

# **IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND MINING OVER INDIGENOUS LIVELIHOODS IN THE ATACAMA DESERT, CHILE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Atacameños are a agricultural/herder precolumbian culture inhabiting the Atacama desert. Within this territory, Peine is a 460-member community that controls around 600,000 ha. Today, they crop alfalfa and maize and raise sheep, but the use of technology and yields are poor. Thus, the Peineños depend on salaries provided by large mining companies that pump large amounts of water from the aquifer, affecting wildlife and vegetation. Local testimonies gathered recently by the authors indicate that nomadic herding throughout the desert was practiced until 1980, and abandoned since due to the impacts of climate change. Employment provided by these corporations have increased the living standard of households in Peine but, at the same time, they have abandoned their traditional activities such as agriculture and animal herding. Thus, the impacts of climate change and foreign mining corporations have affected in many ways the traditional livelihoods of this ancient culture of the desert.

**PALAVRA-CHAVE:** Indigenous livelihood, Atacama