

The Fauna & Flora International - Rio Tinto partnership



Conserving biodiversity worldwide

“Partnership is about mutuality of trust, responsiveness and the exchange of skills to allow a positive outcome for conservation. This is embodied by the Fauna & Flora International - Rio Tinto partnership which operates at a range of levels – from the development of a corporate biodiversity strategy, to implementation of that strategy on the ground. From our perspective, working with Rio Tinto not only helps us to meet our core aim of conserving biodiversity worldwide but also gives us access to some of the skills needed to operate more effectively as an organisation.”

Mark Rose, chief executive officer, Fauna & Flora International

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) as a biodiversity partner

FFI acts to conserve threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and take account of human needs.

Founded in 1903, FFI is the world's longest established international conservation body and one of few whose remit is to protect the entire spectrum of endangered species of animals and plants worldwide. FFI conserves species and ecosystems through collaboration with, and empowerment of, local governments, NGOs, institutions and communities. FFI works in over 40 countries worldwide, its sphere of operation coinciding with Rio Tinto's in many parts of the world.

FFI recognises the impact of corporate activity on biodiversity and acknowledges the private sector as an important stakeholder in conservation policy formation and implementation. By engaging in constructive dialogue, FFI aims to influence corporate policy and persuade major companies to incorporate biodiversity into their strategic planning.

Integrating business and biodiversity

Rio Tinto and FFI agreed in 1999 to work together to further Rio Tinto's aim of ensuring a net positive impact on biodiversity. In the past five years FFI has assisted Rio Tinto by:

- Raising awareness of conservation perspectives at the corporate level.
- Advising on policy development.
- Contributing biodiversity research and assessment.
- Assisting development and implementation of Rio Tinto's biodiversity strategy.

The primary objective of the partnership is to develop innovative approaches to biodiversity leadership, governance and management that are conducive to sustainable development. Shared expertise and resources are used to integrate biodiversity planning into mine site management and provide the foundation for wider strategic support for biodiversity conservation in countries where Rio Tinto and FFI operate.

Partnership success is predicated on constructive engagement at both the corporate and operational level. This shared approach has resulted in biodiversity management and conservation results that could not have been achieved in isolation.

This can best be seen where FFI and Rio Tinto are able to use their national and global resources and expertise to build capacity in community, local government and NGO organisations with which both partners work. The mutual utility of the partnership is reinforced through Rio Tinto and FFI's respective influence at the national and local level.

Unless clear demonstrable business benefit can be derived from building biodiversity into private sector decision making and practice, the long term prospects for biodiversity are diminished. By helping Rio Tinto make the business case for biodiversity, the partnership not only improves the prospects for biodiversity within the Group, but through example, also serves to improve the prospects for biodiversity in mining generally.

The programme:

Applying Rio Tinto's biodiversity strategy

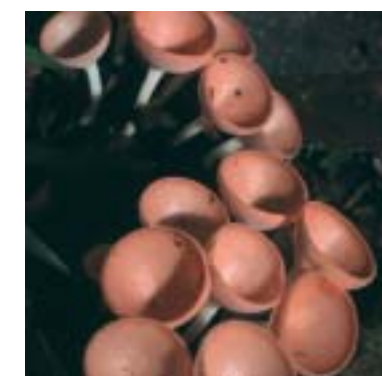
FFI is playing a key role in the development and implementation of Rio Tinto's biodiversity strategy, a role that complements the work of other Rio Tinto partners, including BirdLife International and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Through membership of Rio Tinto's biodiversity strategy external advisory panel, FFI has provided strategic and technical input on Rio Tinto's biodiversity position statement, principles, and biodiversity guidance document. The partnership is now working to develop programmes that will assist Rio Tinto's operations in the implementation of the strategy.

Planning for biodiversity in Rio Tinto operations

FFI has helped Rio Tinto Brasil (RTB) develop a framework for management of biodiversity at mine sites, and facilitated collaboration between RTB and sources of expertise within Brazilian institutions and NGOs. The success of this approach indicates its potential as a template that can be applied to other countries. In west Africa, developing the capacity for government regulatory bodies to work effectively with the mining sector is under way in a project aimed at ensuring sound environmental management of exceptionally rich biodiversity in southern Guinea.

Strategic support for biodiversity

Linking Rio Tinto to FFI's local conservation partners is providing opportunities for wider strategic engagement for influence on biodiversity conservation at a national level in Brazil, Madagascar and South Africa. This takes the form of targeted Rio Tinto investment and involvement in projects, which are of national and local priority for long term conservation and community gain. It includes collaboration with FFI partner organisations that provide the means for working with local communities in areas neighbouring mine sites. This significantly improves the potential for Rio Tinto to work constructively with local communities, NGOs and government, helping to reinforce its licence to operate.



Rio Tinto plc

6 St. James's Square
London SW1Y 4LD
United Kingdom
Telephone +44 (0)20 7930 2399

Rio Tinto Limited

55 Collins Street
Melbourne 3001
Australia
Telephone +61 (0)3 9283 3333

www.riotinto.com
www.fauna-flora.org

For convenience only, the expression "Rio Tinto" is used to describe Rio Tinto plc, Rio Tinto Limited and their subsidiary and affiliated companies even though these companies are independently managed, separate, and distinct entities.

Designed by Tor Pettersen & Partners.
Photos © Jeremy Holden,
Evan Bowen-Jones/FFI.
Printed in England by The Beacon Press to ISO 14001 environmental standards.