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Press Release

Rights of Nature Tribunal finds Canadian Mining companies guilty for the violation of Rights of Nature across South America and Serbia Saturday, March 1st, 2025

Toronto, Canada – The 6th International Rights of Nature Tribunal convened on February 28, 2025 at the University of Toronto in Canada, analyzing the devastating impacts of Canada's extractive industries, particularly on Indigenous Peoples and their communities, water systems, and critical ecosystems worldwide. With cases spanning Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Serbia, and Canada itself, the Tribunal, themed *"The Impacts of Mining and the Post-Extractivism Era"*, heard harrowing testimonies from frontline defenders, legal experts, and environmental activists who exposed Canada's role in perpetuating environmental destruction and human rights violations through its mining and trade policies - just in time for the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) Conference, a flagship gathering of the global mining industry, taking place the following week in Toronto.

Access the full press release with quotes [here](#).

A global pattern of destruction

After listening to all the testimonies, the Rights of Nature Tribunal issued [a series of urgent recommendations](#) addressing the widespread human and non-human rights violations of Canadian mining companies locally and internationally, with the endorsement of the Canadian government. The judges of the Tribunal called for the UN Special Rapporteur to investigate the impact of critical mineral extraction on Indigenous Peoples' rights, urge the adoption of a UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights, and demand the recognition of the Rights of Nature in affected countries.

Specific cases include calls for Canada to enact stronger environmental and human rights due diligence laws, respect Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and suspend destructive projects like Belo Sun in Brazil. Additionally, the Tribunal denounces corporate impunity in Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, and Serbia, highlighting violations related to lithium, uranium, and gold mining, and calling for urgent protection of natural ecosystems and impacted communities.

The Tribunal urges governments to halt mining projects in ecologically sensitive areas, end the criminalization of environmental defenders, and ensure genuine consultation with affected communities. It demands the immediate withdrawal of Canadian mining companies from



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Ecuador, the rejection of the Ecuador-Canada Free Trade Agreement, and full restoration for damages caused by mining operations worldwide. The Tribunal further calls for the Serbian government to suspend gold exploration in Homolje and implement environmental remediation.

In response to these widespread violations, the Tribunal finds Canadian mining companies guilty of infringing collective rights, Indigenous rights, and the Rights of Nature. A final judgment, the *"New Pact with Mother Earth,"* will be presented at COP30 in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025, building on the first session of the 6th International Tribunal hearing in New York during Climate Week 2024, themed *"The End of the Fossil Fuel Era"*, and this second session in Canada, to emphasize that the fossil fuel and mining industries are interconnected components of the same destructive system and must be addressed collectively.

The Tribunal is also planning for a fact-finding mission to the three lithium-producing countries in Latin America to further investigate the impact of mining on Nature and communities.

Watch the full Tribunal and all the individual interventions [here](#).

Learn more about the session of the Tribunal [here](#).

About the Rights of Nature Tribunal

The International Rights of Nature Tribunal is a citizen-led institution that addresses violations against Nature and the rights of its guardians, holding corporations and governments accountable for environmental destruction. By offering legal recommendations and amplifying grassroots voices, the Tribunal advances a framework for environmental justice rooted in the Rights of Nature.

Since its inception, the Tribunal has heard cases from every continent, covering issues such as fracking, deforestation, fossil fuel extraction, large-scale infrastructures, and mining. Its decisions serve as a model for protecting Nature and upholding its rights as the basis for effective and just stewardship. [Learn more about the Tribunal here](#).

The Tribunal was presided over by a distinguished panel of judges, including renowned environmental and human rights advocates Maude Barlow (Canada), Casey Camp-Horinek (Ponca-USA), Tzaporah Berman (Canada), Tom Goldtooth (Dine Dakota-USA), Enrique Viale (Argentina), Danii Kehler (Canada), Francesco Martone (Italy), Heather Milton-Lightening (Canada), and Lucio Cuenca (Chile). Leading the prosecution was James Yap as Earth Prosecutor, with Natalia Greene (Ecuador) and Shannon Biggs (USA) serving as Secretariat and Co-Secretariat, respectively.



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