

TOPIC: Mining and Sustainability

HOST: John Thompson and Wendy Wolford

DATE: November 18th, 12:00 - 1:30pm, 300 Rice Hall

Abstract:

The purpose of the lunch is to discuss the relationship between mining and sustainability. Natural resources are in demand and are necessary to underpin even modest standards of living for the growing population on our planet. Mining will continue, therefore, in regions where economic concentrations of minerals occur. In this context, our goal is to examine what the mining industry is doing, and what needs to be done to meet sustainability goals at local, regional and global scales. We want to understand the perspectives of communities, society in general and the industry, and hence seek common ground and opportunities for change. Specific questions that we will discuss include:

What is the relationship between mining and a sustainable future – globally, regionally and locally?

What is sustainability in the context of mining in general, and with regards to the operating footprint, products, the environment and communities?

How has sustainable development been incorporated in modern mining – are there examples of good practices? How can the industry improve their efforts?

What drives the industry towards sustainability – regulations, public pressure, ethical imperatives or economics?

How do communities view efforts by the mining industry towards sustainability? What is the desired outcome?

The discussion will be initiated and led by brief presentations from:

John Thompson, Wold Family Professor in Environmental Balance for Human Sustainability in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

Muna Ndulo, Government Department and Director of the Institute for African Development

Marina Welker, Anthropology Department

Martin Zorilla, IARD major, Class of '14

We hope to generate vigorous and fruitful discussion that may enable attendees to connect and potentially develop new opportunities for collaboration.