

When governments protect water, corporations can sue.

Trade agreements commonly investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) provisions, which grant investors the right to sue foreign governments if they introduce new laws or regulations – be they environmental, health or human rights – that cause the investor to lose money.

All figures in Canadian Dollars.

Canada: paid \$131 million to American pulp and paper giant AbitibiBowater for water rights.

El Salvador: paid over \$24 million in legal costs to defend against a lawsuit by an Australian company after rejecting a mining permit over water concerns.

Panama: being sued for \$268 million by an American company for refusing to extend mining rights on a newly created reserve.

Colombia: being sued for \$16.5 billion by a Canadian company over a cancelled mining exploration permit.

Bolivia: being sued by a Canadian mining company for \$386 million.

Argentina: ordered to pay the French water utility giant Suez \$405 million.

Estonia: facing a \$140 million lawsuit filed by UK-based United Utilities over a cap on water rate increases.

Slovakia: being sued for \$100 million after refusing to allow a bulk water export pipeline to a factory in Poland.

Romania: being sued for \$4 billion by a Canadian gold mining company over a lake of cyanide-contaminated water.

There are now over 3,500 ISDS agreements in the world!

Corporations vs. Governments



Corporations are winning 60% of ISDS cases, compared to only 40% for governments.

How TRADE Agreements Threaten WATER

“Modern free trade and investment agreements impede the ability of people and their governments to maintain environmental laws and regulations to protect their water.”

- Maude Barlow



Privatization is locked in.

Modern trade agreements include “standstill” and “ratchet” clauses that lock governments into an equal or greater level of privatization as exists when the agreements are signed.

What's the big deal?

Studies show that private water utilities cut jobs and services, skirt pollution rules and raise water rates. A 2016 Survey of 500 U.S. communities found that private water systems charge 58% more than public ones.

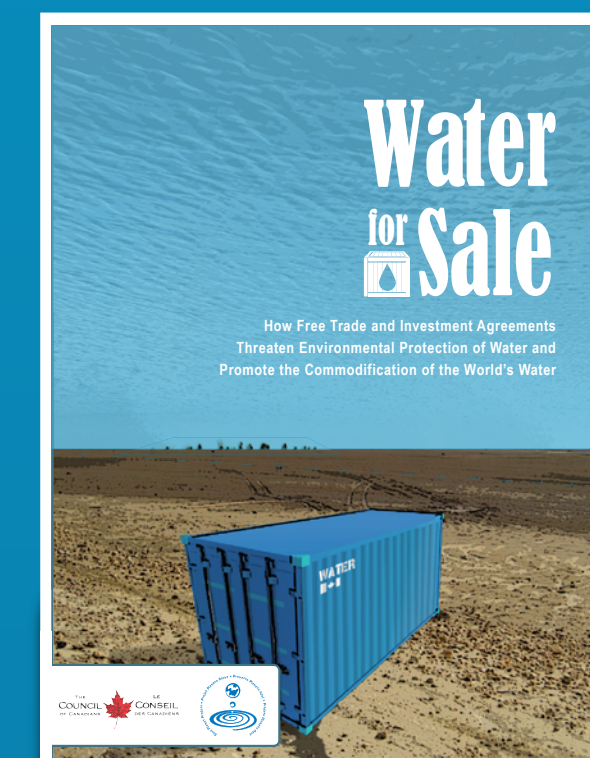


Once water exports start, they can't easily be stopped.

Once water is used in a product or service – as a beverage, or for industry, municipal water systems or hydroelectricity – it becomes a “tradeable good,” subject to international trade law.

However...

Under World Trade Organization rules, no country can impose any “prohibition or restriction” on the export of a tradeable good.



The global annual market for water will be worth just under \$300 billion by 2020. Trade agreements help large multinational corporations lock in these profits and take away the ability of governments to protect public water. That's why more than 3.5 million Europeans signed a petition against CETA and TTIP – to stop these agreements before they start.

Read the full report at www.canadians.org/wfs



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