

In the Sarthe département, the farming community legally refused access to their land to Variscan, which has frozen the project for the time being. That is why it is imperative that we all ban Variscan from our properties NOW and encourage the farmers who are in the front line to do the same.

## YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE NECESSARY FORM FROM OUR WEBSITE

(English translation available)

### **8/ If the mines open despite our efforts, will my property lose value?**

Indeed it will. In similar circumstances, the loss can be up to 70%, depending on the distance from the site, the processing plant and the lorry routes. As a result, it becomes impossible to sell at a decent price. In the case of a mine, the subsurface belongs to the French state. The statutes give full priority to the mining projects over private property of the surface ground who can only hope for compensation or to be expropriated.

### **9/ What can we do to stop this ?**

#### Make it known that you oppose the mining permits!

**Attention Mines** is an association of scientists, farmers, elected representatives, business owners, private citizens, etc... Who all contribute their expertise to fight for their territory in various ways:

- Active involvement in your communes to spread the word that we all can legally refuse access to our property to Variscan.
- Support to our elected representatives in their opposition to the mines.
- Sign and encourage others to sign the petition circulated by **Attention Mines** (paper and electronic versions) to inform about the threat and fight it.
- Legal proceedings initiated by Nature et Patrimoine Centre Bretagne with the assistance of a legal counsel, the financing of which is dependent on donations.

If you wish to become a member, be kept up to date and download our information documents :

<http://alternatives-projetsminiers.org/>

*Don't throw me away, pass me along!*



# MINE ALERT IN CENTRAL BRITTANY!!!



What you need to know about the exclusive mining exploration licenses of “Silfiac”, “Loc Envel”, “Merleac”, etc.

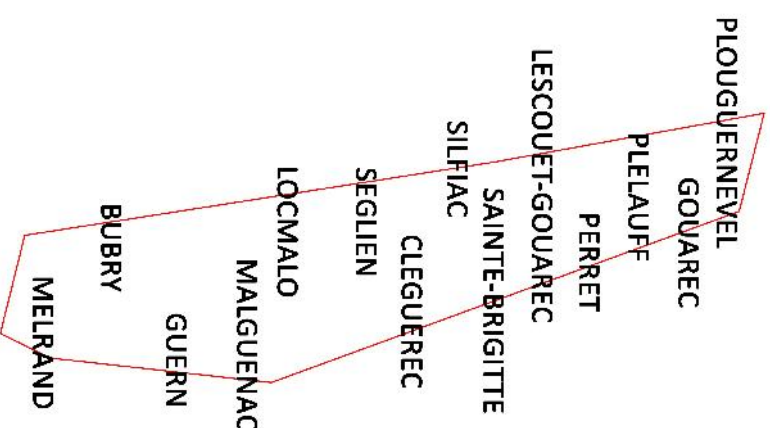


### **1/ What exactly is an exclusive mining exploration license (permis exclusif de recherche minière)?**

The French government has decided to relaunch mining in the country. In Brittany, it has led to several licenses being granted, with more to come, extending over 1100 sq. km. so far.

The beneficiaries are wholly owned subsidiaries of exploration corporations financed by foreign venture investors from Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, China, etc. which enjoy the full support of the French administration. Their aim is to build up a portfolio of licenses in order to sell them on to mine operators as soon as they have secured a mining permit, which is guaranteed them by law.

One of the beneficiaries, VARISCAN MINES has been awarded 5 licenses including the “Silfiac” one over 174 sq. km and 14 communes.



## 2/ What are the impacts of mining exploration and operation?

From the exploratory stage, and particularly during and after mining operation, the impacts on the environment are numerous and always irreversible.

The extraction of the targeted ore will lead to the acidification of ground water and streams, release arsenic, radioactivity (radon, uranium) and circulate various noxious chemicals (lubricants, acids, cyanide, etc.).

Drainage pumping will disrupt groundwater flow and reduce that of streams and springs, drain wetlands, etc. Drinking water resources will become scarcer for human consumption, agriculture, agri-food industries, etc., bearing in mind that we can't do without it.

The construction of superstructures, earth moving works, outsize road traffic, tailing heaps and ponds, etc. will adversely affect quality of life, health, tourism, agriculture in particular.

Dust, fine particulate matter, noise, water pollution always have a negative impact on public health.

## 3/ Why should we oppose a mining project in Central Brittany?

Variscan Mines systematically minimizes or denies even the impacts of mining exploration or operation. It claims to be able to build a "green" mine, something we can easily prove does not exist. With the French government's support, they are trying to sell us that concept because they are fully aware that the population is against such a highly polluting industry. If it were to go ahead, we would get permanently polluted water, ground and air, massacred landscapes, challenged agriculture and the demise of tourism, while foreign venture investors would enjoy the profits generated with the steadfast support of the French government.

## 4/ They do say that mining will create jobs in Central Brittany?

Yes, mining would create a few jobs, but only at the operation stage. Even so, their figures are vastly overestimated. Nowadays, mines are nearly entirely automated, need very little personnel, and most of them with qualifications that cannot be found in Brittany. Virtually all French mines shut down forty years ago because they were losing money, so that mining skills are no longer available here. On the other hand, Variscan Mines says nothing of the lost jobs in agriculture, the agri-food industries, tourism, hotels, restaurants, etc.

Who would want to come and live in Central Brittany in such circumstances?

## 5/ These jobs could make up for the current desertification and closing of schools in Central Brittany?

We cannot be certain that the personnel recruited in distant mining regions would want to bring their families here. Even so, they would be sure to want to settle at a safe distance from the mine (20 to 25 km) since they are fully aware of the impact on health and environment and wouldn't want to expose their relatives to any risk. On the other hand, how many jobs will be lost due to that highly polluting industry?

## 6/ We are told that these minerals are strategic for the armament, telecommunication and electronic industries, indispensable for our technological leadership, that they are in short supply

The "strategic" metals, including the "rare earths" are not ... rare! It is only their extraction which is. Recycling, the banning of planned obsolescence, technological innovation are more viable solutions to limit the extraction of non renewable resources. That is the message in the European Parliament resolution of 9 July 2015 on Circular Economy. Now, the French government's mining policy goes in exactly the opposite direction, worse, it promotes the plundering of our subsurface resources by foreign companies (Variscan Mines is financed by venture investors from Australian Singapore, New Zealand, etc...) at the French tax payer's expense!

## 7/ Can Variscan compel me to allow their sample-taking staff on my property?

NO, you have the right to refuse Variscan access to your property, same if you are a tenant.

- Gardens, yards or walled enclosures, whether you are the owner-occupant or tenant: according to the French mining code, the prospector must seek your authorisation or refusal. Your decision is final and cannot be challenged.
- Pastures, cultivated fields, woods, with or without fencing, whether you are the farmer, owner-occupant or tenant: Variscan (or its subcontractor) can take samples unless you have previously made your position known and notified your refusal.
- In case of refusal, proceedings or compensation for non-pecuniary loss may be instigated in the absence of an amicable settlement with the protection company and / or the Préfecture.