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Reaction to IRIS study on the mining industry | Mining's fiscal deal is broken and requires urgent reform

Québec, Val-d'Or – 16 November 2026. Ever-increasing mining subsidies are leading to fewer jobs and reduced royalties in the province of Québec, at the same time as 98% of company shareholders enjoying rising profits reside outside the province. These are the principal findings of a hard-hitting independent study published this morning by the Institute for Research and Socio-Economic Information (IRIS in French) on the economic impact of the mining industry in the province of Québec.

"Québec has been waiting far too long for this critical and clear-sighted analysis of the purported economic benefits of the mining industry. The findings are shocking: the economic house of cards is collapsing," says Rodrigue Turgeon, lawyer, Canada Program Co-Lead for MiningWatch Canada and co-spokesperson for the Coalition Québec meilleure mine.

In the midst of a mining boom, the governments of Québec and Canada are falling over themselves to shower the mining industry with gifts and subsidies in every budget. But the IRIS study is unequivocal: the largest share of the pie doesn't go to provincial coffers, let alone to local or Indigenous communities.

"The study does not use the term 'plunder' to describe the situation, but we have no hesitation in doing so. Quite literally, future generations are being deprived of the resources needed to ensure a viable economic future in order to enrich foreign shareholders based primarily in the United States, but also in tax havens such as Luxembourg," continues Turgeon.

With regards to employment, the study found that in the decade between 2012 and 2022, while the gross value of minerals extracted increased by 36 per cent, the total number of direct and indirect jobs fell by 19 per cent. This jobs decline is even more pronounced when taking wages into consideration, which fell by a whopping 57 per cent over the same period.

"The mining industry's long-standing justification of 'creating jobs' no longer holds water. Its *raison d'être* is to print money for foreign shareholders. Québec and Ottawa can no longer stand idly by, watching the gold bars slip through their fingers," says Turgeon.

Towards a new tax regime for mining

When the mining industry breaks the social contract it holds with so-called "resource regions," society must respond in kind: by imposing a new tax deal. The Coalition Québec meilleure mine is calling on the Government of Québec to undertake sweeping reforms to the laws and practices governing mining taxation.

This is not simply a matter of tossing a few crumbs to the affected regions. The provincial government has a responsibility to ensure that the exploitation of non-renewable resources does not solely benefit foreign shareholders, but society as a whole – starting with Indigenous and local communities.

The alternative – building more and more mines, each more polluting than the last, with minimal public benefits – is not only unsustainable but downright irresponsible.

At the very least, the Government of Québec must refrain from including additional subsidies to the mining industry in its next budget. As the IRIS study points out, the financial aid granted by the province for so-called critical and strategic minerals must take into account the mining industry's high profitability, with a view to achieving the fiscal justice that is both necessary and strongly demanded by the communities affected by the mining industry.

The Parti Québécois passed the last tax reform – and they must do so again
The mining tax system was last reformed in 2013 by former Finance Minister Nicolas Marceau of the Parti Québécois. The IRIS report, which covers the decade following this reform, demonstrates that the previous royalty reforms did little to weaken Québec's mining industry, which remained highly profitable throughout the following decade.

The question is whether current Premier Paul St-Pierre Plamondon's government will have the courage to follow in the footsteps of its predecessor, Pauline Marois, in defending the interests of the province and communities affected by a foreign-controlled mining industry lobby.

On October 21, the Premier instructed the Minister for Government Efficiency and Regulatory Relief to restructure the mining royalty system before Christmas. This timeframe, however, is insufficient to conduct a rigorous consultation and review.

Such a review involves not only redistributing mining royalties locally, but also reviewing the underlying mining tax system and, more importantly, reaching agreement on how to equitably share the collected revenue in the interests of affected Indigenous and local communities, as well as future generations.

"The industry is acting like an *anti-Robin Hood.* The lion's share of the profits reaped by foreign shareholders of multinational corporations must be returned to affected Indigenous and local communities to address their needs, particularly in terms of housing, environmental protection, public services and economic diversification," concludes Rodrigue Turgeon, lawyer, Canada Program Co-Lead for MiningWatch Canada and co-spokesperson for the Coalition Québec meilleure mine.

The three priorities of Coalition Québec meilleure mine:

1. Increase mining royalties and mining taxes by launching a province-wide national consultation that includes input from civil society on how best to reform the mining royalty regime.
2. Ensure the fair redistribution of mining royalties and industry benefits to communities that bear the environmental, social and economic consequences of mining.
3. Avoid, reduce, and fairly compensate for the current, future and past impacts of the mining industry on Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Discussion on Mining Royalties in Val-d'Or
On November 27, the Coalition Québec meilleure mine will host a public discussion in Val-d'Or entitled "Reforming Mining Royalties: Ensuring Communities Bearing the Costs Can Thrive." An official invitation has been extended to Minister Sébastien D'Astous, who is responsible for this file.

Source : Coalition Québec meilleure mine
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