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Nickel mining in French controlled Non Self Governing Territory of Kanaky - New Caledonia, a colonial heritage that endures decolonisation processes

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- Indigenous people taking control of mining;
- Empowering the people economically;
- Indigenous people governance.

Recommendations
- Cooperation between UN Permanent Forum and Decolonisation Committee;
- Pacific States endorse and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
Océanie

Philippines
At 5,000 km

Australia at 1,500 km

Kanaky-New-Caledonia
At 1,800 km

Aotea at 1,800 km
We are the Kanak people, the indigenous people of this land where we have lived since the first dawn.

We are the Kanak people, and we are part of the three hundred and fifty millions of women and men designated as Indigenous or Aborigines or sometimes Natives, by those who colonised us.
Economic Exclusive Zone
1,386,588 km²

Land mass 191,000 km²
Political situation

1853 France takes over New Caledonia to create first a penal colony, then a colony open to settlers – until now one Europe’s last remaining colonies.

1975 Struggle for independence from France


1998 Signing of the Noumea Accord to postpone the referendum for another 20 years.
2004 total population 263,500 with Kanaks 44%


In the Noumea Accord of 1998, France recognised the Kanak people as the indigenous people of New Caledonia.
Mining areas of New Caledonia in 2004
Matignon Accords of 1988, political changes to concentrate more economic authorities into the hands of the Kanaks

The Accords devolved more responsibilities to the provincial governments and afforded the Kanak populated North and Loyalties provinces increased funding with which to manage them.

The Northern province created SOFINOR, its financial arm to buy from the head of the settlers political party his mining company SMSP - Société Minière du Pacifique Sud.
Once under Kanak control, the SMSP mining company made astonishing progress under its head, Raphael Pidjot, an active independence leader, and a close associate of the late Kanak leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou.

Under Pidjot’s management, SMSP made great strides and grew to control a large portion of the territory’s nickel resources including the Koniambo massif deposit.

Obtaining the Koniambo extraordinarily rich reserve from the French State owned SLN mining company was the pre-condition to the signing of the Noumea Accord by the Kanak political coalition.
Koniambo S.A. project (Vavouto - Kone)

Mine : on the Koniambo massif;  
Pyrotechnic foundry : Vavouto.

Production per year : 60,000 tons of nickel.

Total capacity of the deposit : 151 millions de tons of ore.

Base camp  
One 390 Mgw coal burning power plant  
Port facilities with a 9 km-long 11 metre-deep access channel that need a huge dredging operation to displace 9 million cubic metres of sediment from the lagoon to the open ocean.

Employment at production cruising time, mine & plant : 1,000 direct jobs + 2,500 induced employments.

Beginning of production : 2010
Société Minière du Sud Pacifique

- Mines
- Usine
- Exploration
Vavouto
New Caledonia
60,000 tns/year from 2011

Gwangjiang
South Korea
30,000 tns/year
Started in 2008
SOFINOR other business activities

- Tourist resorts
- Shrimp farms
- Fishing company
- Housing development

Gains for the communities
- Better education & training programmes
- Business opportunities
- Housing development on tribal land
Dix conductrices de choc sur mine

Some changes
Counter effects

- Less Kanak candidates for employment in the tertiary non-mining sector (plumbers, bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, etc);
Less Kanak candidates to become nurses, primary school teachers;
- Immigration to respond to shortage of qualified workers;
Counter effects of the partition of the country

- Provincial authorities and administrations remains western type authorities and administrations. Kanak traditional authorities have no participation in decision making process.

Violations of FPIC of IPs
- Immigration policies violating Resolution 35/118

One province does not make the country. What is the situation of the indigenous population in the Southern province?
« In 130 years of mining activities, the impact over the natural resources and on the environment has been considerable: scrapping of the soil, erosion, tailing disposal in the lagoon that is one of the richest in the world, interaction between maritime traffic and marine mammals ... »

WWF-France, August 2006.
Are Indigenous miners better miners for their land, for their people, for their future generations?
Cokwa

Thank you for your attention