



SOCIETY FOR
THREATENED
PEOPLES



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

CAMPAIGNS & PROJECTS

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CAMPAIGNS & PROJECTS

Editorial

Be it in the form of wind farms on Indigenous territory, a free trade agreement with China or opaque supply chains in the gold industry: Swiss politics and business have an impact on Indigenous communities and minorities worldwide. For this reason, the STP did its utmost in 2023, despite the difficult geopolitical situation, to ensure that Switzerland meets its responsibilities, and that the voices of Indigenous peoples and minorities are also heard here.

Together with Tibetan and Uyghur exile organisations, it called for Switzerland to refrain from prioritising trade interests over human rights. With regard to gold, the STP's demand for transparency finally came before the Federal Supreme Court. Unfortunately, the latter ruled that Swiss gold refineries still do not have to disclose their suppliers: a decision that made big waves in the media. With its new programme 'Climate Justice! Respect Indigenous Consent' launched in autumn, the STP is striving to ensure that the urgently needed energy transition does not have a detrimental effect on Indigenous communities. And an evening charity event with Brazilian star photographer Sebastião Salgado and Indigenous activist Beto Marubo enabled the STP to support Marubo's campaign for Indigenous rights in the Amazon. None of this would have been possible without you and other supporters. We thank you.



After 18 years, I am retiring. I feel fortunate to have helped develop the STP into the organisation it is today. The challenges that I am handing over to my successor, Anna Leissing, are fascinating ones. I wish her and the team every success!

Christoph Wiedmer
Co-Director until the end of April 2024



The STP has achieved major successes for Indigenous peoples and minorities over the past 18 years, and is now a point of reference. We thank Christoph Wiedmer for his tremendous commitment, look forward to welcoming Anna Leissing and will be counting on our donors for their continued support in the future!

Lisa Mazzone
President



IMPRESSUM

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The year 2023 in quotes

In 2023, the STP supported the struggle for the rights of Indigenous peoples and minorities – together with these individuals. It made their voices heard and helped to shape the debate on human rights in Switzerland.



Active in 3 continents



"Switzerland also has responsibility regarding the protection of isolated groups living in Brazil."

Beto Marubo
Indigenous human rights activist
Brazil



7 public events



"My Indigenous friends from Yakutia were forced by the Russian army to fight in the war in Ukraine, precisely because they are Indigenous hunters. The authorities even pretend that this is to reduce unemployment in the region."

Dmitry Berezkhov
Exiled activist
Russia



"The threat is right before our eyes, especially in the poisoned rivers."

Raquel Tupinambá
Indigenous activist
Brazil



"Solidarity is essential in the struggle for Indigenous rights and human rights. The green transformation also calls for solidarity on the part of consumers."

Pavel Sulyandziga
Udege human rights activist
Russia



15 000 supporters



"Every voice and every action counts in the fight for justice and human rights."

Rizwana Ilham
President of the Swiss Uyghur Association



1 charity evening



2 background reports



1 hearing at the Federal Supreme Court



7 active campaigns



17 media releases sent

Brazil: “Hands off the Amazon!”

In 2023, President Lula da Silva sent out strong signals in favour of strengthening Indigenous communities. However, Bolsonaro, the former president, continues to influence the country – with his supporters in parliament and draft anti-Indigenous acts pending.



Foto: Vinícius da Silva Machado

Indigenous communities in Brazil demonstrate against the destruction of the Amazon rainforest.

Activities

Even under President Lula da Silva, proponents of Indigenous rights still face an uphill struggle. The STP brought this situation to the attention of the Swiss public, and supported its partner organisations on the ground in campaigning for their rights and against the destruction of their livelihoods. For instance, the STP supported the Tupinambá community with crowdfunding for the process of demarcating their territory, in order to have it recognised as ‘Terra Indígena’ and thus protected. The STP also used crowdfunding to help enable the Mundurukú community to set up a headquarters for their meetings, as well as for their cultural and political activities. Last but not least, it is supporting a successful cocoa project in northern Brazil, so as to offer young Yanomami a possible source of income.

Achievements

At an evening charity event in June, guests experienced a moving panel discussion with Brazilian star photographer Sebastião Salgado and Indigenous activist Beto Marubo, along with a tour of the ‘Amazônia’ exhibition. The STP used the proceeds to support Beto Marubo’s campaign for the rights of Indigenous communities.

The Tupinambá made great progress in their efforts to have their territory recognised: They collected geographical data about their land on numerous expeditions and wrote a report to explain their claim to the area around the lower course of the Tapajós River in the Amazon. In March, a delegation travelled to the national Indigenous authority FUNAI in Brasília, so as to submit the report and their application for recognition of the territory as ‘Terra Indígena’.

Outlook

The STP will continue to directly support the Mundurukú, Tupinambá and Yanomami Indigenous communities in Brazil. It will also take decisive action if realisation of the planned infrastructure projects in the Tapajós region goes ahead: These threaten not only the Indigenous communities, but also the Amazon rainforest.

<p>January 2023 New Brazilian President Luiz Ignácio Lula da Silva takes office.</p>	<p>● Mid-January 2023 President Lula takes numerous measures to reinforce Indigenous rights. He runs a Ministry of Indigenous People. Sônia Guajajara, partner of the STP, is now its minister.</p>	<p>● End of March 2023 The Tupinambá submit a report and their application for recognition of their land as ‘Terra Indígena’ to Brazilian Indigenous authority FUNAI.</p>	<p>● April 2023 The Brazilian government takes military action against illegal gold panning in the Amazon, which had risen sharply since 2019, especially on Yanomami land.</p>	<p>● September 2023 Brazil’s Supreme Federal Court recognises Indigenous communities’ right to land, siding with them in the dispute over the Xokleng Ibirama-La Klãnõ territory.</p>	<p>● December 2023 Congress overrides President Lula’s veto of the devastating law restricting Indigenous territories. It can now only be stopped in the Constitutional Court.</p>
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Gold: Federal Supreme Court rules against transparency

After around ten years, a key moment arrived concerning the gold programme, when the Federal Supreme Court ruled in favour of the refineries and decided that the STP will not be given insight into Swiss refineries' business relations, indicating that it is against transparency in the gold industry. The Federal Supreme Court is thus continuing to protect the import of dirty gold. However, the problem has been publicised.



Gold mining in Sudan: the paramilitary group RSF uses the raw material to finance itself during the war.

Activities

Last year, the gold trade hit the headlines once again: with reports about Russian gold that was reaching Switzerland via London despite sanctions, about links between dirty gold from Sudan and the gold trading hub Dubai, from where large quantities of gold reach Switzerland, and about a tragic accident killing 27 miners in a Peruvian mine that is supported by the Swiss Better Gold Initiative. Last but not least, in September, the media publicised the authorities' criticism of the operations of Ticino-based gold refinery Valcambi SA. However, the complete lack of transparency makes it very difficult to prove whether (and from where) dirty gold is reaching Switzerland, so it remains a possibility that cannot be ruled out.

Over the past year, the STP again repeatedly showed the existing control measures to be completely inadequate. Nevertheless, the Federal Supreme Court ruled in November 2023 that the STP will not be given access to the detailed figures on gold imports, citing tax secrecy. Thus, after a legal dispute lasting years, this court, which has the final say on the matter, has unfortunately come out against the urgently needed transparency.

Achievements

For more than a decade now, the STP has been trying to create more transparency in the Swiss gold trade. In 2018, due to the complete secrecy in the industry, the STP initiated an official process, so as to get access to the customs authority's records on who supplies the largest Swiss refineries with gold. Despite the Federal Supreme Court's negative ruling, the long journey did pay off: The STP was able to successfully convey its demand for transparency in the media and to the public. Various refineries have since improved their due diligence and the entire gold industry has been put under much greater pressure to make itself more transparent.

Outlook

Now, more than ever, the STP is calling on politicians to pass a comprehensive corporate responsibility law, like the one currently being drawn up by the EU. The STP demands that all refineries conscientiously carry out due diligence and voluntarily disclose their suppliers, so as to credibly demonstrate that they are not importing dirty gold.

2012 Launch of the 'No Dirty Gold!' campaign. With various initiatives, the STP calls for an end to the import of dirty gold into Switzerland.

● **2013 and 2016** At Baselworld, the world's biggest watch and jewellery show, the STP protests against the processing of dirty gold in watches and jewellery.

● **2018** The STP publishes a gold report, exposing imports of conflict gold from Peru and Dubai. As a result, gold imports from Dubai fall sharply.

● **2019** The STP demands access to detailed gold trade statistics. The Directorate General of Customs supports this, but the gold refineries file an appeal with the Federal Administrative Court.

● **2022** After the visit of a delegation from the Amazon, illegal mining is publicly condemned by gold refineries and the Swiss Association of Manufacturers and Traders in Precious Metals.

● **2023** On the 15th of november, the Federal Supreme Court rules against the STP viewing the Customs Administration's records on gold imports.

China: Do not prioritise trade interests over human rights!

The STP has increased the number of staff working on its programme 'No Complicity: Human Rights in China'. It works closely with the Uyghur and Tibetan communities in Switzerland, and is calling on Switzerland to make its stance clear to China and to conduct its business activities responsibly.



Tibetans in exile demonstrate on the Place des Nations in Geneva.

Activities

In 2023, despite China's large-scale human rights violations and despite increasing criticism, the country was re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council. Thus, at global level, China's influence remains high. In Switzerland, together with Tibetan and Uyghur exile organisations, the STP accompanied various negotiations on China at the UN in Geneva, for instance with a demonstration in front of Palais Wilson while the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) was meeting inside. In connection with political activities and development work, the STP supported its partners, including the president of the Swiss Uyghur Association, Rizwana Ilham, newly elected at the beginning of the year.

Achievements

In October, the STP and its partner organisations hosted a side event at the UN, where the rights of women, especially those who belong to minority groups, were discussed. The STP demanded a more courageous human rights policy from Switzerland: Together with Public Eye, it called for more substantial inclusion of civil society in the revision of Switzerland's China strategy. It was also a key public voice of criticism against Switzerland's decision not to adopt the EU's thematic sanctions against China. On Human Rights Day, the 10th of December, Uyghur and Tibetan communities, along with the STP, issued an open letter, calling on the Federal Council not to prioritise trade interests over human rights. Thanks to its ongoing work on China, the STP was a sought-after point of contact for media professionals.

Outlook

The STP has stepped up its commitment to the human rights situation in China and is preparing a campaign on transnational repression (the persecution of opposition figures abroad). Together with its partners, the STP will continue to insist that Switzerland prioritise human rights at least as highly as its trade interests, be it in the context of its economic policy, within the UN, or in its commitment to protecting exile communities in Switzerland.

February 2023

Together with Uyghur and Tibetan partners, the STP demonstrates in Geneva during a UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) session.

October 2023

Criticism from Amnesty, the STP and others: Switzerland does not adopt the EU's thematic sanctions on China and has been silent on this since December 2022.

October 2023

Side event on women's rights in China with ISHR and the World Uyghur Congress at the UN Human Rights Council.

October 2023

The STP strongly criticises China's re-election to the UN Human Rights Council.

December 2023

An audit in a factory in East Turkestan, in which car maker VW holds shares, shows an independent review of working conditions to be impossible.

December 2023

Open letter from Tibetan and Uyghur exile organisations and the STP to the Federal Council: Switzerland should not prioritise trade interests over human rights.

Arctic: “Arctic life, Indigenous rights: now!”

Indigenous communities in the Arctic are under pressure: In some places, the run on raw materials and so-called ‘transition minerals’, along with repression by the Russian state, is leading to the displacement and oppression of communities and their ways of life.



Foto: Denis Sinyakov / Greenpeace

Indigenous activist Sergei Kechimov is campaigning against an oil extraction project and is under pressure from the Russian authorities.

April 2023 Together with partner organisations, the STP submits a report on the situation of Indigenous communities in Russia to the UN Human Rights Council.

May 2023 Russian company Nor Nickel tries to cover up Indigenous rights violations with a PR offensive. The STP calls for transparency and effective improvements instead.

July 2023 A delegation from exile organisation ICIPR visits EMRIP and strongly condemns the Russian propaganda that prevails there.

October 2023 Together with South Sámi, the STP campaigns for the dismantling of the illegal wind farms in Fosen – with a petition to investors EIP and BKW.

December 2023 After tough negotiations, the South Sámi agree to a compromise with the developers. The North Sámi continue to resist: negotiations stall.

Activities

In 2023, repression continued to impact the work of Indigenous organisations and activists in Russia. In projects with its partners, the STP is monitoring the situation on the ground and weighing up security concerns, so as not to expose its partners to any danger. To the best of its abilities, it is supporting its partners in Russia and in exile. It also supported the establishment of the exile organisation ICIPR, with which it works closely and has jointly attended UN sessions, so as to draw attention to the situation of Indigenous communities in Russia. Alongside its efforts regarding Russia, it is also working closely with Sámi who are putting up resistance against the illegally built and operated wind farms in Fosen – because the Swiss companies BKW and EIP are involved in these farms.

Achievements

In order to draw international attention to the situation of Indigenous communities in Russia, the STP and its partners jointly submitted a report to the UN as part of the latter’s Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council, and visited the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP). There, the partners took a clear stand against the influence of RAIPON, the Russian umbrella organisation for Indigenous peoples, and its propaganda. In close cooperation with Sámi in Fosen, the STP launched a petition calling on the Swiss companies EIP and BKW to finally commit to the dismantling of the illegal wind farms in Storheia and Roan, or to an amicable solution.

Outlook

In the coming year, the STP will continue to support independent Indigenous organisations from Russia, so as to assist them in their struggle for the rights of Indigenous communities in Russia and to counter Russian state propaganda. Cooperation with the Sámi will also continue: The STP will keep supporting the Sámi in Fosen as they call for a good solution to the conflict, and will work together with them on the issue of green colonialism.

Climate Justice: Respect Indigenous Consent!

With its new programme 'Climate Justice: Respect Indigenous Consent!', the STP is striving to ensure that the urgently needed energy transition does not have a detrimental impact on Indigenous communities and minorities.



Foto: NETA623/PDXABAY

A copper mine in the north of Sweden.

Activities

The climate crisis calls for swift action. Such action can also have downsides though: Renewable energy technologies require so-called 'transition minerals', such as lithium and cobalt. Countries and companies alike are working flat out to mine these transition minerals in large quantities. This is putting pressure on Indigenous communities and minorities in particular, as demonstrated, for example, by the problems surrounding the construction of Glencore's Antapaccay mine in Peru and many of Nornickel's mines in Russia. Countries and companies must finally guarantee and enforce the communities' rights, so that no more displacement or destruction occurs in the name of the green economy. This is what the STP is campaigning for.

Achievements

The international coalition SIRGE (Securing Indigenous Peoples' Rights in the Green Economy) was founded by a number of Indigenous rights organisations in 2022. The STP was one of them – and launched its own programme on this topic in 2023: Under the slogan 'Climate Justice: Respect Indigenous Consent!', it compiled basic information, and raised questions about a just energy transition and Indigenous rights at both the Swiss Forum 'Business and Human Rights', and the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights. Together with other organisations, it kept a close eye on electric car manufacturers and let the public know which manufacturers have enshrined Indigenous rights in their internal guidelines.

Outlook

In the future, the STP will continue to work closely with its SIRGE coalition partners. It is conducting awareness-raising work and, on a political level, calling for Indigenous rights to be respected in the course of the energy transition. It is keeping a close eye on companies and supporting Indigenous communities as they demand their rights. To this end, the STP is developing a guide on how to use the OECD complaints mechanism, so that Indigenous communities can effectively defend themselves against violations of their rights. In Chile, the STP is working with its coalition partners on the issue of lithium mining.

August 2022 Founding of SIRGE (Securing Indigenous Peoples' Rights in the Green Economy), an international coalition led by an Indigenous steering committee.

February 2023 Together with Lead the Charge, the STP tells the public which electric car makers have enshrined Indigenous rights in their internal guidelines.

September 2023 The STP launches its programme 'Climate Justice: Respect Indigenous Consent!' and produces a fact sheet, explaining the problem with specific examples.

October 2023 Together with its coalition partners, the STP presents the topic 'just transition' at the Swiss Forum 'Business and Human Rights'.

November 2023 At the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, the STP and partners organise a side event about Indigenous rights in the energy transition.

December 2023 The STP supports a letter of protest to Glencore after huge problems at one of Glencore's copper mines in Peru become known.

Financial Report

The STP can again look back on a successful year. With income totalling CHF 2,347,040, it reached a new high and has considerable reserves in relation to its size. We therefore decided to channel some of these financial resources into our substantial work. We deliberately invested around 50 percent more in our programmes and continue to enjoy a solid equity capital base, despite the deficit. We now have five people working on the programmes instead of three, which enables us to carry out more effective projects and campaigns. In this regard, we are also implementing another strategic element: working more closely with affected communities, providing greater support for their projects and thus enabling them to be more successful in demanding their rights.

Without generous support from our members, as well as from donors, foundations and institutions, our work would be impossible. The STP would like to take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude for this support. The STP strives to use the available resources in an efficient, goal-oriented manner and to manage them economically.

Balance sheet as on 31 December 2023

ASSETS	2023	2022
LIQUID ASSETS	958 655.08	1 114 747.98
OUTSTANDING ASSETS / RECEIVABLES	2 751.28	3 878.18
ACCRUED INCOME	62 382.63	7 048.85
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1 023 788.99	1 125 675.01
TANGIBLE ASSETS	12 914.50	9 171.75
TOTAL CAPITAL ASSETS	12 914.50	9 171.75
TOTAL ASSETS	1 036 703.49	1 134 846.76

LIABILITIES	2023	2022
TRADE PAYABLES / CURRENT LIABILITIES	86 241.95	68 556.96
ACCRUED EXPENSES / DEFERRED INCOME	59 421.76	63 267.85
TOTAL BORROWED CAPITAL	145 663.71	131 824.81
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	22 000.00	0.00
TOTAL LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	22 000.00	0.00
FUNDS	74 781.87	76 723.92
TOTAL FUNDS	74 781.87	76 723.92
ORGANISATIONAL CAPITAL	909 350.29	938 758.69
NET PROFIT / LOSS	-115 092.38	-12 460.66
TOTAL EQUITY	794 257.91	926 298.03
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1 036 703.49	1 134 846.76

Income statement for 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

INCOME	2023	2022
SALES REVENUE	908.80	848.80
MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DONATIONS	1 774 476.17	1 818 023.58
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INSTITUTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS	565 406.98	200 169.06
OTHER INCOME	6 248.05	9 030.01
TOTAL INCOME	2 347 040.00	2 028 071.45

EXPENDITURE	2023	2022
PROGRAMMES	1 447 917.46	980 861.17
PERSONNEL EXPENSES	425 797.13	387 879.10
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	104 255.03	106 946.40
FUNDRAISING COSTS	491 004.91	523 964.06
DEPRECIATIONS	4 425.00	16 333.40
TOTAL COSTS	2 473 399.53	2 015 984.13
OPERATING RESULT	-126 359.53	12 087.32
FINANCIAL INCOME	-5 417.93	-6 897.70
INCOME UNRELATED TO THE ACCOUNTING PERIOD	0.00	28 908.90
RESULT BEFORE CHANGE OF FUNDS CAPITAL	-131 777.46	34 098.52
TOTAL FUNDS CAPITAL	16 685.08	-46 559.18
ANNUAL RESULT	-115 092.38	-12 460.66

General accounting principle

The financial reporting of the Society for Threatened Peoples (STP) complies with the professional financial reporting recommendations Swiss GAAP FER 21 and core FER, and with the Swiss Code of Obligations. This financial report represents the actual situation regarding assets, finances and profits.

The 2023 financial report was approved by the executive board on 1 March 2024 for the attention of the members' assembly.

The complete annual financial statement and audit report can be ordered from the STP or downloaded from the website:

<https://www.gfbv.ch/en/publications/annual-report/>

Activity Report

Who we are

The Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland campaigns for the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples. It is an association under the Swiss Civil Code and is the Swiss section of the Society for Threatened Peoples International. No membership fees were paid for the year 2022. Other sections of STP International are located in Germany, South Tyrol / Italy, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The STP has representatives in various other countries.

What we do

- We support local efforts to strengthen the human rights of minorities and indigenous peoples.
- We document and seek penalties for the violation of collective and individual human rights, call for clarification, punishment and compensation in this regard, and seek solutions together with the affected communities and all stakeholders.
- We protect the interests of our partners in dealings with authorities and decision-makers, in cases where they cannot do so alone.

The substantial activities carried out in 2023, the successes achieved and the outlook are described in the annual report. The financial successes are listed accordingly in the Financial Report section.

Organisation

Our executive board is elected for two years (re-election is possible) and is made up of the following people:

Lisa Mazzone (president, elected until 2024)
 Miges Baumann (vice-president, elected until 2024)
 Lea Ackermann (elected until 2024)
 Göpf Berweger (elected until 2025)
 Marianne Helfer (elected until 2025)
 Eva Schmassmann (elected until 2025)

Melanie Gajowski has stepped down as a board member. She has served on our board from 2020 - 2023. We have greatly appreciated her contribution and thank her for her great commitment.

In 2023, the executive board met four times and worked for a total of about 120 non-remunerated hours for the STP.

In the course of 2023, a total of 17 permanent employees and 6 interns worked for the STP. Internships usually last 6–12 months.

Our supporters

Most income is generated from membership fees and donations made by individuals. At the end of 2023, the STP had about 15,000 active supporters – somewhat fewer than in the previous year. The recruitment of members and donors simultaneously serves to raise public awareness of the organisation's objectives. New members and donors are recruited by means of stand campaigns, at events, on doorsteps, via mailings and on the internet.

For various campaigns, we received donations and contributions from foundations and organisations.

The STP would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all members, donors, foundations and organisations for their generous support. Without all of you, our work would not be possible. The STP would also like to thank the executive board, the employees and the interns for their immense enthusiasm and untiring commitment to human rights! And lastly, we wish to express our gratitude to all our programme partners, who selflessly stand up for their rights, often in the face of serious threats and enormous risk, and who have our utmost appreciation.

Become an ally of minorities and indigenous people

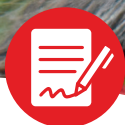
through a:
MEMBERSHIP



a
DONATION



or a
REQUEST



Get involved by supporting us!

We can only continue our work with your support!
Thank you very much for your valuable contribution.

Donations: **IBAN CH05 0079 0016 2531 7232 1**



www.gfbv.ch/en/get-involved/

Thank you!