

Citizens' Advisory Councils for Mining in the Pacific

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Mining and mining policy in the Pacific: history, challenges, and perspectives
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Abstract

In many developing nations mining often does not receive effective governmental or citizen oversight. While mining companies have the financial and technical resources available with which to advance their self-interest, most developing country governments and citizens do not have the experience, technical capacity, money or opportunity to provide effective oversight of these mine projects, often resulting in chronic environmental degradation and social unrest.

This paper proposes a new Social License to Operate for mining (and other extractive industry), including rigorous independent certification of compliance with the World Bank's Extractive Industry Review standards, donation of 1% of profits to environmental conservation initiatives, and other enhanced performance standards.

As informed public engagement is a critical component of responsible development, the paper proposes that all large-scale mining projects, particularly in developing countries, establish Citizens' Advisory Councils (CACs). The mining CACs must be well funded, have legitimate independence, and broad representation from citizen stakeholders within the region impacted by mine operations.

The scope of responsibility for these CACs should include all aspects of mine development - permitting, exploration, production, transportation, revenues, tailings management, water use, environmental compliance, health, human rights, security, etc. Establishment of such Citizens Advisory Councils should be required as a condition of permitting, of any public financing to mine projects from International Financial Institutions, and/or be established voluntarily by mining companies.

Introduction

Most large-scale extractive industry projects around the world receive insufficient governmental and citizen oversight. While mining and energy companies have significant financial, technical, and political resources with which to advance their narrow business interest, most developing governments and civil societies do not. In these situations, oversight and vigilance atrophy. And in the absence of effective oversight, companies have been known to lower social and environmental standards to reduce costs and maximize short-term financial returns, leaving local people, the environment, and

governments unfairly disadvantaged and exploited. This insufficient oversight and low standards can result in acute and catastrophic damage (oil spills, chemical explosions, mine disasters), and long-term, chronic environmental and social degradation. As well, tension between mines and communities can disintegrate into catastrophic violence, such as the Bougainville crisis in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

To prevent such problems, local citizens need to be actively involved in the oversight of major industrial operations that affect their lives, and to do this they need an organization with money, staff, authority, broad representation, and most of all, independence. It is recommended here that governments and/or financial institutions require large-scale extractive industry projects to establish *Citizens' Advisory Councils* (CACs) to provide informed public oversight for such projects. Specifically, all large mine development projects in the Pacific should embrace *Citizens' Advisory Councils* as a fundamental part of responsible business.

This paper discusses the need for CACs, lessons provided by one specific example, and a template for CACs for mining in the Pacific. Section I discusses the background of the problem; Section II discusses the Alaska model as an example of the solution; and Section III proposes *Citizens' Advisory Councils* for all mines in the Pacific.

I. The Challenge: Responsible Mining

Large-scale mineral development presents both *opportunity* and *risk* to local residents, governments, and the environment. Clearly, mine development can provide significant local employment, economic opportunity, and government revenue. As well, these major extractive development projects also pose significant risk of environmental and social degradation.

The risks of extractive industry projects were highlighted by the *Extractive Industry Review* (EIR 2001-2004), sponsored by the World Bank. The President of the EIR, Professor Emil Salim, stated that:

Not only have the oil, gas and mining industries not helped the poorest people in developing countries, they have often made them worse off
(UK Times 16th Jun 2004)

The Extractive Industry Review (web.worldbank.org) found that three overarching conditions must exist to guide investment in the extractive sector:

- *pro-poor public and corporate governance*, including pro-active planning and management to maximize poverty alleviation through sustainable development;
- much more effective *social and environmental policies*; and
- respect for *human rights*

The EIR identified many aspects of extractive industries in need of immediate attention, particularly in developing countries, including the following:

- technical and advisory services for project design
- greater transparency
- governance reforms
- environmental restoration
- gas-flaring reduction
- mine-closure protocols
- waste management
- protection of human rights
- revenue sharing with local communities
- increasing local ownership/content
- more efficient use of energy
- increased stakeholder consultation
- phase-out of investment in carbon-intensive (oil and coal) projects
- prior consent by local people as a precondition to project approval
- guidelines for security forces protecting projects, and
- raising technical standards in extractive industry projects

Unfortunately, the World Bank, other international financial institutions, extractive industries, and governments failed to effectively implement the recommendations of the EIR (and other similar assessments), and the situation with extractive industry performance has continued to deteriorate in many places. Extractive industries are increasingly moving into areas of high biodiversity and in developing / deteriorating countries with low government / civil society capacity to effectively manage them. The current public policy challenge therefore is *to maximize advantages and minimize risks and deleterious impacts* of such extractive industry development in these areas.

The emerging *Social License to Operate* (SLO) for extractive industry

Our collective goal with regard to extractive industrial activities around the world should be to significantly improve the environmental / social standards and performance of extractive industry projects – oil, coal, gas, minerals – with particular emphasis in developing / deteriorating countries.

Within this goal, objectives should be as follow:

- *Maximize advantages* of extractive industry projects to local, regional, and national economies;
- *Minimize deleterious impacts* to environment, economies, and social/cultural assets;
- *Enhance capacity* of civil society and governments *to effectively engage* and manage extractive industry projects, both existing and planned.

It is the responsibility of national governments to ensure all mining projects satisfy this emerging *Social License to Operate*. This should include instruments of *transparency* including enactment of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), open meetings act, whistleblower protections, and conflict of interest / financial disclosure laws for public officials, the *Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative* (EITI) and *Publish What You Pay*. As well, governments must promote more efficient use of minerals in the world economy, and overall dematerialization (reduction in use and waste of materials, increased recycling, etc.).

Specifically, it is proposed here that the emerging *Social License to Operate* (SLO) for extractive industry globally, including mining in the Pacific, must include at least the following three essential components:

- *Independent Certification* – As adopted by the *International Union for the Conservation of Nature* (IUCN) at its World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in 2008 (Res. 4.088), a rigorous *Extractive Industry Certification Protocol* should be developed and applied globally regarding social and environmental performance. Clearly, the International Standards Organization (ISO) standards do not meet what is considered best practice, and a more rigorous independent certification scheme is needed. The new certification protocol should be based in part upon recommendations of the World Bank’s *Extractive Industry Review* (listed above), and should be applied to existing and proposed projects. The protocol should consist of a set of highest social and environmental standards and performance criteria for extractive industry projects with which to measure and compare performance of specific projects around the world, modeled on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for forests, and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for fisheries. The certification should provide strong incentive for companies to improve performance.
- *1% profits donated to environmental conservation* – In addition to providing an equitable government take of mineral revenues, mining companies should contribute at least 1% of annual profits to external conservation initiatives. As adopted by IUCN (Res. 4.085) at its World Conservation Congress in Barcelona (2008), there is need for large companies to commit at least 1% of annual profits into environmental conservation initiatives. The IUCN Resolution calls for the largest 500 companies in the world (Fortune Magazine’s “Global 500”) - which collectively earn about \$10 trillion / year in revenue, and \$1 trillion in profit – to contribute at least 1% of their annual profit into a pooled 1% Earth Profits Fund, to support urgent environmental initiatives, such as biodiversity, clean water, and sustainable energy, agriculture, fisheries, and forests. It is proposed here that, at very least, mining companies contribute an amount equal to 1% of the annual profits into environmental initiatives in the region in which they operate.
- *Citizens’ Advisory Councils* – Also as adopted by IUCN (Res. 4.089), and discussed below, there is a fundamental need for large-scale extractive industries

to establish effective mechanisms for independent, well-informed citizen oversight and engagement – *Citizens' Advisory Councils*.

Difficulties in effective civic oversight and engagement with extractive industries

Historically, major hydrocarbon and mineral development projects have been subject to different degrees of governmental and citizen oversight around the world. In many developing nations and/or the 60 failed and failing states (“deteriorating” states), large-scale extractive projects often receive little, if any, effective governmental or citizen oversight (Steiner R., 2003). Results of low-level oversight and low safety standards can be catastrophic (oil spills, chemical explosions, mine disasters, etc.), but more often results are less than catastrophic and more gradually degrading – e.g., chronic damage from long-term oil and gas development in the Niger Delta, Siberia (Russia), the Amazon basin, and Borneo (Indonesia); damage from large-scale mining in the Philippines, India, Russia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, and Africa.

The balance of political / legal power in these developing / deteriorating countries often tilts heavily toward industry, leaving local people, the environment, and governments unfairly disadvantaged and exploited. Many developing countries simply do not have the experience, capacity, or money to provide effective oversight of these large-scale industrial projects. And it is significant that many of these same developing countries host most of the globally recognized biodiversity ‘hotspots’, such as the Amazon basin, tropical forests of Indonesia, Africa, Papua New Guinea, and southeast Asia.

In recent years there has been a dramatic expansion of *voluntary initiatives* intended to improve the social and environmental performance of business, including corporate social responsibility (CSR), socially responsible investment (SRI), product certification and labeling, targeted philanthropy, corporate sustainability reporting, and so on. While this is encouraging, concerns have grown about trans-national corporations, especially the extractive sector, using such processes to marginalize governments and civil society concerns. Many see such industry-sponsored efforts as corporate public relations strategies, feigning concern for the environment and social equity in attempt to co-opt public opinion.

Other well-known interactions between the extractive industry and international conservation / civil society organizations are high-level *dialogues and partnerships*. These generally aim for voluntary improvement of corporate environmental and social conduct, and to integrate considerations of biodiversity and human rights in the development of extractive industry projects. Again, many observers question the effectiveness of such relationships between civil society and extractive industries, as discussions remain largely academic and commitments vague, not measurable, and unenforceable. Experience has shown that such dialogues, partnerships, and philanthropy often do not generate tangible results on the ground, and become successful corporate public relations strategies to moot public and governmental concern and industry oversight.

Clearly, there is need for more constructive engagement between civil society and extractive industry, and the overarching measure of the effectiveness of such engagement will ultimately be the local people where such projects are located. The international community can and must do a better job in achieving true improvements in the environmental and social performance of extractive industries around the world. Civil society deserves expanded capacity to provide informed public oversight of these projects, and thus a safer, cleaner, and more equitable future.

II. The Solution - Citizens' Advisory Councils

Even in long-established democracies the relationship between government, industry, and the public is problematic and often fails to serve the common public interest. Although government agencies and legislative bodies are legally obligated to operate in the interest of the public, many regulatory agencies are too closely tied to the industries they regulate to provide effective oversight (“industry-capture”). Regulation and legislation in such a symbiotic environment tends to favor industry at the expense of the environment, communities, social justice, and economic justice. Our *ideal* of a well-informed, participatory public, a government always receptive to public concerns, and a cooperative industry all working to protect the public interest is in fact far from the *actual practice* of democracy.

An example -- the Alaska model

Prior to the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill disaster in Alaska, the oil companies and the state and federal governments conducted their business largely "out-of-sight / out-of-mind" of the public (Steiner, 2003; PWSRCAC, 2011). With the disastrous 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, the political dynamic took a dramatic shift in response to an outraged local public. Shortly after the spill, the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company owners (a consortium of BP, ARCO, Exxon, Mobil, Amerada Hess, Phillips, and Unocal) agreed to citizen demands to establish a citizens' oversight council. To back up company promises to fund and cooperate with this new citizens council, the federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) mandated, among many other provisions, the establishment of two RCACs in Alaska—one in Prince William Sound, and the other in Cook Inlet (CIRCAC, 2011).

In the OPA 90 RCAC provision, the U.S. Congress noted that:

"the present system of regulation and oversight of crude oil terminals in the United States has degenerated into a process of continual mistrust and confrontation." and "only when local citizens are involved in the process will the trust develop that is necessary to change the present system from confrontation to consensus."

In December 1989, the Prince William Sound (PWS) RCAC was incorporated as a nonprofit corporation, and in February 1990, it entered into a contract directly with the pipeline owner, Alyeska. Through the negotiated contract, Alyeska agreed to provide

four things to the PWS RCAC: \$2 million in annual funding, adjusted for inflation; absolute independence from Alyeska; access to Alyeska facilities; and that the contract would continue "for as long as oil flowed through the pipeline" (www.pwsrcac.org). The Cook Inlet RCAC was incorporated in December 1990, and entered into a contract with a consortium of oil companies and tanker operators in its region—Cook Inlet Pipeline Co., Kenai Pipeline Co., Phillips Petroleum, Tesoro Alaska Petroleum, UNOCAL, Marathon Oil, and Cross Timbers—with an annual funding level of approximately \$600,000 (www.circac.org).

Structure and Function of the Alaska RCACs

These RCACs provide citizens an advisory role in oil issues in the region, to monitor impacts, review spill prevention and response plans, and recommend continual improvements in the system. The Council gives local citizens a direct voice in the corporate and governmental decisions that affect them and their communities. The group is the primary conduit through which government and industry communicate to the public on oil issues. The public relies on the RCACs to safeguard its interests and assure transparency in industry and government. The PWS RCAC has three main structural components: the board of directors, the staff, and the committees:

Board of Directors: The Board of Directors (Council) consists of 19 members representing the communities and major citizen constituencies affected by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill—commercial fishing, Alaska Natives, aquaculture, conservation, recreation, cities, villages, and tourism. Importantly, Board members are chosen by their respective stakeholder institutions, not by government or the industry to be monitored. Thus, Board members are ultimately accountable to the institution they represent. Both the Prince William Sound RCAC and the Cook Inlet RCAC (with a 13-member board) have several *ex-officio*, non-voting board members representing the relevant state and federal agencies.

The board is responsible for allocating the annual budget. The PWS RCAC has a budget that has averaged about \$3 - \$4 million / year from Alyeska, of which on average about 38 percent (\$1.14 million/yr.) is devoted to staff, 33 percent (\$1 million/yr.) for contracts and research, and 29 percent (\$860,000) to office rent, supplies, equipment, and audits. An annual audit of all finances is conducted and approved. The U.S. Coast Guard also conducts an annual recertification of the group to certify its compliance with the terms of OPA 90. All of the RCAC's work is open to the public on whose behalf it operates, and interested citizens can attend and provide public comment as well. These checks and balances provide a high level of integrity and credibility to the process.

Staff: The day-to-day activity of the PWS RCAC is the responsibility of a paid staff of 18, located in two offices—one in Anchorage, where Alyeska headquarters are located; and the other in Valdez, where the pipeline terminal is located. Staffing includes an executive director, two deputy directors, public information manager, community liaison, finance manager, seven project managers, and administrative assistance (The Cook Inlet RCAC has a staff of six).

Committees: Much of the council's work is conducted by four technical committees, each with a dedicated staff liaison: Oil Spill Prevention and Response; Terminal Operations and Environmental Monitoring; Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems; and Scientific Advisory. These volunteer committees are appointed based on expertise, interest, and willingness to serve. The committees meet regularly to discuss any and all issues within their purview, draft and recommend policy actions to the RCAC Board, and conduct research approved and financed by the Board. The Cook Inlet RCAC has three committees: Environmental Monitoring; Prevention, Response, Operations, and Safety; and Educational Outreach.

Responsibilities: The broad mission of the Council is to organize citizens to promote the environmentally safe operation of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company terminal in Valdez and the oil tankers that use it. Within this mission, the council reviews and submits written comments on operations of the pipeline terminal and tankers. This oversight, review, comment, and recommendation can cover state and federal legislation, regulations and permits, industry policy and procedure, and so on.

The Council commissions independent scientific studies and reports on relevant issues to the public, the media, government agencies, legislative bodies, and the industry. This research often forms the basis of policy recommendations. Conducted jointly with government and industry, this research has fostered a more cooperative spirit among these groups, minimizing conflict and contention. Not surprisingly, the initial relationship between these citizens' councils and the oil industry was somewhat distrustful, but gradually became dynamic and effective.

Alaska RCAC Accomplishments

The recommendations of the RCAC are *non-binding*, and government regulators and industry do not always take the council's advice. Yet most recommendations are adopted because of the thorough research and vetting facilitated by the council's public/industry/government framework that provides regular meetings to discuss research objectives, methodologies and results.

The successes of the PWS RCAC attest to the sort of cooperative problem solving that can be accomplished with genuine, informed public engagement. Overall, the citizens' council has been a primary driver in the improvement of the system for oil transportation through Prince William Sound, making it arguably the safest system anywhere in the world. The following are some of the more significant improvements that the RCAC either recommended or played a pivotal role in (PWSRCAC, 2011):

- Deployment of powerful, maneuverable tugs to escort all outbound, laden tankers
- Monitoring the compliance with phase-in requirements for double-hull tankers
- Installation of ice-detecting radar to warn of iceberg hazards in the shipping lanes
- Development of near shore spill response strategies and contingencies
- Improved Vessel Traffic System (VTS) surveillance of all tankers in the system

- More stringent weather restrictions and speed limits for tanker traffic
- More stringent tanker inspection, in Alaska and beyond
- Advocacy for better government oversight, more personnel, and more funding
- Deployment of weather buoys along the shipping lanes for real-time weather
- Improved spill contingency plans, response equipment, and training
- Improved understanding of community impacts from technological disasters
- Conducted comprehensive environmental monitoring to assess oil impacts
- Pioneered the control of ballast water treatment to control exotic species
- The construction of a Vapor Control System to capture volatile hydrocarbon vapors released during tanker loading
- Improved fire prevention and response capability at terminal and on tankers

An official U.S. government review in 1993 of the two Alaska “demonstration” RCAC programs concluded that:

The demonstration programs have substantially increased the level of citizens' involvement with the oil industry and with government regulators in the environmental oversight of oil terminal and tanker operations. Through various projects and activities, the citizen councils have provided extensive input into matters such as oil-spill contingency plans, tanker navigation and escort procedures, and oil terminal operations. Industry and government officials acknowledge that many of the councils' projects and activities have been helpful.
(U.S. GAO, 1993)

An overall lesson is that citizens are clearly more effective if they have formal relationships with those who make decisions that affect them.

III. Citizens' Advisory Councils for Mining in the Pacific

It is proposed here that *Citizens' Advisory Councils* be established for all large-scale mines in the Pacific, structured to give local citizens a direct voice in the corporate and governmental decisions that affect them and their communities. The groups should become the primary conduit through which government and industry communicate to the public on mining issues. In a real sense, the CAC should become "*the eyes, ears, and voice*" for the local public on industry issues. Based upon the successful Alaska model, the following structure and function for mining CACs is suggested:

Board of Directors / Council

The CAC should be directed by a Board of Directors (either volunteer or paid), consisting of members representing the communities and major citizen constituencies potentially affected by the project – the stakeholders. These board seats might, for instance, represent indigenous people, commercial fishing, aquaculture, conservation, recreation, tourism, communities, tribal entities, and so on. Board members must be chosen by, and serve at the pleasure of, their respective constituencies. Representatives should not be chosen by industry or government. A CAC may also have several *ex-officio*, non-voting, board

members representing the relevant governmental agencies. The Board should meet regularly (e.g., quarterly), and at each meeting representatives of industry and government should be asked to report on their operations and listen to citizens concerns. This regular interchange provides a line of communication vital to the interest of each constituency, and results in a constructive climate for problem solving. The board is responsible for hiring staff, making policy recommendations, and allocating the annual budget.

Staff

The day-to-day activity of the CAC is the responsibility of a paid staff. Staffing should be set by the Board, and be appropriate to all CAC responsibilities.

Committees

Much of the work by a CAC can be conducted by technical committees, each with a dedicated staff liaison. These committees should be appointed by the Board based on expertise, interest, and willingness to serve. The committees should meet regularly to discuss any and all issues within their purview, draft and recommend policy actions to the Board, and conduct research approved and financed by the Board.

Responsibilities

The broad mission of a CAC for a mine is to engage local citizens in ensuring the highest standards of environmental and social responsibility for the project. The CAC should be empowered *to provide oversight on all aspects of mining development in their region*—permitting, exploration, production, transportation, refining, public revenue collection, risk management, and environmental compliance. The CAC should provide oversight and advice on issues such as the following: where to allow development, Best Available and Safest Technology (BAST) standards, accident prevention and response preparedness, waste removal, tailings management, water use, environmental monitoring, human health, managing artisanal activities near the mine, and regulatory reform. The CAC should review and submit advisory comments to the mine and to government on all project operations.

At the request of its Board or committees, the CAC should commission independent scientific studies and reports on issues of relevance to the public, the media, government agencies, legislative bodies, and the industry. This research should form the basis of policy recommendations. Conducted jointly with government and industry, this research will foster a more cooperative spirit among these groups, minimizing conflict and contention. The CAC should monitor and play an active role in all industry and government oversight for the project.

The recommendations of the CAC are advisory and *non-binding*, and while government regulators and industry are not required to adopt the council's advice, many recommendations will likely be adopted if they result from thorough research and vetting

by the council's process. All of the CAC's work should be open to the public on whose behalf it operates, and interested citizens can attend and provide public comment as well. A robust public outreach and communications effort should be developed by the CAC.

Funding

Substantial and stable funding for such a group is essential. The budget should be commensurate with the responsibilities of the CAC, and include sufficient funds to commission independent research and hire staff, as the CAC deems appropriate. One thing that distinguishes the CAC concept from other advisory structures, it is that the CAC has sufficient funding to conduct its work. Typically, about 1/3 of the annual budget is devoted to staff; 1/3 to administration (office rent, supplies, equipment, audits, etc); and 1/3 for research and contracts.

There are several possible options for financial support:

- *Direct funding by the extractive industry:* Funding could come directly from the companies and/or their consortia /associations (as in Alaska), but must contain sufficient safeguards against industry bias and control. Industry funding would be best in the form of an endowment from which the CAC could operate off the investment earnings.
- *Financial institutions requiring the establishment of a CAC as a condition of their loan:* Lacking direct support by the extractive companies, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) could require companies receiving loans to establish and fund such independent, credible public participation as a condition of their loan, as well as audit, review protocols, budget level, and representation.
- *Government support:* Governments can themselves establish and finance such citizen participation from public revenues derived from extractive industry projects, thereby removing industry from any direct role in the group's budget.
- *Interim, start-up support from philanthropic, non-governmental organizations (NGOs):* If none of the above financial instruments are attainable in the short-term, then the assistance of an outside, philanthropic NGO can be solicited. As an interim CAC proves its worth as a mechanism for informed public participation, then their funding should be picked up directly by government or industry.

Avoiding corruption and co-option

To prevent financial corruption, a CAC should commission annual financial audits by independent firms, and report results in their publicly available annual reports. As well, clear conflict of interest and disclosure policies for directors and staff should be instituted. And to minimize the risk of industry co-option, CAC members should remain accountable to their respective stakeholder groups, and have high standards of

transparency and openness. Ultimately, it is the citizens groups represented in a CAC that control the process - not government or industry.

The other challenge to the CAC concept in some emerging democracies is that of *government and/or industry persecution of citizen activists*. This is an extremely serious, fundamental problem that must be addressed whenever and wherever it occurs. Democratic governance depends on the rights of citizens to free speech and dissent. Governments that fail to protect these rights must be challenged to do so by the international community. Democratic governments must have laws and regulations in force to aggressively prosecute any such actions against its citizens. The establishment of RCACs may help some governments that are wary of citizen dissent come to value public attitudes and insights.

Lessons Learned

There have been many important lessons learned from existing CACs that are relevant elsewhere (PWSRCAC, 2011), as follow:

- Establishment of a CAC should be required by government in order for the project to be in legal compliance.
- The CAC should exist for the lifetime of the project.
- Sufficient funding is essential.
- A citizens group can be independent with industry funding, with proper safeguards. Funding should come with no strings attached.
- The CAC should represent all stakeholder groups that are potentially affected by the project.
- Board members should be appointed by, and serve solely at the pleasure of, their stakeholder group. They should not be appointed or controlled by the industry or government.
- Board members do not have to be experts.
- Cooperation works better than confrontation.
- Conflict is inherent, but common ground is possible.
- Agreeing on how to disagree reduces conflict
- Logic makes passion persuasive, using science, etc.
- A clear mission and identity should be established early on

Conclusion - a new paradigm for extractive industry

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the success of corporations in the 21st century will be measured not just by bottom-line profits - but also by social and environmental responsibility, citizen involvement, ethics, justice, and honesty. Governments will be measured by how well they protect the rights and interests of their citizens. In this context, the new paradigm for extractive industry in the 21st century requires a new *Social License to Operate* – including rigorous independent certification, 1% of profits to environmental initiatives, and *Citizens' Advisory Councils*.

The establishment of *Citizens' Advisory Councils* will provide an unprecedented level of *transparency* and *informed public participation* with regard to industrial activities, in fulfillment of the promise of democratic governance - an important prerequisite to achieving a prosperous, equitable, just, and sustainable society.

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