

Biodiversity Partnerships in Rio Tinto – Origins, Evolution and Challenges

David Richards, Chief Adviser Environment, Rio Tinto

EU Business and Biodiversity Conference

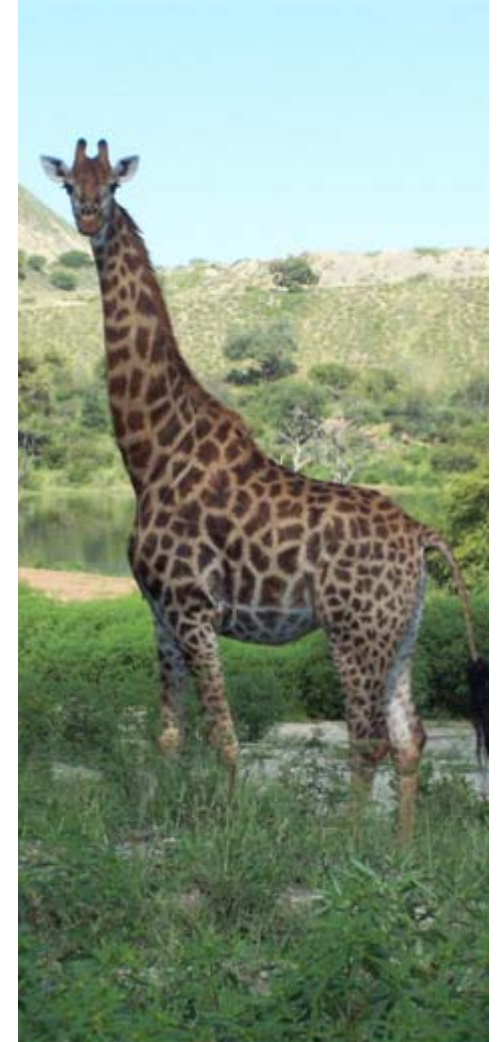
Lisbon: 12-13 November 2007



Our Corporate Biodiversity Partners

- Birdlife International
- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
- Fauna & Flora International
- Earthwatch Institute
- The Eden Project
- UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre
- Conservation International
- The Australian Museum
- Conservation Volunteers Australia

- + Many local partners with Business Units



What defines a 'partnership'...

- Professionally managed and resourced
- Defined objectives
- Formal agreement (3/5 year period)
 - Confidentiality
 - Intellectual property
 - Shared risks and benefits
 - Administration (committee/reviews/formal/informal)
 - Health and safety needs
 - Budgets
- Yearly work programmes
- Sustainability plan
- Communications plan

Note: other engagement types are also used



Evolution of the role of partners

1991 – 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial relationships established
1996 – 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘No strings’ discussions • Due diligence by both parties • Formal agreements signed
2002 – 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development – External Advisory Panel formed • Corporate initiatives – questionnaire, birdwatch events • Development of local biodiversity partnership projects • Relationship governance development • Partnership Manager – key role
2004 – present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing development of tools – offsets, metrics • Joint internal/external working groups • Preparation of reports, background papers • Secondment of expert staff from partners • On-ground involvement with developing projects • Relationships with individual Business Units • Capacity-building with governments



Some of the key current projects/activities with partners



Country	Partners	Projects
Madagascar	Fauna & Flora International (FFI), Kew, Birdlife, Earthwatch Institute	Biodiversity Advisory Committee Metal tolerant plants Lemur and fossa project Seed collecting and conservation
Guinea	FFI, Kew, Birdlife, Conservation International	Project team for biodiversity planning Rapid assessment process
South Africa	FFI, Kew, Birdlife, Earthwatch Institute	Kruger to Canyons biosphere reserve initiative Richards Bay avitourism project and environmental fellowship programme
Australia	Conservation Volunteers Australia, Australian Museum, WWF, Earthwatch Institute, Birds Australia (BirdLife)	Invertebrate ecology training resource kit Biomaps – interactive national biodiversity mapping system Volunteer accreditation programme Frogs conservation National Important Bird Areas (IBA) programme
Brasil	FFI, Kew, Birdlife, Earthwatch Institute	Biodiversity Working Group Vegetation mapping

Challenges

- “Institutionalising” the relationship
 - Really learning each others’ culture and drivers
 - Capacity – on both sides!
 - Managing the transition from corporate to operational
- Matching the scope, coverage and expertise with gaps and needs
 - Never taking each other for granted
 - Working in ecological timeframes – managing expectations
 - Being honest when objectives are not aligned
- Keeping up the energy level
 - Innovation and creativity
 - Reviewing, re-thinking and refreshing

