



# **Conflict resolution strategies in water disputes between communities and mining companies in Peru**

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Presentation based on Sosa, M. and M, Zwarteveen. 2016. "Questioning the effectiveness of planned conflict resolution strategies in water disputes between rural communities and mining companies in Peru." *Water International*: 1-18.

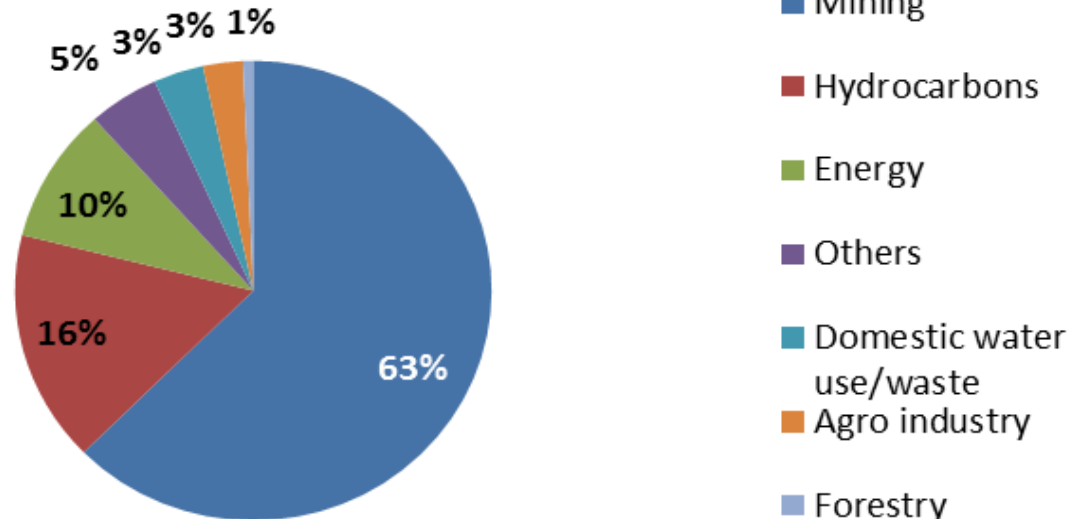
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02508060.2016.1141463?journalCode=rwin20>



Increasing Mining concessions → Socio environmental conflicts



## Peru: Socio environmental conflicts Aug 2016



Source: Defensoría del Pueblo 2016



# Cajamarca region - Peru



Livestock production

Dairy products supplier

Andean valley

Small scale agriculture

Irrigation canals





# Yanacocha (actions & impacts)

- Open pit gold mine
- Located at headwaters areas
- Dewatering of groundwater & surface water sources
- Use of cyanide in operations



- Depletion of water flows
- Pollution of land and water
- Restriction of farmers' water access, use, rights



Owned by Newmont (USA),  
Buenaventura (Peru)  
& IFC (World Bank)

# Socio environmental conflict

Communities' complaints:  
Land and water resources were  
affected (less or not water in the  
canals)

No development projects  
or benefits for communities



By E. Dijkhoff

# Socio environmental conflict

## Agreement: “Combayo Act”

Water management studies (IDB)  
Investment & development plans

→ The company proceed with  
operations

**But**

Water resources depleted,  
communities' were not informed &  
their complaints were dismissed



By E. Dijkhoff



# Legal strategy

- Farmers questioned the way the company got authorized to proceed: concerns about information sharing & social license to operate SLO
- **Operating within the law**
- Environmental Impact Assessment EIA & water permissions for extraction, management, treatment, disposal

*“They could do as they pleased in their concession”*





# Technical strategy

- Sources dried up, water depletion persisted → communities were not aware/ informed about operations or decisions
- **Technical knowledge/ expertise supporting operations**
  - Assessments of mining impacts
  - Involving of international funds/ consulting company
  - Providing treated water from the mine/ mitigation
  - And when complaints appeared ...

*“there are studies going on by an international company!”*



# Conclusions

- Strategies were effective to temporarily reduce tensions.
- Company makes sure that :
  - what it proposes to do is legally right just by obtaining required permissions → “operating within the law”.
  - what it did is scientifically sound → scientific EIAs, proposing technical strategies to mitigate impacts.
- From a long term/ sustainability perspective: water-based ecosystems and communities’ livelihoods were not considered.
- Mining conflicts cannot be treated only as technical/legal problem, it is required, to explicitly admit that they are inherently political, situated and power-laden.



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**Thank you!!**