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Environmental Protection Agency

Ensuring environmental protection & conserving biodiversity

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BANGOMA STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION REPORT FOR MATAMBO OPEN PIT PROJECT



Presented By:

EPA TECHNICAL TEAM(C&E, ERRS, LEGAL,
INTERSECTORAL)

Ensuring Sustainable Environmental Management

Outline



- Introduction
- Special Statements
- Meeting Session
- Conclusion
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Introduction



- In fulfillment of the ESIA Process Bea Mountain Mining Corporation (BMMC), Submitted a Notice of Intent in November 2023 and an ESIA & RAP on February 27, 2024; for the acquisition of an Environmental permit to commence mining at the Matambo Gold mine, in Grand Cape Mount County. The Stakeholder Meeting, to discuss the initiation of open pit mining in the Matambo Corridor of the Bea Mountain Mining Concession and the relocation of Bangoma Town, faced a delay on April 25, 2024. The Project Affected Communities (PACs) raised certain disagreements and demanded the presence of their elected representative in the House of Representatives, Hon. Gbessay Sonni, before any meeting involving BMMC could take place. As a result of the PACs proposal, the stakeholder meeting was rescheduled for May 4, 2024, in Bangoma Town, Tewor District, Grand Cape Mount County.

Introduction



- The second phase of the stakeholders Consultation brought together Two Lawmakers, Hon. (Ma) Gbessay Sonii, and Hon. Mohammed Doesee, of the Grand Cape Mount Legislative Caucus, representatives of the Project Affected Communities, Ministries, Agencies and Commissions of Government, Civil Society Organizations, representatives of Bea Mountain Mining Corporation, persons of interest, Petra Resources, Inc., and technicians from the EPA
- **Note: The Agenda of the Meeting was suspended due to intermittent interruption about the purpose and clarity of the meeting by the Law makers in attendance**

Special Statement & Welcome Remarks



- The Town chief of **Bangoma Hon. Boakai Kamokai** welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished God's blessing on everyone. The town chief further encouraged everyone to remain peaceful and informed the audience that both Church and Mosque are available in Bangoma for religious practices.
- The **paramount chief of Tewor District**, welcome everyone to the meeting and urged everyone to feel at home and expressed high desire for a fruitful meeting.

Presentation Segment



- Mr. John K. Jallah, Jr., Manager of the Dept. of Compliance and Enforcement, EPA gave the overview of the meeting;
- Presentation on the ESIA Process intended to be made by Mr. Daoda S. Carlon was not made due to contention, concerns and interruption at the meeting;
- Presentation on the Summary of the ESIA Report by Petra Resources was not made due to rejection by the stakeholders through their lawmakers attending the meeting;

Discussion



- Mr. John K. Jallah, Jr., Manager of the Dept. of Compliance and Enforcement, EPA gave the overview of the meeting;
- Presentation on the ESIA Process intended to be made by Mr. Daoda S. Carlon was not made due to contention, concerns and interruption at the meeting;
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Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Cllr. Marvis,	Bangorma Town Lawyer	➤ BMMC submitted a letter to the project-affected communities suspending its operations within the Matambo corridor; are they coming back now?
	Hon. Mohammed Doesee,	Representative District #1, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ BMMC told the people of the Matambo corridor that they were suspending their activities in the corridor. Have they discussed this with the higher-ups and are they ready to come back? ➤ The buildings constructed for the relocation of Bangorma are not suitable, they look like “chicken houses”.

Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Hon. Mohammed Doesee,	Representative District #1, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ Two families that presently own and live in two separate houses are being given one duplex which is not acceptable. ➤ If BMMC is unable to provide the needed benefits to the communities, then the communities can revert to their usual shovel mining (artisanal mining).
	Hon. Gbessay Sonii,	Representative, District #3, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ What are the real benefits of mining in this Matambo corridor? ➤ The relocation process and structures being built are not at international standards.

Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Hon. Gbessay Sonii,	Representative, Distric #3, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ Lawmakers (17 in number) visited the Matambo corridor to delve into the crisis at BMMC. ➤ The BMMC letter of suspension of activities and other BMMC issues are on the floor of the House of Legislature pending discussion. Why was this meeting called before the result of the legislative discussion? ➤ BMMC should have met with the lawmakers before calling this meeting.

Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Hon Adam Moniba,	Chairman, Liberia Land Authority	➤ The acquisition of land for the BMMC operations in Motambo was not done according to the New Land Rights Law. ➤ FPIC was not carried out in the communities. ➤ Bangorma has an MOU with BMMC, but other communities do not. ➤ Because of these inconsistencies, the LLA cannot agree or be involved with any arrangement that is out of the law.
	Youth Leader	Bangorma	➤ Express his disappointment in the independent consultant firm for not sharing with the ESIA report, but only communicated with the EPA. ➤ He also allege that BMMC is hiding behind EPA, by failing to resolve the Bangorma relocation

Discussion continuation..



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Adulai Massalay	Citizen of Bangorma	➤ The people of Bangorma have become vulnerable due to BMMC's activities, is the company (BMMC) willing to come back? ➤ If BMMC is not willing to come back to work here, then another company should be given the mining right.
	Daoda S. Carlon	➤ Environmental Protection Agency	➤ The EPA is not aware of the communication in the possession of the Cllr. Mavis, prior to the EPA planning for this Stakeholder Consultation. This is an important revelation to assist in the engagement process
	Mr. John K. Jallah Jr	➤ Environmental Protection Agency	➤ Does BMMC have anything say or clarity to make regarding the letter of suspension in the possession of the Cllr. Mavis?

Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Bea Mountain	➤ Mine Manager	➤ The Mine Manager claimed that BMMC was invited to the meeting by the EPA to serve as an observer.
	Manager John K. Jallah, Jr.	Environmental Protection Agency	➤ The EPA did not invite BMMC to attend and remain mute but to make comments during the discussion proceedings, on issues that may need clarity from BMMC as the project developer. ➤ Following the decision made by all the PACs through the advice of their Representatives (Hon. Gbessay Sonii & Hon. Mohammed Doese) to postpone the meeting; Mr. Jallah invited institution of government to make brief statement.
	Ellen Whyte	National Bureau of Concession	➤ The NBC will work with the EPA to ensure that proper arrangement is made with the affected community to reconvene this meeting.

Discussion continuation...



	Name	Representation	Statement/concern
	Hon. Mohammed Doesee,	Representative District #1, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ The NBC failed to ensure that BMMC did the right thing by granting a 25-year MDA to the company without knowing the benefits to be derived by the people.
	McDonald T. Wlenus,	Ministry of Internal Affairs	➤ Agrees that there is need to postpone/halt this stakeholder meeting until consultations are extensively held with all relevant stakeholders before another meeting is called.
	John K. Jallah, Jr.,	Manager of the Dept. of Compliance and Enforcement	➤ Due to all the contentious issues, concerns raised, the meeting is hereby suspended until otherwise. ➤ A copy of the communication from the BMMC suspending its operations in the Matambo corridor should be submitted to the EPA by the lawyer of the project-affected communities, as well as the communication from the Legislative Committee on BMMC.

Conclusion



The Stakeholder Meeting for the Matambo corridor including relocation of Bangorma Town was not held for the second time in succession due to contentions raised by the people of the projected affected towns and their elected Lawmakers, Hon Sonni and Hon Dosee. The lawmakers along with their citizens demanded that BMMC must discuss and settle with them all issues relative to the operations of the company in their district before proceeding to the stakeholders Consultation to discuss the ESIA report. The meeting was postponed by the EPA, thereby mandating the need for BMMC to resolve issues with the Legislative Caucus, meanwhile an official communication from EPA on the way forward will be transmitted to BMMC in keeping with the EPML.

Recommendation



- BMMC to reengage with the Legislative Caucus on pending matters for which it has been summoned for:
- EPA to juxtapose or evaluate the RAP along with findings from the engagement process at Matambo, and invite BMMC on the way forward to include the following:
 - There is a need to ensure update or redesign of the RAP, conduct verification, validation, and approval.
 - Issues with bridge relative to the FPIC process, development and signing of MOU by all PAPs needs to be addressed.
 - Relocation issues need to be reconsidered as part of the RAP to ensure all new structures meet MPW standard and international best practice to improve the living condition of the people
 - Issues of sacred sites or graves which are part of the traditional practice of the people need to be captured within the RAP for the relocation process.
 - All issues of crop compensation should meet the standard of the MoA and international Best Practice.

Plate 1: Letter of suspension



Bea Mountain
Mining Corp.
A Subsidiary of American Resources Inc.

MEMO

To: General Workforce/Worker Representatives

From: Management, Bea Mountain Mining Corporation

Date: March 11, 2024

Bea Mountain Mining Corporation Management has concluded that it is not possible to proceed with the Matambo project due to ongoing safety risks and certain threats to life and property due to the recent unfortunate events that have occurred at Matambo.

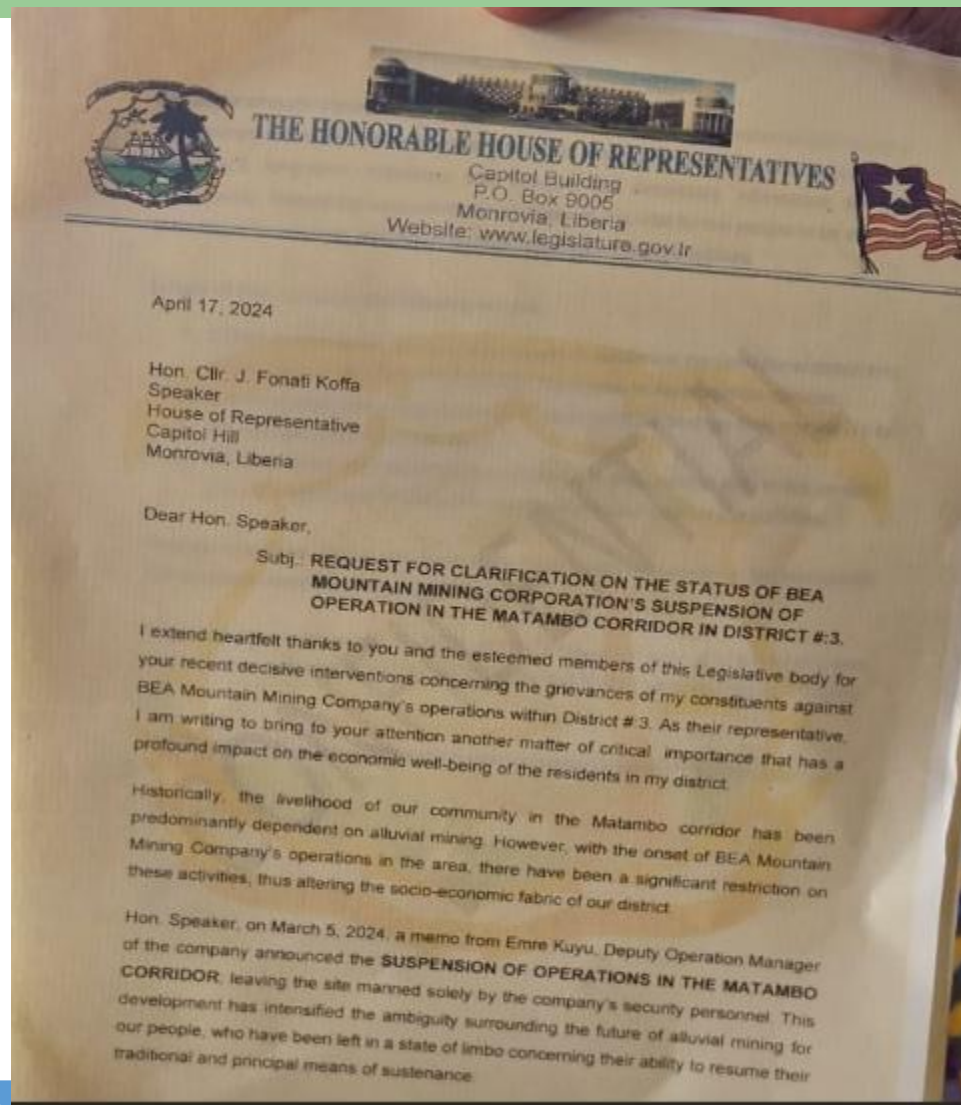
This situation has revealed the necessity of terminating the services of our personnel, most of whom are employed to create employment for the people of the community until further notice. Although we did not want to make this inevitable decision, we regretfully had to make such a decision.

Thank you for your understanding and usual cooperation.

Best Regards,

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Plate 2: Letter of Invitation to BMMC



The Mining plant cc

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Plate 2 continuation.



It is of paramount importance that we establish whether this suspension of operations is a temporary measure or a permanent cessation. A formal and official confirmation of the company's long-term intentions will provide the necessary information for our constituents. Should the suspension be permanent, it is vital for our people to be allowed to re-apply for licenses and return to their customary mining practices.

In light of this, I propose the following actions:

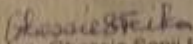
- 1) Initiate an immediate parliamentary inquiry to determine the operational status and future plans of BEA Mountain Mining Corporation in the Matambo corridor.
- 2) Ensure prompt and transparent communication of the findings from this inquiry to the affected community members.
- 3) If it is found that BEA Mountain has ceased operation permanently in this corridor, provide support and facilitate the expedited processing of mining activities.

This decisive action will not only alleviate the current state of uncertainty, but also uphold the economic stability and legacy of our district.

Your leadership in this matter is critical, and I look forward to working in partnership with you to secure a resolution that honors the rights and livelihoods of the people of District #3.

Thank you for your consideration and for the continued support of this honorable body.

Your sincerely,


Hon. Gbessie Sonii Feika
REPRESENTATIVE
District # 3, Grand Cape Mount County
Republic of Liberia

District #1 & #3 Representative



Representation of Legislative Caucus, NBC, MIA in attendance

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PAPs gathering at the Consultation



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Cross section of participants in attendance at the Stakeholder Consultation

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BMMC representation at the Consultation



BMMC representation during the Consultation

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Gathering of Local Leadership



Other leaders of the project affected towns

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