

Barrick constructively engages with communities

Barrick is committed to bringing substantial, long-term benefits to the communities where we operate by working directly and constructively with our stakeholders - including NGOs that deliver important services to people on the ground.

Transparency and accountability are fundamental tenets of our approach to community engagement. Barrick is committed to constructive engagement. We listen to our stakeholders and we respond to their concerns. As part of this commitment, the company routinely goes above and beyond legal requirements for public consultation.

Barrick also produces an annual, independently verified, Responsibility Report, which measures the company's performance in the areas of environment, health, safety and social issues. In the interests of transparency, this report clearly indicates where the company has been successful, but also where it can improve.

A recently released report by CorpWatch, subtitled *Communities Worldwide Respond to Gold Mining's Impacts*, lacks both accuracy and integrity. The report's title implies that it is a response of "the communities" affected by Barrick's projects or operations. CorpWatch, of Oakland California, does not speak for the communities in which Barrick does business, nor do any of the anti-mining NGOs listed as "contributors" to the report. In stark contrast, Barrick works directly with the communities and other stakeholders potentially affected by its operations. Barrick has regular direct, open, transparent and two-way dialogue with local communities throughout the lives of its projects. The company invites comments, criticisms and constructive dialogue with its stakeholders, and learns from what it hears.


The CorpWatch report does not represent the mainstream views of the communities where Barrick operates. Unlike the authors of the report, Barrick does not publish reckless half-truths that appear to be designed to frighten and polarize communities - and it does not continue to repeat slanderous statements long after they have been revealed to be inaccurate.

The report is nothing more than a compilation and regurgitation of salacious (and typically false) allegations made by a collection of unaccountable anti-mining NGOs which currently oppose one or more of Barrick's projects at various locations around the world.

Barrick will address the substance of the CorpWatch report in a comprehensive manner in due course. However, the company would like to take this opportunity to address some of the egregious claims now.

Wiradjuri indigenous people speak for themselves

For example, the CorpWatch report falsely asserts that the Wiradjuri indigenous people who live in the vicinity of Barrick's Cowal mine in New South Wales, Australia "oppose the mine". The report goes on to say that Barrick "desecrated sacred ground" when it constructed Cowal. This is patently false. From the very beginning, Barrick established a constructive working relationship with the Wiradjuri people, who continue to support the mine and the benefits it has brought to the community.



Percy Knight, representative of the Wiradjuri traditional land owners, recently issued a press release on behalf of the Wiradjuri Council of Elders after some activists organized a protest against Barrick, purportedly defending Wiradjuri rights.

“The Wiradjuri Council of Elders developed an open relationship with Barrick that goes back over a decade. The discussions with Barrick regarding the gold mine in its traditional country were well considered and communicated to other aboriginal people. It was a transparent process.”

Mr. Knight went on to say, “The Wiradjuri Condobolin people don’t need, or support, the interference of external groups and individuals. The traditional owners particularly object to the use of other Aboriginal people to prop up non-Aboriginal activism... Don’t try to split our community by fostering people ostensibly representing the Wiradjuri people... Don’t try to drag the Wiradjuri people into issues they have clearly already resolved.”

Moreover, Mr. Knight added that the Wiradjuri people and Barrick enjoy “a mutually beneficial relationship” with “considerable benefits to the Wiradjuri community.”

The CorpWatch report also presumes to speak on behalf of the Wiradjuri community, with no legitimate basis for doing so. The fact is, Barrick has developed positive relationships with both aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities surrounding the Cowal mine and public opinion polls consistently demonstrate over 80 per cent of the population support the mine.


Community consultation and support at Pascua-Lama

CorpWatch falsely inflates community opposition to a number of other Barrick operations, including the Pascua-Lama project in Chile and Argentina. The organization claims Barrick “set up shop through a campaign of charm and pressure... on the local population” and says a “broad movement of farmers” and other groups oppose the project.

As a matter of public record, Huasco Valley water users voted 94 per cent in favor of the project at a Special Meeting of the Water Users Cooperative. This Cooperative represents the area’s 2,000 water users, including the Huasco Valley’s approximately 700 farmers. Mayors from all four municipalities surrounding Pascua-Lama and most of the community leaders in the Huasco Valley have also strongly expressed their support for the project.

Public consultation on Pascua-Lama included almost 1,000 meetings with community leaders, more than 100 presentations to community groups, participation in 30 public events, and a door-to-door visit program in the Huasco province. As a result of this dialogue in both Chile and Argentina, Barrick has made several fundamental changes to the Pascua-Lama project design. Details of these changes can be found in the Shareholder Report on Pascua-Lama, located in the Corporate Responsibility section of the Barrick website (www.barrick.com).

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIA) in Chile was submitted in December 2004 and was under formal review for 14 months. The amount of information and supporting documentation was extensive: the 2004 EIA and three Addenda comprised 5,336 pages in 13 volumes. In Argentina, a separate EIA was evaluated over a period of 25 months and reviewed by a special Interdisciplinary Environmental Evaluation Commission (CIEAM), a group of independent professionals who were assembled to review and issue a technical evaluation of the project.



Before and during this entire process, Barrick conducted extensive public consultations with local community members, farmers and water users. The company's efforts to include and encourage local stakeholder involvement in the process exceeded all of the legal requirements.

Working with Western Shoshone in Nevada

The allegation that Barrick is operating on lands owned by the Western Shoshone without community consent is deliberately misleading. Under U.S. law, the company owns the land and mineral rights at the Cortez site. Some members of the Western Shoshone community have pursued land claims against the United States government with respect to federal lands. Those claims have been determined to be without merit by the United States Supreme Court.

CorpWatch's claim that mining activities at Cortez are "being pushed forward" without consultation with the Western Shoshone is simply not true. In Nevada, Barrick is engaged in constructive dialogue with many representatives of the Western Shoshone, who are recognized as one of our key stakeholders. The tribal and band councils of the Western Shoshone are the only individuals elected to represent their members' interests. The Western Shoshone Defense Project is not an elected representative of the Western Shoshone people. However, in the interests of open dialogue, Barrick has extended a standing invitation to the Defense Project, but they have chosen not engage with the company.


Barrick respects the cultural heritage of the Western Shoshone. The company also complies with section 106 of the U.S. National Historical Preservation Act to survey, identify and archive artifacts of cultural significance to the Native American tribes affected by its exploration projects and operations. Additionally, a recent formal consultation between the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and various Western Shoshone elders identified two areas of cultural and religious importance which Barrick will respect. The company has also agreed to provide safe access to federal lands to enable the Western Shoshone to take part in traditional activities, such as pine nut gathering and ceremonies.

Barrick follows a vigorous, transparent process for engaging a broad range of stakeholders at all of its operations. Community support forms the cornerstone of the company's social license to operate. Without it, mining cannot proceed.

Respecting Human Rights

Barrick does not tolerate human rights violations. The company's security guidelines and standards are also based on the Voluntary Principles of Security and Human Rights. These principles guide companies in maintaining the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that ensures respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Implementing the principles, for example, involves conducting risks assessments and training of security staff on human rights issues.

Barrick also reports openly and transparently on human rights issues in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative, the international standards for sustainability reporting. This entails annual reporting on issues and concerns related to human rights, and how the company manages issues such as resettlement, artisanal mining, and indigenous peoples.



CorpWatch's recent report contains egregious falsehoods and wildly exaggerated allegations of human rights violations and violence connected to Barrick operations. CorpWatch has selectively ignored evidence that long ago disproved many of the allegations in its report. Instead, it has published baseless claims put forth by unaccountable anti-mining NGOs.

Tanzania allegations proved false

For example, on page five of the report, CorpWatch reasserts an allegation by activist Tundu Lissu that over 50 miners were murdered at the Bulyanhulu property in Tanzania three years before Barrick purchased the project. The report uses a "fact-finding" mission by several anti-mining NGOs to corroborate Lissu's story. However, nowhere does CorpWatch reference the formal investigation requested by Mr. Lissu himself, by the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman (CAO) of the World Bank. The thorough investigation found the allegations to be utterly baseless and misleading. Responding to Lissu's concerns, the CAO concluded:

"To repeat an allegation that one knows not to be true, especially an allegation of murder, has consequences. It has consequences on the business reputation and trading ability of a private enterprise and on the individuals concerned. There may be legal consequences to such actions. The CAO is distressed that some NGOs have felt that they may act with impunity in this case. In fact the CAO believes there is no impunity. The consequence is a backlash against the 'non-accountability' of NGOs."

The CAO's statement was made October 29, 2002, following an extensive World Bank investigation of the specific allegations described on page five of the CorpWatch report. A summary of the Ombudsman's report, refuting the allegations in Corpwatch's document, can be found on the CAO website (www.cao-ombudsman.org).

Barrick does not condone repressive action

CorpWatch has also alleged that Barrick works with police to repress opposition to its operations around the world. This is also completely false. The company is not involved in cases where local police respond to incidents in the community at large.

For example, on page three of its report, CorpWatch insinuates that Barrick was somehow connected with the shooting death of a 19-year-old Peruvian man at an anti-mining protest in the Ancash region. This self-serving allegation is deliberately unethical and irresponsible on the part of CorpWatch. The incident in question did not occur at an anti-mining protest. The victim was shot by police during a blockade of the Pan-American highway, while protesting an irrigation project in the area. There was absolutely no connection to Barrick whatsoever, nor did the incident occur even remotely close to the Pierina mine. It was 500 kilometers away.

CorpWatch's attempt to advance its own agenda by distorting the facts is not only unfair and unethical, but disrespectful to the victim in this tragic event.



Responsible Mining and the environment

Part of Barrick's commitment to Responsible Mining includes a commitment to sound environmental stewardship. The company's environmental reporting is honest and accurate. Barrick is committed to protect and reclaim former mine sites and it has received numerous awards for its expertise in this area.

Protecting glaciers at Pascua-Lama

Like most of the report, CorpWatch's attempt to tarnish Barrick's environmental record is misleading and self-serving. CorpWatch cites an anti-mining NGO to assert that Barrick plans to disturb three glaciers near its Pascua-Lama project. This is completely untrue, and would constitute a legal violation of the Chilean approval for Pascua-Lama (Resolution RCA 024/February 2006). Barrick has committed to protecting the icefields and glaciers in the vicinity of the project, along with adhering to over 400 conditions attached to Pascua-Lama's environmental approval. CorpWatch's suggestion that Barrick plans to build tunnels under the glaciers to mine ore is also categorically false. The company will conduct regular monitoring of the icefields/glaciers adjacent to Pascua-Lama, to measure the impacts of climate change and to ensure mining operations do not impact the icefields.

The report is also misleading when it comes to Pascua-Lama's impact on local water supplies. CorpWatch notes that the mine will draw 42 liters per second from the Huasco River system. But it does not say that this only represents 0.3 per cent of the river's supply, and therefore will have a negligible impact on the rivers' water levels.

Environmental stewardship at Cowal

Like at Pascua-Lama, Barrick has worked with the local community to enhance and protect the environment near the Cowal mine in New South Wales, Australia. The company established the Lake Cowal Foundation with several prominent NGOs and environmentalists. Led by an independent board, the award-winning Foundation has initiated a \$5 million wetland rehabilitation project in partnership with several other organizations, and has planted over 50,000 native trees.

Barrick recognizes that a nation-wide drought has strained water systems across much of Australia, including in the Cowal area. However, it is disingenuous for CorpWatch to suggest that Barrick is somehow responsible for the most, if not all of the region's water shortage. At Cowal, Barrick is working towards reducing water consumption and augmenting borefield water with other sources. CorpWatch also fails to disclose that a portion of the water used at the mine is saline, making it totally unsuitable for agriculture or drinking purposes. In response to drought, Barrick recently shut off its bore holes and brought in surface water. As a result, water levels in the borefield aquifer rose dramatically, as predicted in the hydrologic modelling completed to date. The team at Cowal will continue to work with the local community to do everything possible to effectively re-cycle water on site; use high saline water when possible; and reduce its demand for fresh water to an absolute minimum.



Cyanide management

CorpWatch also questions the use of cyanide at the Cowal mine. Again, the report fails to mention that Cowal is recognized as a world-leader in cyanide management. It was the first mine to be pre-operationally certified under the International Cyanide Management Code. The Code was developed under the auspices of the United Nations to provide a framework for safe and environmentally responsible manufacturing, transportation and use of cyanide products. Cowal underwent pre-construction environmental audits every six months and annually since. These audits were conducted by independent auditors and the results were reported to the government of New South Wales. Of the five conducted to date, Barrick has remained 100 per cent compliant. Cowal also uses a cyanide destruction technology that reduces cyanide levels in the mine's tailings to the lowest level of any gold mine in New South Wales.

As part of its commitment to Responsible Mining, Barrick has pledged to obtain Cyanide Code certification at operations around the world.

For more information visit www.barrick.com