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## **A DISPUTE FOR LAND AND GOLD: THE STATE BETWEEN A CANADIAN MINING COMPANY AND A SMALL SCALE MINING COOPERATIVE IN AMAZON – BRAZIL**

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### ***Abstract***

The history of mining in Latin America is marked by conflicts between large companies and the local population of the areas where mineral resources are found. The aim of this study is to analyse the conflict between a small-scale mining cooperative and the Canadian company Belo Sun Mining Inc. The framework of this research is the Latin America political ecology and the ethnography of social and environmental conflicts as a theoretic and methodological guide. The conflict will be analysed using a theoretical framework of political ecology in Latin America. The cooperative and the company are involved in a dispute over gold mining in the area of the “Big Bend” of Xingu River, or Volta Grande do Xingu, in the Amazon, Brazil. The region is known as “Stretch of Reduced Instream Flow”, since the dam for the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Plant was built, around 13 Km upstream from where the small scale mining families have been living since 1940’s. The synergetic impacts of the Belo Monte Dam and the Belo Sun Mining on the livelihood of the local communities are very large. The research question is how did the government of Pará shut down the activities of the small-scale mining cooperative, but gave Preliminary License for gold exploitation to a Canadian mining company. The results showed how companies and some sectors of the government used tricks to approve licenses, despite them going against the Brazilian Law. Some clashes surrounding the process of environmental licensing of Belo Sun Mining Inc. have brought into discussion the high risks for the environment and the disregard

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for the small-scale mining rights. Moreover, accusations of land grabbing weigh heavily on the company.

Keywords: Amazon, socioenvironmental conflict, mining, licensing.

## INTRODUCTION

In the Brazilian Amazon, the implementation of major projects such as hydroelectric plants and mining generate new territorial dynamics. These enterprises settling in the Amazon region result in drastic changes in the natural environment, such as: rivers damming, reservoir formation, reduction of river flows, loss of vegetation, changes in the hydraulic dynamics of the river, and many other changes.

These changes have repercussions on ownership of natural resources, human interaction with the environment, socio-cultural and economic relationships established by the local population, thus greatly affecting territorial rights. (IPEA, 2015).

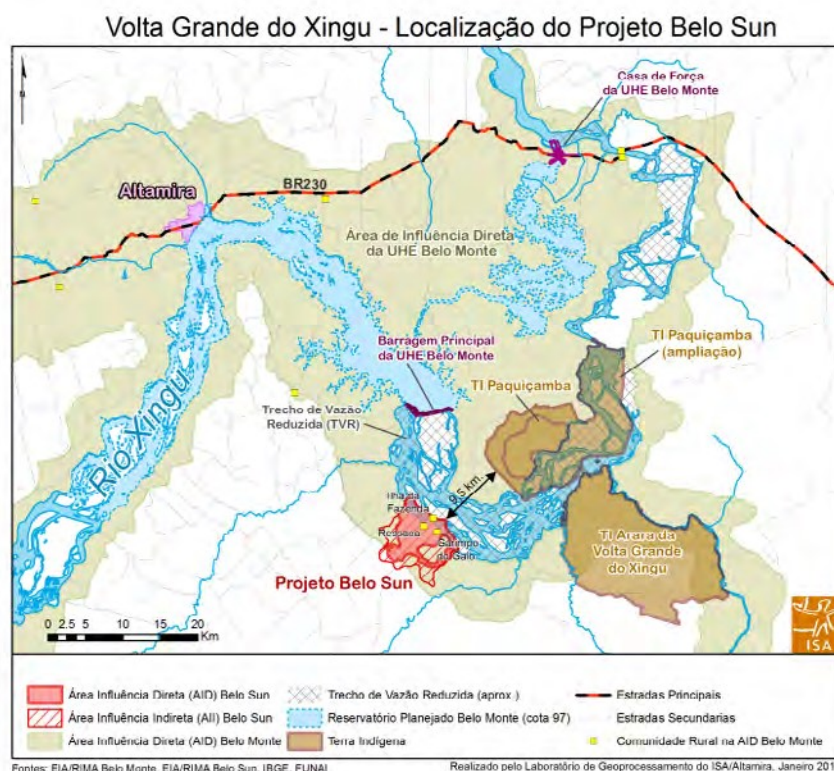
In this paper, I will discuss the synergistic impacts of the Hydroelectric Plant of Belo Monte and the Canadian Belo Sun Mining Inc., which provoke the enlargement of local and global environmental risks.

The first point to be analyzed is that the site provided for the mineral extraction project is located in the Area Directly Affected (ADA) and in the Area of Direct Influence (DIA) of the Hydroelectric Plant of Belo Monte, as can be seen in Figure 1. But this fact was not mentioned in the Belo Sun's Impacts Environmental Studies (ISA, 2013).

The second point is the fact that the area where the gold is located is the same where the families of the miners reside since the 40's. This area is being planned to be the extraction base of the company, about 13 km from the Belo Monte dam, downstream of the Xingu River, which further increases environmental risks.

On the one hand, the explosions for the extraction of gold from the Belo Sun Mining may cause some damage in the structure of the dam, and on the other hand, the seasonal flooding – which is common in the water regime of the Amazon – could flood the structure of the mining site and lead to the flow of the tailings into Xingu and Amazon Rivers.

Belo Sun Mineração Ltda, which is the Brazilian subsidiary of the Belo Sun Mining Corp., a Canadian Forbes & Manhattan Inc. company, applied for the environmental licensing process with the Environment Secretary of the State of Pará, with the intention of what would be the “implementation of an enterprise on mining and processing of gold that would correspond to the largest project of open-pit mine extraction of this metal in the country” (ISA, 2013, p. 1).



**Figure 1 – Synergy between Belo Monte Dam and Belo Sun Mining.**  
Source: ISA, 2013.

The above information has been confirmed in an interview of Helio Botelho Diniz, Vice-president of Operations of the Belo Sun in Brazil, accessed on the website of Forbes & Manhattan: “one of the greatest achievements of the group in Brazil was the Volta Grande Project, focused on the production of gold in the State of Pará, with the Belo Sun Mining.” “We are in the final phase of the studies and environmental licensing to start production in 2015-2016.” (GAVAÇA, 2016)

The main argument in favor of the mining company is that they will be paying enormous amounts of taxes to the government, but at the same time the Canadian company has been heavily criticized by authors such as Sacher (2010), in the light of the provocative concept of Mineralo-State (in analogy to the Narco-State<sup>4</sup>), which qualifies the Canadian jurisdiction as a State that allows the enrichment of a mineral oligarchy, putting the State apparatus at their service, which leads to concentrating the mineral wealth of the country in a few hands, while the socio-environmental costs are transferred to the Canadian population, almost systematically; or as in this case, the local communities of the countries where the enterprises are located.

<sup>4</sup> The term Narco-State applies to countries where political institutions are significantly influenced by drug trafficking, and where leaders play simultaneously positions as government officials and are members of illegal narcotics trafficking networks, supported by its legal powers.

In their turn, the miners of the Mixed Cooperative of Miners of Ressaca, Gallo, Ouro Verde e Ilha da Fazenda (COOMGRIF), in the region of Volta Grande do Xingu, have in their favor the Territorial Report of the Middle Xingu (IPEA<sup>5</sup>, 2015) that provides an analysis of the territorial conflicts in the region.

The report's authors state that, being careful to not to draw up an apology of small-scale mining as opposed to mining industry, the study affirm that in the Ressaca village and the area nearby it was in fact historically developed a small-scale mining activity without the large environmental degradation and social problems that are recurring in other mining areas in the Amazon. And that the group of workers is composed of people who settled in the region, forming communities and organizing in a cooperative to defend their interests and rights, which are seriously threatened by large enterprises, citing the statement below:

There's no killer here. We're hardworking people! Nobody wants to ride a big car and helicopter, that is not the intention. We want to survive, we want to be able to pay our bills, to be able to give education to our children. To be able to have a home with light, with television, with electricity, how we already have, eat, to live! They are trying to corner us. (...) We're aware of their move. It is a group of businessmen, with Mayor, Alderman, those types, and discourage the small! That's what's going on in our region. We ask that the competent authorities take charge of the situation to resolve our problem here. Because the region is suffering (statement-group in Vila da Ressaca). (IPEA, 2015, p. 58)

Considering these information, the aim of this study is to characterize the socio-environmental conflict that currently exist between the Canadian company, Belo Sun Mining, and the Mixed Cooperative of Miners of the Ressaca, Gallo, Ouro Verde and Ilha da Fazenda (COOMGRIF), in the dispute for land and gold in the area of Volta Grande do Xingu, municipality of Senador José Porfírio, Pará state, Brazil. The framework of this research is the Latin America political ecology and the ethnography of social and environmental conflicts as a theoretic and methodological guide as well as investigate the issues that led the Government of the State of Pará to close the small-scale mining and allow the large mining enterprises.

## **SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING IN THE AMAZON**

Wanderley (2015, p. 5) explains that, in the article 2 of the Statute of Small Scale Mining (BRAZIL, 2008), small-scale miners are defined as “every natural person of

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<sup>5</sup> The IPEA is a public Foundation linked to the Secretariat of Strategic Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil. IPEA provides technical and institutional support to governmental actions – enabling the development of numerous policies and programs of Brazilian development – and offers, to society, research and studies by its technicians.



Brazilian nationality who, individually or in associative form, act directly in the process of extracting minerals”. And it also states that are also considered as miners: “mining owners”, traders, “ferry’s owners “, “dredgers”, and those who can also be in this category as autonomous individuals with some capital or with easy access to banks and financing.

Traditionally, the gold miner, poor and invisibilized, was, and still is, in general, seen as an individual gold explorer who fights for his labor and financial freedom, but now he does it through associations, unions and cooperatives. Nowadays, they resist and work hard to keep their labor, some with no “boss”, but fighting as hard as they can to preserve their existence/way of life in the mineral activity. (COELHO, p. 6, in press)

In this perspective, I should reiterate that small-scale mining is a professional activity in accordance with the Brazilian Code of Occupations (CBO) of the Ministry of Labor and Employment, and these miners who are seeking to work in order to provide for their families are exposed to unhealthy and dangerous activities.

The history and geography of gold mining in the Amazon, in its multiple and complex relationships, discuss who are the miners of the past and the present. These miners are, in general, poor and distant from the superior power and economic circles, i.e., lacking capital and advanced technology. They are, therefore, financially, politically, and socially vulnerable. (WANDERLEY, 2015)

In general, in the Amazon, the small-scale mining is characterized by temporary work or with intervals, since this activity depends on the availability of mineral and/or the economic viability of their extraction. Thus, the mining sites often receive workers from other professions seeking for income. Another important aspect that is pointed out in a research done in the Amazon, in Brazil, Bolivia, Suriname, Colombia, and Peru, where small-scale mining occurs, is that this activity has been often discriminated for being, in most cases, informal (CEDLA, 2013).

## **TRICKS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSING PROCESS OF VOLTA GRANDE DO XINGU: COOPTATION, RIGGING, LOCATION BLACKMAILING, SCRAPPING AND BUREAUCRATIZATION**

The concept of “artimanha” or “trick” – defined in the Brazilian Portuguese Aurélio Dictionary (2015) as a “procedure or act of willful cunning” - is being used in studies of environmental licensing processes to name a few tactics, through which companies gain strength to constrain social actors and / or circumvent the law. These tricks have malice intents and are often technically solid and well prepared, therefore hardly intelligible to ordinary citizens. The results of the studies aim at helping citizens to understand how

some licenses are granted by licensing agencies despite being in breach of the legislation “(MELLO; MARTINS, NEFFA, 2015)

A trick reported by local residents and that has been used by enterprises in Brazil is the appointment of scientists to conduct environmental studies required for the environmental licensing process, which is done in a very subtle way.

According to social actors of Volta Grande do Xingu region, entrepreneurs seek leading researchers and hire their work through different ways: offering “scholarships” for public university teachers who work with exclusive dedication; funding research projects that are of interest for the universities, but that contain “confidentiality clauses” with the company; hiring individuals or legal entities to act as “laranjas<sup>6</sup>” or “mules” of researchers. Through these subterfuges, entrepreneurs silent social actors who could criticize the enterprises, favoring immediate corporate and economic interests over diffuse rights to a balanced environment.

A second trick is the absence or the rigging<sup>7</sup> of participatory management forums requested in the environmental legislation. Although the Water Act, from 1997, requires the creation of a Xingu River Basin Committee, that has not yet been created in the Volta Grande region.

The rigging was reported by the residents of Volta Grande, gathered in the Indigenous village Paquicamba, in March of 2016. They claim that Norte Energia, the company responsible for enabling the logistics of operation of the Management Committee of the Stretch of Reduced Instream Flow in Volta Grande do Xingu region, does not convene the committee members regularly.

A third observed trick is what Acselrad (2013, p.110) calls “location blackmailing”, in the sense that large companies can confine “significant portions of the local population within the ‘alternative’ to accept the promise of employment and income at any cost - even at the cost of compliance with increased environmental and social risks - or otherwise having no appropriate source of income.”

Figure 2 shows a photograph of the billboards around the city of Altamira, the day before the licensing agency of the State of Pará announced that it would release the license for Belo Sun Mining. A congressman advertises his role in obtaining the license, even though this it is not a prerogative of legislators.

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<sup>6</sup> Used here in the sense that the researcher produces the requested advice, but the payment is made on behalf of another person, for example, a brother, a spouse or a student.

<sup>7</sup> The term “rigging” applies to representatives or supporters of corporations taking control over agencies or sectors of public administration in order to defend the interests of these groups by occupying strategic positions within state organizations, so as to place them at the service of the groups’ interests.



**Figure 2** – Photo of outdoor in Altamira City.  
Source: Cristiane Costa, April 2016.

A fourth trick is the scrapping of public institutions, which should represent the most vulnerable social groups. In the Brazilian environmental legislation, the State has the command-control prerogative; therefore, the function of recognizing, implementing and managing the territories of traditional populations is a State task. In this study, I adopted the concept of traditional population used by the project that generated an official publication of the Ministry of the Environment, organized by Diegues:

In the project there were considered two types of traditional populations: indigenous and non-indigenous. Although these two sets of people share common knowledge in regards to knowledge on biodiversity, there are important differences between them, as has been stated. (...) But, as explained, these non-traditional indigenous populations (caícaras, riverine, Amazon, sertanejos) received strong Indian influence, which is revealed not only in regional terms, as in the various techniques of food preparation, ceramics, hunting and fishing tools. (Diegues, 2001, p 38, emphasis added by the authors).

Thus, it is possible to notice that Brazilian public institutions which are responsible for Protected Areas (Indigenous Lands, Nature Conservation Units and Quilombos Territories) - respectively, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) and National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA) - do not receive adequate state support, either through lack of proper allocation of material resources, or lack of human resources for their management bodies.

Thus, the asymmetry of power of these traditional populations together with that of their official representatives, when facing the economic interests at stake, perversely leads



to the demoralization of these organs in the face of public opinion and to the processes of deterritorialization of these populations, which:

Are strongly associated to said accumulation dynamics, according to David Harvey (2008), by dispossession. This is because capitalism needs to incorporate non-capitalist territories to the production value to face the crisis of over-accumulation, find profitable outlet for surplus capital and stabilize the system. These territories must therefore be continuously open to provide inputs, labor and low cost land. So is it a dialectical relationship between internal expanded reproduction of capitalism and the expropriation developed out of capitalism. Because the relationship is dialectical, the “exterior” is indispensable to the interior condition, constitutive of capitalism itself. As it is continuous, Harvey (2008) prefers to call it accumulation “by dispossession” instead of primitive. And the state plays a crucial role in the subordination of this “exterior”. (Acsehrad, 2013, p.116, our emphasis)

In the case of the Brazilian territory, we can observe this dialectical relationship of deterritorialization in the South-North axis, between the urban-industrial and the traditional way of life.

The urban-industrial way of life is the “interior”, which lives under the “capitalist witchcraft” (STENGERS y Pignarre, 2005, p. 39), a system that paralyzes and capture the social actors within “hellish alternatives” (Acsehrad, 2013) - situations that do not seem to leave any choice but resignation or impotent denunciation in the face of the inevitable economic war, and which need to rob the territory of the traditional populations in order to seize the natural resources necessary to maintain the unsustainable and consumerist way of life of its inhabitants and, above all, its ruling prodigal elites.

A fifth trick is the bureaucratization of administrative procedures which are necessary so that local communities have access to the rights provided by law. In this case, it is required that subjects in socioenvironmental vulnerability must write applications or fill up forms that are incompatible with their formal education, despite of their traditional knowledge.

This trick become even more serious, or we could say more efficient, if we consider the large distances within the Amazon, combined with the fourth trick, the scrapping of public institutions that are supposed to recognize their rights.

In addition to these situations in which economic interests promote all sorts of illegality, it is worth mentioning a detailed ethnographic study of power relations, discourses and interests behind the environmental licensing processes recently published by Bronz (2016), which demonstrates the complexity of these administrative procedures in the bureaucratic context, the stakeholders (researchers, consultants, state and business representatives), focusing especially on the business practices and discourses of large enterprises:

Like the technical studies, a series of procedures that are part of the licensing process is driven by a deliberate strategy, from the entrepreneurs and their advisors, to build relationships and networks aimed at making feasible the implementation of projects. These strategies rely on a number of mechanisms and internationally recognized management technologies in business models, naturalized in the consultants' practices and internalized in licensing procedures: environmental assessments, strategic planning, stakeholders approach, public hearings, mitigation, and social responsibility and sustainable development programs. (BRONZ, 2016, p. 48).

There are several tricks, such as those described above that have been used by certain representatives/sectors of the Brazilian State in line with national and international companies, to disregard the law applicable to environmental licensing processes, to the detriment of national interests and local population, as stated by BRONZ:

The corporate management practices adopted in the environmental licensing processes, as we have seen, are often justified by an ideological discourse that combines the corporate morals of social responsibility with the actual business planning strategies in economic terms. One can not deny that the discourse on the application of these approaches ends up masking a relation of power, when stating that the objectives of the interest groups are part of the company's own objectives, generically imposing such a nomination for any social group affected by its activities. In general, with the adoption of these approaches, the interests of the companies prevail over those of the communities (2016, p. 275).

## **CLASHES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSING PROCESS OF VOLTA GRANDE PROJECT OF BELO SUN MINING LTD**

Although the Secretary of Environment and Sustainability of Pará (SEMAS-PA) has given its assent to the Preliminary License in November 2013 (Opinion COEMA Technical No. 22520 / GEEMIN / CLA / DILAP / 2013 - Protocol 2012/0000005028) the Public Prosecutors Office requested additional impact studies for several reasons. According to Oliveira (2014) the indigenous people had not been properly consulted in the Belo Monte licensing process, which also happened to Belo Sun, for they did not indicate the indigenous people from the Paquicamba territory (less than 10 km away) and Arara, in Volta Grande do Xingu, as areas of direct or indirect impacts on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA -RIMA).

Other elements that have not been mentioned in the studies and need to be taken into account are related to the fact that the riparian forests and the permanent preservation areas are not being respected.

Additionally, the Ilha da Fazenda community was not even mentioned in the impact studies, despite of being located on the island directly in front of the exploration area.

Furthermore, several other irregularities were identified in Belo Sun licensing process by the Public Prosecutor, Public Defender and social and environmental organizations.

Thus, the specific case of the ongoing process of environmental licensing of Belo Sun Mining for exploration of gold in the region of Volta Grande deserves careful consideration for several reasons, as will be detailed below.

## **Federal licensing**

The Federal Public Prosecutors Office of Altamira questioned why the licensing process is being carried out by a state environmental agency - SEMAS / PA (Case No. 2012/0000005028), even though the legislation states that, because the project is located in the basin of a federal river, meaning that it passes through more than one federative state, the procedure needs to be carried out by the federal Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Resources (IBAMA).

Being established that the litigated area is a federal territory, the discussion re-emerges as one more argument for the need for licensing at the federal level, not the state, as it has been done.

## **Federal Glebe of Ituna**

Against a backdrop of numerous complaints, the Public Defender's Office of Pará initiated a Public Civil Action (Case No 0005149-44.2013.8.14.0005) in favor of the miners in the region.

In March of 2014 it was performed a formal inspection, in which participated members of the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), Belo Sun Mining and bailiffs. The inclusion of INCRA was necessary to verify the validity of the purchase term of the land to be exploited by Belo Sun company, since the miners claimed it to be a public federal territory called "Gleba Federal Ituna".

On November 30th, 2015, it was published in the Official Gazette the Ordinances No. 218 and 220 of 11.20.2015 of the Ownership of the Union Department (SPU) which declare of interest of the public service the properties of the Union inserted in the Gleba Federal Ituna: Vila do Galo, with 15.760 hectares for land regularization of social interest, benefiting 63 low-income families; and Vila da Ressaca Village with 8.9266 hectares for land regularization of social interest, benefiting 176 low-income families and promoting the recognition of social rights to housing, ownership of the Union and social development.

Thus, the question is whether the Ordinances of the Ownership of the Union Department (SPU) will represent in fact a closure to such unequal dispute, for the

purpose of the ordinances is to settle the land rights of the miners from Vila do Galo and Vila da Ressaca, which in its turn would make the Belo Sun project inviable.

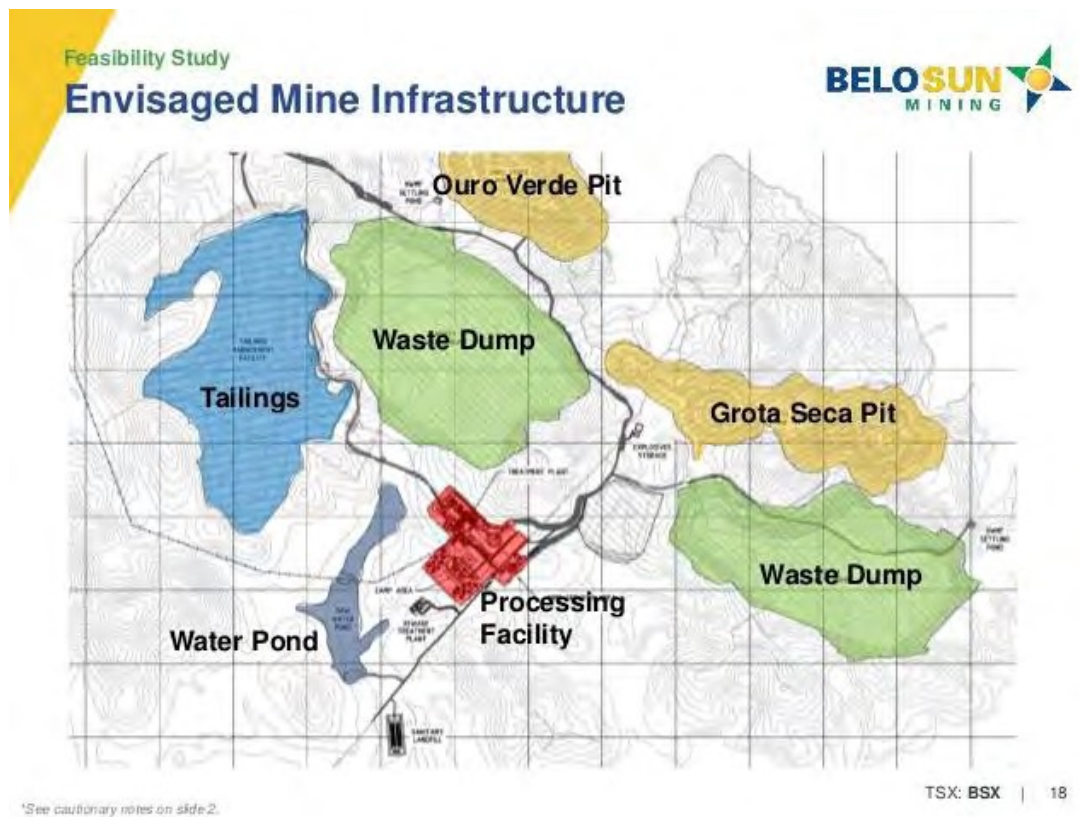


Figure 3 – Planned Mine Infrastructure. Source: BELO SUN, 2016.

A larger question also arises in this context of speculation and land uncertainties, as Figure 3 suggests an overlap of the project area with the SPU area for the miners.

According to Barreto (2007), the Gleba Ituna land is wholly owned by the Union, having not yet been demarcated, giving rise to practices of land grabbing and misappropriation of public land. [...] Thus, the company's acquisition of mining areas would not be a legitimate act. Consequently, the ban on mining work by private agents would be considered as irregular and illegal. Given the situation, the Public Defender Office of the State of Pará filed a civil action against the company and the supposed owners of the mines. According to the petition, despite not having obtained any environmental permit, including the installation of the project, the company started acquiring federal public lands from people who claim to be owners of mines as a way to remove the families from the area. (IPEA, 2015, p.55, emphasis added)

If the villages are located in the Gleba Federal Ituna territory, it is possible to infer that the federal area is much larger and comprises the area of the Belo Sun's project. In this case, it is necessary to question legally the validity of the land purchase term of Belo Sun mining Ltda.

## Regime of Small-scale mining licence

Another clash between the small-scale cooperative and the Canadian company is that the company detains permission from the National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM) for mineral exploration in Volta Grande do Xingu region from 1976 (cases No. 805,657 / 76, 805,658 / 76, 805,659 / 76, 812,559 / 76) (ISA 201: p 1).

However, the site requested at DNPM by Belo Sun for mining is not a new area of extraction. Rather, it is a region known for mining, with five riverfront communities that explore the region since the 40's: Vila do Gallo, Vila da Ressaca, Ilha da Fazenda, Ouro Verde and Grota Seca. (IPEA, 2015).

Art. 5 The miners cooperatives have priority in obtaining mining permission in areas where they are operating, as long as the occupation has occurred in the following cases:

I in areas considered free under the Decree No. 227 of February 28th, 1967;

II in areas required under priority, until the date of July 20th, 1989; and

III in areas where they hold permission for mining.

Sole paragraph. The mineris allowed to join more than one cooperative with operations in different areas.

Therefore, the Preliminary License did not take into account Article 14 of Law No. 7.805, of 1989, which creates the mining permit regime, nor Art. 5 of the Miners Statute, which guarantees the mining priority for the small-scale miners.

## Toxic waste and the “Tabuleiro do Embaubal”

As detailed in the Feasibility Study of the Volta Grande Project prepared by the company, which reports that the waste from the extraction of gold contain the harmful elements shown in Table 13-16 of the study, as follows:

(...) Arsenic, antimony, lead, copper and sulfur can cause problems of leaching and / or high cyanide consumption. However, the concentrations of these elements present in Volta Brande samples are sufficiently low and should not be problematic for cyanide leaching. The presence of these elements calls for attention with regard to the management of waste and effluent. (BELO SUN, 2015, p. 13-25, our emphasis.)

Leakage of tailings will immediately affect the Fluvial Archipelago Tabuleiro do Embaubal, a region scientifically recognized worldwide for its great importance as a breeding area for species of the Amazon River basin, which is located a few tens of kilometers downstream of the area sought by the mining company.

The Government of the State of Pará created on June 17th, 2016, due to strong demand from civil society and the academic community, two Nature Conservation Units



in the archipelago that, since 2013, had already the whole public consultation process ready: the Wildlife Refuge Tabuleiro do Embaubal and Sustainable Development Reserve Vitória de Souzel (PARA, 2016).

From an environmental point of view – considering the high probability of leakage of tailing in the Xingu River, considering the current statistical leakage of mining waste reservoirs in the world, such as in the emblematic case of Mariana in Brazil - the Belo Sun enterprise offers high environmental risk.

## CONCLUSION

Despite the disproportionate economic power between capital and the local community, the implementation of the project has been delayed, as can be seen in the interview given by Helio Botelho Diniz, the Belo Sun Operations Vice President in Brazil, available at the Forbes and Manhattan website, in which he stated that “If all goes as planned, we can produce about ten tons of gold per year by the end of 2015 or in early 2016.” (GAVAÇA, 2016)

The delay in the implementation of projects is a global phenomenon investigated by researchers (FRANKS, DAVIS, BEBBINGTON, ALI, KEMP, SCURRAH, 2014) that demonstrate how the conflicts generated by social and environmental risks have been translated into high costs for companies. Considering this, an understanding of the relationship between environmental and social risk and project success has the potential to improve the sustainability results of large-scale development in the extractive industries.

As an example, the Canadian company Agnico said it will sell its shares of Belo Sun Mining in Pará. The statement was made after Avaaz, an entity that organizes virtual undersigned, send to the mining company a petition with more than 700 thousand adhesions against the exploration of gold in the place. The request was supported by indigenous Juruna and movements such as Xingu Forever Alive Movement (VILELLA, 2018).

The forums of social participation, currently legalized, such as basin committees and councils, are privileged spaces for local social actors to interact and join forces in search of the unveiling of the tricks, to formalize technical reports - that become instruments of consistent denunciations, that can be brought into Courts.

It is possible to observe in these forums, the ‘construction of the pact’: the act of gathering forces of the local community, social movements and the academic community in order to decide how the social claims can be brought forward. These claims, in turn, have been recognized and guaranteed through lawsuits.

Finally, in this study case, the Public Prosecution and the Judiciary have been key players in supporting the recognition of individual and collective rights against arbitrary decisions made at the administrative level of environmental management “(MACHADO; MELLO, 2015). Meanwhile, other public agencies, as the State of Pará and the Municipality of Senador de José Porfírio have been doing so many efforts in favor of the Belo Sun Mining due to the taxes they would receive in case of the Canadian mining operation. What shows how different agencies of the government have been opposite commitments, in the same case. Thus, it is expected that the science of sustainability can benefit from a greater understanding of the risks to businesses and communities, and contribute to the social responsibility projects of companies to develop from an early “makeup” stage, to a period of “environmental diplomacy” (SUSSKIND, 2015) - It is this understanding, and the same results for sustainability, that we hope to enrich with this work, as well as with its further developments.

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**[ VOLTA AO SUMÁRIO ]**