

## 9 Things you should know about the mining project Los Cardones

1. **Gold mining is highly polluting.** To remove the gold from rocks, hazardous chemicals that can poison the water in the region are used or generated, besides using tons of explosives daily, with very harmful effects on biodiversity. These chemicals are mainly cyanide, arsenic, sulfuric acid, lead, mercury and other heavy metals which have dramatic impacts on human health and the ecosystem.
2. **Gold is mainly used to make jewelry.** Very little of the gold produced today goes to industries such as medicine and telecommunications. Globally, most of the gold extracted at present; more than 80% according to some sources, is intended for the jewelry industry. To produce a gold ring, for example, generates about 20 tons of waste.
3. **Open pit gold mining has a dark history in Mexico and the world.** Around the world, from Africa to Central America, different communities have felt firsthand the effects of open pit gold mining. More and more communities have refused to allow the establishment of such mines near sensitive ecosystems.
4. **The Sierras are threatened.** The Biosphere Reserve Sierra la Laguna was created in June 1994, to protect this heritage of Baja California Sur and Mexico. However, there are currently plans to build an open pit gold mine in the Reserve, in the area known as Paredones Amarillos. Because of its location and the type of technology it would use, this mine represents a threat to the Sierra, both to its biodiversity, as well as to its role as the source of water for thousands of people.
5. **A gold mine lasts a few years, while the pollution generated lasts centuries.** According to estimates from the mining company, the gold mine Los Cardones would have a lifespan of only 10 years. In contrast, the effects of the environmental degradation caused by the waste it would produce and the chemicals it would use would last many hundreds of years.
6. **Mining open pit gold generates mountains of waste, literally.** Los Cardones estimates to extract 41 tons of gold (1.4 million ounces) during its 10 year lifespan. The production of this amount of gold, according to calculations made by the company itself, would generate 5.7 tons of waste per gram of gold produced. This means, for 10 years, 518,086 million pounds of waste rock; 141,095,859 pounds per day.
7. **Gold mines leave huge craters where there used to be ecosystems.** The mine would create a crater of 177 acres within the Sierra La Laguna. This size is equivalent to the 62 blocks that make up the downtown area of the city of La Paz (about 102 soccer fields).
8. **Our water is born in the Sierra.** While in regions such as La Paz, Todos Santos and Los Cabos, it barely rains 6.7 inches per year, in the high parts of the Sierra it rains an average of 40 inches per year. The Sierra La Laguna is the source of the water we consume in the southern part of our state.
9. **Sierra La Laguna hosts the only pine and oak forest in the state.** The biodiversity of the Sierra La Laguna is unique in the whole world. This forest contains the largest number of species of any terrestrial ecosystem in the state, with species that exist nowhere else in the world, including 86 endemic plants.