

# World's Worst Polluters

SATURDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2008 | GREENMUZE STAFF





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*Blacksmith Institute* in conjunction with *Green Cross Switzerland* have released a list of the world's top ten most dangerous pollution problems. The world's worst polluters are: artisanal gold mining, contaminated surface water, groundwater contamination, indoor air pollution, industrial mining activities, metals smelters and processing, radioactive waste and uranium mines, untreated sewage, urban air quality, and used lead acid battery recycling.

They offer the list as "...a non-ranked set of global issues, which represent ongoing activities and conditions that pose the greatest threat to human health". Most of these problems are in the developing world, as high-income nations have largely adopted appropriate measures. As industry has moved overseas, so too has pollution.

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—The Blacksmith Institute

Their report, *The 2008 Top Ten List of World's Worst Pollution Problem: The Top 10 of the Toxic Twenty*, found that industrial wastes, air emissions, and legacy pollution affect over a billion people around the world, with millions poisoned and killed each year. *The World Health Organization* estimates that 25 percent of all deaths in the developing world are directly attributable to environmental factors.

The report also highlights that children are particularly susceptible. More than other leading causes of death, those tied to environmental factors have a disproportionate effect on children. Of the 2.2 million people killed by diarrhea in 1998, most were less than five years of age. Up to 90% of diarrheal infections are caused by environmental factors like contaminated water and inadequate sanitation. Similarly, acute respiratory infections, 60% of which can be linked to environmental factors, kill an estimated two million children under five every year.

*The Blacksmith Institute* has also created lists that cover; *The Top Four Least Addressed Pollution Problems*, *The Top Eight Pollution Problems Affecting Children*, *The Top Seven Pollution Problems in Africa*, and *The Top Four Pollution Problems Affecting Future Generations*.

**Visit:** <http://www.worstpolluted.org/>

LAST UPDATED ( SATURDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2008 )

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