



MiningWatch Canada

Mines Alerte

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Vannessa Ventures Drops Defamation Charges Against Costa Rican Environmentalist

On October 11, 2006, at 8:30 in the morning – minutes before the hearing was to begin – Industrias Infinito, the Costa Rican subsidiary of Vannessa Ventures, dropped its lawsuit against Marco Tulio Araya for defamation and damages. The company also agreed to reimburse Araya, a journalist by profession and head of communications for the Northern Front of Opposition to Mining in Costa Rica, \$1000 US for his costs.

The company had met with Araya several months earlier to negotiate an out-of-court settlement but he had refused because the company had insisted that he acknowledge that he had caused harm to the company's image. Araya had simply reported on statements made by community members at a public meeting to the effect that open-pit gold mining is environmentally dangerous, especially in a sensitive environment.

Araya stated before the court that he is convinced that open-pit mining operations are highly contaminative, and that he will maintain his position until it is shown that mining is harmless to the environment. Costa Rican judges Luis Fernando Calderón, Francisco Bolaños y Antonio Barrantes supervised the signing of the settlement and announced the dismissal of the case against Araya.

The company's concession, in the northern Costa Rican district of Crucitas, has been the cause of much conflict since the 1990s. Placer Dome dropped plans to develop the mine in 1997 in the face of overwhelming community opposition.

Vannessa acquired the property from Lyon Lake Mines in

2000. The project is only a few kilometres from the Río San Juan and the Nicaraguan border, and would affect communities and businesses in Nicaragua as well. Any impacts on the Río San Juan would affect the international "Si-a-Paz" ("Yes to Peace") park established between the two countries.

Despite a Costa Rican law banning open pit gold mining, Vannessa/Infinito has been using every means available to convince farmers, ranchers, and ecotourism operators that large-scale mining, with its inevitable water contamination social and economic impacts, is compatible with their rural way of life. The company succeeded in getting its environmental impact statement approved by Costa Rican authorities when it submitted it unamended a second time, but the approval was negated within weeks by injunctions filed by Araya's group.

Antonio Ruiz, director of the Nicaraguan environmental organization Fundación del Río and member of the anti-mining action network of the Río San Juan Watershed, has been following this case closely. He said, "For us, this is a partial victory, for the fact that the mining company has backed off on their charges; however, we interpret this as a change of tactics on the part of the company, from confrontation to a more friendly strategy which will attempt to mitigate the damages through the management of their public image." For the Nicaraguan environmentalist this indicates that "the company was not going to be able to disprove the facts that Araya had stated, that the mining project is highly contaminating".

PBI-Canada Delegation to Guatemala Witnesses Struggle for Lake Izabal

By Ken Luckhardt, Chairperson, PBI-Canada and Board Member, MiningWatch Canada

While the daily pages of the *Globe & Mail's* "Report on Business" announce the latest bidding wars for corporate control of the international nickel industry, the Indigenous Mayan people of Guatemala are saying "no" to mining projects imposed on them without consultation and without consideration for the environmental damage that will inevitably result.

On September 17, 2006, in northeast Guatemala, over 2,000 Q'eqchi' Maya people occupied three separate areas on the mine site of *Compañía Guatemalteca de Níquel (CGN)*, a subsidiary of Vancouver-based *Skye Resources*. *Skye* is the successor to *INCO*, which first laid claim to the site in 1965 and operated the *EXIMBAL* mine for four years before closing it in the face of low nickel prices in 1981. *INCO's* abrupt withdrawal occurred in the midst of the Guatemalan civil war and in the face of charges of corporate complicity in the murder of Guatemalan protestors fired upon from *EXIMBAL* trucks.

INCO continues to hold a 12% stake in *Skye Resources*. *BHP-Billiton*, the largest global mining company, owns another 16% of *Skye* while also holding additional mining leases in the Lake Izabal region.

PBI-Canada Delegation Visit to Lake Izabal

A six-person *Peace Brigades International (PBI)* delegation travelled to Guatemala for ten days in mid-August to meet with activists and leaders of organizations who are (or have recently been) given "protective accompaniment" by the *PBI-Guatemala* project's eight international volunteers. We were joined by a similar fact-finding mission from a *PBI-Spain (Catalunya)* delegation.

The organizations we met represented labour, women, human rights, development, ecological, and gay and lesbian organizations - and, without exception, they all spoke to variations on a common theme: increased fear, increased threats and in many cases increased political violence from the authorities and unidentified right-wing forces harkening back to the terror-filled civil war years. As the leader of a women's organization put it: "We are experiencing a return to counter-insurgency, but without the insurgency."

With regard to resource extraction and human/labour rights, the *PBI* delegation visited two communities on the south side of Lake Izabal, directly across from El Estor, the site of the *Skye Resources* mining operation. The primary purpose of the trip was to meet with Eloyda Mejía, a very courageous and determined leader of a community organization known as *ASALI*, the *Association of Friends of Lake Izabal*. Eloyda Mejia had been accompanied by *PBI* since 2004 in response to threats she and others in *ASALI* have received for raising concerns regarding mining and oil projects that threaten the environment and the people of the region.

In 1999, the communities of Lake Izabal discovered that a 25-year oil concession of some 320,000 acres (including Lake Izabal) had been granted to the *Atlantic Petroleum Company*. In 2002, the concession was revoked by President Portillo in response to strong community opposition to a project destined to threaten the livelihood of El Estor and local residents, not

to mention the environment. *ASALI* was created out of that victory against *APC* in 1999, four years before *INCO* sold its mining concession to *Skye Resources*.

Over 1,000 fishers and their families depend on the 40 species of fish and other aquatic resources of Lake Izabal, the largest of Guatemala's four lakes. *ASALI* has campaigned to defend the fishing culture of the communities and the unique natural resources of the Department of El Estor, especially the river systems that are associated with the Lake Izabal area. Eco-tourism and solar energy projects are considered priorities for the region, and these objectives are incompatible with large-scale mining and resource extractive projects.

When *Skye Resources* announced its plans to re-open the mining operation at El Estor by 2008, *ASALI* organized a local forum to discuss the impact of such a development. It was at that point that Eloyda Mejia began to receive threats, and it was then that she sought out *PBI* accompaniment. Subsequent investigations discovered that people had been paid to attend the *ASALI* forum to issue the threats. In Eloyda's words, "without *PBI* presence, violence could have happened on many occasions." Over the years, she has had to move her residence three times, and graffiti ("*CGN*", the initials of the local *Skye* operating subsidiary) has been painted on her son's store.

Present-day fears of and opposition to the re-opening of the mine (now known as the *Fénix*, or "*Phoenix*", project) are derived largely from the living memory of many local Q'eqchi' residents who endured the *INCO* years. The plant associated with the mine is only 3 km from the lake's edge on the northern shore, and lake water will be used to cool the plant technology before being immediately returned to the lake. An important fish spawning area and a sanctuary for 15 species of birds are both within 10 to 15 km of the plant, causing concern to *ASALI* members.

The old *INCO* mine left areas devoid of vegetation and land problems associated with leaching. An abandoned community of 700 houses, offices, a hospital, school, strip mall, golf course and large industrial processing area have been a waste of resources and blight on the landscape ever since the *EXIMBAL* site was abandoned in the early 1980s. The oft-repeated refrain from mining companies that affected communities receive direct and indirect economic benefits is a hollow claim for Lake Izabal residents as a total of only \$950,000 *Quetzales* (Cdn \$140,000) was paid in 2004; that transaction occurred as a necessary condition for renewal of the concession.

The *INCO/Skye* concessions overlap with Maya Q'eqchi' claims to indigenous lands which were never properly titled by the Guatemalan authorities as per the promises that made up the *Peace Accords* of 1996. Within a few days of the land occupation in mid-September, representatives of various Q'eqchi' communities testified before the *Energy and Mining Commission of Congress*. They insisted that they had purchased the land but had never received property titles. Further, *Skye's* subsidiary had been granted these same lands as mining concessions and the company never informed nor consult-

ed the affected communities, another commitment of the 1996 Peace Accords broken by state and corporate authorities.

Our PBI-Canada delegation had the privilege of attending a community meeting on August 13 in Mariscos, a community on the south side of Lake Izabal that was severely affected by the old INCO operation 25 years ago. ASALI and the ecological organization MadreSelva (“Mother Jungle”) had been invited to lead a discussion on the impacts on this particular community if the Skye/GNC operation is allowed to proceed.

The company is pressuring the residents of Mariscos to agree to widen the winding, hilly road that connects their lakeside community with the highway that leads to the Port of Puerto Barrios, where the ore would be taken for sea transport to undisclosed destinations. The corporate plan would be to barge the ore from El Estor on the north shore of the lake to Mariscos on the south shore, where up to 200 mining trucks per day would then move the ore from the water’s edge to the ocean port. That’s right, 200 trucks per day!

The mood of the meeting was initially calm as community members watched video materials provided by the ASALI and MadreSelva speakers. During the subsequent discussion however, community members expressed anger at the fact that the company claims to have consulted and received approval for the road-widening and trucking operation. No such community consultations happened and no such support exists. A representative from the Mariscos Community Development Council was also outraged that an (unnamed) member of the community had agreed to participate in a pro-mining demonstration in Guatemala City three days before, on August 10.

(Our PBI-Canada delegation had observed this march of some 300-400 pro-mining “activists” in the snarled traffic of the Guatemalan capital at noon. We did not see much enthusiasm from the participants, perhaps because it was reported later that most of those in the march had been paid to attend

by the mining companies, or threatened with the loss of a job if they were currently in their employ and did not participate. Subsequent reports in the daily press confirmed this arrangement. See “Where did the mining companies’ ethics go?” on the MiningWatch web site)



Lake Izabal, Guatemala. Photo courtesy Deborah Frolick.

Such a demonstration reflects the desperation of the mining companies and their neo-liberal politician friends, a desperation that increases with every additional popular community referendum that overwhelmingly opposes foreign (commonly Canadian) mining projects. On August 17, for example, three days after our PBI-delegation left Guatemala for Canada, the communities of the Department of Huehuetenango overwhelmingly rejected mining as a “development” option for their region.

Concluding Thoughts

Canadian mining companies, most notably Glamis Gold in the Sipakapa region and Skye Resources (or is it really INCO or BHP-Billiton in disguise?) in the Lake Izabal region, are definitely engaged in neo-liberal ventures that put the profit motive of their shareholders above the interests of the affected indigenous communities, local laws, and even international human rights law. It is not necessary to go to Guatemala to understand that reality.

On the other hand, it is essential to be there to listen to the people speak of their fears and anxieties, to witness the anguish on their faces as they speak of the future in the language of the past terror of only a decade ago. It is heartening however to know that the oppressed will always collectively resist...and in doing so they call upon other Canadian organizations—MiningWatch Canada and PBI-Canada in particular—to strengthen relationships of solidarity for a common struggle which has as its objective the regulation of capital in the search for social justice and peace.

Kanak-led Opposition to Goro Nickel Widens in New Caledonia

Even as two proposed nickel projects are shifting out of Canadian hands in New Caledonia – Falconbridge’s Koniambo project is now owned by Swiss Xstrata following its hostile takeover of Falconbridge, and Inco now owned by Brazilian CVRD – the opposition to Inco’s Goro project is widening.

Long led by indigenous Kanaks through their organization Rhéébù Nùù, a first sign of a broadening base of opposition came in July of 2005 when CAUGERN, the Indigenous Council for the Management of Natural Resources, was set up. CAUGERN is a Kanak-led umbrella organization that includes Kanak organizations, the trade union USTKE, and primarily

non-Kanak environmental groups.

More recently, meetings to discuss the Goro Nickel project held by the Southern Province government, as well as meetings called by Rhéébù Nùù and CAUGERN, are attracting a growing number of non-Kanak citizens of New Caledonia. The Southern Province is holding meetings to discuss the findings of an independent French team that is reviewing Goro Nickel’s Environmental Impact Assessment. Rhéébù Nùù and CAUGERN called a three hour meeting in the capital’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry on August 29th, 2006. The auditorium seats 186 people but was packed with



Rhéébù Nùù Leader Raphael Mapou addresses audience on August 29. Photo by Mike Hosken

more than 250 people, many of whom sat on the floor. According to MiningWatch Canada's contact, Jacques Boengkih, "the audience was 80% French entrepreneurs and academics, women and men, the ladies being much more demanding than the men for more measures against the project's environmental and social impacts."

Not only is the participant base of the opposition to irresponsible mining in New Caledonia broadening, but also the nature of the discussion. No longer is the debate about problems with the Goro project alone, many are raising concern about the environmental impacts of mining throughout New

Caledonia and questioning whether New Caledonia is receiving enough benefits from the extraction of its nickel resources. Additionally, Kanaks and others are increasing calls for independence from France so that New Caledonians will be better able to take charge of their own destiny.

Rhéébù Nùù won an important legal victory on June 8th when Goro-Nickel's 2004 licence to operate the Goro mine was revoked by magistrate Jean-Paul Briseul. However, as Goro's construction permit was not revoked and construction continued until broad-based protests closed the site at the end of September.



September 28, 2006 protest against Goro Nickel, Noumea, New Caledonia

Life before Profit! Development and Peace Kicks Off Two Year Campaign on Mining

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace is launching a five year action program in solidarity with its partners in communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America to promote sustainable human development through participatory management, democratic control, and the equitable distribution of resources.

The first two years of the campaign will focus on mining by Canadian companies in the Global South. Development and Peace campaigners will encourage people to ask the Canadian

government to:

- Refuse Canadian government support to mining companies that do not respect international environmental and human rights standards, and
- Develop legal mechanisms that ensure mining companies are held accountable for their actions in the Global South. MiningWatch Canada staff have been working with Development and Peace staff and volunteers from across Canada to help prepare for a successful campaign.

TVI Pacific Again Implicated in Forced Evictions at its Canatuan Project in the Philippines

The community at TVI Pacific's mine site in the municipality of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte is made up of indigenous Subanon, some of whom are native to that place and included in the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title, and others that have been come from others areas to work for TVI Pacific, and "settlers," mainly from the Visayan region of the Philippines, some of whom were small scale miners all of whom are now agricultural.

As TVI Pacific's mine has closed in on existing homes, TVI has taken to evicting families. Displacement of populations related to large scale projects around the world is recognized by the World Bank as one of the greatest sources of impoverishment (World Bank Policy on Involuntary Resettlement, 2001). Mining-Induced Displacement and Resettlement (MIDR) was recognized in the final report of a mining industry-led multi-year, multi-stakeholder process to

be a major source of societal instability (Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development 2002:158).

International Human Rights Instruments such as ILO 169 (specifically for Indigenous Peoples) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the World Bank Extractive Industries Review (2003:58) clearly indicate that relocation of populations for large scale development projects should be avoided if at all possible and never occur without the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of effected individuals set out in a consent agreement.

TVI Pacific did not

- 1) conduct an independent Relocation Impact Assessment before starting to mine
- 2) receive the free, prior and informed consent of the people to be relocated in writing
- 3) negotiate an acceptable relocation plan and compen-

- sation plan with the people to be moved before starting to mine
- 4) put aside a relocation bond in case of unforeseen costs associated with relocation
- 5) relocate and compensate the people who need to be moved before starting to mine
- **People resisting relocation:** Indigenous members of the Ancestral Domain Claim community and long time Visayan settlers near the mine site are resisting relocation.
- **Threats from TVI Supporters and Paramilitaries:** In

November and December 2004, Josie Gonzaga said she was threatened by TVI supporters and TVI's paramilitary SCAA with legal action, forcible eviction, and possible personal harm if she would not accept payment from TVI and move.

- **Forcible Eviction:** On February 2, 2005, TVI Pacific issued three eviction notices, stating "...we DEMAND that you vacate the company premises and mining area within a non-extendible period of FIFTEEN [15] days from receipt hereof."

Ottawa, July 7, 2006

To Ellen Ruth Zeisler, David Da Silva, Steven Rheault-Kihara, Jannette Cansing Serrano:

I am writing this urgent e-mail to each of you as I have met with each of you on separate occasions and have discussed with you serious human rights concerns regarding the TVI Pacific mine project in Canatuan, Zamboanga del Norte.

We recently received reports from our local partners in Zamboanga del Norte that there has been yet another case of a forced relocation and demolition of a family home within the TVI concession in Canatuan. Our reports indicate that this event took place after sunset on the evening of June 22. It involved TVI Pacific's private security forces (SCAA). Both the owners of the home, Mr. and Mrs. Galvez, and some of the 14 members of the community who were trying to help the couple to protect the home were injured in the forced relocation. The private property inside the home was confiscated against the wishes of the couple.

This morning, July 7, 2006, we received an urgent appeal for assistance from the Canatuan Farmers' Association who fear that the homes and food crops of some of their members may also soon be destroyed without their consent.

According to TVI's own reporting, some 30 families, 5 of which are indigenous Subanon and the rest are farmers, have not agreed to be relocated in order to make place for TVI's mine.

I am writing to remind you that resettlement of established families is widely recognized as one of the greatest sources of impoverishment associated with large development projects around the world (see references p. 85: www.framework-forresponsiblemining.org), and in the case of indigenous peoples, it is additionally a major threat to their cultural identity and existence as a people. For these reasons, best practice standards have been developed for the relocation of families that conform with international human rights principles. These standards, based on extensive experience, have been set out in numerous places (Mines Minerals and Sustainable Development 2002; World Bank 2003; World Commission on Dams 2000 etc.). Minimally, there should be prior social and economic baseline studies, a relocation impact assessment conducted in conjunction with affected communities focussing specifically on marginal individuals and groups within communities (women, the elderly etc.), a negotiated, agreed upon, and legally binding compensation plan that includes "land for land" alternatives, a relocation bond for unforeseen circumstances, and a dispute resolution mechanism.

Forced resettlement, as is happening at the TVI Pacific site is not acceptable under any standards for responsible mining. TVI Pacific is responsible for activities taking place within its concession and for the activities of its security forces.

I would like to remind you that TVI Pacific's Canatuan project is currently the subject of a Human Rights Impact Assessment led by Rights and Democracy in Montreal.

TVI Pacific has information up on its web site stating that the company is "lauded" by the Canadian Ambassador "for its responsible mining." In discussions with each of you I have also received assurances that this company will mine responsibly and will not abuse human and indigenous rights.

I therefore urge you to impress upon the executive of TVI Pacific that no further forced relocations and home destructions should take place within its concession. TVI Pacific should be encouraged to inform itself of best practice standards and to implement relocation assessments, consultations and plans in accordance with best practice standards for relocation as I have indicated above.

I look forward to your soonest response to this urgent request for intervention.

Best,

Catherine Coumans, Ph.D.
Research Coordinator
MiningWatch Canada

copy: Diana Bronson, Rights and Democracy, others.

- **Farmers appeal to Governor:** On February 8, 2005, 111 self-described “farmers of Canatuan, Tabayo” requested the help of Governor Yebes to stop their eviction.
- **Forcible Eviction:** MiningWatch Canada received word that another case of a forced relocation and demolition of a family home occurred within the TVI concession in

Canatuan. Our reports indicate that this event took place after sunset on the evening of June 22, 2006 and involved TVI Pacific’s private security forces (SCAA).

See the letter that MiningWatch Canada sent to the Embassy (previous page).

Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility and Canada’s Extractive Sector Wrapping Up

The final public sessions in the Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility and Canada’s Extractive Sector in Developing Countries take place on Tuesday, November 14 in Montreal. The deadline to register to make an oral presentation is October 31. If you are interested in observing the presentations, simply show up at the Doubletree Plaza Hotel, 505 Sherbrooke Street E., at 9 a.m. or 6 p.m. Written submissions can be sent to Sabrina Ramzi at Sabrina.Ramzi@international.gc.ca or Clare Morris at Clare.Morris@international.gc.ca.

For more information on how to register to make a public presentation visit the government web site or www.halifaxinitiative.org, or contact Andrea Botto at cnca@halifaxinitiative.org, tel: 613-789-9368. For more information and background on the roundtables see also the MiningWatch Canada web site or Newsletter #22.

Ontario Mining Action Network meets in Sault Ste. Marie

Thirty-two members of the Ontario Mining Action Network met in Sault Ste. Marie September 15 and 16 for a technical workshop on Acid Mine Drainage and a strategy session.

exempts them (see article below).

The participants agreed to work on the following priorities over the next year:

The Ontario Mining Action Network promotes responsible mining practices through mutual support founded on common interests, taking into account the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of mining in Ontario.

The OMAN participants came from First Nations and communities all over the province.

The technical workshop on Acid Mine Drainage was presented by Gilles Tremblay, who works with the Mining and Environment Neutral Drainage (MEND) initiative of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). Acid Mine Drainage is a real concern for most communities in northern Ontario, as most mining there is in sulphide ores. There were many questions and a lively discussion. Power point slides from the presentation can be obtained from MEND or MiningWatch Canada.

1. Youth and education

- Ensure more youth are leaders and participants in the network
- Enable youth to understand the social, environmental and cultural impacts of mining
- Promote the curriculum material “the Mining Controversy”

2. Key Ontario policies on which we will intervene:

- “Free Entry” and the Mining Act – support Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (Big Trout Lake First Nation) in its court challenge to the Ontario Mining Act
- Environmental Assessment – develop a model of what an ideal EA should look like, and challenge the Declaration Order
- Reclamation Bonding – promote “Full, Upfront Bonds”, including reclamation, remediation, perpetual monitoring, etc.,
- End the Ontario practice of accepting “self-assurance” instead of realizable securities

The strategy session heard stories from all the participants about how mining is impacting their communities — from staking to mine development to abandoned mines.

A presentation from Anastasia Lintner of the Sierra Legal Defence Fund told participants about the lack of Environmental Assessment for new mines by the province because of repeated extensions of a Declaration Order that

3. Ensure that the network can continue and expand its work

Outrageous! Most mines in Ontario escape meaningful environmental assessment.

Mining projects in Ontario are supposed to be subjected to two levels of Environmental Assessment: Federal and Provincial.

The federal environmental assessment process is triggered if the mining project or any parts of it will require federal permits or authorizations under the Fisheries Act, the Explosives Act, the Navigable Waters Act, etc. We have increasingly seen that federal departments are only looking at those parts of

the mine project which will require the specific permit from them, and — despite the language of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act — are not reviewing large mining projects at all. Generally the federal government assumes that the Province will review the mine.

However, in Ontario, the provincial environmental assessment of mines will rarely take place at all, because of a little known and poorly understood exemption called “Declaration

Order MNDM-3/3". This Declaration Order, in place since 2003, exempts the granting (or renewal) of mining claims and licences on Crown land from the EA process.

On June 30, 2006, the Minister of the Environment approved another extension (after having already approved a 2-yr extension to the 1-yr interim Declaration Order in 2004) of the MNDM (Ministry of Northern Development and Mines) Declaration Order regarding Disposition of Crown Resources (also known as MNDM-3/3). The order can be found at: http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ea/english/EAs/mndm3_3.htm.

The original exemption order (MNR 26/7) was given in 1981 and was developed during discussions about how to streamline Environmental Assessment for any disposition of Crown resources, including resource extraction licences, that were then the responsibility of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

Environmental groups at that time were more concerned about logging than about mining, and – with little public attention – mining claims and licences were covered by the exemption order. A lengthy, contested debate led to a process whereby most logging licences are now determined by "Class EAs"; that is they are treated as a group, rather than individually.

There was no similar public process for mining, and the granting of Crown land for claims and licences remained subject to the exemption order and exempt from any environmental review (except where the conditions of the exemption, the Mining Act approvals process, or specific aspects of the project such as road and power supply, come under the jurisdiction of other ministries). However, when the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines was created and made responsible for issuing mining claims and licences, the MNR Exemption Order might no longer apply. The government responded with a special order to ensure that mining licences and claims remained exempt from individual EAs.

The Declaration Order stated: "the Crown and the public will be interfered with and damaged by the undue time and

expense required to prepare environmental assessments for undertakings that are expected to have insignificant environmental effects on the environment."

In May, 2003, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment posted a notice to the Environmental Bill of Rights registry (EBR) regarding the parts of the original exemption order that apply to mining (#RA03E0015). There were 5 comments received from the public, including from MiningWatch Canada. All objected to the Declaration Order for Mining. All stated that EAs for mining were warranted given the enormous environmental footprint that mining created.

An "interim order" for one year was granted to permit mining to continue under the status quo while MoE and MNDM would develop a long term environmental assessment strategy. It has never been completed.

The MNDM Declaration Order (MNDM-3/2) was extended on June 8, 2004 (without public consultation that we are aware of, and was not posted to the Environmental Bill of Rights [EBR] Registry) and expired on June 11, 2006. Now, the Declaration Order (MNDM-3/3) is further extended, as of June 30, 2006, for three more years. Again, there has been no public consultation and no posting to the EBR Registry.

There is provision in the Declaration Order for the Minister of the Environment to go to Cabinet and request that a mining project be subject to individual EA, despite the Declaration Order, but nothing happens automatically.

We are concerned that the environmental and social impacts of mining at all stages (prospecting, exploration, development, operations, and closure) have lasting and serious consequences, and that the issuing of mining licences and the administration of the Mining Act should be subject to individual environmental assessments. This Declaration Order perpetuates a situation where mining activity does not automatically get the appropriate scrutiny, and we object most strenuously to it. The Declaration Order understates the environmental consequences of mining and decreases government responsibility and capacity to restrain its more egregious impacts. **It is outrageous.**

Mining-related films at Planet In Focus Film Festival, Toronto

Friday, November 3, 2006

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto

MiningWatch Canada is sponsoring two films at this year's Planet in Focus environmental film festival in Toronto.

Sipakapa is Not for Sale (Sipakapa No Se Vende) is a documentary about Mayan Guatemalans democratically saying "no" to open-pit gold mine proposed by Glamis Gold subsidiary Montana Exploradora. *Sipakapa no se vende* analyzes the debate over mining exploitation by filming representatives of the mining company as well as the Sipakapan Maya. However, the larger issue is the Sipakapan's battle to preserve their autonomy from foreign commercial interests. Their fight offers a hopeful example to other indigenous people around the world who refuse to be victims. Andy Altilia, a Hamilton-based Guatemala solidarity activist, will be present to discuss the film and the current situation.

The Curse of Copper is a documentary about Ecuadorians

battling a Canadian company that wants to turn their cloud forest into an open pit mine. Canada is the biggest investor in global mining, and Vancouver's Ascendant Copper plans to open a mine in the Ecuadorian rainforest, one of the world's most threatened biodiversity hotspots. The mine would destroy the precious ecosystem and disrupt local people's lives. Already, concerned citizens face death threats, physical intimidation and an atmosphere of fear, attributed to CODEGAM, a P.R. front financed by Ascendant. *The Curse of Copper* follows the battle between a profit-driven company and villagers who simply want to maintain their homes and their way of life. Filmmaker Jenny Sharman will be present to discuss the film.

Obviously we are encouraging people to attend these specific films, but please check out the entire festival.

The 2006 festival runs from November 1 to 5 and will feature over 80 films from across Canada and around the world. Screenings take place at the Royal Ontario Museum and Innis College. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for students/seniors, and \$5 for children.

Global urban concerns will be featured alongside other environmental issues in animated films, edgy documentaries, and dramas that make up the range of compelling Canadian and international works from Azerbaijan, Australia, Bhutan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Italy, Israel, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, Russia, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, U.S.A. and Zambia.

The annual festival also includes an Eco-Fair, panel discussions, children's films, and an Organic Pancake Breakfast.

For the full festival schedule, film and event descriptions, and to buy tickets, visit www.planetinfocus.org.

Tickets may also be purchased by phone at 416-968-FILM (3456) or in person at the box office located at the Manulife Centre, 55 Bloor St. West (Main Floor, North Entrance).

New Book: *Reverse Anthropology: Indigenous Analysis of Social and Environmental Relations in New Guinea*

by Stuart Kirsch

Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006

cloth \$55.00, paperback \$21.95 see http://www.sup.org/book.cgi?book_id=5341%5342 for ordering details

While ethnography ordinarily privileges anthropological interpretations, this book attempts the reciprocal process of describing indigenous modes of analysis. Drawing on long-term ethnographic research with the Yonggom people of New Guinea, the author examines how indigenous analysis organizes local knowledge and provides a framework for interpreting events, from first contact and colonial rule to contemporary interactions with a multinational mining company and the Indonesian state.

This book highlights Yonggom participation in two political movements: an international campaign against the Ok Tedi mine, which is responsible for extensive deforestation and environmental problems, and the opposition to Indonesian control over West Papua, including Yonggom experiences as political refugees in Papua New Guinea. The author challenges a prevailing homogenization in current representations of indigenous peoples, showing how Yonggom modes of analysis specifically have shaped these political movements.

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