

Rights Action  
Goldcorp Impunity Watch  
December 20, 2010

**GOLDCORP Inc. & THE DOW JONES SUSTAINABILITY INDEX (NORTH AMERICA):**

With "sustainability" like this, who needs human rights violations, health harms and environmental destruction?

**BELOW:** A Rights Action letter to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index.

**WHAT TO DO:** Based on this letter, please write your own letter to the DJSI, and to your own investments manager and pension funds you have savings invested in (ex: Canada Pension Plan), to learn more about their investment criteria and whether and why they invest in Goldcorp Inc.

- Please forward this article, citing author and source
- To get on/ off Rights Action's listserv:  
<http://visitor.constantcontact.com/d.jsp?m=1103480765269>
- Carry it on. Keep your eye on the prize

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[info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org) / [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)

Originally founded in 1983, Rights Action is a not-for-profit organization with tax charitable status in the US and Canada. The Canadian Rights Action Foundation was founded in 1999, is independent from and works in conjunction with Rights Action (USA). Since 1995, Rights Action has been funding and working to eliminate poverty and impunity and the underlying causes of poverty and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in Chiapas [Mexico], Salvador and Haiti. We directly fund and work with community-based development, environmental, disaster relief and human rights organizations. And, we educate about and are involved in activism aimed at critically understanding and changing unjust north-south, global economic, military and political relationships.

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December 20, 2010

Dow Jones Sustainability Index (North America)  
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To Whom It May Concern:

Over the past 8 years in Honduras and 6 years in Guatemala, Rights Action has been supporting community based struggles related to environmental and health harms and other human rights violations caused directly and indirectly by Goldcorp Inc's open-pit,

cyanide leaching mines: the "San Martin" mine in Honduras, the "Marlin" mine in Guatemala.

Recently, Goldcorp Inc announced that "it will be added to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index North America (DJSI North America), effective December 20, 2010." Reading this, we were reminded of the old saying "With friends like these, who needs enemies?"

Or, in the context of mining: 'With "sustainability" like this, who needs human rights violations, health harms and environmental destruction?'

### **QUESTIONS FOR THE DJSI North America**

Below, we set out a summary of harms and violations caused by Goldcorp's mines in Guatemala and Honduras, as documented by a range of Central and North American and European organizations (NGOs and solidarity groups; the International Labour Organization; the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights; church groups; universities; etc).

We write the DJSI North America to ask:

- What criteria do you use to determine what constitutes valid and merit-worthy "sustainability"?
- What and who were your sources of information with respect to concluding that Goldcorp Inc. is operating its mines in a merit-worthy "sustainable" manner?
- Will you agree to send an investigatory mission to Guatemala and Honduras, to carry out a full and proper investigation into the harms and violations summarized below, half of the time of which would be set up and attended to by Rights Action and other groups that we work with in these countries?

### **HARMS & VIOLATIONS**

We believe that if you properly study Goldcorp's mining record in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in other countries across Latin America, you will conclude that much of Goldcorp's extraordinarily high profits come from what can only be termed unjust enrichment, in the broadest sense of that expression.

We believe you will conclude there nothing "sustainable" about their operations with respect to the needs and rights of the harmed communities; that the only thing "sustainable" are the extraordinarily high profits flowing north to North America company directors, shareholders and investors.

In Honduras and Guatemala, where we (and many other small groups) have worked for many years in support of and alongside Goldcorp-affected communities – poor indigenous and campesino communities -, Goldcorp has directly and indirectly caused environmental and health harms and other human rights violations. They have done so with impunity.

- Initial and prior violation of indigenous and human rights, through lack of free, prior and informed consultation with and consent from affected campesino and indigenous communities. This initial and prior problem is made possible by a fundamental lack of democracy and by a manipulated and corrupted administration of justice in both countries. This is widely documented and known.

- Illegal and/or forced evictions of families and communities; manipulated and sometimes pressured purchases of property from impoverished local communities. These problems include: not informing local communities about the mining prospects; undervaluing the land ("preying on the poverty" of the local population); forcing and pressuring people to sell their land; paying different prices to community members, creating divisions and tensions at the local level, between family and community members.
- Further sowing division in families and communities, as Goldcorp offers low-skill employment to poor, local men (and some women), again preying on the poverty and generalized lack of employment. These divisions are occurring in Guatemala and Honduras that have not recovered from the trauma and legacy of the State-sponsored terrorism and repression of the 1970s through to the early 1990s.
- Moreover, Goldcorp is now apparently trying to re-open its mine in Honduras, soon after the elected government of President Zelaya was overthrown in a violent military coup, June 28, 2009. Today, Honduras is under the control of an illegitimate government backed by the military and police – repression is systemic and widespread.
- De-forestation, through the clear-cutting of the land, before the use of explosives to blow up and remove, level by level, entire hills and mountain tops.
- Air contamination due to the de-forestation and to dust created by the use of explosives and heavy machinery to break up the mountain and rock.
- Contamination of surface and underground water sources due to de-forestation and to the use of explosives and heavy machinery to destroy and remove entire hills and mountain tops.
- Contamination of surface and underground water sources due to the use of huge amounts of cyanide (in the process to separate the gold from earth, rock and other metals) and the release of naturally occurring heavy metals (mercury, arsenic, lead) in dangerous amounts due to the explosives and destruction of mountains.
- Contamination of water sources, through release and leak of waste products from the processing plant and tailings pond.
- Depletion of surface and underground water sources due to use of huge quantities of water in the gold and silver processing plant. This water depletion and contamination occurs in regions of the two countries where the "subsistence economy" campesinos and indigenous communities barely survive the "dry" season, most years.
- Cracking of peoples' homes, due to use of explosives.
- Health harms to local populations (babies to the elderly), including: hair loss, skin rashes and diseases, blood contamination due to breathing in or consumption of dangerous levels of heavy metals, other more serious health problems (organ failure and complications) due to blood contaminants; eye irritations; respiratory complications.

- Repression against villagers (including deaths and shootings) who carry out community education and organization work to protest the harms and violations occurring in their communities.
- “Criminalization of work in defense of human rights and the environment” and the laying of criminal charges against and jailing of local community members who protest the harms and violations.

### **IMPUNITY - LACK OF REMEDY & RECOURSE**

The people suffering these harms and violations have no legal remedy or recourse in any legal system, not only inside Guatemala and Honduras, but also at the international level, and in Canada.

### **IACHR ORDER**

Having said that, in May 2010 the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) – based on its investigations of these harms and violations – ordered the government of Guatemala to suspend Goldcorp’s mine in Guatemala as a precautionary measure.

Neither the government of Guatemala nor Goldcorp have abided by this order. The government of Canada (also a member of the Organization of American States) has said nothing about this suspension order.

### **DOCUMENTATION**

In April 2010, the Canadian television station CTV aired a W5 documentary “Lost Paradise”, looking at Goldcorp’s mining operation in Guatemala, and HudBay Mineral’s nickel mining operation in Guatemala. It is recommended viewing: <http://watch.ctv.ca/news/w5/paradise-lost/#clip290436>.

In 2010, a documentary film about Goldcorp’s mine in Guatemala was released: “The Business Of Gold In Guatemala”. It is recommended viewing and available on request.

In 2009, a documentary film was released about Goldcorp’s mine in Honduras: “All That Glitters Is Not Gold”. It is recommended viewing and available on request.

At [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org) you will find articles, urgent actions and reports about Goldcorp’s mines in Guatemala and Honduras, going back over 8 years.

### **GOLDWASHING - ROB FROM THE POOR TO GIVE TO THE RICH**

Goldcorp denies all of the above. Either they deny that any of these harms and violations have actually occurred, or they deny any link to them.

This is why we ask you – the DJSI (North America) - how did you arrive at your conclusions about Goldcorp’s mining operations and upon what criteria of “sustainability” did you base your decisions?

We believe that by naming Goldcorp to your “sustainability” index, you give the very notion of “sustainability” a bad name and you contribute to the impunity with which Goldcorp operates its mine, turning a blind eye to well and widely documented allegations of serious harms and violations.

In this way, the DJSI North America is helping gold-wash a legacy of environmental and health harms and other human rights violations (including deaths) at Goldcorp operated mine sites in Guatemala and Honduras, and across the Americas.

We respectfully ask:

- What criteria do you use to determine what constitutes valid and merit-worthy "sustainability"?
- What and who were your sources of information with respect to concluding that Goldcorp Inc. is operating its mines in a merit-worthy "sustainable" manner?
- Will you agree to send an investigatory mission to Guatemala and Honduras, to carry out a full and proper investigation into the harms and violations summarized below, half of the time of which would be set up and attended to by Rights Action and other groups that we work with in these countries?

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Grahame Russell (and Annie Bird), co-directors  
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**GIVE THE GIFT OF  
STRUGGLING & WORKING FOR  
GLOBAL EQUALITY, JUSTICE & BALANCE WITH MOTHER NATURE**

**TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS**

To make a tax-deductible donation for community controlled and actually sustainable development and environmental justice work in Guatemala and Honduras, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887  
CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>; or go to:  
[www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org). (Credit card donations can be done anonymously)  
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