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## **CHALLENGES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

**I**ntegrating environmental concerns with a nation's legitimate aspirations for economic and social development is achievable. Sustainable development is applicable to minerals and metals as they have been and will continue to be essential materials for the development of society. There are, however, challenges to be addressed, and multilateral and multinational cooperation is essential.

### **Stewardship of Minerals and Metals by the Minerals Industry**

The minerals industry has its own challenge in managing environmental issues. Companies need to assume greater responsibility for their own environmental performance and for good stewardship practices of minerals and metals throughout their life cycle. Environmental management systems (for example, ISO 14000) and codes of practice are examples of voluntary initiatives being developed and committed to by companies wishing to demonstrate their commitment to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. The International Council on Metals and the Environment, an organization of some thirty major mining companies around the world, is playing a lead role in identifying issues and promoting research and international cooperation to meet environmental challenges. Governments need to encourage stewardship by expecting their transnational natural resource companies to operate at the same high environmental and labour standards wherever their operations are located.

### **The Safe Use Principle**

As previously mentioned, the safe use principle provides an approach for minerals and metals that follows well-established