

# IT'S ABOUT TIME

When CIEL was founded in the summer of 1989, the Soviet Union existed and the European Union was yet to come. The rapid, successful adoption of the Montreal Protocol had ushered in a new age of optimism for international solutions to address shared global problems, and calls were rising for a new global agreement to address the looming threat of climate change.

The world has changed profoundly in the last 30 years, although not enough. CIEL has both shaped that change and changed itself along the way.

Early in our history, CIEL's experience supporting communities threatened by development projects taught us that **we could not simply be an environmental organization — we must be a human rights organization as well.** That lesson changed not only CIEL's identity, but also our mission and our vision for what a just and sustainable world looks like — and what it will take to get us there.

That vision helped CIEL lead the movement to win the World Bank Inspection Panel, the first accountability mechanism to provide communities access to justice for the negative impacts of development finance. More than two dozen development finance institutions have followed this model in the ensuing quarter century. The newest of these — at the Green Climate Fund — has the strongest protections yet.

**Working with partners and frontline communities, we have slowly, steadily moved human rights from the margins of the environmental debate ever closer to its center.** In 2005, CIEL and partners supported the Inuit Circumpolar Conference to bring the first ever human rights complaint based on the impacts of climate change. Ten years later, we secured human rights obligations in the Paris Climate Agreement. Globally, human rights bodies are beginning to recognize and to adjudicate the right to a healthy environment and a livable planet. And more than 100 countries worldwide, from South Africa to India to Colombia, have followed suit. This legal recognition is feeding a wave of lawsuits that seek to end the era of fossil fuels and hold State and corporate actors accountable for their role in the climate crisis.

**But the world is not changing fast enough.** A quarter century after the Inspection Panel was created, development finance is still putting rights, livelihoods, and lives at risk in communities around the world. Nearly three decades since the UN climate convention was adopted, the climate crisis is accelerating. And thirty and twenty years on from the Basel and Stockholm Conventions respectively, toxic risks continue to mount, including those stemming from an increasingly plastic planet.

This reality has taught us a hard but critical lesson: Strong treaties and effective laws are critical, but words alone are not enough. To make change, we need effective enforcement. We need political will. We need people in the streets demanding accountability and action. We need to change the economic systems that keep us tied to dirty fuels, polluting industries, and corporate influence.

**We've adapted our work to these new realities, but CIEL and the world must do more.** It's this growing recognition that is bringing people into the streets to block construction trucks in Chile, stop mines in Romania, disrupt pipelines and oil terminals across North America, and in teeming millions, demand action on the climate crisis in thousands of cities in nearly every country in the world. To succeed, people need not only massive mobilization, but access to information, access to justice, and the freedom to speak out without fear of criminalization, violence, and death.

**We face this reality because we are running out of time.** The planet's leading climate scientists have warned that we have 11 years to fundamentally alter our course. This is the challenge for CIEL and the world, and we will spend our next decade working relentlessly to meet that challenge.

**But we are not alone in the fight. Not by far.** Our children are in the streets and in the courts, leading by example and by necessity. Indigenous Peoples have fought this extractive system for centuries. Frontline and fenceline communities are demanding environmental justice from Houston to Antioquia, and from Argentina to Romania. And so are you. Every day, our movement for a just and sustainable planet grows. Because it must.

**We are proud of the progress we've won over the last thirty years. But as we embark on our next thirty years, the time for incremental change has passed. Humanity's future demands a radical and rapid departure from its past.** Using the power of the law, we will work alongside partners to reduce toxic risks, protect our forests, ensure that human rights drive development, and bring the fossil era to an end. IT'S ABOUT TIME.

CARROLL MUFFETT,  
PRESIDENT & CEO



# REGULATING FOREVER CHEMICALS

For *decades*, we've fought to get the European Union to regulate **endocrine-disrupting chemicals** that affect our hormone systems, causing long-term effects such as infertility and cancer. In May, in response to our advocacy, the European Parliament called upon the EU Commission to create a concrete plan to eliminate endocrine disruptors from cosmetics, toys, and food packaging by 2020.

**Nanomaterials** are particles tens of thousands of times smaller than a human hair, and industry is using them in thousands of new and novel products. But at such small sizes, some nanomaterials can pass through the walls of organs and cells — allowing chemicals that were previously considered “safe” to impact our health in new and unforeseen ways. Years of CIEL advocacy to regulate nanomaterials culminated in a major win this year: Europe's flagship chemical regulation, known as REACH, now requires companies to submit data on the chemicals they're using as nanomaterials.

The **Stockholm Convention** is a global treaty to regulate the world's worst chemicals, which harm human health and build up over time in the environment and the body. CIEL has been there since the treaty's inception, advocating

for countries to ban some of the most dangerous pesticides and industrial chemicals that persist indefinitely — *forever chemicals*. In a critical victory for global health, countries agreed this year to ban the chemical PFOA, a suspected carcinogen and endocrine disruptor that has contaminated drinking water in many parts of the world.

In a moment of anxious excitement, countries broke 15 years of gridlock under the **Rotterdam Convention** to ensure that countries are meeting their commitments under the treaty. The Convention empowers countries to make an informed decision on whether or not they want to import hazardous chemicals. Though decisions are typically made by consensus, for the first time, delegates used voting to break the deadlock and create a compliance mechanism. But the problem of leaving public health up to consensus continues to threaten progress. Though it has been on the agenda for years, a few countries refused, yet again, to regulate such known toxic offenders as chrysotile asbestos or paraquat, in spite of their established health impacts. That's why CIEL is working with countries on a new way of listing chemicals under the convention, which doesn't allow the economic benefit of the few to override the health and protection of all.



Toxic threats lurk in plain sight — in our food, drinks, toys, cosmetics, and thousands of consumer products. Every day, these chemicals build up in our bodies, with impacts that are not yet fully understood. That's why **CIEL advocates for a precautionary approach:** companies should have to prove their chemicals are *safe before* they're used in consumer products, not the other way around. CIEL works at multiple levels to make our planet safer by limiting our exposure to toxic chemicals — from strengthening regulations on specific hazardous substances, to advocating for a global legal framework to manage chemicals in a safer way.

# TIME TO REORGANIZE THE

After more than two weeks of intense negotiations, a huddle of weary industry lobbyists entered the elevator, lowering their voices. Turning to CIEL's David Azoulay, one of them said accusingly, "You just completely reorganized the global plastic waste trade."



The Basel Convention regulates the trade of hazardous wastes from one country to another. Along with the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, it's one of the three major chemical treaties that meet every two years to address some of the biggest toxic threats of our time.

# GLOBAL PLASTIC WASTE TRADE

When plastic is tossed in the recycling bin, the expectation is that it will become a new plastic product. But in fact, only nine percent of all plastic has ever been recycled — with the vast majority instead being incinerated, thrown into landfills, or sent “away” to communities around the world who are left drowning in wealthy countries’ plastic trash.

When China — the biggest importer of plastic waste — banned these imports last year, waste brokers redirected this plastic “recycling” to countries in Southeast Asia

without their permission, knowing full well that they did not have the infrastructure to deal with it.

But CIEL and partners helped convince 187 countries to take bold action to stop this abuse. Under a new amendment to the Basel Convention, exporting countries will now have to get importing countries’ consent before they ship them their plastic waste.

It's a major win for communities around the world that are being exposed to toxic plastic trash that they neither created

nor want. And CIEL was there from the beginning, advocating for the original proposal by Norway, sharing legal analysis of the measure, countering false narratives by the plastic industry, and helping garner over a million signatures from a public that is demanding concrete action on plastic pollution.

International law can be slow, but this Basel Amendment (which came to fruition in less than a year) shows the law can be agile when countries unite to address an urgent crisis that affects us all.





# THE HIDDEN COSTS

From drafting new chemical treaties, to stopping corporate-controlled trade deals, to creating a roadmap to sue Big Oil for climate change: we've built our reputation by being on the vanguard of emerging environmental issues. And we're doing it again. We are transforming the global movement to address the plastic crisis and exposing the hidden costs of plastic in two groundbreaking reports.

## PLASTIC THREATENS OUR **CLIMATE** ON A GLOBAL SCALE.

From the moment plastic feedstocks leave the wellhead as a fossil fuel, to refining and manufacturing plastic products, to managing plastic waste: plastic contributes to climate change and threatens our ability to keep global temperature rise under 1.5°C.

- In 2019, plastic will release 850 million tons of greenhouse gases. That's the equivalent of 189 new coal power plants. By 2030, it could be as much as 295 new coal power plants each year.
- Industry is rapidly accelerating plastic production. By 2050, plastic could account for 13% of the total remaining emissions to keep warming below 1.5°C.
- Plastic threatens the ocean's life-supporting ability to regulate our climate.

To address the climate crisis, we must turn off the tap on plastic production.

**Learn more:** [www.ciel.org/plastic](http://www.ciel.org/plastic)

2019 2030



# OF A PLASTIC PLANET

## PLASTIC IS A GLOBAL **HEALTH** CRISIS.

Everyday, we inhale, swallow, and touch plastic and the hazardous chemicals added to it — through the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the toys, packaging, and clothes we use every day. At each stage of its lifecycle, plastic is toxic to human health.

- The extraction of fossil fuels — the feedstock for 99% of plastic — exposes nearby communities to carcinogenic and neurotoxic chemicals.
- Refining fossil fuels into plastic pellets emits toxic chemicals like benzene, which is a known bone marrow poison.
- Large quantities of toxic additives are required to make plastic soft, hard, transparent, or colorful. Those chemicals can represent up to 80% of the mass in some types of plastic, and many are carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, or heavy metals.
- “Disposal” — whether by incineration, land-filling, so-called chemical recycling, or other uses like plastic roads — releases scores of toxic substances into our air, water, and soil.
- Microplastics — both those intentionally created and those that result from the disintegration of larger pieces of plastic — accumulate in food chains, making them available again for human exposure.

Our findings are changing the conversation about the health impacts of plastic and strengthening health regulations around the globe, including the strongest-yet single-use plastic ban in Vermont, USA.

2030

# TURNING OFF THE TAP ON PLASTIC PRODUCTION

Within one mile of billowing smoke plumes and methane flares from petrochemical and plastic production plants, babies are playing, children attend school, and neighbors gather at public parks. These fenceline communities bear the greatest toxic burden of our plastic planet.

**“Plastic is only as disposable as the communities that sit at the fenceline.”**

— Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services

As the rest of the world clamors to stop plastic pollution, the fossil fuel industry is poised to open the floodgates by investing hundreds of billions of dollars to expand plastic production.

In Portland, Texas, ExxonMobil and SABIC are building the world’s largest ethylene cracker — a massive industrial plant that will break apart the molecules in ethane gas and rearrange them into the building blocks of plastic. This new plant will release dangerous levels of toxic chemicals like ammonia, benzene, and formaldehyde, as well as massive amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases. Year-round, emissions will rain down upon the town of Portland, like so many other fenceline communities across the US Gulf Coast and Appalachia region, showering the residents in toxic chemicals.

CIEL connects fenceline communities with regional campaigns and legal advocates to support their efforts. As communities fight for their rights and oppose dangerous petrochemical expansion, their successes provide vital lessons for other communities doing the same.

In Portland, CIEL linked local advocates with legal support to challenge the air permit for this new, massive, and dangerous plant. Although the local councils tasked with permitting are notoriously industry-friendly, communities successfully delayed the permit for nine months. Companies have historically disregarded local opposition, but this delay sent a powerful message: The time for polluting industries to act without consequences is over.

Now, we are channeling momentum from these local fights on an international level. With a powerful network of allies in the Break Free From Plastic movement, we are advocating for a legally binding international treaty to stop plastic production at its source.



FOR  
INVESTORS,  
THERE'S  
**NO FUTURE  
IN FOSSILS**

For decades, as long as profits were high and shareholders quiet, fossil fuel companies profited off of climate change. But times are changing.

CIEL is a vital partner in the global movement to shift trillions of dollars of investments away from fossil fuels and into a clean-energy economy. By changing where investments flow, we're changing the economics that have supported a dirty-energy economy for decades.

We're flipping the script: CIEL's legal analysis and advocacy are making the case that divesting from polluting energy isn't just a moral imperative; it's a legal obligation. The transition to a clean-energy economy will reduce the long-term value of fossil fuel companies, even as litigation over their role in the climate crisis accelerates. The mounting impacts of rising sea levels, massive wildfires, and supercharged storms have demonstrated that financing fossil fuels is an investment in climate chaos, environmental destruction, and human rights abuses on a global scale. Failure to properly consider these risks could create legal liability for pension funds and other large investors.

CIEL is equipping local, state, and regional advocates with new legal tools and strategies designed to compel institutional investors to consider climate risks and divest from fossil fuels. Putting these arguments into the toolkits

of campaigners around the country and across the globe, CIEL is helping to shift money away from increasingly risky fossil fuels and into cleaner-energy solutions, accelerating our path to a more sustainable future.

Across the world, there's momentum to shine a light on the financial risks of fossil fuels:

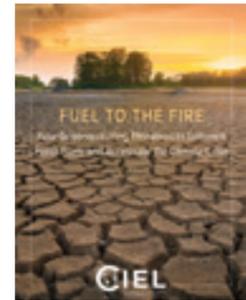
- California passed a law requiring the two largest pension funds in the US to report on how climate change will impact their investments, and CIEL will be monitoring to ensure adequate disclosure.
- National pension funds in Norway and Denmark have dramatically reduced their investments in fossil fuel assets.
- The US House and the Senate introduced the Climate Risk Disclosure Act, a bill that would require publicly traded companies to report how climate change will impact their performance.
- Globally, investors with nearly \$9 trillion in assets have announced their intention to divest.

# NO TIME FOR FALSE

Geoengineering sounds like science fiction — spraying chemicals into the sky to block the sun, sucking emissions from the atmosphere with massive fans, injecting carbon dioxide into the soil to pump out more oil. But these risky technologies are gaining traction as fossil fuel companies push false solutions that undermine our ability to tackle climate change.

We have less than eleven years to cut global carbon emissions in half. Eleven years that we can't afford to waste on risky technological fixes that squander resources and political will while locking in dirty energy for decades to come.

CIEL's *Fuel to the Fire* report reveals that fossil fuel companies have been promoting geoengineering as a false solution to climate change. In addition to the significant risks inherent in transforming and irrevocably altering the Earth and its atmosphere, geoengineering threatens to delay action on urgently needed emissions reductions, as it justifies continued investments in and reliance on fossil fuels.



The climate crisis is grave, it is urgent, and we are running out of time. We shouldn't be spending that time on false "solutions" that mask climate symptoms and perpetuate our addiction to fossil fuels. We *have* the tools to reduce our emissions today, without resorting to these false solutions. Solving the climate crisis is a matter of political will, mass mobilization, and corporate accountability.

Now, *Fuel to the Fire* is equipping a network of advocates to recognize the deep links between geoengineering and fossil fuels and to push back against rising calls for experiments with, deployment of, and subsidies for geoengineering in the US and around the world.

# 11 YEARS

# SOLUTIONS

**Carbon capture and storage**, which injects captured CO<sub>2</sub> into aging oil wells to extract previously unreachable fossil fuels, could spur:

- 40% more coal consumption
- 923 million additional barrels of oil in the US alone by 2040

**Solar radiation modification**, injecting sulfate aerosols into the atmosphere to reflect back the sun's rays and reduce warming, could cause:

- Acid rain and ozone depletion
- Unpredictable impacts on global weather patterns and hydrological cycles
- Massive displacement of communities
- A massive warming spike if the modification is stopped once started



# CLIMATE CRISIS = HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS

**From deadly hurricanes to raging wildfires to rising sea levels, climate change is here and impacting the human rights of people around the world.**

With only 11 years left to radically change course or face true climate catastrophe, climate action that respects and protects human rights is more critical than ever.

From its start, CIEL has been at the vanguard of using international law to expose and address the human rights impacts of the climate crisis. Over our thirty-year history, we have played a critical role in shaping emerging international law to understand and address these interlinked threats.

## 1989

CIEL provides international environmental law expertise to developing countries in the negotiation of the climate change regime, supporting the creation of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

## 1999

CIEL supports the Mayagna Awas Tigni in a land rights case before the Inter-America Court that in 2001 recognized the property rights of indigenous communities to their traditional land and resources.

## 2005

CIEL and partners support the first case to connect climate change and human rights, an Inuit petition asserting that inaction to stop global warming by the US violates the rights of Arctic peoples. This leads to the first-ever hearing on the connection between climate change and human rights at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

## 2007

CIEL supports Small Island States in developing the Malé Declaration, a seminal document in the now-universal recognition that climate change impacts human rights.

## 2008

CIEL helps secure the first UN Human Rights Council resolution to recognize the link between climate change and human rights.

## 2009

CIEL and partners convene experts to identify practical ways to implement human rights and climate linkages, publishing "Human Rights & Climate Change: A Practical Primer."

## 2012

After 15 years of CIEL and partners' advocacy, the UN establishes an Independent Expert (now Special Rapporteur) on Human Rights and the Environment.

## 2015

CIEL and partners lead the movement to secure human rights in the preamble of the Paris Climate Agreement, setting a roadmap for climate action.

## 2017

With partners, CIEL helps secure authoritative statements by the UN human rights treaty bodies that large-scale extraction, export, consumption, and financing of fossil fuels violate international human rights obligations.

## 2019

CIEL and partners spearhead a global summit on human rights and climate change, bringing together Indigenous Peoples, workers, women, and youth to demand that people's fundamental rights be at the core of climate action.

In the past year, CIEL worked with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on a series of workshops to develop guidance on how countries can put their human rights commitments into practice as they adapt to and mitigate climate change. This year, we also celebrated the creation of a Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform within the UN climate negotiation process, through which Indigenous Peoples can share their traditional knowledge. CIEL is continuing

to support this platform to ensure that the rights and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are placed at the core of climate action. In June, representatives of Indigenous Peoples around the world gathered for the first-ever meeting convened under the platform, marking a major step toward more participatory climate policies worldwide.

# 30 YEARS OF IMPACT

CIEL opens, with the hope of addressing the environmental concerns that transcend national boundaries, from climate change to toxic exposure to deforestation.

CIEL and partners help establish the World Bank Inspection Panel, the first accountability mechanism to provide access to justice for communities affected by international development.

CIEL opens its Geneva office to focus on the World Trade Organization (WTO).

CIEL's legal analysis and support help to defeat the Multilateral Agreement on Investment that would have drastically expanded corporate power and impunity.

CIEL's legal advocacy supports the creation of the Stockholm Convention, a critical treaty that eliminates persistent organic pollutants — extremely hazardous chemicals that remain in the environment indefinitely.

CIEL helps protect the rights of indigenous communities displaced by the Ralco Dam along the BíoBío River in Chile, setting a precedent for indigenous people impacted by development projects.

CIEL helps secure the first ruling from the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) that tribunals may consider amicus briefs in investor-state disputes, even over the objection of the parties.

CIEL's appeal to the Inter-American Court successfully protects communities from toxic mining waste in San Mateo de Huanchor, Peru, the first ruling that pollution violates human rights.

CIEL advocacy secures groundbreaking provisions on environmental protection, forest governance, and labor rights in the Peru-US Free Trade Agreement.

CIEL plays a major role in accelerating REACH, the sweeping European chemicals law, and in assisting companies seeking safer alternatives for hundreds of toxic chemicals.

1989

1993

1995

1998

2001

2003

2005

2006

2007

2008



# 2009

CIEL represents former sugarcane workers in Nicaragua suffering from chronic kidney disease in a complaint at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) that leads to systemic reforms in how the IFC evaluates risks; sugarcane workers ultimately receive more than \$6 million in benefits.

# 2010

CIEL organizes a first-of-its-kind hearing at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to highlight the situation of environmental human rights defenders across Latin America.

# 2012

CIEL helps lay the groundwork for the 2018 adoption of the Escazú Convention, which commits governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure public access to information, participation, and justice in environmental issues.

# 2013

CIEL and International Accountability Project launch the Early Warning System to alert thousands of communities about new development projects that threaten their human rights and the environment.

# 2014

CIEL advocacy leads to the adoption of the Mauritius Convention, which secures stronger transparency in investor-state arbitration under UNCITRAL, including disclosure of documents, consideration of amicus curiae briefs, and open hearings.

# 2016

In response to pressure from CIEL and others, Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) add more than 300 species of rosewood to its protected species list to ensure their survival.

# 2016

CIEL's legal support to Salvadoran communities leads to a ruling in favor of El Salvador and against Pacific Rim Mining Corp. Shortly thereafter, El Salvador makes history as the first country to ban metal mining.

# 2017

CIEL plays a key role in the creation of the Minamata Convention, the first global treaty to reduce mercury pollution.

# 2017

CIEL's *Smoke and Fumes* exposes that the oil industry knew their products contributed to climate change for six decades, creating a "road map" to sue Big Oil for its role in the climate crisis.

# 2019

187 countries adopt amendments to the Basel Convention that require major plastic waste producers to get consent before exporting their toxic plastic waste to the Global South.

**\*Since its inception, CIEL has been at the vanguard of using international law to expose and address the human rights impacts of climate change. To learn more about the milestones and CIEL's achievements in this critical space, please see page 15-16.**

# TIME FOR CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY

For far too long, countries have failed to take meaningful action to address climate change, allowing both the climate crisis and the industries fueling it to go unchecked. In courtrooms around the world, time is up. Using the power of law, people are demanding that the companies and countries most responsible for the climate crisis be held accountable.

Six decades ago, the oil and gas industry knew their products contributed to climate change. CIEL's *Smoke & Fumes* research brought this evidence to light and helped equip a climate accountability movement bringing cases around the world.

**Holding corporations accountable** for what they knew about climate change — and what they did with that information:

- Hours of testimony and an amicus brief by CIEL informed the Philippines Human Rights Commission investigation into whether 47 fossil fuel companies are responsible for the human rights impacts of climate change.
- CIEL's *A Crack in the Shell* research and expert testimony are being used by Milieudefensie and other Dutch NGOs to sue Shell for its contributions to climate change.
- 16 US cities, counties, and states have cited evidence unearthed by *Smoke & Fumes* in climate lawsuits or investigations against fossil fuel companies.



**Holding States accountable** for their legal obligations to protect human rights from the threats of climate change:

- Two CIEL amicus briefs supported 21 youth in their lawsuit to hold the US government accountable for actively supporting the fossil fuel energy system that threatens current and future generations' rights in *Juliana v. United States*.
- A CIEL amicus brief supported a lawsuit against the Norwegian government to stop it from opening up the Arctic to new oil development.

■ CIEL has helped secure recommendations from UN Treaty Bodies that will help hold states accountable for their climate commitments, strengthen climate advocacy, and drive climate action to better protect human rights. These recommendations have included that:

- Argentina reconsider its plans to pursue new gas development in the Vaca Muerta region;
- Australia reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, including those from coal exports;
- Japan reduce its emissions to meet its international commitments and stop funding coal plants; and
- The United Kingdom ban fracking.



## SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

Chile's Alto Maipo hydro project was financed by multiple development banks, including the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Finance Corporation, and was registered under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) because it would theoretically help reduce emissions. But at what cost? Our incredible partners at the Coordinadora Ciudadana No Alto Maipo and Ecosistemas have mobilized thousands of people to protest the project's impacts, including loss of livelihoods, destruction of the Andes Mountains and glaciers, and a compromised water supply for two million people. The mounting environmental, labor, social, and financial problems could have been avoided had the project developers properly consulted with local communities and respected human rights from the earliest stages.

**Getting these safeguards and procedural rules right is part of CIEL's least glamorous, most technical work. And it is critically important.**

Strong policies and processes ensure that human rights are integrated into environmental decision-making. That's why

we're working with Chilean partners in the international climate negotiations to ensure the replacement CDM learns from its mistakes and has the proper safeguards in place to protect people, as well as the planet.

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

On the other side of the world, in Songdo, South Korea, we're working to ensure the newest climate finance mechanism, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), learns from past mistakes and gets climate action right. And that includes not only ensuring strong safeguards, but also making sure there is accountability when things do go wrong.

CIEL helped create the first independent accountability mechanism at the World Bank in 1993, which serves as an avenue to access justice for communities harmed by development projects. Since then, over two dozen development finance institutions around the world have followed suit. CIEL has helped dozens of communities file complaints and demand redress. Building on this legacy, CIEL supported the GCF's adoption of the strongest independent accountability mechanism to date, setting a new bar for international financial institutions around the world.

# CLIMATE FINANCE THE RIGHT(S) WAY

Climate and poverty alleviation "solutions" that fail to protect the rights of the communities they claim to help undermine both objectives. And what's worse, without strong avenues for those communities to access justice when their rights are violated, these projects can further entrench inequality and environmental damage. Take, for example, the Alto Maipo hydro project in Chile, a megaproject that has repeatedly come under fire for environmental and social harms



## DEVELOPMENT FINANCE:

Changing huge, global institutions takes time and significant collective effort. Progress often comes slowly and painstakingly, with important changes taking years or even decades to materialize. Yet years of advocacy bear fruit at unexpected moments. **After 30 years, the past year has borne dramatic changes to the way development banks like the World Bank do business.**

## 25 YEARS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

In February 2019, the US Supreme Court ruled on a case brought by EarthRights International on behalf of fisherfolk in India, finding that development banks do not have absolute immunity from lawsuits and can now be sued for harm caused by their investments. This is a huge step forward for communities around the world who have been affected by development projects.

We also made the World Bank Group rethink how it invests in conflict zones, how it assesses environmental and human rights risks, how it responds to community complaints, and how it prevents retaliation against those who speak out against its projects. Now, we're working to ensure the banks follow through on these commitments in practice.

In November 2018, national police in riot gear descended upon the small community of Santa Cruz de la India, **Nicaragua**, carrying heavy weaponry. For years, community members had

peacefully protested the construction of a gold mine that would contaminate their water and violate their human rights. Community members have experienced escalating surveillance, intimidation, and death threats, culminating in a full-on siege by militarized police forces.

In a huge win for the communities of Santa Cruz de la India, the International Finance Corporation divested from the mine in 2019. CIEL is working alongside the community as they demand accountability for the human rights violations they have faced, but the threats against them continue to mount as they oppose mining in their region.

The Hidroituango dam, currently under construction in northwest **Colombia**, would be the nation's largest hydroelectric plant. It's also the greatest threat to the human rights of local communities since the Colombian armed conflict. Flooding has forced thousands of people from their homes,

and intimidation, death threats, and assassinations of those who have opposed the project are escalating. Despite these threats, local communities are defending their rights. With support from CIEL and partners, more than 400 community members from Movimiento Ríos Vivos filed a complaint last year demanding accountability from the Inter-American Development Bank for financing the project.

In a critical step forward, a Colombian judge recognized the grave dangers to local communities and ordered precautionary measures be put in place, in order to prevent further harm and address ongoing problems with the dam. **"This historic decision has given us a glimmer of hope that we might achieve justice, despite the many years of pain and anguish that we have experienced,"** said Isabel Zuleta, **spokesperson for Movimiento Ríos Vivos.**

## CORPORATE CONTROL OF DEMOCRACY

# TIME TO END ISDS

Nestled in the heart of Transylvania lies the Romanian town of Roșia Montană, home to a community with a rich cultural and archaeological heritage. Yet a Canadian mining company is suing Romania for having denied the company permission to build the continent's largest open-pit gold mine in the heart of the village.

Around the world, investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) allows corporations to sue countries (for \$4 billion in Romania's case) when national institutions protect the public interest at the perceived cost of corporate profits. It's a profoundly dangerous system that prioritizes corporate interests over public safety and wellbeing. In short: it enables corporate extortion.

CIEL advocates to end ISDS and supports communities directly impacted by it. Although ISDS tribunals are notoriously opaque and closed-door, CIEL works to ensure

that impacted communities like Roșia Montană can make their voices heard. In November 2018, CIEL helped residents of Roșia Montană submit an amicus brief to the tribunal to consider their evidence of the company's environmental and human rights impacts.

And as these cases proliferate around the world, CIEL is answering requests for help. In Colombia, we've supported partners for years to successfully stop a gold mine in their protected high-altitude wetlands. Now, we're supporting them as they

face an ISDS case.

As we learned in El Salvador fighting Pacific Rim Mining's ISDS case, public interest in and outrage over ISDS cases can have a powerful impact on the tribunal's decision. We are using and adapting these strategies to protect our partners in Romania, Colombia, and beyond.

“This is not a fight to win; it is a fight to survive. If the company won't respect our independent justice system, we don't want them, at all.”

—Representative of Alburnus Maior, Romania





The Amazon Rainforest is the lungs of our planet, absorbing climate-change-inducing carbon dioxide and breathing out 20 percent of the Earth's oxygen. It's also home to tens of thousands of species, many of which can't be found anywhere else in the world.

But this critical ecosystem is at risk.

In Peru, timber mafias have built empires by trading illegal lumber from the Amazon, despite operating in a country with some of the strongest forest governance on the books. CIEL's research revealed a key piece of the mafia's success: government corruption. *Authorized to Steal*, our meticulous investigation into a thousand individual trade permits, revealed just how deep this corruption runs.

And then we named names. We identified 34 government officials who helped launder illegal timber. Up to this point, these officials assumed their actions would have no consequences. They were wrong.

Our exposé is having massive impacts. Within a month of the report's release, there were government investigations, frontpage news coverage, and a reorganization of oversight offices. The best part? The laws already exist to punish illegal logging. (We know, we helped strengthen them!) Now, it's time to enforce them.

While some corrupt Peruvian officials are lining their pockets helping the timber mafia, others are valiantly taking a stand to protect the Amazon. Forest inspectors of the Peruvian agency OSINFOR trek to remote parts of the Amazon forest to verify if timber was logged legally. Their investigations and reports are one of the few backstops against illegal logging in Peru.

But earlier this year, the Peruvian government threatened to restructure OSINFOR to rob it of its independence. After CIEL and our partners took to the international stage to expose Peru's attempts to gut OSINFOR, the Peruvian government reversed the decision, marking an important victory.



TO STOP  
ILLEGAL LOGGING,  
**START NAMING NAMES**

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## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR FISCAL YEARS ENDING JUNE 30TH

### ASSETS: FY 2019

#### CURRENT ASSETS

**Cash & Cash Equivalents:** \$1,102,195

**Contributions Receivable:** \$1,239,078

**Contracts Receivable:** \$38,667

**Miscellaneous Receivables:** \$5,607

**Prepaid Expenses:** \$22,015

**TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS:** \$2,407,562

### Other Assets

**Property & Equipment, Net:** \$31,535

**Rental Security Deposits:** \$2,401

**Long-Term Investments:** \$24,073

**TOTAL ASSETS:** \$2,465,571

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:

##### Current Liabilities

**Accounts Payable:** \$14,736

**Accrued Payroll & Benefits Payable:** \$39,657

**Deferred Contract Revenue:** \$76,539

**Deferred Lease Liability:** \$8,341

**TOTAL LIABILITIES:** \$139,273

##### Net Assets

**Without Donor Restrictions:** \$673,621

**With Donor Restrictions:** \$1,652,677

**TOTAL NET ASSETS:** \$2,326,298

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:**  
\$2,465,571

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FOR FISCAL YEARS ENDING JUNE 30TH

### Revenue: FY 2019

**Foundation Grants:** \$2,229,326

**Misc. Contracts:** \$990,842

**Salaries In-Kind:** \$124,564

**Misc. Contributions:** \$147,602

**Interest & Investment Income:** \$21,908

**Miscellaneous Income:** \$25,973

**TOTAL REVENUE:** \$3,540,215

### EXPENSES:

#### Program Services:

**Climate and Energy:** \$728,692

**Environmental Health:** \$566,914

**People, Land And Resources:** \$520,819

**IPEN Secretariat and UNEP Funded  
Projects:** \$593,809

**TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES:** \$2,410,234

### Supporting Services:

**Management & General:** \$384,953

**Fundraising:** \$94,473

**Total Expenses:** \$2,889,660

**Changes in Net Assets:** \$650,555

**Beginning Net Assets:** \$1,675,743

**Ending Net Assets:** \$2,326,298

CIEL's audited financial statements and IRS Form 990s are available on our website (CIEL.ORG) or upon request.  
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## JOIN THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR A

**We're running out of time.** Leading scientists have warned us that we have only 11 years to transform our energy system to avoid catastrophic climate change. International financial institutions continue to fund projects that threaten human rights. The toxic cocktail of chemicals with which we come into contact every day harms our health and the health of our planet.

But if the past 30 years have taught us anything, it's that together, we have the power to meet these challenges. Our children are taking to the streets and the courts to protect the rights of current and future generations from climate change. Frontline communities are fighting back against mines, dams, and fracking projects that threaten their rights while irrevocably damaging the Earth. Around the world — from the streets to the halls of power — a growing global movement is echoing the call: It's about time.

It's about time for radical change. Our collective future depends on it. Incremental change is no longer enough. Instead, we must transform the economic system that ties us to corporate power and polluting industries, we must fully enforce our most ambitious laws and treaties, and we must hold the industries that have harmed human rights and the climate accountable.



## JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**Doing so means thinking big, coming up with new solutions, and taking leadership from directly impacted communities. Together, we will:**

- Transition away from fossil fuels toward a clean-energy economy;
- Halt the toxic and climate impacts of plastic across its full lifecycle;
- Reduce people's exposure to toxic chemicals;
- Protect forests and other critical ecosystems; and
- Ensure that human rights drive development.

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