

# WHY WE HAVE TO SAY NO TO THE MONTAGNE D'OR PROJECT



*Because...*

Or de Question : Collectif citoyen apolitique et non-violent - 30 associations guyanaises, 120 ONG nationales et internationales - CONTACT : ordequestion@gmail.com - WEB : ordequestion.org

## 1 – Local development, by the French Guianese, for French Guiana !

Montagne d'Or is not a French Guianese company. It is and will remain the wholly-owned property of a mining consortium made up mainly (55%) of the Russian multinational Nordgold and the Canadian industrialist Columbus Gold.

## 2 – Our health comes before your business deals !

Mega-mining is one of the most polluting industries in the world! The true cost of social, health and environmental damage is considerable. The 3,500 mines in continental France, all of which are now closed, continue to pollute, prompting numerous complaints by local residents due to health-related concerns (cancer, leukemia, cognitive impairment, etc.).

## 3 – Wildly expensive jobs and investments with no future !

Each potential job would cost taxpayers 560,000 €, when direct, indirect and induced (1) subsidies are taken into account, whereas government-supported contracts (13,000 € per year), which provide meaningful employment and promote social cohesion, are being cut. Once the industrial gold rush has been swept away by the ups and downs of the business cycle, mine infrastructures will become industrial wastelands.

## 4 – Industrial gold mining will not prevent illegal activities !

On the contrary! How can a private company bring about a decrease in illegal activity when the French armed forces have failed to achieve that aim for 30 years? All over the planet, mega-mines tend to promote conflicts and illegal activities in their vicinity (alcohol, drugs, prostitution). Illegal small-scale gold miners also work alongside legal operators since they derive mutual benefit from each other (resale of duty-free fuel and equipment, cheap labor, buying of illegally-extracted gold, etc.).

## 5 – Toxic, cyanide-contaminated mud – not for us !

There have been 25 accidental dam failures throughout the world since 2000. Cyanide and other toxic chemicals are contained, either by geotextiles, which are weakened by our climate, or by tailings dams that are at risk of collapsing due to heavy rainfall (close to 3 meters annually). In 2015, the "Brazilian Fukushima" ravaged 800 km of riverbank along the Rio Docé. In Suriname (Rosebel) and Guyana (Omai), pollution of this type has also devastated rivers. In the event of a dam failure, how could the Mana river basin be cleaned up or supply clean drinking water ?

## 6 – French Guiana is not a garbage dump !

Heavy tropical rainfall on the gigantic hills of mining waste (estimated at close to 350 million tons) accumulated around the mine site, equivalent to the contents of a pit measuring 2.5 km long, 500 m wide and more 300 m deep, will generate toxic runoff and probably drain pollution by heavy metals (such as arsenic, mercury, cadmium, lead, etc.) from the Mana river basin to the coast for hundreds of years.

## 7 – A complete rip-off ! A 2% mining royalty !

French Guiana is already being plundered and martyred by illegal small-scale gold miners known as garimpeiros. In this case, the French government probably wants to conclude some obscure Franco-Russian diplomatic agreements by handing over 98% of the territory's mining resources to a multinational.

## 8 – A mountain... of subsidies, amounting to between 420 and 600 million € !

To plunder us at minimal cost, the French government is planning to build a chemical and industrial port for the Russian industrialist to store roughly 300 tons of explosives and 300 tons of cyanide every month, as well as toxic chemicals. To that we can add the renovation of a 65-km-long road, the construction of a 106-km-long high-voltage line, a power plant, an indirect subsidy covering EDF's (the French electricity utility) tariff equalization costs, tax exemption schemes, the cost of monitoring mining waste for centuries ... and the financial bottomless pit that would result from a major accident ! WWF has estimated that subsidies would total 420 million euros.

## 9 – Electricity for them, nothing for us !

Production operations involving digging, dynamiting, crushing, grinding, and transporting followed by cyanidation and electrolytic recovery will require the equivalent of 100% of the electricity consumed by the businesses and inhabitants of Cayenne, the capital city! And other multinationals, such as lamgold, Newmont, etc., will make similar demands on the power supply, whereas our energy and ecological transition is already way behind schedule.

## 10 – Promises ... the usual mirages !

A junior mining company can make endless promises until it obtains the mining permit. Once the business is sold, the major mining company will no longer be held to those promises, but will cut production costs in order to raise profits.

## 11 – Respect for indigenous peoples and territories !

By virtue of national and international law and the convention ratified by the French government, indigenous peoples have the right to control, protect and exploit their lands. They are entitled to free, prior and informed consent. For any project that will impact the territory, the government must consult the Grand Customary Council! The same rule applies to the project for the industrial chemical port, under consideration for possible construction on Kalin'a land to support the mega-mine. The mine site is also an exceptional Amerindian archeological site (covering dozens of potential funeral sites (montagnes couronnées).

## 12 – The climate is also my planet !

It is disgraceful, with regard to humanity and climate change, to expend so much energy to recover 1.8 gr per ton of rock (or 0.00018%) of useless ore. Recycling supplies three times more gold than required by industry (phone, satellite, medicine, etc.), which represents 8% of the global gold produced each year.

## 13 – Show some respect for French Guiana !

Mega-mine would mean giving up any hope of freedom and energy independence! By rejecting it, we could finally work together to build genuine, sustainable and solidarity-based endogenous development.

## 14 – Gold prices are unpredictable and unstable !

The mine's viability is linked to the unstable price of gold (which must remain at at least \$900 per ounce for the project to be viable). A 36% drop in the price of gold or simply a 10% decrease in the euro/dollar exchange rate (1) would make this project unprofitable. Note that the price of gold fell by 60% between Sept. 2012 and Dec. 2015.

## 15 – Uncontrollable climate change !

The BRGM (French Bureau of Geological and Mining Research) is forecasting more frequent droughts and intense rainfall, which will lead to flooding and mudslides, the perfect recipe for dam failure.

## 16 – Multinationals, get out! You have never developed a country !

You cause social conflicts, destruction of land, health crises .... Bolivia is the country most impacted by extractivism (oil, gold, diamonds), yet it is still the poorest in South America. Uruguay, on the other hand, where the mining industry is not highly developed, is the richest country on the continent (GDP per capita).

## 17 – Already asphyxiated, soon to be paralyzed !

All government agencies, which are already understaffed, will be intensely mobilized and swamped by this project. SMEs and skilled trade businesses will suffer more than ever from administrative inertia, which is very detrimental.

## 18 – Our carbon capital ruined !

Our primary forest should earn us substantial financial compensation from the French government, through carbon offsetting. Instead, the useless combustion of 142 million liters of fuel (1) will send our ecological footprint soaring.

## 19 – "Responsible" mine : Enough with the hot air !

That concept is simply a marketing strategy aimed at convincing public opinion that today's mines are "clean". Can you be "responsible" in French Guiana and "irresponsible" in Burkina Faso, as highlighted by the damning report published by the Swiss NGO Action de Carême?

## 20 – All this, because they're not interested in promoting the jobs of the future !

Solutions exist for alternative development that is sustainable and eco- and human-friendly. Developing biodiversity could lead to the creation of thousands of jobs in the fields of agroforestry, agroecology, agriculture, wood and forest-related professions, cosmetics, perfumery, essential oils, medicinal plants, ecotourism, the social and solidarity economy, bioclimatic housing, research, etc. Download « Top 25 of sustainable development in French Guiana »





# PROJET MONTAGNE D'OR

Comment l'industrie de l'or veut miner la biodiversité, la forêt & l'énergie guyanaise



# NO DIRTY GOLD IN FRENCH GUIANA

BY ENCOURAGING MULTINATIONALS TO ENGAGE IN INDUSTRIAL GOLD MINING, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO AUTHORIZE ONE OF THE MOST HIGHLY POLLUTING INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD, IN RICH EUROPE'S ONLY TROPICAL RAINFOREST ! AT THE COST OF SACRIFICING BIODIVERSITY AND THE HEALTH OF INHABITANTS !

**CYANIDE  
EXPLOSIVES  
POLLUTION  
HEAVY METALS  
PRECARIOUSNESS  
MINE WASTE  
HEALTH RISKS**



**OR DE QUESTION !  
CONTRE LA  
MEGA-INDUSTRIE MINIERE  
EN FORET GUYANAISE**



**TAKE ACTION !**

[Twitter](https://twitter.com/ordequestion) [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ordequestion) @: [ordequestion@gmail.com](mailto:ordequestion@gmail.com)

web : [ordequestion.org](http://ordequestion.org) - Scoop it

We rely solely on the generosity of our donors : [Helloasso.com](http://Helloasso.com) - Maiouri Nature

