



# MiningWatch Canada

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## Mines Alerte

### Newsletter

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### Yukon Faces Renewed Mining Problems

On March 18-19, MiningWatch Canada facilitated a meeting in Whitehorse to assess resources and capacity in the Yukon to work on mining, prioritize issues, expand working relationships and work on strategies. Invitees included a number of individuals and representatives of local organizations.

Key points for discussion were:

- 1) Ensuring that the proposed placer mining regime is consistent with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' legal responsibilities to protect fish and fish habitat
- 2) Effective reclamation of closed hard rock mines
- 3) Threats and opportunities presented by the development of regulations for mining under the new Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Act (YESAA) and the proposed Mine Reclamation Policy
- 4) Proposed new mines in the Yukon

#### Proposed Placer Mining Regime

The proposed new Placer mining regime is expected to be based on watershed assessments and classifications from important to non-fish habitat. A "watershed analysis" will document the Valued Components



Watching "development": Glamis Gold's Marlin mine project in Guatemala. Photo courtesy Centro de Acción para el Desarrollo y el Derecho.

in each watershed, including fish and gold, and a list of "Best Practices" for placer mining will be developed. A set of limits for suspended solids for the watershed will be set. Authorisations under the Fisheries Act will then be issued without any Environmental Assessment as long as the total limits for the watershed are not exceeded by the placer application, and as long as the company commits to "best practices".

A number of serious questions were raised by the meeting. Will the limits that are set be low enough really to protect the health of all fish in the watershed? Will they protect all stages of fish life?

How will Best Practices be determined? Will they drive improved technology? What kind of monitoring and enforcement will be in place? What kind of public consultation is planned on the proposed regime when it is released?

### ***Abandoned Mines in the Yukon***

There are seven really significant “Type II” abandoned mine sites in the Yukon. Some of them are mired in ownership questions which have to be resolved before the final decommissioning can take place. The seven are: United Keno Hill, Clinton Creek, Mt. Nansen, Faro, Ketza, Sa Dena Hess and Brewery Creek.

With the exception of Brewery Creek, these sites had inadequate reclamation bonds and cleanup will depend on the federal government Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan (FCSAP). The Brewery Creek Mine is in the process of decommissioning, and the Yukon government has already returned a portion of their reclamation bond. Three of these mines are:

***United Keno Hill.*** This silver property with over nine different mines came under the management of the Yukon government when its most recent owner, United Keno Hill Mines, went bankrupt. The mine had operated from 1921-1982. When the price of silver plummeted world wide, the mine then operated sporadically with many different owners, and stock plays. It is for sale by the court-appointed receiver. The federal government has severed the environmental liability from the site, although any new owners would be required to manage it.

***Clinton Creek Mine.*** The Clinton Creek asbestos mine was operated by the Cassiar Asbestos Corporation Limited from October 1967 until August of 1978. The mine has three open pits, located on the south side of Clinton Creek. There are 60 million tonnes of waste rock which have blocked Clinton Creek and formed Hudgeon Lake. During its short life, the mill discharged 10 million tonnes of tailings to the Wolverine Creek valley. The tailings dumps have since failed and formed two lobes, blocking the flow of Wolverine Creek. The creeks have eroded both the tailings piles and waste rock, and the fish habitat of upper Clinton Creek

and Wolverine Creek were destroyed. The federal FCSAP has paid for gabion (mesh cage) beds to stabilize the waste rock piles and allow water flows to resume in the creek. It will cost \$17-35 million to properly reclaim.

***Mt. Nansen/BYG Mine.*** Hugely promoted by the mining industry when it opened in 1996, this gold mine closed in 1997 because it was unable to meet the terms of its water licence. A Territorial Court judge later found that the actions of the company “demonstrate an attitude consistent with the raping and pillaging of resources in the Yukon”. Arsenic, cyanide, lead and other toxins were contaminating Dome Creek. It costs the federal government almost \$2 million a year to maintain the site, and plans are now underway to spend the \$7 million it will cost to actually reclaim it. The company is in bankruptcy proceedings. The mine is on the land of the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation.

### ***Threatening New Mines in the Yukon***

Two new mining projects threaten the traditional livelihoods of Yukon First Nations:

***Carmacks Copper Mine.*** Nine years ago, the company that owns this mine – now called Western Silver – aborted an Environmental Assessment when it failed to file required information. Now hoping to resume the same EA, the company wants to set up an open pit, sulphuric acid heap leach mine, which will have a mine life of eight years. The mine is only feasible at copper prices over \$.80 US a pound. The grade of the ore is very low (1.01%) and will create waste rock and tailings in excess of 100 times the volume of ore extracted.

***Wolverine Mine.*** Located in Kaska Dene Territory, this proposed underground lead, zinc mine is owned by junior Yukon Zinc. It is near the closed Kudz Ze Kayah Mine. The company is seeking a water licence, but the selenium content of the ore is such that it may be impossible to find a smelter to take it.

There are also concerns about the safety of other proposed mines: Dublin Gulch, Minto and Skookum Gold.

## ***Community Centred Health Research and Impacts of Mining on Women in Labrador West (Wabush/Labrador City)***

In 2004, MiningWatch Canada partnered with two women’s groups in the remote mining communities of Wabush and Labrador City (together known as Lab West) to consider the health implications of living in a mining town for community women. The *Labrador West Status of Women Council* and the *Femmes francophones de l’Ouest du Labrador* were interested in a community-centred participatory approach to better understand, document and communicate the health concerns of women in Labrador West. MiningWatch Canada was interested in the project because it has been our experience in working with communities affected by mining that it is often women who express health concerns and are motivated to address them.

The primary goals of this project were to stimulate dialogue with and between community women on the perceived impacts of mining on women’s health in Lab West, to document the findings resulting from these discussions, and to present these findings to the community. We adopted the holistic definition of health that is used by the World Health Organization (WHO), looking at health not merely as the absence of disease, but as the complete social, psychological, spiritual and physical well-being of a person, with a focus on the individual’s own views of their well-being.

In preparation for the “Overburdened” project, MiningWatch Canada commissioned CCSG Associates to conduct a review of epidemiological, toxicological, and community-

based literature that examines the effects of mining – both toxicological and social – on women’s health. The review found that little is known about the toxicological effects of common mining-related minerals on women’s health throughout the stages of a woman’s life cycle. Nonetheless, physiological conditions specific to women, such as pregnancy and lactation, and to female physiology in aging, may facilitate the release into the blood stream of metals that are stored in bone, causing health problems.

The Lab West women conducted research on the history of mining in the community and sought to identify historical and current studies that track emissions from the mines and assess environmental impacts and worker and community health. They also gathered information from provincial government officials, union representatives and lung and cancer

associations in the province. A technical advisory team was established by MiningWatch Canada. A Community Centered Research workshop with Catherine Coumans produced a questionnaire for health professionals and a community interview questionnaire in both official languages. When community interviews were underway, Susan Moodie of CCSG Associates visited Lab West. She provided training on community monitoring and collected water, soil, vegetation and dust samples. Significantly, the mines were both closed due to a strike at this time. The CCSG report and the final reports of the project were launched at a well-attended community meeting in Lab West on February 15, 2005.

For copies of the reports from this project see: [www.miningwatch.ca/publications.html](http://www.miningwatch.ca/publications.html)

## ***Indigenous Kanaks Blockade Inco’s Goro Site, Demand Hearing from Inco, Government Authorities***

On February 1st at 4 am in the morning members of the indigenous Kanak Rhéébù Nùu Committee blockaded the entrance to INCO’s Goro Nickel site. This is the latest effort in a long-standing struggle by the Kanak population of New Caledonia in the South Pacific to force Canadian nickel giant INCO to respect local indigenous rights.

Recognised Kanak authorities representing the major Kanak institutions of the Senat Coutumier and the Rhéébù Nùu Committee demand that Inco: 1) halt recently resumed construction of the Goro facility, 2) initiate a negotiation process that will result in an agreement with recognized Kanak authorities that responds to their social and environmental concerns concerning the Goro project, 3) allow an independent assessment of Inco’s Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Kanak authorities have repeatedly pointed to the agreements INCO negotiated with the Labrador Innu and Inuit as an example of the process they seek with INCO. (See media release and backgrounder at [www.miningwatch.ca/issues.html](http://www.miningwatch.ca/issues.html))

By February 4th, both Raphael Mapou, Secretary General of the Rhéébù Nùu Committee and André Vama, President of the Rhéébù Nùu Committee, had been arrested by French security forces. The following information on the events following the arrest of Kanak leaders is drawn from dispatches from Jacques Boengkih, a Kanak advisor to the Rhéébù Nùu Committee.

On Tuesday, February 8, people started filling the Noumea Court Hall where Raphael Mapou and André Vama were to face a “Tribunal correctionnel”. The court room was overflowing with supporters and the proceedings were well covered by media. The lawyers for Rhéébù Nùu asked that the trial be postponed to allow more time to prepare a defence. The lawyers asked that Raphael Mapou and André Vama be set free pending the new trial date (April 12, 2005) as they had promised that they will not disturb the peace.

Outside the court building André Vama and Raphael Mapou addressed the crowd, which demanded a march on Inco’s Goro-Nickel headquarters. Following a demonstration in front of the Goro-Nickel headquarters, a delegation was received by Ron Renton, Director general of Goro-Nickel and

Laurent Chatenay, head of Goro-Nickel’s communication department. The Rhéébù Nùu delegation was made up of André Vama, president, Hubert Newedou, vice-president, Joseph Attiti (brother of late high chief Charles Attiti) and Fernand Ouetcho, members of the Goro council of Elders, Gabriel Kate, member of the St. Louis council of Elders, Jacques Lalie, member of Congress, and Jacques Boengkih.

A list of demands was presented to Ron Renton including the call for an independent team of scientists to review the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The delegation also denounced the New Caledonian Government’s decision to grant Goro-Nickel a local tax exemption. André Vama reminded Ron Renton that Kanak demands have not changed and have not been addressed by Inco. In response to the delegation’s request for a negotiated agreement between Inco and legitimate Kanak organizations, such as Inco has with indigenous peoples of Canada, Ron Renton replied that he is employed by Goro-Nickel, the New Caledonian company, and he knows nothing about agreements signed by Inco with the Innu Nation and the Inuit Association of Labrador. But he said he would pass on to the company’s headquarters the claim for recognition of indigenous peoples’ rights, and he would take the issue to Toronto.

From Goro-Nickel’s headquarters the crowd and the delegation went to the Southern province headquarters. The same delegation plus Raphael Mapou was received by Philippe Gomes, president, Sonia Lagarde, vice-president and Bernard Cheriou, special advisor to the president. After a long debate Philippe Gomes said he agreed with the principle of an independent team to review the EIA. As chair of the Southern province environmental committee to monitor the Goro nickel project, Philippe Gomes agreed to call for an independent scientific review of Goro’s EIA. The next meeting of the environmental committee was planned for the second half of March. Gomes specifically referenced the disposal of mine effluents into the lagoon. He said that if independent scientist could show that the quantity of heavy metals would be hazardous for the environment, then the Southern province would ask Inco to halt the marine dumping of waste.

The Kanak delegation also requested an Impact Assessment Commission on the model of the panel of experts that worked on the Voisey's Bay Mine. Philippe Gomes said that the Southern province has created a steering committee made up of authorities competent in all matters such as health, cultural and social aspects that the project might affect. The delegation noted that the concerned Kanak people should be allowed to name their own representatives and that the Southern province authorities should stop creating division and con-

frontation between Kanak leaders and their communities.

Finally, the crowd and the Kanak delegation, now joined by Georges Mandaoue of the Senat Coutumier (the customary senate of the Kanaks) and High Chief Berge Kawa, marched to a meeting with the government of New Caledonia and subsequently to the French High Commissioner (who was away). Neither of these meetings seem to have been fruitful.

For pictures of the blockade and demonstrations see [www.rheebunuu.com](http://www.rheebunuu.com).

## ***Ontario Mining Action Network: For responsible and better-regulated mining in Ontario***

The Ontario Mining Action Network (OMAN) was launched in Sudbury, Ontario on December 5, 2004 at the conclusion of a two-day workshop on mining in Ontario. Representatives from First Nation communities, labour organizations, environmental groups and mining-affected communities from Southern and Northern Ontario identified a number of obstacles to more responsible and better regulated mining in the province and agreed to use the strength of a network to address these issues in their communities and at the government/policy level.

Participants at the workshop shared their experiences of how mining has affected their communities. Participants spoke about the environmental, social, economic and cultural impacts of mining, the challenges of interacting with mining companies and the need for better regulation of mining activities. As a result of our discussions, we identified three major areas of concern:

- Lack of meaningful consultation with First Nations and other surface holders prior to the onset of mining activities;
- Insufficient mechanisms for reclamation and rehabilitation funding;
- Inadequacy of specified standards, guidelines and monitoring mechanisms to protect our health and the environment.

These concerns and the recommendations from the workshop are elaborated in the background document which has been sent to Ontario ministries with responsibilities for mining - Environment, Natural Resources and Northern Development and Mines. The backgrounder is also on the MiningWatch Canada web site: [www.miningwatch.ca](http://www.miningwatch.ca).

The workshop was organized by MiningWatch Canada.



Micah Winter at OMAN founding meeting, holding improvised "talking stick" made out of rolled up flipchart paper. Susan Isaac photo.

## ***Teck-Cominco Pursuing Garbage for Highland Valley Copper Mine***

Faced with the impending end of production at the Highland Valley Copper Mine in Logan Lake, BC, mine owner Teck-Cominco is proposing the transformation of the waste rock dumps into a "solid waste facility" to take garbage from the Greater Vancouver area.

Logan Lake is seeking any possible alternative economic activity to minimize the loss of revenue associated with mine closure. The mine's closure will cause the following losses in the immediate region: 900 direct jobs and 1000 support service jobs and over \$18 million in after-tax income. The Town itself will lose 34% of municipal revenues.

Teck-Cominco is faced with a daunting bill for mine

reclamation after closure of Canada's largest open-pit mine. A memo from Wolf Nickel, the mine manager, dated August 26, 2004 states: "As a large disturbed "brownfield" site, HVC may be the best location in BC for a solid waste facility since over 6000 hectares of land are already disturbed, ground cover materials are readily available, a climate low in precipitation and the existing well-established environmental management and operation."

Sperling Hansen Associates ([www.sperlinghansen.com](http://www.sperlinghansen.com)), the landfill consultant working with Logan Lake, has identified a 250 hectare area on top of an existing waste dump located between the Valley Pit and the H-H dam for the facility. The



facility is said to have a capacity of more than 167 million tonnes.

Teck Cominco thinks the dump would offset a portion of their mine reclamation costs because construction of the leachate containment systems for the landfill would effectively cap the waste dumps.

## ***Diamond Rush in Manitoba***

DeBeers has staked over 1.94 million hectares of land in north eastern Manitoba near the Hudson Bay coast, in return for a payment of \$1 million to the Manitoba government - about 50 cents a hectare. The claims surround another 60,900 hectares staked by Western Warrior Resources ([www.westernwarrior.ca](http://www.westernwarrior.ca)).

De Beers' presence in northern Manitoba has sparked a run on exploration licences in the Province, once again creating third party interests - without consultation - on indigenous lands.

Manitoba has a system of claim staking that enables large areas to be claimed at one time.

Mining claims can vary in size from a minimum of 16

On March 8-9, 2005, Logan Lake Municipal Council and Teck Cominco pitched the plan to the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Logan Lake is competing with Ashcroft, another desperate town in the region, for the dump.

A number of community members want public debate and a referendum on the plan.

hectares to a maximum of 256 hectares. A mining claim in unsurveyed territory is approximately rectangular in shape; the length cannot be greater than four times the width; and no side can be less than 400 metres in length.

To stake a claim, a staker must have a prospecting licence. Anyone 18 years or older can apply for a licence at any Industry, Economic Development and Mines office. The licence is good for a lifetime and costs \$10.00.

The prospecting licence allows the licensee to stake any number of claims. Unlicensed people can help stake a claim but the holder of the licence must be present to ensure the proper information is written on the claim posts.

## ***Getting Smelter Toxins Under Control***

An open letter signed by over 20 environmental organizations was sent to the federal Environment and Health Ministers on February 21, 2005, demanding urgent action on toxins coming from smelters.

Smelters in Canada are a major source of pollution to air, lands and water. In the 2002 *National Pollutant Release Inventory*, the three largest emitters of "CEPA" toxics to air in Canada were base metal smelters - Inco Copper Cliff, Inco Thompson, Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting (now HudBay) - and the sector in total produced more than 26% of all CEPA toxics releases to air reported in Canada.

The HudBay Minerals smelter in Flin Flon is the largest point source of mercury emissions to air in Canada (over 1340 kilograms annually).

In the face of legislated limits, many smelters have reduced their emissions over the years by the constructing sulphuric acid plants and introducing new technologies. Despite this, base metal smelters remain the single largest source of sulphur dioxide emissions in Canada as well as mercury, arsenic, cadmium, lead, beryllium and nickel emissions.

Despite the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA '99) which names "emissions from smelters" as a substance of concern, there is no federal regulation to enforce it.

INCO, HudBay and other companies are blocking progress on these issues, saying they cannot afford to make the necessary changes, and that protecting health will result in the

smelters being closed.

However, at this time, Canada's base metal smelters are enjoying greatly increased profitability because of rising commodity prices. It is the ideal moment to require that the dividend from these profits be spent to protect the health of the very workers and communities that have produced it and sustained this industry over the past several decades. Both INCO and Sudbury are planning mine expansions at this time.

What is needed is tough regulation of smelters under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and the development of effective measures taken to creatively address the interests and needs of the affected communities.

The use of just-transition programs and community reinvestment funds can counter the employment impacts on these communities of the potential closure of facilities or down sizing as technologies change.

Despite this, Environment Canada proposes to reduce smelter emissions through Pollution Prevention (P2) Planning, an instrument under CEPA '99 for the management of toxic substances. This instrument is not regulatory in nature. The proposed Notice on P2 Planning for this sector lists targets and limits for emission reductions that are factors for consideration by facilities, in other words, not enforceable. Most of the targets in the Notice are inadequate to realise any significant reductions in the next 10 years. But even this measure is resisted by the companies.

## ***Victor Mine Environmental Assessment Decision Delayed***

A number of key issues are delaying a decision on the Environmental Assessment of the proposed Victor Diamond Mine in Attawapiskat in northern Ontario. Key among them are the possibility that the mine will contaminate the Attawapiskat River and other surface waters with salinated

water from deep in the ground, a concern about the possible drying out of over 2000 square kilometres of muskeg per pit, questions about a proposed road from Hearst to Attawapiskat that would replace the winter road, as well as inadequate socio-economic evaluation.

## Two Killed So Far Protesting Glamis Gold in Guatemala

Canadian mining investment has been implicated in the violation of human rights and indigenous rights as well as environmental problems at Glamis Gold's Marlin mine project in San Marcos in the western highlands of Guatemala. The



Construction of Glamis Gold's Marlin mine project in Guatemala. Photo courtesy Centro de Acción para el Desarrollo y el Derecho.

project is operated by a wholly-owned subsidiary of Glamis, Montana Exploradora. It has been the focus of protests and violent repression by the Guatemalan government and now private security contractors and anonymous actors as well.

Guatemala's struggle towards peace and democracy hinges on the implementation of the 1996 peace accords, which among other things recognised the existence and rights of the Mayan peoples by including the ratification of the International Labour Organisation's *Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries* number 169 (often just referred to as "ILO 169"). The Convention recognises the rights of indigenous peoples to be consulted wherever development projects might affect them or their lands, sacred sites, and resource use.

Mayan and campesino (peasant or farmers) groups have been supported by the Catholic Church and environmental groups in opposing both the government's granting of mining concessions without consulting the affected communities (mostly Mam and Sipacapense Maya) and the Marlin project itself. Glamis has received a \$45 million (US) loan from the World Bank's International Finance Corporation for the Marlin project despite serious concerns over the concession process, the lack of consultation, and the potential for serious environmental damage from the mine itself. The Canadian Ambassador has been very vocal in publicly supporting the mining industry while dismissing any concerns that might be raised.

MadreSelva, a Guatemalan environmental group, commissioned independent hydrogeologist Robert Moran to review the project's Environmental Impact Assessment. His report shows shocking inadequacies in the EIA as well as a refusal by the company to provide any further information or cooperate with his investigation in any way. The report is available on our web site in English and Spanish.

While the Church, indigenous groups and environmental

and campesino organisations have tried to engage the Guatemalan government and the World Bank in discussions on how to meet the requirements of ILO 169 and accommodate the communities' needs in any development proposal, the government has responded with force.

On January 11 the Guatemalan army and police attacked a blockade set up by the peasants of Sololá to prevent a pedestrian overpass from being dismantled to allow equipment to be transported to the mine. Protestor Raúl Castro Bocel was killed. The incident is still under investigation and there have been no arrests.

In response to this incident, as well as Glamis' continuing pursuit of a \$50 million claim against the US Government under Chapter 11 provisions of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement for not allowing it to mine on land sacred to the Quechan Indian tribe of California, Indigenous and non-indigenous solidarity groups picketed Glamis Gold's special annual meeting on February 9. Photos and background can be found at the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs web site at [www.ubcic.bc.ca](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca). The protestors handed out a flyer: *Failure to Disclose Material Risk: Are you aware of how Glamis Gold Limited operates in Central America? Is your investment truly "Low Risk"?*

More recently, on March 13, Álvaro Benigno Sanchez, a critic of the Marlin project, was shot dead by an employee of the Grupo Golan company providing "security" for the Marlin Project while leaving a choral concert in the parish church of San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos. Despite eyewitnesses having identified the attackers no arrests have been made. The victim was 23 years old, and leaves behind a pregnant wife and a 3 year old infant. Rights Action is collecting money to help the victim's family – see [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org).



Protest outside Glamis Gold's February 8 Special Annual Meeting in Vancouver. Photo courtesy Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

On March 25, in Sololá, Carlos Humberto Guarquez, prominent member of indigenous rights group Fundación Maya, local mayor Dominga Vásquez, and her husband, journalist Alfonso Guarquez, received death threats in an apparent effort to intimidate them into dropping their opposition to the Marlin mine. Amnesty International issued an Urgent Action alert on this case. For details see our web site.

## ***Ascendant Copper Threatens Ecuador Cloud Forest***

Since the early 1990s, the Intag region of Imbabura in northwestern Ecuador has been the target of mining exploration. There is a large ecological reserve there (the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve) as well as community forest reserves. The region depends on subsistence farming, coffee and other agricultural production, and eco-tourism. There is widespread and vehement opposition to plans by Bermuda-based Ascendant Holdings to mine copper in the cloud forest.

Ascendant's mining concessions are located in primary forests in the Toisan Mountain Range, in the confluence of two of the world's biodiversity "hotspots" (Tropical Andes, and the Chocó-Western Ecuadorian), home to dozens of endangered species.

In order to raise money for further exploration, Ascendant (through its subsidiaries Ascendant Exploration and Ascendant Copper) is seeking a listing on the Toronto Stock Exchange, despite questions that have been raised about the accuracy of its resource estimates and the status of its claims.

Ascendant's press releases claim inferred reserves three times those found in exploration work by a subsidiary of Mitsubishi, Bishimetals, in the 1990s. Local people have not allowed Ascendant to carry out any road-building or drilling in the concession area. In May, 1997 Mitsubishi's camp was burned to the ground by hundreds of local residents from seven different communities. Mitsubishi eventually withdrew completely. The government laid criminal charges against three community leaders, but was unable to get a conviction.

The Mayor of the Canton of Cotacachi, where the con-

cessions are located, has written to the Toronto Stock Exchange outlining why Ascendant should be denied access to the Stock Exchange. The communities nearest the mine – which would have to be relocated if the project proceeds – Cerro Pelado, Barcelona, El Triunfo, and Junín, have also declared their categorical opposition to the proposed mine.

The affected communities have not been consulted by the government regarding the concessions themselves, as required by Ecuador's Constitution, and neither has the company sought the authorization of the Municipality of Cotacachi as required by the Mining Law. The concessions can therefore be annulled according to the Environmental Management Law. As well, the concessions were granted while a law suit by the Municipality of Cotacachi challenging the legality of the Ecuadorian government's actions and those of the mining companies involved was before the Constitutional Tribunal. Final clarification of the Tribunal's resolution is still pending.

Ascendant recently dropped its attempts to sue a local community newspaper, INTAG, for libel, apparently for simply reporting on comments made by local people and government and church officials at a public meeting. On March 14 a settlement was reached absolving the paper of any wrongdoing – see the paper's web site at [www.intagnewspaper.org](http://www.intagnewspaper.org) for details.

MiningWatch is working with Friends of the Earth and DECOIN (Defence and Conservation of the Intag, a local organisation), to protect the cloud forest and the rights of the affected communities. For more details see [www.decoin.org](http://www.decoin.org).

### ***Book Review:***

***"In The Way of Development: Indigenous Peoples, Life Projects and Globalization". Edited by Mario Blaser, Harvey A. Feit, and Glenn McRae. 2004. Zed Books: London and New York.***

This book is based on a collaboration of indigenous leaders, social activists and scholars. It explores indigenous peoples' struggles to maintain control of their lives and lands in the face of increasing and accelerated encroachment of globalized industrial and commercial "development."

The book approaches indigenous peoples caught up in these struggles not merely as "victims" or "subjects" of development aggression – although they may be such at times – but also as active agents of resistance and change, and as shaping both their own continuity and transformation. This local and culturally rooted process, which is set against imposed forces

of development, is characterized as "life projects."

"Life projects" reflect efforts by local groups to define themselves and their own place in the cosmos in the face of, and sometimes in opposition to, a complex web of marketplace pressures, state-mandated development, globalized capital and power struggles over finite resources.

The stories that illustrate the broader themes of this book are drawn mainly from North America, particularly the Cree, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), and Chippewa Ojibwe (Anishnaabe) peoples. But there are also studies from South America and the Former Soviet Union.

### ***Book Review:***

***"Africa's Blessing, Africa's Curse: The Legacy of Resource Extraction in Africa." 2004. Kairos, Third World Network Africa: Toronto/Accra. 72 pages.***

*Africa's Blessing/Africa's Curse* provides a very accessible overview of resource extraction in Africa, with chapters devoted to gold mining, diamonds and the oil industry. Numerous case studies give a human face to the social, cultural and environmental impacts of mining and the struggles of affected communities to have a say in how Africa should best

develop its mineral wealth for the benefit of its own people.

Canada's involvement (and complicity) in resource extraction in Africa is a thread that runs throughout this book. Favourable tax laws on mining investment encourage junior mining companies to list on Canadian stock exchanges. Canadian diplomatic missions in Africa help to bring Canadian min-

ing ventures to Africa on the best possible terms and facilitate meetings between companies and host governments. Canadian laws and regulations are inadequate to punish Canadian companies operating in Africa when they degrade the environment, commit human rights abuses or contribute to social or civil strife. As a prominent player in the resource extraction industry in Africa, Canada needs to ensure that its support of this industry reflects its policy objectives of being a promoter of human rights and human security around the world. *Africa's Blessing, Africa's Curse* concludes with recommendations from Canadian and African civil society organizations for better regulated resource extraction which recognizes the rights of communities to decide if and how mining takes place on their lands.

The book is a good introduction to the mining and oil industry, and would be a useful tool for community education and classroom use. Worksheets on the gold mining process (highlighting the environmental and social at each stage from exploration to reclamation) and on the global diamond industry are features of the book which make the complex world of resource extraction and commodity markets accessible to newcomers to this topic.

Available at \$16.00 from:  
 Kairos – Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives  
 129 St. Clair Ave. West, Toronto, ON M4V 1N5  
 Canada  
 e-mail: orders@kairoscanada.org  
 or visit www.kairoscanada.org/e/resources/orders.asp

## In Memoriam: Roch Lanthier

Roch Lanthier, long-time activist and defender of the environment and people's health, died January 29 of a heart attack. MiningWatch Canada joins his family and friends in expressing our gratitude for the life of Roch Lanthier and our deep regret at his passing.

We have known Roch as a courageous activist – first in raising the issues of pollutants from the proposed Magnola smelter in Danville, Québec, then as an activist on stopping the aluminium smelter proposed for the pristine Patagonia area of Chile and then in fighting on behalf of the victims of asbestos in Québec and around the world.

His optimism always bore fruit. The Danville Magnola

magnesium smelter was stopped and the Patagonia Alumysa Project was abandoned by Noranda.

Roch believed that the victims of asbestos in Québec would also see justice one day, and that the asbestos-contaminated region of Québec would become a "Shambala". His vision will continue to inspire us all.

His enormous energy, creativity and vitality inspired others to get involved and take up the cause. He was loving and supportive of everyone who worked with him. He was willing, always, to give all of himself into whatever he was doing. He is deeply missed.



**I want to help provide communities with the support they need and make the mining industry accountable.**

**Direct my contribution to:**

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