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## Areva Uranium mining in Imouraren, Niger



(https://file.ejatlas.org/img/Conflict/areva-uranium-mining-in-imouraren-niger/areva\_niger.jpg)

### ▼ Description

French nuclear energy company Areva will develop a third mine in Imouraren, Northern Niger, in 2014/2015, expected to last 35 years.

[See more...](#)

### ▼ Basic Data

#### Name

Areva Uranium mining in Imouraren, Niger

#### Country

Niger (/country/niger)

#### Province

Niger

#### Site

Agadez region

#### Accuracy of Location

HIGH local level

### ▼ Source of Conflict

#### Type of Conflict (1st level)

Nuclear

#### Type of Conflict (2nd level)

Nuclear waste storage  
Water access rights and entitlements  
Uranium extraction  
Nuclear power plants

#### Specific Commodities

Electricity (/commodity/electricity)

Water (/commodity/water)

Uranium (/commodity/uranium)

### ▼ Project Details and Actors

#### Project Details

According to Areva, the Imouraren deposit contains one of the worlds largest uranium deposits and will be the largest open-pit mine in Africa. The uranium is a large, but

low-grade quantity (0.8 kilograms of uranium per metric ton of rock on average) and it lies deep under the surface (110-170 meters). The estimated production is 5000 metric tonnes per year for more than 35 years. There are 3.8 billion tonnes of waste rock to be extracted from a deposit that measures 8 km long and 2.5 kilometres wide.

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## Project Area (in hectares)

20000

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## Level of Investment (in USD)

1500000000

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## Type of Population

Semi-urban

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## Company Names or State Enterprises

Areva (Areva) (/company/areva) from France (/country-of-company/france)

Subsidiaries (/company/subsidiaries) - COMINAK, SOMAIR, Imouraren SA

China National Nuclear Corporation (/company/china-national-nuclear-corporation) from China (/country-of-company/china)

Guangdong Nuclear Power (/company/guangdong-nuclear-power) from China (/country-of-company/china)

Korea Electric Power Corporation (/company/korea-electric-power-corporation) from Republic of Korea (/country-of-company/republic-of-korea)

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## Relevant government actors

President of the Republic of Niger, Regional Council of Agadez, Traditional chiefs of Agadez region

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## Environmental justice organisations and other supporters

Le Groupement des organisations de la socit civile de la region d Agadez GOSCRAZ, Aghir Inman: <http://aghirinman.blogspot.fr>, Committee for independent research and information on radioactivity (CRIIRAD): [www.criirad.org](http://www.criirad.org), CREN (local environmental group), ROTAB (Nigerian NGO network), <http://www.rotabniger.org/>, Sherpa (French human rights organization), <http://www.asso-sherpa.org/association/notre-mission>, Tchinaghen Association, FUSAD, Syntramines Union, AUA African Uranium Alliance

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### ▼ The Conflict and the Mobilization

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## Intensity of Conflict (at highest level)

MEDIUM (street protests, visible mobilization)

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## When did the mobilization begin

In REACTION to the implementation (during construction or operation)

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## Groups Mobilizing

Indigenous groups or traditional communities

Industrial workers

International ejos

Local ejos

Local government/political parties

Social movements

Ethnically/racially discriminated groups

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## Forms of Mobilization

Creation of alternative reports/knowledge

Development of a network/collective action

Development of alternative proposals

Involvement of national and international NGOs

Lawsuits, court cases, judicial activism

Objections to the EIA

Public campaigns

Shareholder/financial activism.

Strikes

Arguments for the rights of mother nature

Appeals/recourse to economic valuation of the environment

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### ▼ Impacts

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## Environmental Impacts

**Visible:** Air pollution, Biodiversity loss (wildlife, agro-diversity), Floods (river, coastal, mudflow), Loss of landscape/aesthetic degradation, Soil contamination, Waste overflow, Surface water pollution / Decreasing water (physico-chemical, biological) quality, Groundwater pollution or depletion, Large-scale disturbance of hydro and geological systems, Mine tailing spills

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## Health Impacts

**Visible:** Exposure to unknown or uncertain complex risks (radiation, etc...), Occupational disease and accidents, Deaths

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## Other

Exposure to radioactivity can cause respiratory problems, birth defects, leukaemia and cancer. Disease and poor health abound in this region, and death rates linked to respiratory problems are twice that of the rest of the country. AREVA has failed to take responsibility for any impacts. Its hospitals have been accused of misdiagnosing cases of cancer as HIV. It claims there has never been a case of cancer attributable to mining in 40 years. But the local hospitals do not staff any occupational doctors, making it impossible for someone to be diagnosed with a work related illness.

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## Socio-economic Impacts

**Visible:** Increase in Corruption/Co-optation of different actors, Lack of work security, labour absenteeism, firings, unemployment, Loss of livelihood

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### ▼ Outcome

## Project Status

Under construction

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## Pathways for conflict outcome / response

Application of existing regulations  
New Environmental Impact Assessment/Study

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## Development of Alternatives

-GOSCRAZ is calling on the Nigerian government and on ordinary Nigerians to take note of the disastrous consequences of Arevas mining activities and to take action.

-NGO Aghir InMan is calling for Areva to conduct a new EIA, using the expertise of independent scientists, and to address the following concerns:

-That the terms of extraction are different from those described in the initial assessment.

-That there is no water in the wells around Imouraren.

-That the initial impact study does not indicate an exclusion zone around the mine of 450 km<sup>2</sup>.

The organization noted that the existing EIA was in violation of Nigerian law.

-Concerning Arevas other two mines, Greenpeace is calling for an independent study around the mines and towns of Arlit and Akokan. As well as a thorough clean-up and decontamination process. As well, Areva should follow international safety norms in its operations, with consideration for its workers, surrounding populations and the environment. The company should inform its workers and the local community about the risks of uranium mining.

-Greenpeace calls on the leaders of Niger to ensure that environmental and health agencies are properly funded, educated, and equipped, and that the people of Niger are compensated fairly for their lands and resources.

-Ultimately, Greenpeace calls for an energy revolution based on sustainable, cheap and safe renewable energies and energy efficiency.

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## Do you consider this as a success?

Not Sure

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## Why? Explain briefly.

Over the decades that Areva has been operational in Northern Niger, people have become more aware of the health and environmental impacts of radioactivity, which has enabled them to mobilize more effectively. Greenpeace also conducted an independent investigation on levels of radioactivity in the vicinity of the company's two mines. Local NGOs like Aghir InMan, with international support, are mobilizing to hold the company to account before it begins its new project at Imouraren. However, the company is already violating an original impact study of the mine, it has not included in the new project an exclusion zone of 450 km<sup>2</sup> and the wells surrounding the project are already dry. Strikes over working conditions were held last year. According to the newspaper Les Afriques, Niger has lost between 14.5 and 21 billion Euros since 1960 from potential mining revenues. Currently, French forces are intervening to protect the mine and France's interests in the region.

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### ▼ Sources and Materials

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Accompanying video (Uploaded May 5, 2010)

[click to view] (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioRtzOWm07A>)

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## Links

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Temoust. Communiqu de Groupement des organisations de la socit civile de la rgion dAgadez dnomm GOSCRAZ. (January 13, 2013)

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## Media Links

Greenpeace

[click to view] (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioRtzOWm07A>)

### ▼ Meta Information

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## Contributor

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## Last update

08/04/2014

### ▼ Related conflicts

**Chinese Azelik uranium mine in Ingall, Niger (/conflict/chinese-uranium-mine-invades-nigers-traditional-pastoral-territory)**

### ▼ Comments

(<http://acknowledgej.org/>)

(<http://www.ejolt.org/>)



(<http://envjustice.org/>)

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