Nornickel: Toxic Business at the Expense of Indigenous Peoples

May 2021
The traditional way of living of the indigenous communities of the Russian Arctic is increasingly under threat: as well as suffering the severe effects of climate change, these peoples are also affected by the industrial exploitation of natural resources and the associated pollution. In May 2020, near the city of Norilsk in Siberia, 21,000 tons of diesel were spilled from a defective tank into the tundra, resulting in the heavy pollution of two rivers. This incident is one of the worst environmental disasters ever inflicted upon the Arctic. Norilsk Nickel, known as Nornickel, the company behind this, had already attracted attention due to its environmentally harmful business practices. This repeated pollution of the environment is slowly poisoning the ecologically sensitive habitat of the indigenous communities. The diesel disaster actually endangers even their subsistence: one year after the disaster, the food supply, for many, is no longer guaranteed.

However, the Nornickel group is showing no interest in addressing the problems of the indigenous communities and entering into a dialogue on an equal footing with their legitimate representatives. Furthermore, the Russian state grants the indigenous communities hardly any rights. For example, they have no legal right to have a say in matters related to natural resources or land use.

The Society for Threatened Peoples (STP) supports the independent indigenous network Aborigen Forum in their claims against the Nornickel corporation for their breaches of human rights, in particular, as regards Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), fair compensation, as well as for an independent investigation of the diesel accident. The STP is requesting Metal Trade Overseas SA, Nornickel’s Swiss branch, and the Swiss banks involved with Nornickel, to put pressure on Nornickel and demand that they take appropriate measures.
1. Introduction

On 29 May 2020, near the Siberian city of Norilsk, 21,000 tons of diesel spilled from an old, rusted tank belonging to a Nornickel subsidiary, and seeped into the surrounding tundra and two rivers: a catastrophe on a devastating scale. Within a short period of time, the fuel spread over an area of some 180,000 m² (which is approximately 26 football pitches). This event is the worst environmental disaster in the Arctic since 1989, when the oil tanker Exxon Valdez capsized off the coast of Alaska. However, in addition to this diesel accident, the natural habitat of the people on the Taymyr Peninsula, where Norilsk is located, is also threatened by further pollution of the environment. The northern-most city in Russia is one of the dirtiest in the world, with the air heavily polluted with sulphur dioxide and the soil with heavy metals, copper, and nickel. This is reflected in the life expectancy of the people living there: according to statistics, they die on average ten years earlier compared to the rest of the Russian population. Particularly affected by the pollution are the people who, for centuries, have been living in their natural environment, and indeed, depending on it, on the Taymyr Peninsula, i.e. the Nganasan, Dolgan, Nenet, Enet and Evenk indigenous communities. The MMC Norilsk Nickel (Nornickel for short) group is largely responsible for the pollution.


2. Nornickel: Business at the Expense of the Environment

Nornickel is the world’s leading producer of refined nickel and palladium. The group had a turnover of US$ 14 billion and a profit of US$ 6 billion in 2019, making it one of the most profitable commodity companies in the world. Majority shareholder Vladimir Potanin owns almost 35% of the company, as well as being Nornickel’s CEO. With a US$ 30 billion fortune, he is the richest man in Russia. Potanin was able to acquire the company cheaply from the Russian state during the process of privatisation in the 1990s. However, since then, the infrastructure, much of which is eighty years old, has been severely neglected. There has almost been no investment by Potanin in maintenance, safety or modernisation. Instead, in 2019, 80% of the profit was paid to the group’s shareholders as dividends.

Pollution caused by Nornickel

Neglecting Nornickel’s infrastructure has resulted in repeated pollution. The production of nickel, copper and palladium, increasingly used for the construction of electric cars and solar panels, is associated with large pollution from old smelters. Such as in the two of Nornickel’s smelters in Norilsk. Every year, around two million tons of toxic sulphur dioxide escapes from these smelters, which is more than half of Russia’s total emissions and twice as much as the total of US emissions. This has led the industrial city to become the world’s largest anthropogenic source of this colourless and odourless gas. In addition to causing coughing, shortness of breath and pulmonary oedema, it increases the risk of respiratory diseases. In the atmosphere, it reacts with water to form sulfuric acid, which causes acid rain. More often than not, around Norilsk, nothing grows within a radius of 30 km as a result of acid rain, which kills all vegetation. Moreover, the concentration of iron, nickel and copper in the rivers around the industrial city exceeds threshold values by nine to ten times. The company keeps promising improvements. For example, sulphur dioxide emissions should have been halved in 2019. However, the company did not achieve this goal.

In addition, repeated accidents have been reported at Nornickel, at various production facilities: in 2016, iron oxide was released into the environment in a newly built plant belonging to the group called „Nadejda“ (‘hope’, in English). And shortly after the oil spill in May 2020, wastewaster contaminated with toxins was pumped into the Charajelach river from a containment basin at Nornickel’s enrichment facility in Talnach. According to Greenpeace Russia, on the basis of satellite imagery, this is how Nornickel employees appear to be illegally disposing of waste. In addition, in July 2020, 44.5 tons of kerosene found their way into the environment due to a leak in a pipeline at Nornickel’s subsidiary Norilsktransgaz. Human lives are also in jeopardy. An accident in February 2021 caused three people to be killed and three others injured.
Iron oxide leaks into the environment from the „Nadejda“ plant. The Daldykan River turns red.

Water contaminated with toxins is pumped from a wastewater basin at Nornickel’s enrichment plant in Talnach into the Charajelach River.

A Norilsk-Transgaz pipeline rupture releases 44.5 tons of kerosene into the environment near Tuchard on the Taymyr Peninsula.

A serious industrial accident at a processing plant in Norilsk claims the lives of three people and injures three others.

Some indigenous communities receive compensation payments from Nornickel.

Nornickel announces a program to support indigenous communities on the Taymyr Peninsula in cooperation with the state’s indigenous organization RAIPON at a cost of approximately 25 million Swiss francs.

A fire breaks out at a landfill site containing Nornickel’s industrial waste. The smoke spreads over the tundra, harming flora, fauna and people.

A court fines Nornickel’s subsidiary 1.87 billion francs for the diesel accident. It is the highest fine ever imposed in Russia for an environmental offense.

Will Nornickel seriously listen to the affected indigenous groups in the future and raise safety standards for industrial plants?

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**TIMELINE**

**2016**

Iron oxide leaks into the environment from the „Nadejda“ plant. The Daldykan River turns red.

**May 29, 2020**

- 21,000 tons of diesel oil leak into the environment from an old tank of a Nornickel subsidiary.
- Despite floating barriers, toxic components reach Lake Pyasino and the Pyasino River fed by it.
- The estimated economic damage to the affected indigenous communities amounts to 2 million Swiss francs.

**June 28, 2020**

Water contaminated with toxins is pumped from a wastewater basin at Nornickel’s enrichment plant in Talnach into the Charajelach River.

**June 29, 2020**

A fire breaks out at a landfill site containing Nornickel’s industrial waste. The smoke spreads over the tundra, harming flora, fauna and people.

**July 12, 2020**

A Norilsk-Transgaz pipeline rupture releases 44.5 tons of kerosene into the environment near Tuchard on the Taymyr Peninsula.

**September 2020**

Nornickel announces a program to support indigenous communities on the Taymyr Peninsula in cooperation with the state’s indigenous organization RAIPON at a cost of approximately 25 million Swiss francs.

**January 2021**

Some indigenous communities receive compensation payments from Nornickel.

**February 5, 2021**

A court fines Nornickel’s subsidiary 1.87 billion francs for the diesel accident. It is the highest fine ever imposed in Russia for an environmental offense.

**February 20, 2021**

A serious industrial accident at a processing plant in Norilsk claims the lives of three people and injures three others.

**Today**

Will Nornickel seriously listen to the affected indigenous groups in the future and raise safety standards for industrial plants?

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*a* Kavanosyan, Gregori: NORILSK / Lügen entlarven und Potanin ansprechen, Youtube, 19.06.2020. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlsyN8JsRvA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlsyN8JsRvA)

Nornickel’s Production Sites
For the global group, the Taymyr Peninsula is one of the most important mining and production sites. Indeed, most of the around 80,000 people employed by Nornickel in Russia live and work in the industrial city of Norilsk. The political life of the city's population is determined by the group. Persons holding political offices previously held important positions in the company, or politicians end up working for the group. Allegations of corruption, exertion of influence and neglected controls have also been made. Numerous breaches of environmental and safety regulations by Nornickel have gone unpunished.

Nornickel has another production site located on the Kola Peninsula, in Russia, the easternmost part of the area in which the indigenous Sami people live. There, in the same way, nickel and copper are mined and the environment is affected by sulphur dioxide and heavy metals pollution. After years of negotiations, Norwegian residents and environmental organizations managed to achieve a reduction in emissions from Nornickel. In March 2021, a plant in Monchegorsk was shut down. With this, Nornickel hopes to reduce emissions by 85%. However, the Sami communities remain barely informed. Andrei Danilov, Director of the „Sámi Heritage and Development Fund“ reports:

„When the plant shut down, the company invested in new technology. I was approached by Sami communities, who were interested in an expert opinion on Nornickel’s plans and on the potential impact on their communities. Despite requesting information from the company, I received nothing. However, I have ascertained that, despite the plant having been shut down, the air is still being polluted with sulphur dioxide. I don’t see any real action by Nornickel aimed at actually improving the conditions of indigenous communities and the environment. They [Nornickel] ignore all of our requests.”

Catastrophic neglect of the infrastructure, disregard of safety and human rights standards, illegal disposal of toxic waste and resistance to modernisation all seem to be part of Nornickel’s business model, at least according to the interpretation of Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta.

Smog, acid rain and contaminated water: Norilsk in Russia, the northernmost metropolis in the world with 150,000 inhabitants, has suffered major ecological damage due to the mining company Nornickel based there.
3. Nornickel’s Connections with Switzerland

Like many other commodity companies, Nornickel also has a subsidiary in Switzerland. “Metal Trade Overseas SA” is 100% owned by Nornickel and has its registered office in Zug. The company sells Nornickel’s nickel, copper and palladium produced in Russia and Finland all over the world. According to NGO Public Eye’s assessment, the purpose of a company with this type of structure is usually that of evading taxes. Through a procedure known as „transfer pricing”, profits are shifted from one country to another. Thus, Nornickel’s headquarters in Russia could sell its goods at below market value to its trading subsidiary in Zug, which, in turn, sells them at the usual price. This way, profit would mainly be made in Switzerland instead of Russia. The Canton of Zug has one of the lowest corporate income tax rates in Europe.23

There is also a money flow to Nornickel from Swiss financial institutions: as of April 2021, UBS held shares and bonds in Nornickel valued at US$ 45 million and granted loans for a total of US$ 63 million in 2020. Credit Suisse also has equity in Nornickel, corresponding to US$ 27 million in stocks and bonds and US$ 268 million in loans. Therefore, the Swiss financial institutions are together among the ten largest Nornickel investors. Thus, Nornickel benefits from Switzerland in two ways: from its low corporate income tax rate and from the investments by Swiss financial institutions.

One of the other main investors is Sberbank, which is largely owned by the Russian state. Banks financially involved are also from the US, Europe and Japan. On the other hand, other financial institutions in countries such as Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden withdrew their investments in Nornickel as early as 2009. Their withdrawal was justified by the significant environmental damage caused by the group.24

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4. The 29 May 2020 Spill

On 29 May 2020, 21,000 tons of diesel seeped from a tank of one of Nornickel’s subsidiaries, first into the ground and then into the Daldykan and Ambarnaja rivers. No dam or containment basin could stop the spread of diesel.25 Oil barriers were erected only on the second day after the accident, which was much too late.26 The pictures of the disaster were seen all around the world.

Nornickel’s CEO, Vladimir Potanin, blamed climate change for the crack in the diesel tank. He stated that melting permafrost caused the tank’s supports to slide away, causing the crack.27 However, a Russian journalist found out that the tank concerned was not standing on permafrost, but on rock.28 Even Russian President Vladimir Putin reprimanded Potanin during a video conference, accusing him of not replacing the tank in time and thus of not having prevented the disaster.29

Penalties and Measures

Soon after the incident, the director of the Nornickel subsidiary and two engineers were put into custody by the Russian authorities, and criminal proceedings were initiated.30 In February 2021, a Russian court fined the company US$ 2 billion.31 This was the highest fine for pollution in Russia’s history.32 In October 2020, Nornickel reported having carried out a comprehensive program to clean up the spilled diesel and promised to upgrade its industrial facilities in terms of their

32 Sakirko, Elena: Remember the Norilsk oil spill? Well, the polluters will pay, Greenpeace, 12.02.2020. Available on: https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/46429/remember-the-norilsk-oil-spill-well-the-polluters-will-pay/
safety and environmental standards, to monitor risks and to launch projects aimed at the remediation and rehabilitation of the environment. Whether Nornickel will keep its promises remains to be seen. In any case, the environment has suffered great and irreversible damage. The indigenous communities in this region have to live with these devastating consequences (see Chapter 5).

Lack of Transparency

Another critical aspect concerns the credibility of Nornickel’s statements in relation to the 29 May 2020 disaster. The group has had great influence on institutional and political processes for a long time. The company also owns and controls the airport in Norilsk. In the summer, it is the only way to reach the city, as access by land is all but impossible. A journalist has described the episode when, in the summer of 2020, water and soil samples from Greenpeace were stopped by the head of security at the airport. Whereas shortly after the disaster, Nornickel provided free helicopter flights, in order for authorities and media representatives to have an overview of the extent of the disaster. Thus, Nornickel has an influence on reporting. Moreover, the entire Arctic region is defined as a border zone. This means that Russian people have to show their ID on arrival and foreigners need a special permit.

Therefore, for a long period, Nornickel was able to convey their own picture of what had happened. Immediately after the incident, Nornickel security and police prevented the management of the local supervisory authority (called Rosprirodnadzor) from inspecting the site of the accident. Furthermore, they only carried out limited investigations to find out the real extent of the disaster: for example, they only took water samples near the floating barriers and not downstream, in Lake Pyasino. Despite it not being convincing, Nornickel’s own declaration that the diesel could not have reached the lake thanks to the onshore wind prevailed in official statements. However, independent measurements were able to detect hydrocarbon compounds (diesel components dissolved in water) in the Pyasino river, which flows out of the lake of the same name.

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5. The Impact of the Spill on Indigenous Communities

About 10,000 indigenous people live on the Taymyr Peninsula, where the industrial city of Norilsk is located. They include the Nganasan, Dolgan, Nenet, Enzen and Evenk ethnic minorities, the majority of whom today still live based on subsistence farming. This involves hunting, reindeer herding and fishing in the rivers and lakes north of Norilsk. Therefore, the preservation of the environment is vital for them.

Endangered Way of Living

Many other indigenous peoples in the region, for example, the Dolgan people, were forced to become sedentary in the 1960s. With the Soviet government building industrial plants, ports, roads and railways for the exploitation of natural resources, their nomadic lifestyle became increasingly difficult for them to maintain. The indigenous people’s ecologically sensitive habitat is slowly being poisoned by the industrial plants, which endangers their way of living. They are also affected by climate change, which makes it even more difficult and brings changes to the sequence of rain and snow, thaw and frost. On the one hand, reindeer herding becomes more difficult, as the animals often can no longer find food. At the same time, maximum temperature records in the Siberian tundra reflect thawing permafrost and huge wildfires.

The oil spill in May 2020 was disastrous. The pollution described in Chapter 4 had massive, negative effects on the way of living of the indigenous peoples. The toxins from leaked diesel not only poisoned the fish directly, but also the insects, the source of food for the fish. This has created severe food shortages for the indigenous communities. In addition, reindeer have largely left the area due to the pollution. Even a year after the incident, hunters often return to the village empty-handed, says Gennady Shchukin. Before the disaster, the sale of fresh meat was an important source of income. This trade also ensured the supply of other food to the communities. Whilst grocers bought meat from the indigenous people, they used to sell them other goods in return. Such exchanges came to a standstill due to the diesel accident.

Many indigenous people of the Taimyr Peninsula still live by subsistence economy.

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6. Nornickel & Indigenous Peoples: Collusion in place of Compensation

Shortly after the disaster, Nornickel announced that they would pay compensation to the affected communities. In January 2021, some indigenous communities indeed received compensation payments. However, the compensation was not paid to all those affected, and in accordance with the promised amounts. For example, in March 2021, a representative of the indigenous Dolgan community known to the STP, Gennady Shchukin, reported that they, as a community, only received a small amount of compensation from Nornickel after the spill. They used this money to buy snowmobiles in order to reach the reindeer that had run away. However, in the coming spring and summer, it’s not possible to move around with snowmobiles, car or trucks. The indigenous communities are now urging Nornickel to support them in supplying their villages, albeit, so far, without any success. Shchukin complains: „Communities living near the area of the spill hardly have any food. They asked for help from Nornickel, but they were ignored“.

Gennady Shchukin reports major bureaucratic obstacles for receiving financial compensation. It is the norm that such compensation is not paid directly to individuals and families, but to indigenous organisations and groups which are loyal to the company.

The Strategy of Collusion

The company’s strategy of collusion is a particularly worrying aspect: Nornickel employs individual indigenous people as so-called „inspectors“. The role of these inspectors is to legitimise the interactions of the company with the indigenous communities. Indeed, the company presents indigenous employees as if they were representing the interests of the indigenous communities, despite the fact that they actually act on behalf of the company. This is a pretence through which Nornickel appears to show its support to the indigenous communities. However, this is a strategy through which the company is dividing the indigenous communities and making it difficult for indigenous peoples to create a commitment to claim their rights. Gennady Shchukin said:

„The indigenous inspectors tell people not to listen to me. They want to create conflict between the indigenous communities in the region. They tell us to take our criticism back, to become ′civilised′. Our land is poisoned and we are facing acute food shortages. But the inspectors employed by Nornickel keep telling us to calm down and keep quiet”.

Collaboration with RAIPON

At the same time, at the end of 2020, Nornickel began collaborating with the Association of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (RAIPON). RAIPON is a non-governmental organisation which claims to represent the interests of forty-one indigenous communities in Russia. With RAIPON, Nornickel is planning to implement a five-year program for the promotion and development of indigenous communities on the Taymyr Peninsula. The costs will amount to 2 billion roubles (approx. 25 million CHF). Offically, there is no direct reference to the diesel spill, however, it is obvious that this measure is aimed at improving Nornickel’s public image.

The group also launched internal guidelines on the rights of indigenous peoples with reference to the ILO Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention) and created a department dedicated to the interaction with indigenous communities. At first glance, this may appear as a positive development. The catch lies in the implementation and in the issue of representation:

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In 2012, a law came into force in Russia which classifies civil society organisations receiving funding from foreign donors as “foreign agents”. Based on this allegation, RAIPON was temporarily dissolved by the Russian Ministry of Justice in 2013, and then reinstated with a new structure and under new management. Grigori Ledkow took over the management of this new organisation. The Yamal Nenets’ representative is a member of parliament for Vladimir Putin’s party. Since then, RAIPON has been heavily criticised by representatives of other indigenous organisations. For example by Dmitry Berezhkov. The former Vice President of RAIPON describes the new organisation as an illegitimate representative of Russian indigenous peoples.46 Pavel Sulyandziga also accuses Nornickel of buying influence and consent through its two-billion rouble funding program:

„Nornickel only speaks to those indigenous people who portray Nornickel in a good light towards the outside world. Those who ask inconvenient questions about breaches of regulations and other issues are simply excluded.“47

According to him, the funding program only addresses social, cultural and infrastructural projects, whilst the truly important questions about land, resources and compensation mechanisms are not seriously addressed by Nornickel.48

Indigenous people criticize Nornickel for not seriously addressing key issues of land, resources, and compensation mechanisms.

According to statements by local indigenous representatives, the internal department for interaction with the indigenous communities serves Nornickel primarily to create a semblance of fairness. Gennady Shchukin says:

„However, in reality, the department discredits local activists and creates tensions between the communities and their leaders. Our suggestions for improving the situation are ignored by Nornickel”.

Because of their commitment to the indigenous communities, Shchukin and other indigenous activists are publicly discredited by Nornickel.

Furthermore, potentially affected indigenous communities in the area are not included when planning new projects. The decommissioned Nornickel plant on the Kola Peninsula is to be replaced by a new one. The Nornickel subsidiary did not respond to a proposal for dialogue with the local Sami association, the Sami Heritage and Development Fund, and their request for compliance with their right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent. An assessment of the impact of the new plant on the environment and communities was drafted without the local indigenous communities being able to have a say in it, and the results remain unknown.

The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Russia
The Russian state does not recognise the rights of indigenous communities. This is why it is difficult for indigenous communities to defend their interests against large-scale infrastructure and commodity extraction projects. The Russian government’s Arctic strategy provides for an expansion of economic activities: oil and gas production will be increased considerably and transport facilities will be scaled up, by sea through new ports and on land with the construction of new pipelines.49 Especially in connection with its chairmanship of the Arctic Council, the Russian government is planning economic expansion in the Russian part of the Arctic, asserting its claims to power over the Arctic region internationally. If they succeed, this will endanger the way of living and the rights of all the Arctic indigenous peoples.

The rights of indigenous peoples at international level:
At the international level, indigenous communities are protected by international law through two instruments:

• The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) sets the minimum standards for the dignity, well-being and survival of all indigenous communities in the world.50

• Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) is the only agreement to be ratified which exclusively relates to the rights of indigenous peoples.51

However, Russia has neither endorsed the UNDRIP nor ratified the ILO Convention 169. The 1999 Law „On Guarantees of the Rights of Numerically-small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation”, recognises only 40 of the 160 indigenous communities. In certain cases, this official recognition guarantees consultation and participation rights for the indigenous minorities, however, all matters relating to land and natural resources are excluded. Also the concept of Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC) is not anchored in Russian legislation.52

7. Conclusion

The 29 May 2020 oil spill has had a devastating impact on the environment and food supply of local indigenous communities. It amplified issues related to the indigenous peoples which already existed. In their fight for self-determination and for the protection of their living environment, they are opposed to both the interests of large companies such as Nornickel and those of the Russian state. The Russian government’s Arctic strategy is aimed at exploiting the natural resources in the Arctic and opening up new transport routes. Financial profit is the priority. Therefore, the government shows no intention of protecting the rights of indigenous communities under the law.

As a result of the diesel disaster, the pressure on Nornickel on the part of the national and international public opinion has increased. The fine issued by a Russian court for the environmental damage caused is higher than any other before. However, instead of establishing a dialogue on an equal footing with the indigenous communities and listening to their concerns openly, the company only collaborates with indigenous representatives compliant with them, appointing individual “inspectors” with the aim of creating divisions within the indigenous communities.
8. Demands of the Society for Threatened Peoples

Demands towards Nornickel:

General Demands:
Ongoing dialogue with indigenous representatives: Nornickel shall actively promote exchanges with indigenous communities which are actually or potentially affected by their business activities. Nornickel shall maintain constant exchanges, on the basis of an equal footing relationship, with the indigenous communities who live near its plants. Nornickel shall comply with international environmental standards, take measures to prevent environmental damage and adequately repair any damage occurred. Compensation to the affected communities shall be made in consultation and collaboration with the communities.

Specific Demands:

1. Analysis of the environmental damage and of any negative social impact, as well as preventive measures:
   - Comprehensive and independent expert opinion on the impact of Nornickel plants on the environment and on the local communities on the Taymyr and Kola Peninsulas.
   - Expert opinion on the damage caused by the diesel spill in Norilsk, in particular in relation to the traditional economic activities of the indigenous communities.
   - Detailed analysis on the condition of the Nornickel plants and appropriate measures to be taken in order to prevent future accidents.

2. Compensation and recultivation of the polluted land:
   - Compensation of indigenous communities for the damage caused to their traditional way of living in accordance with Art. 28 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): equitable, fair and just. The type and modalities of the compensation should be negotiated in consultation with the communities concerned.
   - Development and implementation of a plan to recultivate the polluted land on the Taymyr and Kola Peninsulas.

3. Revision of internal human rights policies:
   - Revision of the Indigenous Policy in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with an unambiguous and binding commitment to the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
   - Revision of the existing human rights policy in accordance with international human rights standards, in particular the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the IFC Performance Standard.
   - Implementation of the announced “Stakeholder Engagement Policy” with an unambiguous and binding obligation to implement the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Demands towards Metal Trade Overseas SA:

- Metal Trade Overseas SA shall demand that its parent company Nornickel implements the above-mentioned demands.
- Metal Trade Overseas SA shall comply with its obligations under the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guidelines on Business and Human Rights.

Demands towards Nornickel’s Investors:

- Nornickel investors shall use their influence to demand that Nornickel implements the above-mentioned demands.
- Should the exchanges with Nornickel prove to be ineffective and no improvement can be achieved, the financial institutions shall terminate their business relationships with Nornickel.
General demands towards financial institutions:

- Adequate due diligence in all business activities to reduce the risk of contributing to violations of human rights.
- Publication and implementation of effective policies that require Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for project and corporate lending.

Demands towards the Russian Federation:

- Signing of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and ratification of the ILO Convention 169.
- Inclusion of the UNDRIP and ILO 169 in Russian legislation, and notably the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- Inclusion and consideration of the rights of indigenous communities within Russia’s Arctic strategy.
- End the criminalisation of indigenous organisations, activists and human rights defenders.
With the STP for human rights
The Society of Threatened Peoples (STP) is an international human rights organisation that supports minorities and indigenous peoples. It documents human rights abuses, informs and sensitises the public, and represents the interests of victims against authorities and decision makers. It supports local efforts to improve the human rights situation for minorities and indigenous peoples, and works together, both nationally and internationally, with organisations and people that are pursuing similar goals. The STP has advisory status both at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN and at the Council of Europe.

Do you want to get involved? Please support us!
Our engagement is only possible with your support. With your membership or donation, we support minorities and indigenous peoples throughout the world.
Register at: www.gfbv.ch/en/support-actively
Thank you very much!