

**ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS**  
**Statement on Extractive Industries**  
Presented for consideration April 2021

*You must not destroy the trees there by chopping them down.  
Eat from them, and do not destroy them."*  
– Deuteronomy 20:19, The Inclusive Bible

The Alliance of Baptists joins with our multi-faith partners and affirms and endorses a faith-based statement on principles of extractive industries:

As people of faith, working in the United States and abroad, we witness and support communities devastated by the irregularities of extractive ventures such as fossil fuel extraction, mining, logging and agribusiness. We have seen that ill-conceived and poorly managed projects can bring conflict, damage human health, displace people from their homes and lands, pollute the environment and feed corruption. Expanded exploration by extractive companies has weakened local economies, hindered development and curbed human rights in the United States, but even more so in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

Our shared faith traditions call us to respect and defend all God's Creation and to stand in solidarity with communities and workers who face displacement, loss of livelihoods, and threats to their health and safety. These faithful efforts ensure the well-being of all, but especially the protection of society's most vulnerable, and the more-than-human world.

Some extractive corporations adopt policies that promote greater consultation with communities or consider more careful practices that do the least harm. Some companies have also joined and implemented a few positive initiatives such as: The United Nations Global Compact, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. However, much more must be done.

All governments, corporations and financial institutions must consult impacted communities, including faith and civil society leaders, to reach joint agreement among all parties. Governments, international financial institutions and corporations must also uphold standards of transparency and public accountability. In addition, governments must have environmental, financial and judicial mechanisms to protect communities from harmful extractive projects.

We are committed to a reduction of the exploitation of God's Creation; accordingly, when these practices occur, natural resource wealth should be used to improve the lives of those living in the local communities where the project takes place.

Furthermore, while transparency and due process requirements for community consultation are important, still more is required. Given the tremendous power imbalance between local communities and multi-national corporations and the extremely pressing need to phase out the extraction and use of fossil fuels by the end of the decade -- this according to the

scientific consensus of climate experts -- we also need to push financial institutions to stop investing in fossil fuel projects immediately and to re-invest in clean energy.

Therefore, in order to provide a better relationship with workers, citizens and communities, as well as to ensure that the environment, human life and rights are respected, we ask governments, international financial institutions, corporations, and all those involved in the extractive industries to commit to the following principles:

### 1. Commitment to Human Rights and Environmental Justice:

- In compliance with the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, extractive industries must respect and support the dignity of the human person, including the right to safeguard the global commons and sustainably develop natural resources.
- Extractive industries and governments must respect the rights of dissenting individuals and organizations to express their dissent through the use of protest, negotiation and other non-violent means.

### 2. Transparency and Public Accountability

- Policies and decisions about extractive industries must be transparent and must involve the meaningful participation of the most vulnerable stakeholders.
- Extractive industries must advance the common good and be evaluated in the light of their impact on the environment, as well as those who are most vulnerable, especially women, children, indigenous communities and people who are impoverished.
- Extractive industries must employ workers from the local community and help fund its social, educational and developmental projects to enhance local and national economies and to ensure sustained growth.
- Extractive industries must respect the role of legitimate governments, in collaboration with civil society, to set policies regarding the development and welfare of people and the natural world. In order to ensure restorative justice for affected families and communities, an independent third party must help resolve grievances.

### 3. Consultation

- Local communities have a right to be consulted and heard in all natural resource exploration and development in their region. Therefore, extractive industries must adopt policies that mandate that they obtain comprehensive local community consent and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) before beginning any industry project. This consultation includes communities' right to reject projects.
- In order to ensure that the decisions are informed by considerations of broad ecological impact, the consultation should include the involvement of scientists knowledgeable about the local area who have no financial relationship to the extractive industries.

More background information is [here](#).