The dangers of gold-mining for Romania and Europe
Mining Watch Romania

Monitoring network designed to organise civil society and local communities on proposed mining projects in Romania.

The network performs monitoring and analysis activities of mining projects proposed in Romania.

Works with local communities so they can voice their concerns regarding their own future.
Open pit mine
Tailings pond
Modern industrial gold mining is a chemical process often done using massive open pits and large quantities of cyanide to separate the gold from the ores. This extraction method does not generate wealth but leads to pollution, poverty and dependency. It drains communities of resources and limits the development of alternatives.
More and more gold-mining projects are planned in Romania. In this context, mining is an industry with a very high-stake for the public politics and financial markets, but mostly for the communities and ecosystems directly affected.
TRANSILVANIA TEREN MINAT

Mineritul cu cianuri la scară mică, noua formă de cianurare a României

România a fost acedată drept țara cu cel mai mare reznire de aur la Europa, cu 58% din zăcămintele auferite puse în evidență în Cadrilaterul Aurifer din Muntele Apuseni. Decoltoarea de proiecte, la scară mică, măcar de cel de la Roșia Montană, pe bază de cianurare sau flotarea, ar duce la "generarea a nu mai puțin de 2500 de hectare cu deșeuri de cianurare".

ROVINA

Localizare: București, Buzău și Crițeni, județul Vâlcea  
Titular: proiect: SAMAX Romania SRL  
Achiziții: Deținut indirect de Canadian Gold Resources, compania Samax Romania Ltd, înregistrată în Insulele Virginii  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

BAIA MARE

Localizare: Băia Mare, Băia Spriș, jud. Maramureș  
Titular: proiect: Romanian Mining  
Achiziții: 49% Fribourg Investments România, Date despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

BÂṬA CRĂCIOVEȘTI / TEASCU

Localizare: Băța și Cernești de Sus, județul Hunedoara  
Titular: proiect: Deva Gold SA  
Achiziții: 51% prietenie Deva Gold Barbados Ltd. și Minitron Deva, 49%  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

TROIȚA PĂTIGUȘ

Localizare: Băța, județul Hunedoara  
Titular: proiect: European Goldfields Deva  
Achiziții: 100% Buyro Mining  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

CERTEJ

Localizare: Certei, județul Hunedoara  
Titular: proiect: Deva Gold SA  
Achiziții: 100% Eldorado Gold Corp. prin subsidiara Deva Gold Barbados Ltd.  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

DEVĂ MUNCEL

Localizare: Vețel și Deva, județul Huedinești  
Titular: proiect: European Goldfields Deva  
Achiziții: 100% Eldorado Gold Corp. prin subsidiara Deva Gold Barbados Ltd.  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

BRAD

Localizare: Brad, Bălaba de Criș, Vălișoara și Dealul Mare, județul Hunedoara  
Titular: proiect: European Goldfields Deva  
Achiziții: 51% prietenie Deva Gold Barbados Ltd.  
Data: despărțirea: punctul șaptespre-a șapte și aer

MININGWATCH  
afă mal multe pe www.miningwatch.ro
Smaller scale mining, a new way to bring cyanide destruction

Growing interest from investors internationally in starting mining projects in Europe.

The whole South-Eastern Europe faces such project proposals, 8 of which are located only in Greece and 13 in Romania.

There are 68 gold deposits in the Golden Quadrilateral in the Apuseni Mountains
Cyanide based mining in Romania

There is no cyanide based mining activity in Romania at the moment.

However, Romania is known as the country with the most severe accidents caused by dam disintegration of two cyanide tailings management ponds: Certej (1971) and Baia Mare (2000).
The Certej project

The most advanced mining project is located at Certej. Eldorado Gold (ELD’s) obtained in 2012 an environmental permit and in 2013 revised it. ELD’s Certej development has come under criticism from environmental groups due to a significant number of risks and the murky manner by which it obtained its permits. In autumn 2014 the project owner started construction works without a valid permit. After legal action and citizens’ petitions, regional authorities ordered ELD to halt the works.
This is how the Certej looks like
This is what it would become:

A 62,8 ha open-pit, with a depth of 290 m
The forests would turn into a huge toxic tailing pond
Like this one. And it would be only the beginning...
5 additional project extensions are planned in the area of Certej
The Baita-Craciunesti project

In May 2014 Eldorado Gold submitted a request to obtain the environmental permit for mining the Baita-Craciunesti deposit, which is part of the Certej deposit. To minimise impact and permitting risks, the project owner divided the Certej proposal into smaller entities and is applying for each individually. However, while ownership and project financing comprises the Certej deposit as a whole, all individual parts will use one and the same TMF, roads or power sources.
A precedent ruling of the European Court of Justice clearly states that ‘a proposal should not be considered in isolation if in reality it is properly to be regarded as an integral part of an inevitably more substantial development’. The same way, the procedure for evaluating the environmental impact (EIA) of the Certej mine should have integrated also the second phase of the project, namely the Baita-Craciunesti open-pit. Instead, Eldorado submitted two separate requests for receiving the needed environmental permits.
The Rovina project

In spring 2015, NAMR announced a new gold mining permit in the Apuseni Mountains, at Rovina. Carpathian Gold (CPN), a Canadian mining junior, intends to open a low-cost monster open-pit copper and gold mine. In 2011, Barrick Gold, the largest mining company in the world, purchased 9% of the shares of Carpathian Gold against the amount of 20 million dollars.
The dangers of gold-mining for Romania

If ever started, the mining projects:

- Would produce **2900 ha** of cyanide based mining waste and a moonlike landscape in the Apuseni Mountains.

- Would affect the lives of **millions of people** in Transylvania

- Would deny the future development of alternative activities such as agriculture.
- Would be a constant source of acid water drainage and contaminated water.

- Would affect the biodiversity, these areas are home of *endangered species* such as the lynx.

- Would produce enormous quantities of dust and the stagnant cyanide would be spread in the air as *cyaniding acid* that remains in the atmosphere for 1-3 years.

- Would *endanger 22,000 existing jobs* in the region in the agriculture and tourism sector.
The dangers of gold-mining for Europe

If ever started, the mining projects:

- Would be a **constant risk of cyanide spills and water contamination**. Since the Baia Mare disaster in 2000, at least 25 accidents caused by cyanide tailings failure have been reported throughout mining areas in the world.

- Would encourage **corruption** in the affected areas.
- Would create the precedent in Europe of huge industrial projects that use and deposit chemical substances in open-air.

- Would allow companies to forcibly requisite people's properties and lands.

- Would create the precedent of cyanide based mining for gold in Europe.

- Would pose serious risks to farmlands inducing food insecurity.

- Would endanger one of the last sanctuaries of wildlife in Europe.
Companies tactics and dirty politics

Suspicion of fake documentation regarding the mining projects

Governmental attempts to break the Rule of Law

Governmental dismissal of public servants who oppose the project

Secret agreements between Government and mining companies
Companies tactics and dirty politics

Conviction that political class is not pursuing the national interest

Suspicion of political bribery

Indifference of authorities and lawmakers to citizen's requests

Intransparent permitting procedures

Intransparent procedures regarding the ICSID arbitration
The European ban on cyanide.
In 2010, the members of the European Parliament voted for a resolution that generally bans the use of cyanide based mining technologies with 488 in favour, 48 against and 57 abstentions.
But, the European Commission left the implementation of this law in the national legislation to the discretion of the member states. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Costa Rica, several of the provinces in Argentina, the American states Montanas and Wisconsin – have all banned the use of cyanide in mining practices.
At present large scale, gold mines are currently being proposed or developed at Krumovgrad (Bulgaria), Kremnica (Slovakia), Rosia Montana or Certej (Romania). In Greece there are numerous proposals such as the ‘Hellas Gold’ proposal in Halkidiki. Similar issues have arisen in the Galician region of Spain or Limousin in France.
In total 40 new cyanide based projects are proposed in 10 countries on the continent, Europe being on the verge to become one of the most impacted gold-mining regions on Earth. Therefore the need to act in order to ban cyanide is an urgent matter, that if left unsolved, could put at risk Europe’s water resources for many years to come.
www.miningwatch.ro

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