

Reactions from Council Members on the Collaboration
Agreement between IUCN and Rio Tinto

From Miguel Pelleran, IUCN Regional Councillor for Latin America (Argentina)

Dear Julia,

Many thanks for the mail and the information about this very important ~~idea~~ idea. As we discussed

Note from Piet Witte, Chair of IUCN's Commission on Ecosystem Management

I attended the IUCN Rio Tinto launch in London at the Darwin Centre of the Natural History Museum. Our Julia Marton-Lefèvre infected her audience with her enthusiasm for nature and the role of IUCN in conservation. Rio Tinto's CEO stated his personal and company's commitment to the best possible integration of conservation in the company's operations. He spoke with experts from other companies and Green NGOs (including IUCN members) that attended. There were biological drinks and cocktail bites illustrating that creativity can lead to tasty innovations. There was confidence in the potential of the collaboration among IUCN staff.

I did go to London in recognition of the importance of the impacts of the mining sector on the ecosystems where their mining operations take place. We make a lot of noise about the damage done from the sideline of the mining operations, but so far it has not altered mining practices fundamentally, not for the sector as a whole. We since 1996 have realized that and have consistently asked IUCN for more involvement with the private sector so that important conservation gains may be made through constructive cooperation.

Commissions as part of the IUCN family tree, have to follow the decisions of congress with loyalty, but I also feel personally that these resolutions about private sector involvement have been very welcome. Of course we are not selling IUCN nature out, allowing companies to green wash their company profile without logo. We should learn from the past, not being paralyzed by previous mistakes by partners that are honestly trying to improve their records. The mining sector certainly has caused much harm to the environment, and in too many instances continues to do so with unnecessary negative impacts on biodiversity. They need to be critically followed. But the blame for their negative records should not be solely put upon the mining companies. Governments have their share in the damage. And let us not forget the consumers of mining products, including those that are united in IUCN's membership.

IUCN is in an excellent position to bring these different stakeholders together, working with those elements that have proven to be genuinely interested in caring for our world and its biodiversity. IUCN played a pivotal role in the past in getting the World Commission of Dams off the ground, which

From Brahim Haddane IUCN Regional Councillor for Africa (Morocco)

Dear Julia,

Congratulations. In fact the due diligence and the wise discussions undertaken by you and your staff were productive and concluded by the first collaborative agreement with Rio Tinto to be signed on 12 July and I believe in your willingness to bring other partners from the private sector to sign similar agreements. Bon courage

Brahim

Response from Mohammad Shahbazi IUCN Regional Councillor from West Asia (Jordan)

Dear Julia,

I must start by thanking all of those people involved in the materialization of this agreement, in fact the future of the well-being of nature lies in such prudent initiatives by organizations like us. Without rushing into a decision, I am looking forward to explore the package. Best wishes.

Mohammad

Response from Piet Wit Chair of IUCN's Commission on Ecosystem Management

Dear Julia,

I like to join Mohammad in his appreciation for the work of you and your staff. Ever since I came to the first World Conservation Congresses (in Montreal 1996), I have seen resolutions being adopted about the necessity to get involved with the private sector, and especially with those that are heavily impacting biodiversity values. I feel that this sensitive issue has been addressed very well by you and your staff and such not only in conformity with the text of these resolutions, but also within the spirit in which they were discussed, as exemplified by the present agreement with Rio Tinto. My congratulations.

Piet Wit