

Lead and associated metals in the Ribeira Valley, States of Paraná and São Paulo, Brazil: Evaluation of the Impact on public health.

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Environmental studies carried out by Environmental Health Tecnology Company of the State, São Paulo - Cetesb and the University of São Paulo between 1987 and 1991 revealed that the Ribeira Valley was contaminated by heavy metals from its upper reaches to its mouth. Later studies, published between 1996 and 1997, attributed the source of Pb and Zn contamination to base metal mines, now closed, situated in the upper reaches of the valley. Lead and associated metals are now being monitored through blood, urine and hair samples collected at random from children aged from 7 to 14 years, resident in geologically contaminated areas, and compared to similar samples collected from children living in non-contaminated areas.

This study may serve to alert the public health authorities, both local and regional, to take preventative action and/or adequate measures to deal with the problem.