

# Extractive industries have negative impacts on Indigenous peoples

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The LKAB iron ore mine in Kiruna, in northern Sweden, lies on Laeva Sami land, where reindeer are still grazing. Credit: Niila Inga

Extractive industries affect Indigenous peoples in Sweden and Australia, and Indigenous group's perspectives are often ignored or trivialised, according to a PhD thesis from Umeå University in Sweden. Kristina Sehlin MacNeil has collaborated with Indigenous organisations in developing concepts that include Indigenous peoples' perspectives on conflicts and power relations.

The PhD study compares situations for Laevas čearru, a Sami reindeer herding community in northern Sweden and Adnyamathanha Traditional Owners, an Indigenous people in South Australia. Both groups identify various forms of violence caused by extractive activities on their lands as threats to their societies, livelihoods and cultures. Furthermore, the results show that in order to address violence against Indigenous peoples and improve processes of conflict transformation, Indigenous and decolonising perspectives should be heard and taken into account.

"By illuminating asymmetrical conflicts and power relations between Indigenous groups and extractive industries and by highlighting Indigenous peoples' perspectives, a better foundation for inclusive dialogue and conflict transformation can hopefully be achieved," says Kristina Sehlin MacNeil, PhD student at Vaartoe - Centre for Sami Research at Umeå University.

As a part of Umeå University's Industrial Doctoral School, Kristina Sehlin MacNeil, with the mentorship of the Swedish Sami Organisation, Sámiid Riikkasearvi, has also developed methods and analytical tools aimed to make the research more relevant for the communities it concerns. In her study, Sehlin MacNeil has used Indigenous and

decolonising methodologies to centre the research participants' perspectives and create space for their voices.

Kristina Sehlin MacNeil has adapted the Violence Triangle, developed by Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung, in order to understand the conflicts and power relations. The model includes structural violence (unfair social structures), cultural violence (discriminating attitudes) and direct violence (physical violence).

"As the model didn't allow for the type of violence that the Sami and Aboriginal research participants experience when their lands are destroyed by extractive industries, I introduced the term extractive violence, to replace direct violence. Extractive [violence](#) is a concept that illuminates how extractivism impacts Indigenous peoples negatively and how this is often ignored or trivialised," concludes Kristina Sehlin MacNeil.

Kristina Sehlin MacNeil comes from Umeå in northern Sweden and has a background in communications and conflict studies from the University of South Australia in Adelaide. From an early age, she has been interested in conflicts, particularly in conflict transformation, and has worked and studied in the peace and conflict field for a number of years.

**More information:** Extractive Violence on Indigenous Country: sami and Aboriginal Views on Conflicts and Power Relations with Extractive Industries, [www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1068229&dswid=newPopUp](http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1068229&dswid=newPopUp)

Provided by Umea University

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