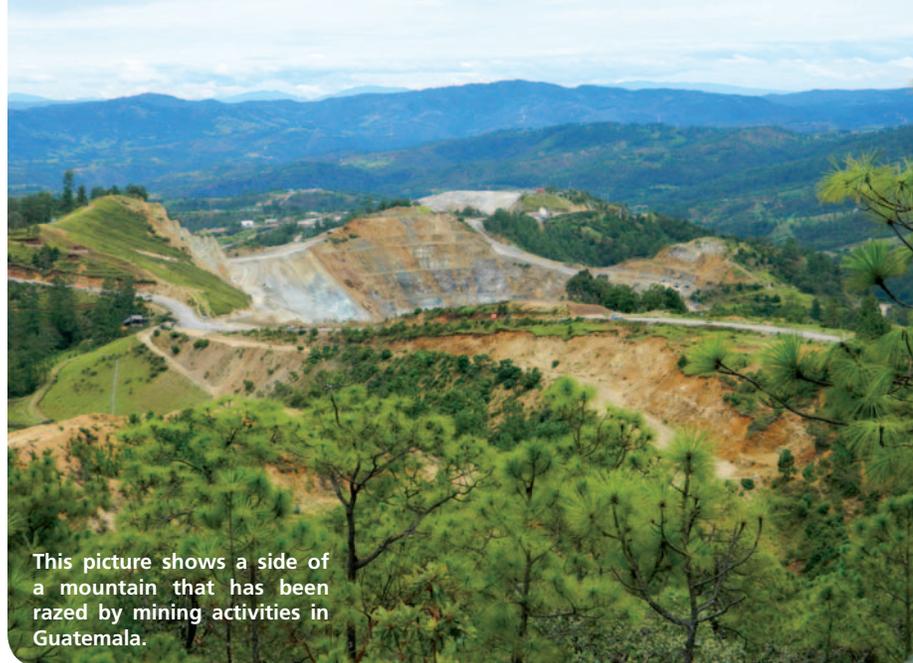


The **High Price** of **Precious Metals** in **Guatemala**

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This picture shows a side of a mountain that has been razed by mining activities in Guatemala.

When Council of Canadians National Chairperson Maude Barlow visited the Marlin Mine operated by Vancouver-based Goldcorp in 2011, she described how a breathtaking landscape in the department of San Marcos in Guatemala had been reduced to “a razed mountain top surrounded by huge lagoons of poisoned water.”

Complaints by members of the community about the poisoning of water sources and resulting health impacts have been confirmed by a number of independent studies, including a report by the University of Michigan for Physicians without Borders in 2010 and a study by the Comisión Pastoral Paz y Ecología (COPAE).

Based on the growing evidence of environmental damage and human rights violations, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights demanded in 2010 that the Guatemalan government suspend the Marlin Mine’s operations, but to no avail. The mine continues to operate and the company is expanding in the area with the support of a government that has failed to pay heed to the affected communities. Goldcorp also owns the claims for the Cerro Blanco operation near the Salvadoran border and the Los Chocoyos Mine – both projects are strongly opposed by the community.

In addition, Goldcorp holds 40 per cent of the shares in Tahoe Resources, which owns the Escobal Mine. In March 2013,

masked men kidnapped four Xinca leaders who were on their way home from observing a public referendum on the Escobal Mine. One of the leaders was killed – adding to the growing list of Latin American anti-mining activists who have lost their lives in the struggle to protect their communities from big Canadian mining projects.

Canadian mining companies and the mining-friendly Guatemalan government have resorted to extreme and oppressive measures in order to impose these extractive projects onto a primarily Indigenous population that has overwhelmingly rejected them. Given the Guatemalan government’s repeated violations of the rights of Indigenous peoples to Free Prior and Informed Consent, communities have taken public consultation into their own hands. Since 2005, more than 74 public referenda have been held through community consultation processes, enabling more than one million Guatemalans to voice their opinions. The Guatemalan government continues to ignore these decisions.

Show your solidarity for mining-impacted communities in Guatemala

While the Canadian and Guatemalan governments continue to promote the expansion of mining practices that are at the centre of human rights and environmental justice struggles, we are asking people living in Canada to show their

solidarity through concrete actions. A new project called “The Money Thread” by the Council of Canadians and the Projet d’Accompagnement Québec Guatemala (PAQG) calls on Canadians to cut financial ties to destructive mining projects in Guatemala.

Nearly 90 per cent of the gold consumed in the world is used to manufacture jewellery and collectible coins. In Guatemala, as in other places, mining activities are extremely prosperous. The value of gold and silver on the world market has increased by more than 450 per cent since 2014. The profit margin, which sits at billions of dollars, is nearly four times as high as the production costs. Unfortunately, this industry is often extraordinarily profitable simply because the vital costs of the mining are assumed by the populations who feel the environmental impacts and the harmful effects on human health at first hand.

The Money Thread urges Canadians to acknowledge their financial ties to the serious harm and brutal repression related to Tahoe Resources and Goldcorp’s mining projects. While these ties make us the unwitting accomplices to the human rights violations taking place in Guatemala, they also provide us with a means to act in order to make a difference by divesting our money from their companies.

Find out more at themoneythread.org.