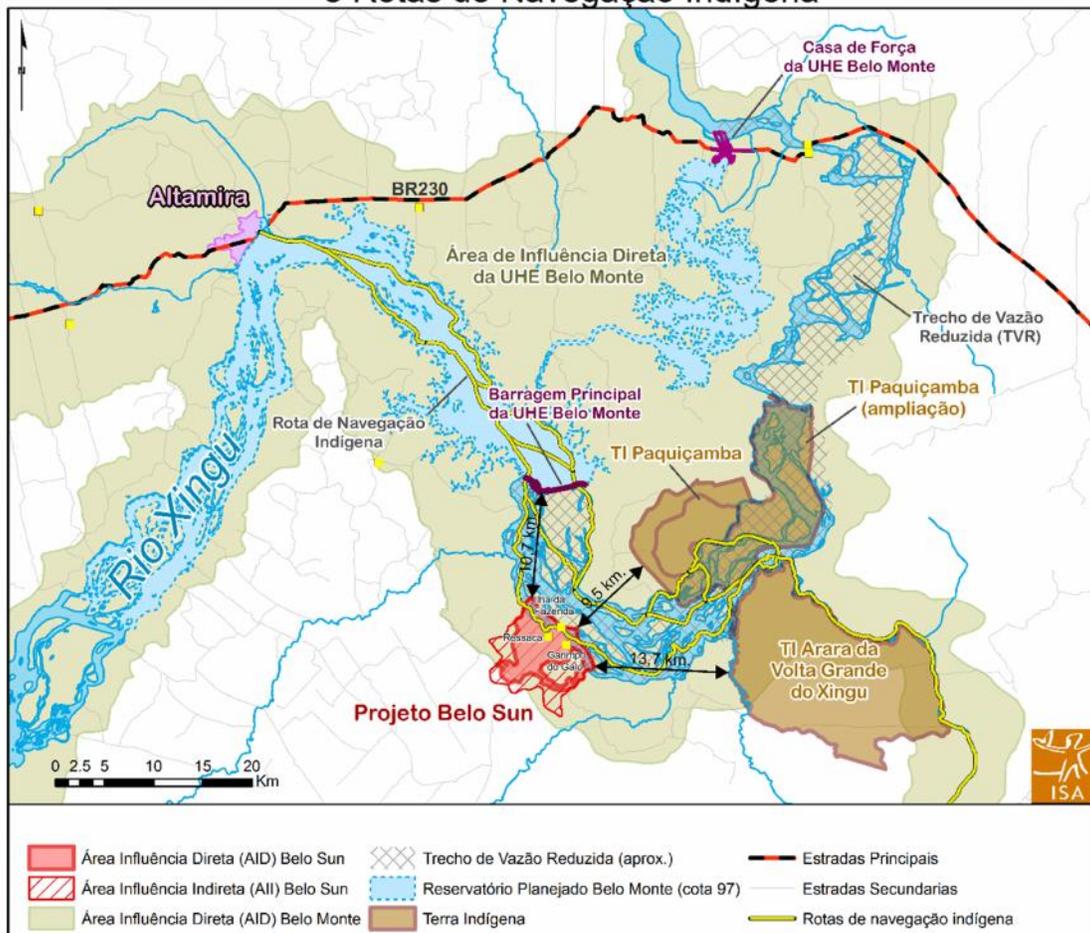


Public Sign-on Letter: Belo Sun No!

The entities below signed-on to this letter hereby express their opposition to the imminent approval of the environmental license for the Canadian company Belo Sun's Amazonian "Volta Grande" mining project. The company seeks to install the largest gold mine in Brazil just meters from the "Big Bend" of the Xingu River, exactly where the river is to have its water flow drastically reduced as the result of the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam. The indigenous communities that are most directly affected by the dam live on this stretch of the Xingu, which is also widely known for the endemic fish species that only occur there. To extract gold the project will require the use of huge quantities of cyanide, a highly toxic material, and will create a mountain of chemically active waste materials with a volume equivalent to twice the size of Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro, which will be left on the banks of the Xingu as a perpetual environmental liability.

The Xingu River's Big Bend Localization of the Belo Sun Project and Indigenous Navigation Routes Volta Grande do Xingu - Localização do Projeto Belo Sun e Rotas de Navegação Indígena



Fontes: EIA/RIMA Belo Monte, EIA/RIMA Belo Sun, IBGE, FUNAI

Realizado pelo Laboratório de Geoprocessamento do ISA/Altamira, Janeiro 2013

The Environmental Secretariat of Pará State (SEMA-PA) has already produced a technical report claiming that the mining project is viable from a socio-environmental standpoint. This report was carried out without studying the impact on neighboring indigenous peoples, while ignoring the right of these peoples to be consulted about the project as stipulated by the Federal Constitution and international jurisprudence instruments concerning the human rights of indigenous peoples. There are two indigenous territories and an area inhabited by isolated indigenous groups approximately 10 km from the project.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) provides no details regarding the interaction between the impacts caused by the hydroelectric dam and the mine. SEMA also ignores the high risk of accidents: toxic spills from mining dams are frequent, with approximately one dam failure every eight months worldwide. Most of these spills occur in the U.S.A., which uses high-tech monitoring and has rigid inspection policies that are absent in Xingu region. In addition, after conducting the environmental study the mining company doubled the size of the project without further analysis. Therefore the current evaluation of environmental impact is completely insufficient to support a license. In September 2013, the Federal Public Prosecutors (MPF) identified various irregularities in the licensing process and recommended that SEMA not grant a license for the project.

The federal environmental agency IBAMA officially approved Belo Monte while admitting that it did not have time to analyze the cumulative impacts of the project, and ended up postponing fundamental socio-environmental studies, determining that a period of 6 years of testing is needed after the construction of the dam is complete to observe whether the impacts caused by Belo Monte can or cannot be endured by the people and ecosystem of the region: the project's impacts will be studied only after they have been created. In other words, the approval of the Belo Sun mining project would ignore the enormous transformation that Belo Monte is causing to the environment and to the lives of local people, preventing a correct assessment of the environmental risks of the mine, given the unpredictable interaction between the two mega-projects.

Furthermore, it is not possible to accept the promise that investment in mitigation measures will resolve these problems. The Brazilian government promised society that the Belo Monte dam would be an "example" of environmental impact management, but what is seen today is a total lack of consistency between the progress of the dam's construction as compared to compliance with the conditions for compensation and mitigation efforts under which the dam's license was approved. The "anticipatory measures" and the mitigation programs for indigenous peoples have just been initiated, more than two years after the start of construction. Because of the dam, indigenous peoples and riverine communities from the Xingu have already witnessed the loss of their fish, without any sign of fair compensation by the company that owns the dam. In this same context of violation of environmental standards and political cooptation, SEMA wants to authorize the installation of a mining mega-project without even performing basic necessary studies.

It is not possible to permit another act of disrespect for socio-environmental legality in the Amazon. The private interests of Belo Sun's investors cannot be imposed on the life and safety of traditional and urban populations of the Xingu!

BeloSunNão #PareBeloSun

Altamira PA, September XX of 2013.

Institutions signed onto this letter:

Brazil:

1. Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil (APIB)
2. Conselho Indigenista Misionário (CIMI)
3. Greenpeace Brazil
4. Grupo de Defesa da Amazônia (GDA)
5. Instituto Socioambiental (ISA)
6. Justiça Global
7. Movimento Tapajós Vivo - Núcleo Santarém
8. Movimento Salve o Juá
9. Movimento Xingu Vivo Para Sempre (MXVPS)
10. Rede FAOR
11. Sociedade Paraense de Defesa dos Direitos Humanos (SDDH)

Canada:

12. Atlantic Regional Solidarity Network
13. Blue Planet Project
14. Canadian Union of Postal Workers
15. Committee for Human Rights in Latin America (CDHAL) Montréal
16. Common Frontiers
17. Council of Canadians
18. Elizabeth May, O.C, MP (Leader, Green Party of Canada)
19. MiningWatch Canada
20. Mining Injustice Solidarity Network
21. Mining Justice Alliance
22. Polaris Institute
23. Project of Heart
24. Sierra Club Canada
25. Sierra Club Chinook Group

Europe:

26. Banktrack, Netherlands
27. Berne Declaration, Switzerland
28. DKA Áustria, Austria
29. ECA Watch, Austria
30. FDCL, Germany
31. GegenStrömung/CounterCurrent, Germany
32. International Work Group for Indigenous People, Denmark

33. KoBra – Kooperation Brasilien e.V., Germany
34. Les Amis de la Terre, France
35. Planète Amazone, France
36. POEMA e.V. Stuttgart - Armut und Umwelt in Amazonien, Germany
37. Society of Threatened Peoples, Switzerland
38. Survival International, UK
39. Urgewald, Germany

International:

40. Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA)

United States:

41. Amazon Watch
42. International Accountability Project
43. International Rivers
44. Rainforest Action Network