



REJECT OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, SAVE OUR OCEANS!

Oxfam South Africa is supporting the Amadiba Crisis Committee's calls to keep Shell away from our oceans. Amadiba is joined by many organisations and ordinary citizens and activists who are protesting the planned three-dimensional seismic survey in search of oil and gas deposits from Morgan Bay to Port St Johns off the Wild Coast. The exploration was meant to start on 1 December but was delayed when an urgent court application for an interim order was heard on 30 November but dismissed with costs. This means that the seismic survey will continue.

Responding to the dismissal of the interdict, Nonhle Buthuma, Amadiba Crisis Committee spokesperson says *"The dismissal does not discourage us, it makes us more determined to fight. Our community is busy putting together its own impact assessment on the real effect of the seismic surveying on people, sea life and our livelihoods. We will use this information to fight more and ensure that we save our oceans. We call upon everyone to be in solidarity with us to fight against extractivism that compromises our people, sea life, our livelihoods, and spiritual homes. It's not only people living near the ocean that are under threat, but all humanity will be affected, the impact of this kind of extractivism will go will go beyond ocean facing communities."*

As Oxfam South Africa, we will be joining activists at protests across the South African coastline on 5th December to call for an end to the survey because of its potential detrimental effect on noise sensitive sea life and the livelihoods of communities along the coast who survive on eco – tourism and subsistence farming. Amadiba and other activists are protesting the survey because of its potential impact on sealife, people and their livelihoods. People along the Wild Coast survive by fishing, farming, raising animals and eco – tourism. The ocean is also an important spiritual centre and venue for many sacred cultural and traditional ceremonies. The destruction of the ocean would therefore mean the destruction of a food source, a source of livelihood and a spiritual source.

Oxfam South Africa has been supporting Amadiba Crisis Committee since 2016 and has supported many mining affected communities to exercise their right to Free, Prior, and Informed consent to stop mining and other developments detrimental to their communities. The struggle of the people of Xolobeni is a continuous and never-ending struggle starting as far back as before 2007 when Amadiba Crisis Committee was formed. Since then the organisation, with community support has successfully fought off an attempt to bring mining to the area, then a proposal for a coastal road which would have divided the community into two and separated many from their source of livelihoods - their grazing and farmland and the ocean. Now they are fighting in yet another battle for their lives and livelihoods with Shell in South Africa joining a long list of companies that are pushing for oil and gas exploration in South Africa's oceans.

What is happening to the community of Xolobeni is just the beginning of a long battle which other ocean facing communities are going to have to fight as the government explores its oceans economy strategy and oil and gas exploration plan which seeks more partners to explore new revenues from Oil and Gas. This fight is about saving our oceans as the entire South African coastline has been identified by government as having potential for oil and gas exploration.

We are supporting Amadiba Crisis Committee yet again because our oceans are under threat.

“Ocean economies and livelihoods in South Africa are under constant threat from mining, oil and gas companies who want to explore potential gas and minerals in the ocean. This is often done without informing the communities and considering the potential damage to the environment and people’s livelihoods. Over the years, we have supported many mining affected communities to exercise their right to Free, Prior, and Informed consent and we are now helping ocean facing communities with this training as the government targets oil and gas exploration on our oceans without engaging the people whose lives will be affected the most by any exploration” Thembinkosi Dlamini, Climate Justice Programme Manager, Oxfam South Africa

Shell is pushing for a seismic survey, despite environmental reports advising that exploration has the potential to destroy sea life, eco systems, biodiversity and the lives and livelihoods of ocean communities. This is all happening in part because the South African government has built a strategy for Oil and gas exploration that encourages exploration and seeks to partner with those invested in Oil and Gas at the expense of people and planet.

According to government documents by the South African Department of Planning and Monitoring, government is seeking to explore investments in the ocean’s economy. These documents outline that *“Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration has indicated that South Africa’s coast and adjoining waters have possible resources of approximately nine billion barrels of oil. This is equivalent to forty years of South African oil consumption. We also have eleven billion barrels oil equivalent of natural gas, which is equal to three hundred and seventy-five years of South African gas consumption.”*

Based on these projections government then set *“an ambitious target of drilling thirty exploration wells in ten years. Over the next twenty years, this work could lead to the production of three hundred thousand (370 000) barrels of oil and gas per day. This is approximately eighty percent of current oil and gas imports. The result would be one hundred and thirty thousand jobs and a contribution of two point two billion US dollars (US \$2.2 billion) to GDP.”*

Oxfam South Africa’s support goes beyond just Amadiba Crisis Committee because the government has a stated intention to explore drilling thirty exploration wells in ten years. This means all ocean facing communities are under threat. Our call is about saving our oceans from extractivism, starting with supporting the Amadiba Crisis Committee and many others fighting for an end to Shell’s extractivism in the Eastern Cape’s Wild Coast area.

We are calling on the government to end the suffering of the people of Xolobeni and all oceans-facing communities in the name of development.

We call on government to go back to the drawing board to develop an oceans economy plan that acknowledges potential for environmental degradation instead of passing rights for exploration despite environmental reports saying the environmental cost of exploration will be high.

We call on government to work with ocean- facing communities to develop ocean economy plans that work with people's current livelihoods and way of life e.g., eco-tourism rather than bringing external solutions and plans for development that are not compatible with current livelihoods and ways of life

We call for global solidarity in all nations of the world because this is not just a fight for the people of Xolobeni or those along the coastline of South Africa. This is a fight for all people on the planet as our oceans are interconnected and the Wild Coast sits in the middle of a current that affects many different coastlines across the world.

Stand in solidarity with Amadiba Crisis and other activists and #saveouroceans

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