Proposed Uranium Mining Threatens the Granary of Central Tanzania

In the area near Bahi, west of the Tanzanian Capital of Dodoma, **uranium has been discovered.** So far, **prospection is still going on, but Uranium mining could start within the next years.**

During the rainy season, a swamp forms in this area of 6800 sq.kms, where about 270,000 people live - mainly farmers. This area is the **granary of Central Tanzania** contributing much to peoples' **food security.** About 70,000 tons of cassava, 40,000 tons of millet, 35,000 tons of groundnuts, 30,000 tons of each maize and sorghum, 14,000 tons of paddy/rice, and 2,500 tons of fish are harvested each year. **Livestock keeping** (about 200,000 cattle, 45,000 goats and 9,000 sheep) as well as **forestry, honey, wax and salt production** are also important activities in this area. (Mbogoro & Mwakipesile, Dodoma 2010)

Deposits of **92 million tons of uranium ore** are estimated to lie near the surface of this area. Yet, the uranium concentration of 0.01% is very small. Therefore, several **open pit mines with tremendous heaps of overburden** would be created. Uranium mining needs **enormous amounts of water** which after extraction remains **contaminated with radioactive particles and poisonous heavy metals,** pumped to tailings dams. These tailings contain up to 80% of the original radioactivity of the ore, emitting the radioactive gas radon. Wind will disperse radon and radioactive dust from dry tailings in the region. Tailing dams may break, toxic substances trickle down to the ground water. Therefore, **water and food may be contaminated and become unsuitable for humans and animals.** About 10,000 people got cancer due to uranium mining in Germany. The country stopped uranium mining in 1990 and tries to clean up the overburden heaps. So far, 9.7 billion $ have been spent – but the job is not yet finished!

Since Tanzania does not have the means to manage such a contamination of the environment, uranium mining should be banned in Central Tanzania. Otherwise people have to be resettled and Central Tanzania would lose its granary. Uranium mining in Bahi area would bring the Government perhaps an income for twelve years. Yet, the residues of uranium mining radiate for thousands of years! The cleaning up of the Bahi area after uranium mining would very likely cost Tanzania far more than the possible income by uranium mining if the Government would ever try this. In USA, Andarko company has to pay the Government 5.1 billion $ in order to compensate the damages caused by uranium mining of a daughter company (New York Times, 04.04.2014).

Tanzanian gold mines affect men and environment by cyanides and heavy metals. **Companies annually export gold worth about 1 billion $, yet Tanzania stays terribly poor.** Uranium mining will have similar effects. AREVA mines uranium in Niger since 50 years, but Niger is still one of the poorest countries! There and in other uranium mining areas of the world, considerable numbers of deformities of humans as well as animals and increased radioactivity of the surroundings are

reported. In USA, 23,400 victims of uranium mining received 1.5 billion $ of “compensation” (New York Times, 01.04.2012).

Since industrialized countries have learned from such experience, uranium companies now go to Africa. John Borshoff, CEO of the Australian uranium mining company Paladin, said: „Australia and Canada have become overly sophisticated … There´s been an over-compensation in terms of thinking about environmental issues and social issues, forcing companies like Paladin into Africa.” (Melbourne Sun Herald, April 3rd, 2006). These remarks and the uncovered uranium exploration boreholes and ditches in Bahi area prove: These companies go to Africa because there they are not forced to care much about damages for men and environment.

Further Informations

Dr. Damas K. Mbogoro and Mr. Augustino Mwakipesile:

ECONOMICAL AND ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH OF BAHI SWAMP

The University of Dodoma, Dodoma, Tanzania, December 2012
http://www.wise-uranium.org/pdf/BahiSwamp.pdf

USA: Andarko to pay 5.1 billion to settle pollution case

caused by uranium mining of a daughter company (New York Times, 04.04.2014).
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/04/business/energy-environment/anadarko-petroleum-to-pay-5-1-billion-to-settle-pollution-case.html?_r=0

The seventh International Conference of Uranium Mining and Hydrogeology of the Technische Universität Bergakademie Freiberg and the IAEA Technical Meeting of the Uranium Mining and Remediation Exchange Group (UMREG) September 21-25, 2014, Freiberg, Saxony, Germany

http://tu-freiberg.de/sites/default/files/media/uranium-mining-and-hydrogeology-2014-international-conference-and-umreg-2014--umh-vii-4534/2nd_call_umh_vii.pdf

Environmental scandal at uranium exploration project in Bahi, Tanzania

http://www.nuclear-heritage.net/index.php/Environmental_scandal_at_uranium_exploration_project_in_Bahi,_Tanzania

URANIUM MINING:Tanzania faces the devil’s choice, experts warn

By David Kisanga, 5th October 2013 http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=60040

Tanzania: Uranium Ore Tempts Tanzania to Dig Dangerously

By Philipp Sandner, 19 October 2013 http://allafrica.com/stories/201310190347.html

Uranium Toxicology and Epidemiology

Workshop on Public Health and Safety of Uranium Mining and Milling and Nuclear Energy Production, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Danville, VA, USA, November 12, 2011 by Teresa Coons, PhD

http://www.geos.vt.edu/events/uranium/pdf/1345-1430_Coons_U_Toxicology_&_Epidemiology.pdf

Uranium Toxicology Studies
http://usm.maine.edu/toxicology/uranium-toxicology-studies

Uranium Mining in Niger: Influence on health and environment – Legal and social aspects – Role of mining companies – Alternative energies
Symposium, November 2014, Niamey, Niger
http://umweltfairaendern.de/2014/03/uranbergbau-im-niger-aerzte-planen-konferenz-ueber-folgen-fuer-gesundheit-und-umwelt/

Uranium Conference in Tanzania, October 2013
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zb2LlKAIXSc