

MINING NEWS

The newspaper for mining people

R1.00 plus vat

November 2009

Rio Tinto scoops award

Rio Tinto's QIT Madagascar Minerals (QMM) in Madagascar has won the 2009 Nedbank Environmental Award. The award was presented at a ceremony at Nedbank headquarters in Sandton, Johannesburg on Thursday, 22 October 2009.

The Environmental Award honours a company that has made a significant effort in terms of protecting or improving the biophysical environment in which it operates. QMM was recognised for its groundbreaking work and commitment in environment and biodiversity especially its net positive impact. Manon Vincelette, head of Community Affairs, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development at QMM said: "We are very proud to be a recipient of this esteemed award. More important, we are pleased that QMM has been recognised for protecting and conserving the unique biodiversity of its mining sites and other related infrastructures and for building capacity for better use of the natural resources."

"I share this award with our hardworking employees at Rio Tinto and QMM as an affirmation that our dedication and effort to address the issues of biodiversity and ecosystem service degradation will have long reaching

and positive effects for society and present a benchmark for the mining industry. Of course we have not done this alone. Active engagement with local, national and international stakeholders has been fundamental to the success of the project. We engaged extensively with aid agencies and international institutions to build capability in the areas of communities, education and health. QMM also worked with numerous specialist environmental organisations researching the region's biodiversity. I also thank our former managing director Gary O'Bryan for his support and direction on the project."

An independent biodiversity advisory committee was formed in 2001 to review the biodiversity strategy and on-the-ground conservation action that consists of biodiversity experts in various fields of long-standing experience and globally renowned research credentials in Madagascar.

Rio Tinto recognises that biodiversity and ecosystem service degradation are issues of global significance that will have long reaching, negative effects for society if not addressed promptly and effectively. These issues present new challenges to the mining industry as a whole.

Noteworthy characteris-

tics of QMM'S biodiversity programme include identifying opportunities to enhance biodiversity conservation and promote fast growing plantations for community use,

biodiversity conservation, rehabilitation and dune stabilisation. It also seeks to restore the natural ecosystems and rehabilitate the land.

Three independent and expert

adjudicators in consultation with Nedbank were appointed to peruse and evaluate all submissions and the award winner selected based on the "best-in-class" principle.