ANNUAL REPORT

MINING CONFLICTS IN BRAZIL 2020

COMITÊ NACIONAL EM
DEFESA DOS TERRITÓRIOS
FRENTE À MINERAÇÃO

Observatório dos
Conflitos da Mineração
no Brasil

ANNUAL REPORT
AUGUST 2021

MINING CONFLICTS IN BRAZIL 2020

summary

Mining Conflicts Highlights 2020

The National Committee in Defense of Territories Against Mining releases the Mining Conflict Map in Brazil to monitor mining related violations. Link: www.conflitosdamineracao.org

In 2020, there were 722 cases and 823 conflict events involving at least 1,088,012 people.

Among the 25 participating states, the greatest number of conflict areas were in Minas Gerais (45.8%), Pará (14.9%), and Bahia (9.8%). Minas Gerais had 75% of the total number of people affected, followed by Alagoas (6.6%), Pará (4.8%), and Roraima (4.3%).

The biome with the highest number of violation was the Atlantic rain forest (53.7%), followed by the Amazon (23.7%), Caatinga (10.4%), and the Cerrado (10.2%)..

Of the 853 municipalities in Minas Gerais state, conflicts were noted in 121 (14.1%), with most in Brumadinho. In this city there were 27 conflict situations, totaling 40 events, mainly as a result of the reparations and recovery program of Vale's tailing dam disaster in 2019.

The number of land and and water related conflicts stood out with 384 and 319 events, respectively.

Conflicts involving 144 companies in 564 different locations were mapped, with Vale S.A. involved in most of the disputes (38.9%), including Vale S.A. (110 events), and its subsidiary, Samarco (109 events).

Illegal mineral extraction – mainly small-scale mining – caused 149 events in 130 areas in 19 states, with in 42.2% in Pará, 12.7% in Mato Grosso, and 8% in Minas Gerais. The greatest impact was on indigenous groups, who were effected by the activity in 31 areas (23,8%), amounting to 49 events (32.8%).

Some extremely violent events were slave labor (10 events involving 144 people enslaved), death threats (5 events), murder (2 events, 3 casualties). Twenty six forced evictions of 57,662 people, and one threat, one unlawful imprisonment, and one physical attack were recorded. There were 27 deaths of workers in the sector.

The groups most affected by mining were small landowners (14.8%), workers (12.2 %), riparian populations (10%), and indigenous people (9.7%).

The report shows 121 direct reactions to violations centered in the states of Minas Gerais (55 events), Pará (25) and Bahia (16). On average, there was more than one demonstration a month in Brumadinho (14). Small landowners (26 events) and indigenous groups (21 events) participated more protests.

At least 112,718 indigenous people were involved in clashes, 58.7% with illegal miners.

The quilombola group were involved in 43 conflicts and 47 incidents involving at least 20,800 people.

There were 74 events in urban areas (10.2 % of all occurrences), totaling 93 events involving at least 104,143 people.

The National Committee in Defense of Territories Against Mining

The Committee, established in 2013, is a civil society organization, consisting of more than 100 organizations, social movements, churches, and researchers. It is one of the main entities working on a political level in Brazil to defend groups and territories affected by mining. It provides training, does outreach, facilitates political activism, and produces communications material about Brazilian mining policies.

The Mining Conflict Map

The **Conflict Map** was created by the National Committee in Defense of Territories Against Mining, under **the Brazilian Mining Conflicts Observatory**, to expose the Brazilian mining model, particularly within the current context of environmental policy deregulation, proposals to open new mining areas, and incentives for institutionalizing small-scale mining. The consequences of such actions are the exacerbation of mining problems, as well as insufficient environmental monitoring and licensing that lead to conflicts and disasters such as the ones in the Paraopeba River (Vale), the Doce River (Samarco/Vale/BHP Billiton), and in Maceió (Braskem). These disasters – including the damage they caused and the resistance that they sparked –were well publicized.

The Conflict Map aims to **classify, monitor, and provide visibility to violations regularly** perpetrated by the Brazilian mining sector in urban and rural areas. The mapping included mining and mineral processing companies, both domestic and international, and legal and illegal small-scale mining activity.

The Observatory has a database for monitoring purposes, which is updated annually. It uses **secondary data** from sources such as domestic and regional newspapers, news websites, social and independent media, social movement reports, and reports of rural mining conflicts compiled yearly by the Pastoral Land Commission (Comissão Pastoral da Terra – CPT).

The Observatory is a resource for information to facilitate medium- and long-term monitoring and analysis of the changes in conflicts over time and the behavior of different companies in the sectors, as they relate to domestic and global political and economic factors that influence mining policy. The mapping will also show the spatial distribution of conflict and different disputes around the appropriation of natural resources, and the effects on the communities.

Main Monitoring Results in 2020:

The main results obtained through monitoring conflicts involving the Brazilian mining sector in 2020 are presented on the following pages. Researchers can access raw data on the website www.conflitosdamineracao.org, where affected locations are displayed individually on the Mining Conflict Map.

General Data and Spatial Distribution of Conflict

In 2020, conflict mapping [1] enabled the sorting of **722 cases** scattered across most Brazilian states. There were **823 conflict events involving no fewer than 1.088.012 people**. Out of the Brazil's 26 states and one Federal District, 25 states had conflicts recorded. Only the Federal District and Piauí had no occurrences. However, the lack of data in 2020 does not necessarily mean there were no mining-related conflicts in these areas. Rather, it only means that it was not possible to map any conflicts that did occur using secondary public data in 2020.

The predominant issues in the conflicts were iron ore (42.7%) and gold mining (15.5%).

The biome with the most records was the Atlantic rain forest (53.7%) followed by the Amazon (23.7%), then Caatinga (10.4%), Cerrado (10.2%), Pampa (1.8%), and the Pantanal (0.1%).

The states with the highest number of conflict areas were Minas Gerais, Pará, and Bahia. Minas Gerais alone had 45.8% of the cases, followed by Pará (14.9%) and Bahia (9.8%). Out of the 853 municipalities in Minas Gerais, 121 (14.1%) presented conflicts in 2020.

Minas Gerais is the state with the most people affected, with 75% of the total population impacted. Alagoas has 6.6% of the population affected, Pará 4.8%, and Roraima 4.3%. It's important to note that data are somewhat under reported due to difficulties in obtaining information on the number of people affected by mining activity.

Countrywide, **Brumadinho was the municipality with the highest number of conflicts in 2020**: 27 conflict situations totaling 40 events related primarily to the Vale S.A. company and the reparations and recovery following the company's B1 tailing dam break on January 25, 2019. The most frequent type of violence was related to non-compliance with legal procedures, and the most

common type of conflict was related to land, followed by conflicts related to water.

In 2020, a total of 14 protests, either demonstrations or open letters, were mapped in Brumadinho, 13 of which involved Vale S.A., and the other involved Mineração Geral do Brasil (MGB). These numbers correspond to more than one event per month.

A great number of conflicts were related to land (384) and water (319). This corresponds to 33.6% and 27.9% of the conflict categories. 11.3% of conflicts were legal, 9.7% health, 8.9% labor, and 8.3% mining related.

Violators, Conflict-Causing Companies and Illegal Extraction

In the category of violators who sparked actions there were 823 events, with international mining companies responsible for 48.7%, followed by mining companies (23.8%) and illegal extraction (19.4%). Australia, where BHP Billiton is headquartered, was at the top of the list of international companies. BHP Billiton and Vale form the Samarco joint venture, which ranks second on the list violator companies, followed by the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Luxembourg, Belgium, and China.

In 2020, 144 companies involved with conflicts were identified in 564 places. **The five companies with the highest number of conflicts were Vale S.A. (110), Samarco/Vale/BHP (109), Anglo American (29), Hydro (17), and Mineração Curimbaba (16)**. Considering all events stemming from conflicts, Vale S.A. was present in 146, and Samarco/Vale/BHP in 123, thus **Vale S.A., which also owns Samarco, was involved in 38.9% of the conflicts in Brazil.**

Illegal mineral extractions were the cause of 149 events in 130 locations. Illegal small-scale mining corresponded to 122 occurrences and illegal mining to 27. Of the 19 states with events, 63 events (42.2%) took place in Pará, 19 in Mato Grosso (12.7%), and 12 in Minas Gerais (8%). The indigenous groups were the most violated by this activity in 49 occurrences (32.8%) in 31 (23,8%) different locations.

Of 823 conflict events, the **tailing dam category appeared in the first position with 30% of cases while mine pit appeared in second position with 22.6% when categorized according to the object of the conflict.** Illegal small-scale mining was ranked third with 15.6%. Tailing dam conflicts involved 14 companies. Samarco/Vale/BHP ranks

first with 42.3% of specific tailing dam occurrences, while Vale S. had 36.6%. **Together they represent almost 80% of conflicts related to tailing dams in 2020.** The mine pit category, on the other hand, includes 74 companies with Vale ranked first, with 12.3% of events, followed by Braskem (8.6%) and Samarco/Vale/BHP (8.6%).

Groups Affected and Reactions

In 2020, of the 823 conflict events, the **undergoing action category** was predominantly made up of **small landowners (14.8%), workers (12.2%), riparian populations (10.0%), and indigenous people (9.7%).** The presence of workers in second place in 2020 is due to accidents, deaths, and conflicts related to labor security during the Covid -19 pandemic.

The research mapped 121 direct reactions to violations, such as protests, open letters, roadblocks, occupations, etc. The states of Minas Gerais, Pará and Bahia were the states with the most reactions: **55 reactions in Minas Gerais (45.5%), 25 in Pará (20.7%), and 16 in Bahia (13.2%).**

Reactions were to companies' violations (104 events) and small-scale mining violations (18 events). **The companies most targeted were Vale S.A. (42 events), Samarco/Vale/BHP (13 events), and Braskem (6 events).**

The categories most impacted by companies and small-scale mining were **small landowners (26 events) and indigenous people (21 events).** Indigenous groups organized more actions against small-scale mining (12 events) and companies (7 events).

Conflicts with Indigenous People

In the 2020 mapping at least **112.718 indigenous people** from the states of Pará, Roraima, Espírito Santo, Amazonas, Acre, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia and Amapá had conflicts with illegal small-scale miners and mining companies. **Illegal small-scale mining corresponded to 58.7% of all events, followed by international mining companies (23.7%), mining company (12.5%), indigenous people (3.7%), and the state (1.2%).** Out of the 80 conflict events related to indigenous people, 53.75% were in Pará, followed by Amazonas (13.75%) and Roraima (11.25%) states.

The companies involved in the conflicts were Vale S.A. (in Pará and Minas Gerais), Samarco/Vale/BHP (in Espírito Santo), Chapleau Exploração Mineral Ltda. (in Pará), Copelmi Mineração (in Rio Grande do Sul), Belo Sun (Pará), Potássio Brasil (Amapá) and Buritirama Mineração (Pará). In addition, the Alto Rio Negro Indigenous Land community is involved in conflict with the military forces, which mines granite used to rebuild the runway at the Iauaretê Military Airport in the state of Amazonas. The army's mining activity has not been authorized by the National Mining Agency (Agência Nacional de Mineração – ANM) [2].

Conflicts with Quilombolas

The *quilombolas* (traditional Afro-Brazilian communities) **was involved in 43 conflicts, totaling 47 events that involved at least 20,800 people.** In 2020, clashes between *quilombolas* and companies took place in seven states: Bahia, Minas Gerais, Pará, Maranhão, Alagoas, Goiás and Mato Grosso. Bahia was the site of 37.2% of the conflicts, followed by Minas Gerais (30.2%) and Pará (20.9%).

At least 14 companies were involved in conflicts with *quilombolas*. The five first were Lipari Mineração Ltda, representing 27.9% of the conflicts, Vale S.A. (20.9%), Hydro (13.9%), Anglo American (6.9%), and Bahia Mineração (4.6%). The minerals around which the conflicts revolved were iron ore (37.2%), diamond (27.9%), and bauxite (13.9%).

Five reactions to the *quilombola* communities were reported in 2020, including open letters, roadblocks, and petitions. One open letter released in July 2020, signed by 44 organizations, reported rights violations against 12 communities [3] by Lipari Mineração. Roadblock here refers to the closure of the MG-129 (a road that provides access to Vale S. A.'s Brucutu mine) by residents of the Vale da Lua community in São Gonçalo do Rio Baixo (Minas Gerais). They exposed the invasion of their territories, the accumulation of mud and dust, environmental damages, and the death of river springs caused by the mining company [4].

The prevalent types of conflict with quilombolas in 2020 was land, followed by water – 54.6% and 29.6% – respectively. The predominant types of violence were harm, violations of living conditions, non-compliance with legal procedures, water pollution, negligence, and lack of prior consultation.

Other Peasant Groups

Fishermen and riparian populations are part of the group that comprised 96 conflicts, with 101 events involving 14,776 people. Minas Gerais state was the site of 55.2% of the disputes, with 13.5% of the cases in the town of Barra Longa. Nine companies, as well as representatives from small-scale mining, took part in the conflicts. Samarco/Vale/BHP alone was in 62.5% of the cases. These cases are related to the company's Fundão tailing dam break on November 5, 2015, and to the struggle for full reparations. The second most affected town is Sento Sé, Bahia. It is the site of 12.5% of the cases involving riparian populations and fishermen. All conflicts were with Tombador Iron Mineração and the implementation of the Tombador Project. The Project could destroy and pollute natural springs that are essential for the population and agriculture.

In 2020, 156 cases of conflict and 182 conflict events involving **"rural settlers, *fundo de pasto* farm workers, extractivists, *geraizeiros* farm workers, small-scale cattle ranchers, small-scale landowners, land occupants and landless people were registered, and 38,746 people engaged in these conflicts**. The group is divided into small-scale landowners (17,154 people), landless people (7755), geraizeiros farm workers (5407), land occupants (3820), fundo de pasto farm workers (2491), rural settlers (1404), extractivists (557) and small-scale cattle ranchers (159) [5].

Most events above were reported in Minas Gerais and Bahia states: 60.2% and 19.8%, respectively. Out of 49 companies, the four most cited were Vale S.A. (21.1%), Anglo American (9.6%), Mineração Curimbaba (8.7%) and Samarco/Vale/BHP (5.1%). The most common type of conflict was land (49.2%), followed by water (31.4%), and the predominant types of violence were threat (16.4%), followed by non-compliance with legal procedures (11.8%), harm (9.5%) and negligence (8.2%). Tailing dam is the principal conflict-causing-object, with 37.9% of the cases, followed by projects (31.3%) and mine pits (16.4%).

Urban Conflicts

Regarding **conflicts in urban areas, 74 clashes** [6] **were identified** with a total of 93 occurrences representing 10.2% of all recorded disputes. **At least 104.143 people participated in urban conflicts with mining in the country, and underwent violations perpetrated by the sector.** There were 26 companies involved in conflicts. The first five were Vale S.A., concentrating 28.3% of urban conflicts, Braskem,

13.5%, followed by Hydro (9.4%), Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional (CSN) (6.7%), and Samarco/Vale/BHP (4.0%).

During 2020, urban conflicts took place in 38 municipalities in nine states. The states with the highest number of events were **Minas Gerais (58.1%),** Alagoas (13.5%), Pará (10.8%) and Bahia (5.4%), **while the five main conflicted municipalities were Brumadinho and Maceió – tied for the top position with 10.8% of all cases** – Barcarena (9.4%), Congonhas (6.7%), and Barão de Cocais (5.4%).

Braskem was involved in only one conflict event, in Alagoas state. The event was one of the main urban environmental conflicts in the country, triggering an unprecedented compulsory displacement that drove 55,000 people from their homes because their neighborhoods were considered entirely destroyed. In addition to homelessness, residents suffered loss of income due to the closure of many businesses as a result of the disaster, the delay in repairs due to the company's inaction, and reduced transportation caused by damage to the light rail track between the Bom Parto and Bebedouro stations, affecting at least 12 thousand public transportation users [7].

Violence Types

Out of the 48 different categories for violence types used to classify conflict events, the most common were harm (17.2%), non-compliance with legal procedures (14.3%), illegal extraction (8%), harm threat (7.4%), and negligence (6.8%).

Some types of extreme violence are noteworthy, namely slave labor (10 conflict events and 144 people enslaved), death threats (5 events), murder (2 events with 3 victims). There was one occurrence of threat, unlawful imprisonment and physical violence, each. In 2020, 27 casualties of workers in the sector were recorded.

The evictions resulted in 26 occurrences involving 57,662 people. Os estados The states with compulsory displacement cases were Minas Gerais (61.5%), with 1,734 people displaced, followed by Alagoas (30.7%), with approximately 55 thousand people displaced in Maceió. In Goiás (3.8%), 84 people were forcibly evicted in Caiapônia, and in Pará (3.8%), 843 people were forcibly evicted in Parauapebas. The places with the most displacements were Maceió, with eight occurrences, Ouro Preto, with six occurrences, and Barão de Cocais with two occurrences.

Murder cases include the death of a watchman at Intervales State Park, killed in a clash between the Environmental Police and small-scale mining workers in Sete Barras, São Paulo state in May 2020 [8]; two other victims were killed in a conflict between small-scale mining workers and indigenous people in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory in the Alto Alegre municipality in June 2020 [9].

Cases involving a death threat were concentrated in the state of Pará, with three events in the area in which Hydro is active, and two other events involving illegal small-scale mining and indigenous people. The former took place in the São Sebastião de Burajuba community, where human rights advocate Maria do Socorro Costa da Silva (Socorro do Burajuba) has suffered frequent threats because of her work reporting social-environmental crimes in the area. Maria Salistiano Cardoso, from the Bom Futuro community, and a quilombola leader from Jambuaçu in Moju face similar threats [10]. The clashes between small-scale mining workers and indigenous people took place in the Munduruku and Sai Cinza ITs. The indigenous people disclosed the threats in an open letter [11].

There were 23 events related to Covid-19, most with Vale S.A., followed by the Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional (CSN). Of the total number of conflicts in, Covid-19 represented 4.4% of the cases and 16.3% in the specific worker category.

Government Action

Government agencies, mainly supervisory and legal entities, also participated in the mapping process. The cases are related to legislative disputes, conflicts with municipalities and states, as well as actions directed to curb small-scale and illegal mining. Of the 133 conflict events, the government **opposed small-scale mining in 44.3%, mining companies in 19.5%, international mining companies in 18.7% and illegal mining in 15%.**

The most prominent agencies were the Federal Prosecutors (Ministério Público Federal – MPF and Ministério Público do Trabalho - MPT), IBAMA, ICMBio, Environmental State Secretariats (Secretarias Estaduais do Meio Ambiente - Semas), the Federal Police (Polícia Federal - PF), Military Forces (Forças Armadas), and the Military Police (Polícia Militar -PM).

Follow this link for more information: conflitosdamineracao.org

[1] Conflicts result from actions and reactions to mining practices and strategies that affect people's lives and degrade the environment throughout the value chain (the mine, processing of raw material, and infrastructure). In order for an event to be entered into the database, there must be an account of reactions to report, stop, punish or question social, economic, spatial, and environmental impacts of the activity, where every complaint is a public expression of the conflict in question. A conflict event is recorded any time notice of actions and/or reactions is published for public viewing. The conflicts are categorized and numbered according to location and the conflict between two social agents: those impacted by the action (affected) and those causing the action (violator). The criteria used to categorize a conflict is always the lowest possible: communities/neighborhoods, preferably.

[2] POTTER, Hyury; ANDRADE, Eduardo Goulart de. Aeronáutica explora mina de brita clandestina em Terra Indígena há uma década. **The Intercept**. December 7, 2020. Link: https://theintercept.com/2020/12/07/aeronautica-mina-clandestina-terra-indigena/

[3] CPT, Comissão Pastoral da Terra. Nota de Apoio às comunidades quilombolas de Nordestina em defesa de seus territórios e modos de vida. CPT. July 6, 2020. Link: https://cptba.org.br/nota-de-apoio-as-comunidades-quilombolas-de-nordestina-em-defesa-de-seus-territorios-e-modos-de-vida/

[4] SANTOS, Gabriel dos. MG: Moradores fecham estrada em protesto contra a mineradora Vale. A Nova Democracia. June 26, 2020. Link: https://anovademocracia.com.br/noticias/13720-mg-moradores-fecham-estrada-em-protesto-contra-a-mineradora-vale

[5] Fundo de pasto farmers, extrativistas, and geraizeiros are traditional rural groups in Brazil.

[6] Ten of these conflicts involve rural and urban populations. Three involve business people.
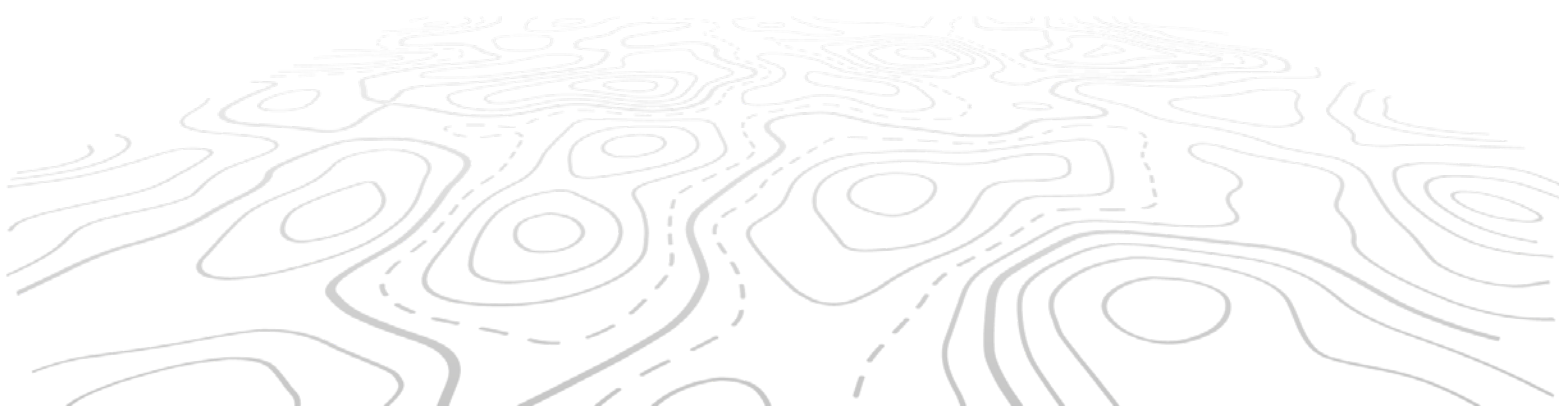
[7] CARVALHO, Regina. Mineração põe em colapso também a mobilidade urbana de Maceió. Gazeta de Alagoas. August 29, 2020. Link: https://d.gazetadealagoas.com.br/cidades/280966/mineracao-poe-em-colapso-tambem-a-mobilidade-urbana-de-maceio

[8] G1. Vigilante é morto em operação para destruir garimpo ilegal em SP. O Globo. March 3, 2020. Link: https://g1.globo.com/sp/santos-regiao/noticia/2020/05/03/vigilante-e-morto-em-operacao-para-destruir-garimpo-ilegal-de-ouro-em-sp.ghtml

[9] Folha BV. Dois indígenas morrem em conflito com garimpeiros no Alto Alegre. Folha BV. June 24, 2020. Link: https://folhabv.com.br/noticia/CIDADES/Interior/Dois-indigenas-morrem-em-conflito-com-garimpeiros-no-Alto-Alegre/66676

[10] CPT, Comissão Pastoral da Terra. Conflitos no Campo Brasil 2020. CPT. March 28, 2021. Link: https://www.cptnacional.org.br/downlods/download/41-conflitos-no-campo-brasil-publicacao/14242-conflitos-no-campo-brasil-2020

[11] MPF, Ministério Público Federal. Carta do Povo Munduruku da Região do rio Cururu, Anipiri, Rio Tapajós e Kajeredi para exigir o fechamento dos garimpos no Território Munduruku. MPF. August 31, 2020. Link: http://www.mpf.mp.br/pa/sala-de-imprensa/documentos/2020/carta-munduruku.pdf

COMITÊ NACIONAL EM
DEFESA DOS TERRITÓRIOS
FRENTE À MINERAÇÃO

Observatório dos
Conflitos da Mineração
no Brasil