

March 30, 2009

BELOW:

- Guatemalan Church Group Finds More Contaminants (Arsenic) in Rivers Near Goldcorp Inc's "Marlin Mine" in Guatemala
- Guatemalan media article, by Magali Rey Rosa: Goldcorp Inc has lost its 'social and environmental licence' to operate.

WHAT TO DO: see below.

To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:

<http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3>

DELEGATION TO GUATEMALA, APRIL 12-17, 2009:

Rights Action is leading an educational trip to Guatemala and the Goldcorp Inc-mining affected regions. To join this delegation: info@rightsaction.org, www.rightsaction.org.

SPEAKING TOUR IN CENTRAL & EASTERN CANADA, APRIL & MAY, 2009:

Rights Action is organizing a speaking tour: "GOLDCORP Inc's Open Pit Cyanide Mining In Honduras and Guatemala - Versus - Community Development, Environment & Human Rights Well-being of Indigenous and Local Populations in Guatemala & Honduras". To host educational events in your community: info@rightsaction.org, www.rightsaction.org.

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**ARSENIC IN THE RIVERS
AROUND GOLDCORP Inc's "MARLIN MINE"
IN GUATEMALA**

By COPAE, March 26, 2009, copae.sanmarcos@gmail.com, <http://resistance-mining.org/english/?q=node/99>

[Translated to english by COPAE. ORIGINAL EN ESPANOL: <http://www.resistencia-mineria.org/espanol/?q=node/118>]

The level of arsenic found in the rivers around the Marlin mine is alarming. That's what Ing. Fausto Valiente from the technical team of COPAE affirms, after the water monitoring in February 2009.

On Monday 23rd of February this year, the technical team of COPAE found a very high level of arsenic in the stream down the water dike of the Marlin mine, located in the municipality of San Miguel Ixtahuacán, department of San Marcos.

The level found was of 70 ppb (parts per billion) or 0.70 mg/L. While the international standards, such as the ones of the World Bank for strip mining, establish the maximum limit is 0.1 mg/L, the standards of the Environmental Protection Agency of the U.S.A. establish the maximum limit in 0.01 mg/L.

The stream down the mine flows to the stream Quivichil that unites the Cuilco river, the one that forms the river basin of the Cuilco river, one of the 33 most important basins of the country, which flows to Mexico.

WATER CONTAMINATION GETS WORSE

In the report presented by COPAE in October 2008 about the monitoring and analysis of the quality of water around the Marlin mine, data were presented that went up until 0.05 mg/L of arsenic in the monitoring point presented before (green line in the next graphic). The difference between the data of October 2007, March 2008 and February 2009 is enormous.

The range difference between what is established and what was found is fairly wide.

This may cause serious diseases in the people living close to the Marlin mine. Arsenic related effects in human beings are bladder, lung, skin, kidney, nose, liver and prostate cancer; in animals it increases the mortality and reduces the fertility, increases spontaneous abortions (miscarriages) and damage the red corpuscles.

The pictures below show pictures of people who have drunk contaminated water with arsenic, to have an idea of the great danger of drinking this kind of contaminated water

[COPAE, the Pastoral Commission for Peace and Ecology, accompanies the people from San Marcos, Guatemala, who are being harmed by the natural resources exploitation policies promoted by the Guatemalan State through concessions and licenses given to transnational mining and hydro-electric dam companies.
copae.sanmarcos@gmail.com / <http://resistance-mining.org/english/?q=node>]

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THINGS ARE GETTING UGLY

by Magalí Rey Rosa, Prensa Libre, 27 March 2009
(Translated for Rights Action by Marie Manrique)

Things got ugly for Goldcorp after it was withdrawn in April 2008 from the Jantzi Social Index due to: 1) indigenous groups' opposition to the Marlin mine in Guatemala, 2) the company's inadequate response to the health problems faced by the Honduran communities where Goldcorp also has a mine, and 3) as explained by Jantzi, its low environmental compliance record.

After a trip to Guatemala and a visit to the mining area, Goldcorp shareholders' pressure forced the transnational mining company to conduct an "independent" Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) of the problems caused by mining exploitation in the Marlin mine region.

The transnational company accepted bids for the project. Several organizations that had initially been interested decided not to participate since they considered that the term "independent" did not apply: the company financed the study, one of the Goldcorp vice-presidents participated directly, and the researchers would have to sign a confidentiality clause by which the transnational company assured itself that no inconvenient result would be disseminated.

The people from the mining region rejected this "independent" evaluation conducted by the "On Common Ground" group using South American experts with Guatemalan consultants.

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) had signed an agreement with Goldcorp and a group of shareholders, regarding the HRIA for the Marlin Mine in Guatemala.

According to a note that circulated this week, PSAC had decided to participate in the HRIA with the hope that this would benefit local communities in Guatemala. The note says: "Since then, PSAC has become increasingly concerned with the HRIA process and its relationship with the local communities."

"We have been especially concerned about the lack of free and informed prior consent of the communities in regards to the HRIA, and that the interests of Goldcorp are being put before the interests of the local people. As a result, PSAC has withdrawn our involvement in the HRIA, effective immediately."

Some Guatemalan consultants also have resigned.

When the truth is revealed, Goldcorp as well as the majority of transnational mining companies lose their social and environmental license.

The congressperson Bossinot made clear that he would not support the proposed mining law being discussed in Congress. I hope that the congressperson's demonstrated interest to open an orderly and transparent discussion on this topic allows him to include—in front row and with special consideration—the Guatemalans directly affected by mining exploitation and those potentially affected by future projects.

I take this opportunity to recommend-- to those who believe that mining problems are solved by an increase in royalties-- that they read in the New York Times Sunday edition, published by Prensa Libre, about how mining exploitation has left several communities without water in Chile, a country cited as the great example to follow to achieve better development levels based on metal mining exploitation.

What we in Guatemala need is the immediate detention of the issuance of any type of license for metal exploration and exploitation and the legality and legitimacy of the concessions in force be meticulously revised.

I insist: under the current conditions, metal mining in Guatemala increases social and environmental vulnerability, insecurity, injustice, and violence.

Do we want things to get even uglier?

(Magali Rey Rosa, Prensa Libre, lamaga55@gmail.com)

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WHAT TO DO

US and Canadian citizens should write to -- and keep writing to -- their politicians and media, making them aware of these situations, demanding that our governments prioritize global human rights and environmental concerns over global business interests, demanding that our governments pass criminal and civil laws to help hold our corporations accountable if/ when they violate human rights and/or cause environmental and health harms.

US and Canadian citizens should write to -- and keep writing to -- their Pension Funds and Investment Brokers, to find out what types of corporations and businesses they are investing in, to demand that our investors prioritize global human rights and environmental concerns over profits, to insist that investments be withdrawn if/ when profits are being made at the expense of environmental and health harms and/ or human rights violations.

This is slow, long-term work. We need to make our governments, corporations and investment firms accountable to us and to the highest standards of environmental protection and human rights, in all facets of global economic relations and policies.

See addresses, below.

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TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS for Indigenous and community-based organizations in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as El Salvador, Peru and southern Mexico that are resisting the harms caused by large-scale "development" projects (mining, tourism, hydro-electric dams, etc) and implementing their own community development projects (schools and scholarships, health clinics, solidarity economy productive projects, etc), human rights and environment projects, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

* UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

* CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: http://www.rightsaction.org/Templates/donations_index.html

TO JOIN Rights Action's email list and/or quarterly newsletter list: info@rightsaction.org

CREATE YOUR OWN E-MAIL LIST and re-distribute this and other information

DAILY NEWS: Watch & listen to www.democracynow.org; Read

www.upsidedownworld.org, www.dominionpaper.ca

READ: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine";

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