www.iied.org/mmsd](http://www.iied.org/mmsd))
- ICMM Sustainability Charter ([www.icmm.com/charter\\_intro.php](http://www.icmm.com/charter_intro.php))
- International Cyanide Code ([www.cyanidecode.org](http://www.cyanidecode.org))

# THE CANARY

The first draft set of Working Principles were the focus of the second meeting of the Working Group was held on 6 March, 2003 in Melbourne. The discussion was wide-ranging and productive. Some of the key issues covered at the meeting included:

## Box 2 – Key Discussion Points at Working Group Meeting 2

1. Definition of a mine site – geographic, temporal, social and/or legal.
2. Discussion about developing a statement of 'values' to describe higher level aims of MCEP.
3. Relationships with other initiatives – eg ICMM Sustainability Code, ISO series standards (Note: the draft ICMM Sustainability Principles had not been released at the time of the Working Group meeting).
4. Discussion about the balance in the Working Principles (and associated criteria) between corporate values, behaviour, and on-ground performance.
5. The level of prescription within the Working Principles (and/or criteria) eg stipulating IUCN categories and ILO Conventions.

The ICMM's draft Sustainability Principles are now available for public comment on their website at [www.icmm.com](http://www.icmm.com), and the MCEP project team will evaluate the connections between these and the draft Working Principles.

The third Working Group meeting is planned for early May and aims to further develop the MCEP Working Principles.

## PUBLICATIONS

The MCEP web site is now online at:

<http://www.minerals.csiro.au/certification>

Feedback is welcome. New downloads available at the site include:

- Fact Sheet for the Project.
- Final Terms of Reference for the Working Group.
- Notes of discussions at the first Working Group meeting.
- The Canary – Update 1 December 2002.

A short paper for the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy has also been published. [Rae, M., Rouse, A. and Solomon, F., 'Independent Certification of Environmental and Social Performance in the Mining Sector', *AusIMM Bulletin*, January/February 2003, 71-72.]

## CONTACT

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