

Case studies: Renewable energy & human rights

Geothermal energy

Indonesia: Locals protest geothermal plant, express alarm over contamination, violence and threats

Country: Indonesia	Companies: PT Sejahtera Alam Energy (SAE)
<p>The Baturraden geothermal power plant in central Java is expected to generate 220 MW of electricity, making a significant contribution to Indonesia's sharply increasing energy demand. However, the project, developed by independent power producer PT Sejahtera Alam Energy (SAE), has faced several rounds of protests by local community members expressing alarm over the mud and debris contaminating local water sources, which was attributed to runoff from the construction of the geothermal power plant. Villagers were forced to filter the water before use and were concerned that the progressive muddying of local water would lead to a drop in tourist visits to the nearby waterfalls. In 2017, 24 protestors were detained and beaten by Indonesian authorities. With an estimated \$1 billion in project costs and a projected operational date of 2022, SAE's continued refusal to mitigate its human rights impacts or provide remedy for the harms caused presents risks to the overall success of the project.</p>	
Source: Fast & fair renewable energy: A practical guide for investors	

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New Zealand: Mutually beneficial relationships and shared risk in geothermal projects

Country: New Zealand	Company: Contact Energy
<p>Contact Energy is New Zealand's second-largest generator of electricity, with a portfolio made up of geothermal, hydropower, and natural gas. New Zealand's indigenous Maori communities own land that includes vast geothermal steam fields, and through extensive consultation Contact Energy has established mutually beneficial relationships with Maori land trust leaders. In its response to the Resource Centre's survey, Contact Energy noted that its staff are members of the communities in which they operate. Local values of ethical behaviour known as "Nga Tikanga" are manifested in Contact Energy's consultation protocols. For example, the company funds community members' travel to consultation meetings in an effort to make meetings accessible. In 2011, a Taupo Maori land trust signed an agreement with Contact Energy allowing the company to drill for geothermal exploration. The Tauhara Moana Trust made a deal to share in the risk with Contact Energy, which was a departure from many of the royalty-based agreements between other Maori trusts and energy companies. The trust represents around 800 people, and a statement from its chairman included the idea that, "It is far better to be part of a project, be informed and be active partners than be on the outside and in the shadows."</p>	
Source: Fast & fair renewable energy: A practical guide for investors	

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