

To : Manitoba Clean-Environment Commission
305-155 Carlton St.
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3H8

From: Gérard Dubé



The Sio Silica Sand project has got to stop!

Today is the second day of the International Water Conference. As we enter a highly difficult era of the climate emergency- water has come into a crucial focus. In some cases it is devastating countries(Pakistan) and area (California) other areas are drying up around the world causing havoc, migrations, loss of crops and livelihoods, devastating fires and on... It is also a good time to reflect on how we value the water resources we have and make plans to maintain them properly and insure we keep them clean. Drinking water is a highly shrinking resource: the costs of cleaning and filtering are getting higher as even our rain waters are getting polluted(PFAS (forever chemicals) in rain water (1) and in drinking water(2). The increase in rare earths and metals due to the explosion in demand for 'green technology'(PV , cell phones, wind generators, and EV's) is also pushing higher levels of water consumption and pollution. **So it is very important not to be reckless with the clean resources that we have now and protect them so that they stay clean!**

The Sio Silica Sand project advertises that we can produce 'clean' technology locally- that is PhotoVoltaic Panels(PV). Silica Sand is one element of the PV- there are 30+ rare earth and metal components to build PV's. Most of these are being imported from China and third World countries where environmental regulations are weak or non-existent; where human(such as child labour, starvation wages, inhumane working

conditions) exploitation is rampant. (3) The use of water in the extraction process is high and polluted water is dumped back in lakes and rivers.(3,4). With concentrations of rare earths and metals being lower(hanging fruit has already been picked) there is an increase in both energy use and water use- leading to even more pollution of land, water and air! (3,4). Aurore Stéphant, geological mine engineer, has visited close to 1000 mines in the last 20 years, has seen the pollution first hand on all mines without exception- says that if companies tell you that they will not pollute -she states 'do not believe them'(she even repeated it twice with emphasis). She has testimony from other scientist that say due to the increasing demand for rare earths and metals (examples increase of lithium 20X and cobalt 4X), and because, for the most part, the extraction and refinement is done with the use of fossil fuels(83% of world energy use is fossil- 64% fossil energy for world electricity production) we will increase CO2 emissions faster reversing our initial purpose...(4)

Sio Silica told the people in attendance on the first morning of the CEC hearing that they had already spent 35 million\$. Within the framework of the 'climate emergency' (-this term has been acknowledged by the Federal Government)- Sio Silica's advertising campaign claims it as a 'Green Project' -(solar panel construction) - a comprehensive GHG report on all their activities so far should be put forth and an estimate of GHG's as to what the actual extraction will produce. It is quite possible that the mining in our drinking water will produce more GHG than it will mitigate.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinion on this mining project- It should not happen not today, not tomorrow- never. No one in this area has to gain from this project- everyone could lose- even those that think tax dollars could be helpful- you can't drink money.

Respectfully,
Gérard Dubé



References:

1- Pollution: Forever Chemicals found in rainwater exceed safe levels
August 12, 2022; Matt McGrath

2- 'Distrust lingers after PFAS found in drinking water' The Canadian Press;
March 2, 2023

3- 'Cobalt Red' (how the blood of the Congo powers our lives') by
Siddharth Kara

Quote: '...across the twenty one years of research into slavery and child labour, I have never seen more extreme predation for profit than I witnessed at the bottom of the global cobalt supply chains. The titanic companies that sell products containing Congolese cobalt are worth trillions, yet the people who dig their cobalt out of the ground eke out a base existence characterized by extreme poverty and immense suffering. They exist at the edge of human life in an environment that is treated like a toxic dumping ground by foreign mining companies. Millions of trees have been clear-cut, dozens villages have been razed, rivers and air polluted, and arable land destroyed. Our daily lives are powered by a human and environmental catastrophe in the Congo.' page 5 (intro)

note : you can also listen to an interview with Siddharth Kara on CBC the current from March 3, 2023

4- 'Ruée minière au XXI^e Siècle: jusqu'où les limites seront-elles repoussées?' 2022 (the mining rush in the 21st Century: how far can we push the limits); presenter: Aurore Stéphant (On youtube)

I'm sorry this is in French but I am sure you could find someone to translate for you... and it is well worth the listen... GD