

ESCOBAL PROJECT

SUBTERRANEAN POLYMETALLIC SILVER MINE



NATURAL RESOURCE
Silver
Gold
Lead
Zinc



LOCATION
Municipality of San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa Department (Southern Guatemala).



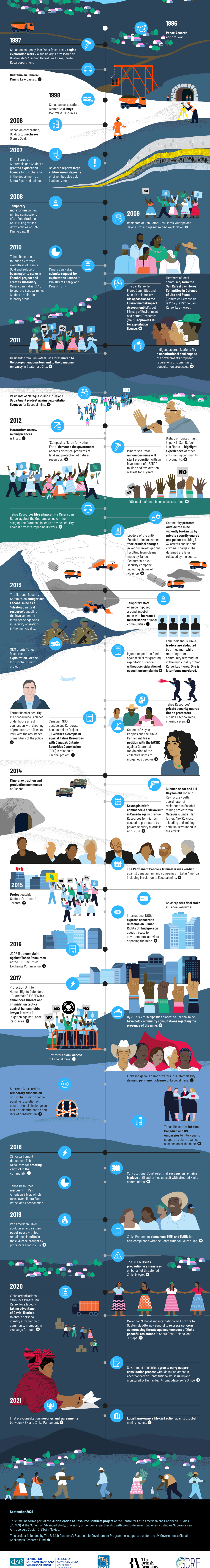
AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
San Rafael Las Flores and other municipalities in departments of San Rosa, Jalapa and Jutiapa.



OWNED BY
Pan American Silver and run by its subsidiary Minera San Rafael.

ESCOBAL MINE

Guatemala



1996

1996

Peace Accords end civil war.

1997

Canadian company, Mar-West Resources, begins exploration work via subsidiary, Entre Mares de Guatemala S.A. in San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa Department.

Guatemalan General Mining Law passed.

1998

Canadian corporation, Glamis Gold, buys Mar-West Resources.

2006

Canadian corporation, Goldcorp, purchases Glamis Gold.

2007

Entre Mares de Guatemala and Goldcorp granted exploration licence for Escobal site in the departments of Santa Rosa and Jalapa.

Goldcorp reports large subterranean deposits of silver, but also gold, lead and zinc.

2008

Temporary moratorium on new mining concessions after Constitutional Court ruling strikes down articles of 1997 Mining Law.

2009

Residents of San Rafael Las Flores, Jutiapa and Jalapa protest against mining exploration.

2010

Tahoe Resources, founded by former executives of Glamis Gold and Goldcorp, buys majority stake in Escobal project and creates subsidiary, Minera San Rafael S.A., to operate Escobal mine. Goldcorp maintains minority stake.

Minera San Rafael submits request for exploitation licence to Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM).

Members of local community form the San Rafael Las Flores Committee in Defence of Life and Peace (Comité en Defensa de la Vida y la Paz de San Rafael Las Flores).

2011

Residents of San Rafael Las Flores march to Goldcorp's headquarters and to the Canadian embassy in Guatemala City.

The San Rafael las Flores Committee and Colectivo Madreselva file opposition to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), but Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) approves EIA for exploitation licence.

Indigenous organizations file a constitutional challenge to the government's proposed regulations on community consultation processes.

2012

Moratorium on new mining licences is lifted.

"Campesina March for Mother Earth" demands the government address historical problems of land and protection of natural resources.

Bishop officiates mass in park in San Rafael Las Flores to highlight experiences of other anti-mining community movements.

Minera San Rafael announces mine will start production with an investment of US\$500 million and exploitation will last for 19 years.

400 local residents block access to mine.

2013

Tahoe Resources files a lawsuit via Minera San Rafael against the Guatemalan government, alleging the State has failed to provide security against protests impeding its work.

Community protests outside the mine violently broken up by private security guards and police, resulting in 32 arrests and serious criminal charges. The detained are later released by the courts.

2013

The National Security Commission categorises Escobal mine as a "strategic natural resource", enabling the involvement of intelligence agencies in security operations in the municipality.

Temporary state of siege imposed around Escobal mine with increased militarisation of local communities.

2013

MEM grants Tahoe Resources an exploitation licence for Escobal mining project.

Leaders of the anti-Escobal mine movement face criminal charges in various investigations resulting from claims made by Tahoe Resources' private security company, including claims of violence.

2013

Former head of security at Escobal mine is placed under house arrest in connection with shooting of protesters. He flees to Peru with the assistance of members of the police.

Canadian NGO, Justice and Corporate Accountability Project (JCAP) files a complaint against Tahoe Resources with Canada's Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) in relation to Escobal project.

Four indigenous Xinka leaders are abducted by armed men while returning from a community referendum in the municipality of San Rafael Las Flores. One is later found murdered.

Tahoe Resources' private security guards fire on protesters outside Escobal mine, injuring seven.

Council of Mayan Peoples and the Xinka Parliament file a petition with the IACHR against Guatemala for violation of the collective rights of indigenous peoples.

2014

Mineral extraction and production commence at Escobal.

Gunmen shoot and kill 16-year-old Topacio Reynoso, a youth coordinator of resistance to Escobal mining project from Mataquesuintla. Her father, Alex Reynoso, a leading anti-mining activist, is wounded in the attack.

2014

Canadian NGO, Justice and Corporate Accountability Project (JCAP) files a complaint against Tahoe Resources with the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission.

Seven plaintiffs convene a civil lawsuit in Canada against Tahoe Resources for injuries caused to protesters by private security guards in April 2013.

2015

Protest outside Goldcorp's offices in Toronto.

The Permanent People's Tribunal verdict against Canadian mining companies in Latin America, including in relation to Escobal mine.

2015

JCAP file a complaint against Tahoe Resources at the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission.

International NGOs express concern to Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsperson about threats to environmental activists opposing the mine.

2016

JCAP file a complaint against Tahoe Resources at the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission.

Goldcorp sells final stake in Tahoe Resources.

2017

Protesters block access to Escobal mine.

By 2017, six municipalities closest to Escobal mine have held community consultations rejecting the presence of the mine.

2017

Protesters block access to Escobal mine.

Xinka indigenous demonstrators in Guatemala City demand permanent closure of Escobal mine.

2018

Tahoe Resources orders temporary suspension of Escobal mining licence pending resolution of constitutional challenge on basis of discrimination and lack of consultation.

Tahoe Resources lobbies Canadian and US embassies to intervene to support its claim against suspension of the mine.

2018

Xinka parliament denounces Tahoe Resources for creating conflict in the community.

Constitutional Court rules that suspension remains in place until authorities consult with affected Xinka communities.

2018

Tahoe Resources merges with Pan American Silver, which takes over Minera San Rafael and Escobal mine.

Xinka Parliament denounces MEM and MARN for non-compliance with the Constitutional Court ruling.

2019

Pan American Silver apologises and settles out of court with four remaining plaintiffs in the civil case brought by protesters shot in 2013.

The IACHR issues precautionary measures on behalf of threatened Xinka lawyer.

2020

Xinka organizations denounce Minera San Rafael for allegedly taking advantage of Covid-19 crisis to obtain personal identity information of community members in exchange for food.

More than 90 local and international NGOs write to Guatemala Attorney General to express concern at increasing threats against members of Xinka peaceful resistance in Santa Rosa, Jalapa, and Jutiapa.

2020

Government processes agree to carry out pre-consultation meetings with Xinka Parliament in accordance with Constitutional Court ruling and monitored by Human Rights Ombudsperson's Office.

Local farm-owners file civil action against Escobal mining licence.

2021

First pre-consultation meetings and agreements between MEM and Xinka Parliament.

September 2021

This timeline forms part of the Juridification of Resource Conflicts project at the Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) at the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS), Mexico.

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