

PRESS RELEASE

EXTINCTION REBELLION CAPE TOWN

13 SEPTEMBER 2023



FOSSIL FUELS - YOUR CHICKENS ARE COMING HOME TO ROOST!

“Scientists have long warned what our fossil fuel addiction will unleash. Our climate is imploding faster than we can cope with extreme weather events hitting every corner of the planet.”
Antonio Guterres 6 September 2023

What? A protest action at the Southern African Oil & Gas Conference which is taking place at the CTICC.

Who? Extinction Rebellion Cape Town, together with other organisations (SAFCEI, CJCM, Feed the Future, ACA etc).

Where? Outside CTICC2, Corner of Heerengracht & Rua Bartholomeu Dias, Foreshore, Cape Town

When? Wed 13 September 2023 from 10:00-13:00

Contact persons:

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Details of action:

We will be joining other organisations protesting at the Oil & Gas Conference.

XR's visual contribution will be a reference to the fact the the “Climate Chickens” are coming home to roost. The effects of climate breakdown are already being felt all over the world and yet the fossil fuel companies are still looking to make vast amounts of money regardless of the suffering this will cause.

Extinction Rebellion Cape Town's core demands are:

We call on our government to declare a climate emergency.

Climate action now! Every part of society must act now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and begin protecting and repairing nature immediately. No more investments in fossil fuel projects.

Mozambique's gas find led to an insurgency in northern Mozambique where the gas was found, and a corruption scandal.

But even if South Africa and Namibia, which are now dreaming of oil and gas bonanzas, escape such tragedies, these dreams demonstrate a wilful blindness to the perilous situation we find ourselves in as a world in 2023. Thirty years ago, in 1992, the United Nations Climate Change Convention agreed that the burning of fossil fuels was causing greenhouse gas pollution that was dangerously affecting the climate. Since then scientists have sounded the alarm louder and louder and yet we have dramatically increased the amount of CO₂ that we are putting into the atmosphere to the point where we are now reaching dangerous tipping points (the chickens are coming home to roost!)

Arctic and Antarctic sea ice is melting, the Boreal forest in Canada and Siberia is burning, the oceans are dramatically heating and acidifying, and the Amazon forest may no longer be acting as a protective carbon sink. This year, 2023, brought heat domes, extensive wildfires, floods, marine heatwaves and continued desperate drought in Somalia. And July 2023 was the hottest month on record. To quote Peter Carter, who is Director of the Climate Emergency Institute, "we're on a rapid trend of a biosphere collapse"

Setting out to burn more oil and gas is therefore delusional and suicidal.

Of course, southern African countries need energy but we need to massively invest in safer, renewable energy which is maturing fast and getting cheaper all the time. Scientists have warned us that if we do not start to sharply reduce emissions in the next year or so, we may be locked into an irreversible unraveling of the systems that support life on our planet. We cannot pass such an evil legacy to the next generations!

Oil and gas companies have shown over and over that they cannot be trusted. They have spent billions on discrediting the science, downplaying climate danger and lobbying politicians to weaken climate legislation. They have recently made bonanza profits but are walking back on their promised contributions to the energy transition. They have talked up carbon capture and storage as the great panacea to our climate ills when they know very well that this technology is still in its infancy. They peddle the lie that gas is a transition fuel in denial of the fact that gas production and transport involves methane flaring and leaks and methane is a powerful greenhouse gas. They would not even be able to make a profit if they paid the true cost of the pollution which they externalise to the environment.

It is unjust that the North benefited economically from fossil fuels and southern Africa will not have the same opportunity. But to demand that Africa be allowed to burn fossil fuels to contribute its own GHGs makes no sense given the world's dire situation and the fact that climate change is hurting Africa very badly with, for example, drought greatly increasing food and water insecurity on the continent. Economically, investing in oil and gas infrastructure only makes sense if you are driven by short term gains, but soon Africa will be burdened by stranded assets as the global North will transition away from dirty energy.

Yes, we should fight for fairness and justice but the justice we demand is as outlined by the Climate Justice Charter Movement and the other organisations that are behind this protest today:

1. Ambitious just transition plans from all carbon corporations and polluters so we accelerate the realisation of net-zero emissions;
2. No new investments in oil, gas and coal;
3. All governments to withdraw subsidies from fossil fuel industries and redirect this money to socially owned renewable energy transitions;
4. The UN establish an "End Fossil Fuel Treaty" which ensures that fossil fuel corporations pay the world a carbon debt for the harm they have caused, that poor countries, including those with fossil fuel reserves, are compensated for suffering a problem they did not create, and that all oil, coal and gas industries are shut down in the next 10 years or sooner;
5. We demand the government place the country on a climate emergency footing given scientific forecasts of a dangerously hot summer;

Boiler plate

Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a global network and believes it is a citizen's duty to rebel using peaceful civil disobedience when faced with criminal inactivity by its Government. The Rebellion centres on demands for Government to tell the truth about our dire situation and to act accordingly, including to decarbonise our economy by 2025, in a mobilisation of war time like proportion.

We declare a non-violent rebellion on behalf of life itself and against our criminally negligent government. Our government's abject failure to protect citizens and the next generations from unimaginable suffering brought about by climate breakdown and social collapse is no longer tolerable.

The group's key demands are:

- The Government must admit the truth about the ecological emergency, reverse all policies inconsistent with addressing climate change, and work alongside the media to communicate with citizens
- The Government must enact legally binding policy measures to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and to reduce consumption levels
- A national Citizen's Assembly to oversee the changes, as part of creating a democracy fit for purpose.

Website: www.extinctionrebellion.org.za

