Do You Know Where Your Gold Comes From?
Some gold mining practices in the artisanal and small scale mining sector (ASGM) are illegal and unregulated, and are now a growing threat to the global environment and to people.

ASGM is the Number One Source of Mercury Pollution in the World.
Mercury is one of the most toxic elements on earth. It can stay in an ecosystem for years, if not centuries, and can cause serious health issues for people including brain damage, nerve and organ damage, memory loss and even a shortened life span. It can be found in the fish that you eat.

ASGM is a perfect front for the mafia and organized crime.
ASGM can frequently be illegal and attract illicit activities that include corruption, violence, child slavery, money laundering, human trafficking, illegal seizing of lands, environmental destruction, and even terrorism.

The Power of the Wallet
As a consumer, you can help ensure that the gold you buy is responsibly sourced. When shopping for jewelry or products that contain gold, you can ask the salesperson questions to find out what they or their companies are doing to prevent human rights abuses, environmental destruction, and mercury poisoning caused by illegal and unregulated gold mining.

Questions You Should Ask When Buying Gold or Products that Contain Gold:
- Where does your gold come from? Can you verify the source?
- Is it from a certified responsible source like Fairmined or Fairtrade Gold?
  - If yes, can you verify this?
  - If not – what can you tell me about your gold?
- Is it recycled gold?
  - If yes, can you verify this?
  - If not – what can you tell me about your gold?
- Do you take any steps to verify that your gold does not come from an illegal or illicit source?
  - If yes, what are they?
  - If not – why?

Red Flag Responses:
In many cases your jeweler will not fully know the answers to your questions.

These responses may sound like:
- “We only use the highest standards with our materials.”
- “We only use the best quality gold in our pieces.”
- “We have strong requirements for our suppliers.”

If this is the case keep asking questions!
- Great – can you share what they are?
- How do you make sure these standards are consistently met?

Through talking with your jeweler, favorite tech company, or bank, and making the most informed choice possible, you are part of advancing these industries to be more responsible.