

represents one of a very few options for employment in the region for the poorly-educated locals.

Conflict is likewise possible in situations where control of the resource is under contest as a result of two incompatible uses. For example, development of a mine often closes off a substantial area to access by its traditional residents. In the case of uranium mining in northern Australia²⁰, a national park was proposed for establishment in the Alligator Rivers/Kakadu region in 1965, whereas a substantial body of uranium ore was discovered in 1969 in the same area. At this time, the issue of Aboriginal land claims to the region was also being raised. Competing, justifiable and possibly incompatible uses of the same resource-space – a protected area, a uranium source, and the basis for practice of traditional livelihoods – have led to over 25 years of unresolved conflict.

Conflict can emerge over the right to participate in decision-making over management of a resource and to share in the benefits of its exploitation. It was reported that in Ecuador in 1997, several forest communities sought a meeting with the management of a mining subsidiary of Mitsubishi. The allegation was that they were concerned both by their lack of consultation in the establishment of the mine, and by the threat of deforestation, soil erosion and pollution of significant watersheds resulting from the mine. After apparently being rebuffed for 3 days by the mine's management, the community representatives are said to have removed valuable goods and equipment from the mine site, before burning what remained²¹.

In Nigeria, militant youths took one hundred and sixty-five Shell staff members and contractors as hostages, seeking jobs as security personnel and catering staff as well as a £3,000 ransom. An agreement was reached to free the hostages, though the oil company refused the youths' demands for jobs²².

Conflict can emerge as a result of the process of mineral production, whether due to environmental or social impacts. This presents a broad range of pathways to conflict. One is conflict resulting from environmental contamination affecting community health and livelihoods. Large-scale mining inevitably has a widespread impact on the landscape. Operations of the Panguna copper mine on the island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea caused severe environmental problems, eliminating many traditional livelihoods. As a result of direct discharge of waste water into the Kawerong-Jaba river system, fish disappeared and local river waters became unfit to drink²³. The mine was closed in 1989

1997) p. 114.

²⁰ Hitchcock, P., *Environment and Security in Australia: The Case of Kakadu National Park and Uranium Mining*, IUCN/IISD Task Force on Environment and Security, 2001, forthcoming.

²¹ Ramos, I., "Press release: Communities occupy Bishimetals mining installations -- demand an end to mining project" *Accion Ecologica and South and Meso American Indian Rights Center (SAIIC)*. 16 May, 1997. <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/42a/004.html>. Also <http://www.moles.org/ProjectUnderground/drillbits/970707/97070701.html>

²² Reuters (Lagos). 'Oil Workers Held Hostage in Nigeria, Then Freed'. June 27, 2001.

<http://news.excite.ca/news/r/010627/22/international-nigeria-kidnap-dc>.

²³ See Ross, M. *Natural Resources and Civil Conflict: Evidence from Case Studies*, 2001 (draft cited with permission).