

# Making the Invisible Visible: Unveiling the Hidden Aspects of Resource Extraction Through Inquiry



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There are two sides to the extraction of vital resources to fuel economies and lifestyles, encompassing both visible and invisible dimensions. Some, such as economic gain, we have adequately quantified and prioritised as a society. However, hidden in the shadows is the still unquantifiable damage to the environment, society, and human well-being caused by resource extraction. As we explore this topic, we unravel

questions about the transparency, accountability, ethics, consumption, technological innovations, and sustainability of resource extraction.

In this exploration, I strive to uncover the visible and invisible costs that underlie resource extraction by asking questions, seeking a deeper understanding of the intricate balance between human progress and the preservation of our shared world. These questions can serve as a **tool to navigate the multidimensional landscape of resource extraction, revealing its complexities, contradictions, and potential for transformation.** The goal is to reveal the holistic impact of resource extraction on humanity and the planet and drive change by making the invisible visible. This could be a pivotal step towards demanding ethical practices, pushing for regulatory reform, and supporting innovative solutions.

- What is the visible and invisible cost of resource extraction?
- How can we move beyond economic gain and make the social, environmental, and health costs of resource extraction visible?

Asking these questions will enable us to shine a light on the shady aspects of resource extraction that often evade the spotlight. Amidst the **global supply chains** that intricately weave regions together, transporting the resources extracted, we raise questions about:

- How does global supply chain complexity make the Global South's human and resource exploitation invisible?
- As societies, how can we lift the curtain on the obscurity of global supply chains to empower consumers with the knowledge to make informed choices?
- Can visible or invisible ethical responsibility guide producers' resource extraction and consumers' consumption habits? Or should it depend on other measures?

Amidst these questions, we gaze at the intricate web of **corruption and exploitation**, often lurking within enabling frameworks.

- Who benefits from these visible and invisible systems, and why do they persist, especially in resource-rich nations of the Global South?
- Whose interests are made visible or invisible in resource extraction: communities, corporations, or governments?
- What frameworks can be deployed to make the interests of the parties involved visible in the resource extraction decision-making process?

- Can the existing **national and international regulatory frameworks** be sufficient to ensure responsible resource extraction that protects human and environmental rights, or do they fall short of addressing invisible challenges?

Therefore, we must contemplate ways to fortify their effectiveness and address current and future challenges.

As the wheels of innovation turn, we question the **impact of technological progress** on the quest for responsible and sustainable resource extraction.

- Can technological innovation visibly steer the wheel to more responsible and sustainable resource extraction practices?
- Are technological innovations exacerbating the environmental and social challenges of resource extraction in the Global South?
- What are the impacts of the green energy transition that fosters new extractivism in the Global South?

Finally, we confront the **circular economy and green capitalism**—models that champion sustainability.

- Can they transcend the realm of conceptual aspiration to make a tangible impact on minimising resource extraction as well as on reducing inequality and impacts on the environment and society?
- If so, how can this paradigm be realised in practice, especially in regions where challenges such as corruption, infrastructure, regulation, and policy complexity cast a shadow?