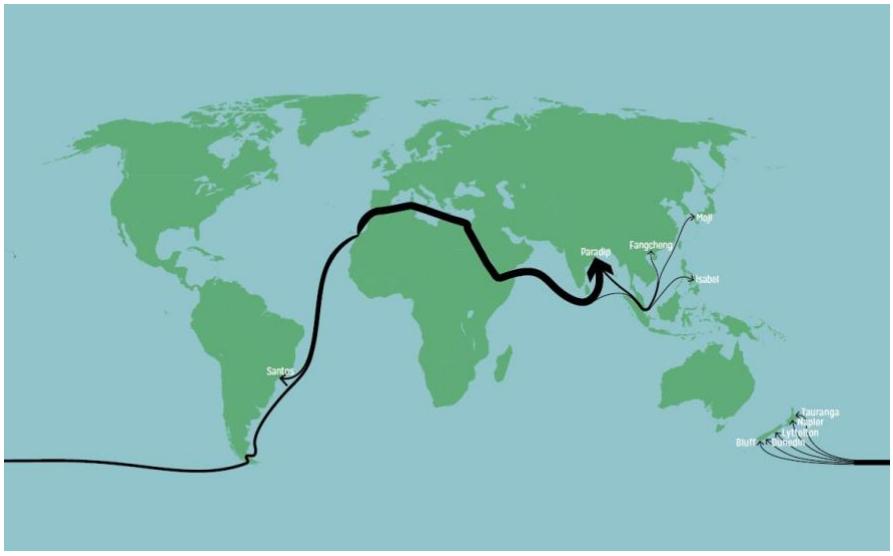
https://wsrw.org/en/news/report-reveals-clients-of-western-saharas-conflict-mineral

Report reveals clients of Western Sahara's conflict mineral



India and New Zealand stand out as the main importers of phosphate rock from occupied Western Sahara, in WSRW's newest annual report on the controversial trade.

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Western Sahara Resource Watch today publishes its 2020 annual overview of the companies involved in the purchase of occupied Western Sahara's conflict mineral: phosphate.

The report documents all shipments that left the occupied territory to 7 or 8 takers around the globe during calendar year 2020. The total exported volume is estimated at 1.1 million tonnes with a projected value of USD 170.8 million - ending up with the national phosphate company, OCP SA, of Morocco, which has no right or legal mandate to Western Sahara. The cargo was transported aboard 22 bulk vessels.

The vessel 'Pacific Crown' here spotted in the Strait of Gibraltar heading to El Aaiún, Western Sahara, on 27 February 2021. The vessel picked up a cargo to be transported to Paradeep, India, the biggest importer of the Western Sahara conflict mineral. In total, 22 vessels transported 1,12 million tonnes from the territory during 2020.

The export remains at approximately the same level as in the record-low 2019. WSRW's calculations reveal that the trade to OCP's joint venture in India and to two farmer cooperatives in New Zealand remains relatively stable from the year before, representing 64% and 20,4% of the entire trade, respectively. The remaining trade goes to Brazil, Japan and most likely to China and the Philippines.

Key service suppliers Continental and Epiroc to Morocco's exploitation of Western Sahara's phosphate reserves have recently ended their long-term involvement after investor pressure.

Download the report here.

After a review of sources in importing countries, WSRW has concluded that the price that Morocco earns from the trade could be approximately twice as high as we have reported in previous editions of the same report series.

The illegally exploited phosphate rock is an important source of income for the Moroccan government, which holds large parts of the Western Sahara territory under military occupation, contrary to international law. Representatives of the Saharawi people have been consistently outspoken against the trade, both in the UN, generally, and to specific companies.

Find previous editions of the *P for Plunder* reports, published since 2014, here. WSRW calls on all companies involved in the trade to immediately halt all purchases of Western Sahara phosphates until a solution to the conflict has been found and the Saharawi people have been assured the exercise of their fundamental right to self-determination. Investors are requested to engage or divest unless companies commit clearly to withdrawing from the trade.