



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL POLICIES OF THE UNION

DIRECTORATE B

POLICY DEPARTMENT

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Abstract

The present in-depth analysis examines the human rights impacts of the extractive industries on indigenous peoples worldwide. It finds that there continue to be significant human rights risks associated with mining, oil and gas extraction falling disproportionately on indigenous peoples. It argues that the growing demand for non-renewable resources and the need to explore and exploit resources in ever more invasive ways suggest that such activities are likely to impinge even more on the lands of indigenous communities living in countries with important resource reserves. The paper acknowledges the major efforts being made by industry associations to address these issues through voluntary guidelines but finds that, notwithstanding, conflicts and violence persist and that further measures are required to protect the rights and interests of indigenous peoples. The universal acceptance of the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides impetus to renewed efforts to ensure implementation of the provisions in practice. The paper concludes by recommending, among other things, that the European Union as one of the regions championing the Declaration at the United Nations take the initiative to develop a region-wide framework for extractive industries that sanction companies and provide legal redress in cases where the human rights of indigenous peoples are violated.