1. THE MINING, MINERALS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Origins

From the 1970's the forces influencing industry to review its contribution to sustainable development have increased in magnitude. A heightened awareness of the need to include the principles of sustainable development in company policy led to global co-operation amongst mining companies, and the formation of the Global Mining Initiative (GMI).

The GMI channelled funding through the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) for an initiative that will provide the mining and minerals sector with guidelines as to how mining and minerals can best contribute to the global transition to sustainable development. This initiative is the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) project.

The WBCSD appointed the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to undertake this project. The IIED was approached for several reasons: it had recently completed a widely accepted report on the global pulp and paper industry, it has no mining links and it will not be involved in the sector after the completion of the project.

The IIED established the MMSD Working Group to carry out the mandate of the WBCSD.

1.1 The MMSD project

MMSD is an independent process of multi-stakeholder engagement and participatory analysis that seeks to address every aspect of the interface between the mining and minerals sector and the concept of sustainable development. The aim of MMSD is to "identify how the mining and minerals sector can best contribute to the global transition to sustainable development". In addition to the nearly 30 major mining companies funding the project through the WBCSD, MMSD has received funds and in-kind support from non-commercial sources, including foundations, international organisations, regional banks and agencies, governments, NGOs and research institutes.

MMSD is a two-year project that began in April 2000. The project should result in the establishment of structures capable of being carried forward after its completion.

MMSD is involved in regional processes in the world’s major mineral producing and consuming regions. These include southern Africa, Latin America, Australia and North America. Scoping studies are being conducted in Southeast Asia, the former Soviet Union and Europe. These regional MMSD processes are crucial components of the project. Each region is engaged in scoping issues and identifying institutional frameworks that could be established to promote sustainable development within the sector. MMSD aims to promote regional governance and build ongoing networks of stakeholders that will last beyond the lifetime of the project.

The MMSD process is:

- independent - listening to, and guided by all stakeholders, but under the control of none,
- consultative - stakeholders are consulted on each step of the process, and due recognition is given to their views,
- transparent - all publications, contracts and terms of reference are accessible to the public, and,
- regional - each regional centre has its own consultative process, governance structure relevant to the region, and is autonomous, transparent and accountable.

1.1.1 Objectives of MMSD

By March 2002, MMSD will issue a series of reports with recommendations as to how the mining and minerals sector can best contribute to the global transition to sustainable development. These recommendations will be based on:

- analysis of the issues,
- investigation of new standards and benchmarks,
- processes for continuing work beyond the scope of the current project,
- investigation of new working methods and relationships, and
- facilitation of greater trust and understanding between participants.
The Steering Committee of MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA, representative of key stakeholder groups from across the region, was elected at the MMSD Multistakeholder Meeting held in Johannesburg in November 2000. The role of this committee is to:
- provide general advice and support to the Working Group,
- peer review the outputs of the Working Group, and assure the quality of such outputs, and
- engage with stakeholders in their constituencies.

The Steering Committee advised and guided IIED in the selection and appointment of the MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA Working Group.

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) jointly formed MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA to lead, manage and guide the southern African MMSD regional process.

The objective of MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA is to determine how the mining and minerals sector can best contribute to the region’s transition to sustainable development.

In order to achieve the objective outlined above, MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA designed a process comprising three phases.

1. **Scoping**: the purpose of this phase was to develop a common vision for transition to sustainable development in the mining and minerals sector in southern Africa, and to identify key areas for research.

2. **Situation analysis**: this is where the bulk of the work occurred through a series of contract research projects based on readily available information.

3. **Framework Development**: this final phase of the project entailed the development of a framework of recommendations that will guide the transition to sustainable development in the mining and minerals sector in the region. This phase also included commitment to the process by key stakeholders in the region.

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**Figure 1.1**: The MMSD southern Africa process, indicating the strong stakeholder involvement.
1.2.2 The research and consultation process

The MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA project comprises two components: research and stakeholder consultation. These components are interactive and complementary - the regional issues to be researched were identified by the stakeholders and the reports, in turn, reflect the priorities of the stakeholders. Recommendations for implementation have been developed in collaboration with stakeholders.

In November 2000, at a Multistakeholder Meeting in Johannesburg, stakeholders identified the five key areas for research described below. The terms of reference were based on the results of that meeting. These were further refined in consultation with the Steering Committee.

The five research topics are:
1. Small Scale Mining and sustainable development in southern Africa (RT1),
2. HIV/AIDS, the mining and minerals sector and sustainable development in southern Africa (RT2),
3. Social issues within the mining and minerals sector in southern Africa (RT3),
4. Mining, minerals, the biophysical environment and the transition to sustainable development in southern Africa (RT4), and
5. Mining, minerals, economic development and the transition to sustainable development in southern Africa (RT5).

A sixth research report (RT6) - a baseline study of the industry - was commissioned and funded directly by the global MMSD project.

In April 2001 six research co-ordinators were contracted to carry out the studies, and the Working Group contracted six independent reviewers, eminent in their relevant fields of study, to review the research reports.

Stakeholder engagement and consultation informs all the activities of the MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA initiative. The Working Group accepted a set of principles according to which the stakeholder engagement component was conducted. These were:
- transparency,
- accessibility,
- neutrality, and
- consultation.

Southern Africa is a vast region, and to engage satisfactorily with stakeholders in a short space of time was not possible. Many stakeholders do not have access to the internet, telephone connections are unreliable and the postal services are slow. Further factors complicating stakeholder consultation are the multi-lingual nature of the region, the difficulties in identifying key players and the unsettled conditions in countries like Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In spite of these drawbacks, MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA now has over one thousand names of individuals and organisations on its mailing list. A continuous flow of information has been one of the success factors of the stakeholder engagement process.

A second multistakeholder meeting was held in Johannesburg on 18/19 September 2001. Stakeholder participation at this meeting is reflected in Figure 1.2. The purpose of this meeting was to:
- update stakeholders on progress to date,
- share the results of the six research reports with stakeholders,
- agree on key recommendations, and
- identify possible mechanisms for implementation of the findings.

Figure 1.2: Participants at the multi-stakeholder workshop held in Johannesburg on 18/19 September 2001.
In addition to the above, focus group meetings were held in Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. MMSD SOUTHERN AFRICA also made a presentation to, and conducted discussions with, the Technical Committee of the SADC Mining Co-ordinating Unit in Luanda, Angola. At these meetings, the purpose and progress of MMSD were discussed, and stakeholders were able to identify initiatives and issues that were relevant to their countries. The issues raised at these meetings correlated closely with the issues identified in the research reports. Stakeholders suggested the formation of national MMSD chapters as part of the implementation process.

This chapter has traced the origins and development of the MMSD initiative. The following chapter outlines the significance of the mining and minerals sector in southern Africa, and Chapter 3 describes the context within which it operates. Chapter 4 deals with the challenges facing sustainable development in the region, and offers recommendations to meet such challenges. The report concludes with suggestions for possible structures to implement the recommendations contained in Chapter 4.