

Hundreds Of Millions Of Tons Of Mine Tailings Are To Be Dumped Into Norway's Fjords

Written by Joan Russow

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<https://www.keikoconservation.com/blog/hundreds-of-millions-of-tons-of-mine-tailings-are-to-be-dumped-into-norway-s-fjords>
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Despite public outcry, Norway has decided to stick with plans to dump mine tailings into the majestic fjords, "Førdefjorden" in Sogn and Fjordane and "Repparfjorden" in Finnmark. Mine tailings, known as "gruveavfall" in Norwegian, are what remain after mining for minerals and metals. Gruveavfall actually quite literally means mine (gruve) garbage (avfall) and can contain chemicals and hazardous materials. The plan is to dump an immense amount into these fjords, with 250 million tons of tailings in Førdefjorden alone!

The fight against mine tailing dumpings in Norway has been long and ongoing. In 2016, 80 activists even chained themselves to the Nordic Minings machinery alongside Førdefjorden. All together they were fined over 1 million kroner. Many people are understandably concerned and angry. These activities threaten the beautiful fjords and, most importantly, the life that resides in and around them. These fjords are homes to many animals including orcas, cod, spiny dogfish, eels and multiple species of birds, mammals and fish.

Norway is one of only 5 countries in the world that still allows the dumping of tailings into the ocean and the 4 other remaining countries are even slowly beginning to change their opinion. The government in Norway often promotes the country as clean and respectable with a high focus on a sustainable future, but dumping tailings is not sustainable in any way.

Both of these fjords hold wild salmon. One can only imagine the damage these tailings will have on spawning areas. The large mass of the tailings will lay almost immediately on the ocean floor, suffocating and killing marine life. The mining industry also uses different types of chemicals to perfect their product. These chemicals are mainly Magnafloc 155, Magnafloc 1707 and Lilafloc D817M. Even worse, it is believed that, due to heavy currents inside the fjords, tailing particles may be carried over great distances. Scientists are concerned that these chemicals will not break down effectively and may spread to marine life. These waters have no barriers. What goes on in these fjords will potentially also effect others outside of Norway's borders.

What You Can Do:

Nussir is the name of the company planning to dump tailings in Repparfjord while Nordic Mining plans to dump tailings in Førdefjorden. We hope you will urge them to stop this destructive practice by contacting them through e-mail.

Nussir: info@nussir.no

Nordic Mining: post@nordicmining.com

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You can also contact:

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Minister of Climate and Environment- Ola Elvestuen: postmottak@kld.dep.no

-Keiko Norway Team