

Chevron's Pollution Victory Opens Door for Companies to Shirk Foreign Verdicts

Corporations seeking to avoid enforcement of foreign judgments they contend are based on corrupt proceedings may have a new weapon now, thanks to a ruling by a federal appeals court over Chevron's long-running Ecuadorian pollution litigation, reports **BloombergBusinessWeek**.

The court affirmed that a lawyer for victims engaged in wrongdoing to secure a \$9.5 billion verdict in the South American country.

"The decision hands well-heeled corporations a template for avoiding legal accountability anywhere in the world," says Deepak Gupta, the lawyer representing Steven Donziger, the controversial New York attorney who has been battling Chevron over pollution liability in Ecuador for decades.

Paul Barrett explains that "the case began with pollution in oil fields operated by Texaco Inc. in the rain forests of Ecuador in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1993, Donziger and other U.S. lawyers sued Texaco in New York on behalf of villagers and indigenous tribe members. Chevron acquired Texaco and its potential liabilities in 2001. The pollution case was dismissed by U.S. courts and restarted in Ecuador in 2003."

Read the article.