

Indigenous Rights

Through dialogue and shareholder proposals, Trillium Asset Management Corporation (“Trillium”) is helping to bring the concerns of indigenous peoples to corporate decision-makers. Indigenous peoples worldwide are imperiled by numerous threats to their physical and cultural survival - deforestation, the despoilment of land and water through resource extraction, war, foreign diseases, poaching, and racism.

Corporate activities -- particularly resource extraction -- are often the medium through which these disasters visit. Many of the ancestral lands of native peoples are rich in natural resources coveted by the timber, oil and gas, mining, tourist and other industries. These areas are also home to diverse and fragile ecosystems whose survival is key to a sustainable human future. The continuing assaults on the world’s indigenous peoples and their ancestral lands could have disastrous impacts on the industrialized world.

What We're Doing

When we consider investing in a company, Trillium examines its behavior and policies toward indigenous communities. We will avoid investing in companies that have demonstrated a pattern of disrespectful or exploitative behavior. If problems emerge at a company in which we are already invested, we will engage with management in dialogue to determine if the company is committed to changing its behavior and redressing past wrongs. We generally view divestment on social grounds as a last resort, to be used only if dialogue and shareholder proposals fail to have a positive impact upon corporate behavior.

Corporate Dialogues and Shareholder Proposals

In recent years, Trillium has undertaken a number of initiatives in support of indigenous rights:

- Since 2003, Trillium has taken a leadership role in pressing Chevron concerning Texaco’s legacy of environmental contamination in Ecuador (Texaco was acquired by Chevron in 2001). Our staff has visited the polluted sites in the Amazon and attended several Chevron stockholder meetings to present shareholder resolutions.
- In the 1990s, we filed resolutions at major oil companies addressing drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; a resolution at BP addressed drilling in sensitive areas more broadly.
- Our 1999 shareholder proposal at Home Depot helped spur the company to commit to phasing out old growth products from its stores and become a member of the Forest Stewardship Council, which incorporates indigenous rights into its certification process.
- For the benefit of the Onondaga, Trillium facilitated a shareholder resolution at Honeywell to pressure the company about the ongoing impacts of the company’s pollution of Lake Onondaga.
- Trillium has pressured retailers and clothing manufacturers whose use of Native names and images has drawn protest from American Indians.
- Two Trillium staff participate in the Social Investment Forum’s Indigenous Peoples’ Working Group.

For more information, visit our web site at www.trilliuminvest.com