



LAW

Environmental
Law
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Worldwide

advocate

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Connecting Communities
Protecting the Planet

Google Earth for Justice



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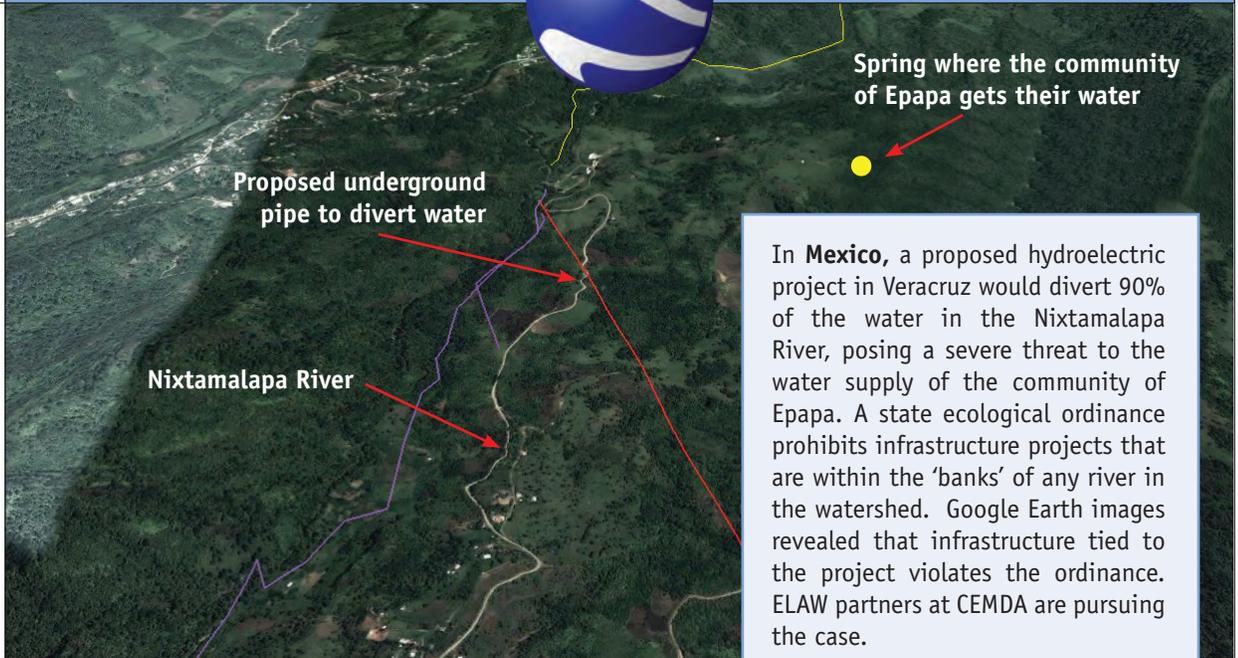
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Google's tools make it possible for ELAW staff to tour proposed development sites and provide environmental analysis, without costly travel and the associated greenhouse gas emissions. The result is victories for communities around the world. "Project proponents often mischaracterize an area as already 'degraded' in order to argue that their proposed project will have minimal environmental impacts," says Mark Chernaik, ELAW Staff Scientist.

The following are a few examples of how ELAW uses the power of satellite images to help partners seek justice.

In **Kerala, India** developers sought to build a private airport. Google Earth revealed that the project site threatened key wetlands. The Chennai Bench of the National Green Tribunal shelved the developer's plans. ELAW partner T. Mohan said, Mark's analysis "proved to be the death knell for the clearance."

In **Himachal Pradesh**, developers of a proposed limestone mine claimed the area "shows scant vegetation." Google Earth revealed that the site had dense forest and vegetation. The project was revoked. ELAW partner Ritwick Dutta wrote: "Big thanks for the critique!"

In **Honduras**, notices were published in a local newspaper about proposed mining concessions near Danlí. ELAW partners requested maps of the proposed sites based on coordinates published in local newspaper notices. Google Earth revealed that the coordinates in the newspaper had numbers transposed, placing the sites somewhere in Ecuador!

ELAW corrected the coordinates and showed that the four mining concessions would encompass large areas of forested land a few miles north of Danlí. ELAW partners at IDAMHO are working to alert community members and regulators.

In the **Philippines**, EcoShield has proposed a landfill scheme for the coast of Obando, on Manila Bay. EcoShield's plans make no mention of mangroves on the project site. Google Earth revealed that extensive mangroves, critical to shoreline protection, would have to be cleared. ELAW partner Ron Gutierrez included these findings in a petition to the Supreme Court calling for a halt to the project. The case is pending.

In **Jamaica**, developers claimed the proposed site of a large housing development was "denuded." Google Earth showed it had a lush forest canopy. The Jamaica Environment Trust challenged the project, and the housing development was scaled down.



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