



# THE CHALLENGE OF ACHIEVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: CASE OF SAKDRISI-KACHAGHIANI AND DAKOTA PIPELINE

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## SCOPE

- The article discusses and analyzes the challenges faced by the autochthonous populations like Georgians and Native Americans in the fight for their natural resources.
- The article provides a comparative analysis on how Georgian and Native American nations had to struggle to protect their environment as both of them are autochthonous populations.
- In 2004, an important archeological discovery was made by the German and Georgian scientists on the Sakdrisi-Kachaghiani hill, located at the territory of the Bolnisi Municipality, Georgia. Later, the Georgian and foreign media outlets started discussing the world-wide scale and uniqueness of the pre-historic mine. Sakdrisi-Kachaghiani has been recognized to be the oldest pre-historic gold mine in the world. In 2006, the Sakdrisi-Kachaghiani was granted the status of the Cultural Heritage and the Grade of the National Significance.
- In 2013, the status of the Sakdrisi-Kachaghiani, as a cultural monument was deprived and the mining company "RMG Gold" got a permission to extract gold in the wider area where Sakdrisi was located, which caused protests from academics and preservationists.
- Similar challenge was faced by Native Americans (in the U.S.) in 2016 (the problem lasted till 2020), when protests started around the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota (U.S.). The pipeline was supposed to run from the Bakken oil fields in western North Dakota to southern Illinois, crossing beneath the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, as well as under part of Lake Oahe near the Standing Rock Indian Reservation. Native Americans considered that the pipeline would cause a serious threat to the region's water. The construction also directly threatened ancient burial grounds and cultural sites of historic importance.
- In March 2020, according to the federal judge James Boasberg (appointed by the president Obama), the environmental analysis by both the companies behind the pipeline and the corps was severely lacking. The Biden administration urged the supreme court not to hear the subsequent appeal by Energy Transfer, saying the pipeline operator concerns about a shutdown were overstated.

## METHODOLOGY

- The article has applied a qualitative research methodology based on the interviews with the actual representatives of the topic: Georgians and Native Americans.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- The results of the work are based on the analysis of interviews. Respondents are discussing about the inequalities in environmental conditions. Pollution risks create challenging political, economic and social circumstances for the government to address. Eliminating such inequalities are difficult to be fully accomplished, however when governments are concerned and thoughtful about these problems, it becomes more realistic to further environmental protection for everybody.

## CONCLUSION

- Taking into consideration the issues discussed in the article, we can assume that the unique cultural heritage of populations and living environment should not be endangered. This problem requires an important attention and carefully planned problem-solving agenda to achieve environmental justice, implement and enforce environmental laws to protect everyone.

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