

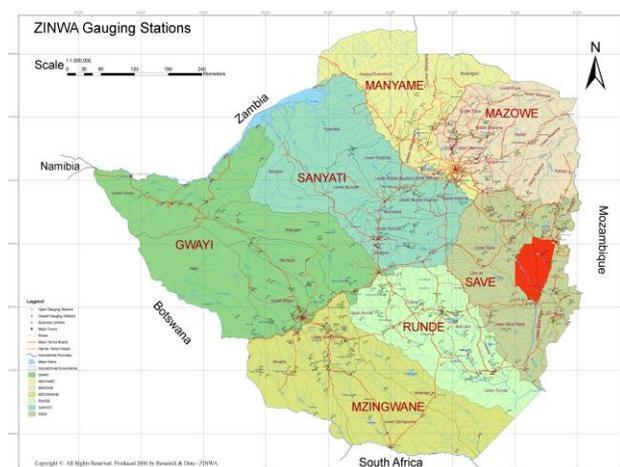
Ecological justice and the rights of Nature: Common Good of Humanity

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GERMANY

Case Study

Diamond mining: Threat to the fundamental integrity of nature.



Introduction

Humanity to act when the humanity of others is being denied!!

- “The idea of unlimited growth needs to be seriously questioned on at least two counts:
- the availability of basic resources
- the capacity of the environment to cope with the degree of interference implied. ”

E.F. Schumacher

Extractive Industries Investments in Post-Crisis Moments.

- For Zimbabwe, alluvial Diamond mining coincides with the period of
 - i. political and economic crisis internally
 - ii. Global economic crisis (2008)
- Massive resource scramble by international capital seeking recovery from the global recession
- Massive militarization of the extractive regimes
- Such scramble/competition foregoes environmental stewardship as corporations pursue profit
- Ironically even those with statutory mandates to protect our human ecological systems (bureaucrats) became inconsistent and unreliable under the lure of the gems

Is Responsible Investment Possible?

- The Extractive system of production is based on cheap labour, weak regulations, no beneficiation and thrives on masses of unemployed
- Does not guarantee wealth sharing so alongside the gems come large scale poverty, crime, ill health and death
- Depletion and destruction of limited resources (soil, water, air and forests) - a threat to the future
- A political economic system based on greed, destructive competition and wealth for only a few
- CAN EXTRACTIVES DELIVER EQUITY? ----- YES!!!

Water and Diamonds

- Water availability varies markedly across Zimbabwe and so is considered a scarce and limiting resource.
- It's a fugitive resource which can by its own properties distribute generate vulnerability
- With Zimbabweans' population projected to double in years, the need for serious water quality management becomes imperative
- Water uses: domestic, industrial, agricultural, environmental, recreational, spiritual.
- Each of these uses is tied to the water quality.
- Water injustice in Chiadzwa:
 - i. water for diamond processing but not for the people
 - ii. Polluted water to downstream communities
 - iii. procedural and distributive injustice in water politics
 etc

Environmental Rights (Constitution: Section 4)

- Discord between the constitutional provisions and the practice

The law affords every person the following rights;

- Right to live in a clean environment not harmful to health
- Access to environmental information
- Right to protect the environment for the present and future
- Right to participate in the implementation of legislation and policies that prevent pollution, environmental degradation and sustainable management and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT (CAP 20:27).

Pollution Pays Principles:

- In this context we refer to the widely accepted belief that the producer of any pollution should pay the full cost of treatment to reduce pollution loads to levels which will not cause environmental damage or loss of beneficial use to others, together with the cost of monitoring and management.
- The waste water or water pollution control system must ensure that the health of the nation is protected and that the living environment is conserved.
- Basic principles under which the new water pollution control system operates are summarised below:

The Daunting Issues

- Control of water resources is an extremely complex subject covering agriculture, industrial and mining practices, waste treatment and disposal, chemical analysis and the interpretation of all this in the context of risk to the environment.
- The challenges for Zimbabweans is to establish a robust water and waste water management system to addresses major water pollution problem given limited resources.
- Managing the fragmented institutional roles between users catchment councils, ZINWA, EMA water quality regulations, politicians etc

Experiences from Chiadzwa Diamond Mining.

- Four (+) mining companies operate diamond mines in this area.
- Ten study sites were sampled
- These included reference sites (where there are no known impacts) were selected on each river outside the diamond mining areas to give comparison of the effects before and after mining discharges.
- Twenty physical and chemical water quality parameters were measured; along with nine heavy metal elements and four microbiological parameters.
- The results were evaluated against established W.H.O. standards and Effluent Standards.

Site 1: The water was turbid (water was cloudy, opaque, or muddy) because of being discharged
The site is about 5km downstream of the mine. Livestock and people cannot use the water for
drinking and any other domestic uses.



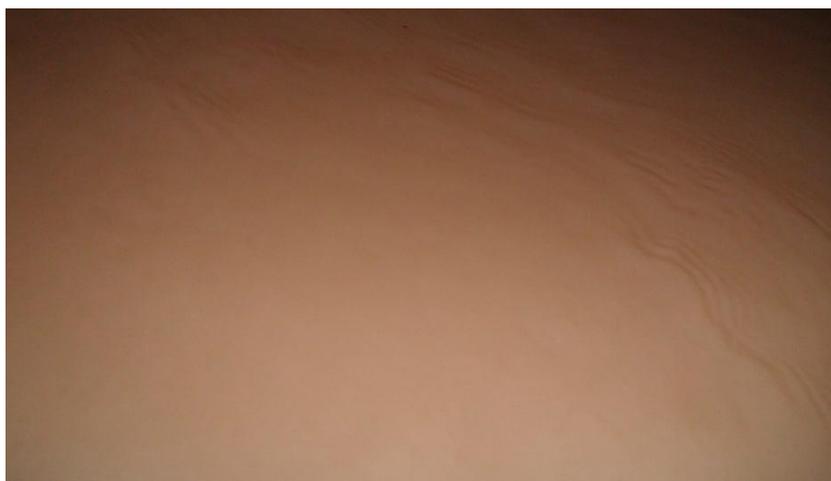
Site 2: The water was turbid (water was cloudy, opaque, or muddy) at this site and cannot be used
to water livestock or other domestic uses. This site is downstream of the discharges from down
stream of a mining.



Site 3: The water was again turbid (water was cloudy, opaque, or muddy) at this site and cannot be used to water livestock or other domestic uses. This site is downstream of the discharges from the mining area.



Site 4: The water was again turbid (water was cloudy, opaque, or muddy) at this site and cannot be used to water livestock or other domestic uses. This site is downstream of all the discharges from the mining area on the Save River.



Site 5: Water was clear at this site at Bazeley Bridge and women were actually seen doing laundry at the site. This site is just upstream of the Marange diamond fields mining area and was the **reference point** for the Odzi River.



Site 6: Water was clear at this site and even fish could be seen swimming in the water. Local people were also bathing and swimming upstream. This site was the **reference point** on the Save River.



Environmental Impacts by Diamond Mining;

- Impacts include siltation, chemical pollution and also heavy metal pollution.
- Water of high turbidity (hazy, murky water) cannot be used as potable water, and the high total solids also imply that it cannot be used as irrigation or will damage irrigation infrastructure.
- Downstream activities affected as water has turned into a red ochre colour, thereby affecting the health of the river system.
- When in contact with the skin, the water and mud is itchy.
- subsistence artisanal fishing that took place before is no longer possible at affected river sites, thereby impacting negatively on people's livelihoods.
- The pH that is alkaline (hard water) is corrosive and can damage plumbing equipment and clothes.
- High levels of fluoride causes as dental and skeletal fluorosis. Dental fluorosis relates to the poor development of teeth, while skeletal fluorosis is a bone disease caused by excessive consumption of fluoride.

Facing reality: degrowth

- sustainable degrowth is a downscaling of production and consumption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions and equity on the planet
- More precisely, the degrowth movement believes that:
 - 1) the global economy is in an ecological overshoot;
 - 2) thus, it is necessary to reduce the size of the economy;
 - 3) once the size of the economy adjusts to ecological limits, the goal should be a steady state economy or zero economic growth;

Leading to a better quality of life.

From the declaration from the 2008 Paris conference on degrowth (Research and Degrowth, 2010).

Facing reality: degrowth

- There is need for a paradigm shift from the general and unlimited pursuit of economic growth to a concept of 'right-sizing' both globally and nationally.
- At the global level, right-sizing means reducing the global ecological footprint (including carbon footprint) to a sustainable level.
- In countries where per capita footprint is greater than the sustainable global level, this right-sizing implies a reduction to this level through the process of voluntary economic contraction (i.e. degrowth).
- In countries where severe poverty still remains, right-sizing implies increasing consumption to a level adequate for a decent life. This will involve increasing economic activity in some cases, but redistribution of income and wealth both within and between countries is a more essential part of the process.

Common Good: Degrowth

- Is degrowing extractives possible for our struggling economies with almost zero manufacturing?
- The common good can not be achieved if we do not have peace or financial stability or environmental security.
- Sustainable human development cannot be achieved if we do not prevent conflicts, manage markets wisely or reverse the depletion of soils, energy, fresh water and clean air.
- Equity within and between generations is not feasible without an international system for identifying and apportioning environmental costs.
- The responsibility for and the origins and effects of such challenges transcend national borders.

Lets engage a bit

- What are the costs of degrowth?
- What are the benefits of degrowth?
- Can we derive superimpose the degrowth argument on the current economic system?
- Can we have degrowth before growth?
- Degrowth as responsibility to protect the innocent abroad

What is the way forward?

- *Change in paradigm (values, practices, ideology, economics etc)*
- *reducing consumption: Re-evaluating; the need for a change in values, which is the key to all change;*

What is the way forward?

- Relocating production and consumption by reducing imports and exports to a minimum,
- increasing regional autonomy- covering as many needs as possible at a local level
- each region becoming responsible for treating its own waste.
- Reducing the ecologic footprint.

Way Forward

- Relocating and localising involves reconnecting to our physical reality, and culture.
- Unlimited growth in a finite earth is not an option (over consumption exhausts our resources and collapses the earth's handling capacity).
- This is a starting point for a dialogue about a new social project based on cooperation rather than competition.

Role of the church.

- Training in conflict management and transformation.
- Linking local to national and local to global.
- Forming partnerships; working other stakeholders.
- Putting international norms and multi-stakeholder initiatives into practice.
- Monitoring implementation of local/national laws and regulations.
- Holding governments and corporations accountable.
- Educating and engaging the communities.
- Awareness, Advocacy, Watchdog functions.

Conclusion:

The earth has been entrusted to us, its stewards

- *“The current crisis obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules The crisis thus becomes an opportunity for discernment, in which to shape a new vision for the future.”*

Gaudium et Spes