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Developing a framework for sustainable development indicators for the mining and minerals industry

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Abstract

The mining and minerals industry faces some of the most difficult sustainability challenges of any industrial sector. To secure its continued "social licence"™ to operate, the industry must respond to these challenges by engaging its many different stakeholders and addressing their sustainability concerns. The industry must also be able to measure and assess its sustainability performance and to demonstrate continuous improvements over long term. The mining and minerals sector has already started responding to some of the sustainability challenges, as demonstrated by the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) project.

Following the findings of MMSD, this paper aims to contribute to these activities at the sectoral level through a development of a framework for sustainability indicators as a

tool for performance assessment and improvements. The indicators have been developed specifically for metallic, construction and industrial minerals, but may also be suitable for some energy minerals, particularly coal. The framework comprises economic, environmental, social and integrated indicators, which can be used both internally, for identification of "hot spots"™ and externally, for sustainability reporting and stakeholder engagement. In an attempt to help standardise corporate reports and enable cross-comparisons, the framework is compatible with the general indicators proposed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); however, a number of sector-specific indicators have also been developed to reflect the characteristics of the industry.



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Keywords

Mining; Minerals; Industry; Sustainable development; Indicators

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