



OCTOBER 2016 EDITION



**AFRICA  
NEWSLETTER**

**GREETINGS!**

**WELCOME TO THIS EDITION OF OILWATCH  
NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED  
BY OILWATCH AFRICA.**

Oilwatch Africa newsletters are packaged to share information about activities of our member groups, impacted communities as well as other fossil fuels news bits. As usual, we bring you news from member groups and from across Africa.

This edition brings you reports from Oilwatch Africa General Assembly which held in Entebbe Uganda, Oilwatch international 20 years anniversary celebration, Oilwatching all over the globe and Oilwatch calls for a De-petroleum-ized Habitat”.

Also present in this edition are Seeds of an Oil Curse in Uganda and a special report on how West Africa is being swallowed by the sea encroaching waters off the coast of Togo, Ghana, Mauritania, and others, destroying homes, schools, fisheries, and the livelihood of the people. From Nigeria we have documented report about NNPC plans to return to its discarded biofuel project.

We will always like to hear from you; please do send us your reports, articles and stories to [info@oilwatch.org](mailto:info@oilwatch.org)

Thank you.

Together we can #keeepitintheground

# 20 YEARS OF OILWATCHING

by Nnimmo Bassey

Oilwatch International was formally inaugurated in 1996 in Quito, Ecuador. Oilwatch has remained a network driven by the conviction that the petroleum civilisation is driving humans to the precipice.

This forward-looking network called for oil to be left in the soil from its very early days. That is still the call today. Building a post-petroleum civilisation has never been more urgent as it is now.

Ecuador was the right place to begin this adventure, this struggle, this working with and learning from communities impacted by fossil fuels extraction. Ecuador served as a big school because in one or two days, and within a short travel time, you could visit oil wells, pollution spots and refineries. You could see all the atrocities and massive oil spills left by Chevron in the Amazon, for example. Using the tools of research and social exchanges, Oilwatchers from various countries could see that the destructive impacts of hydrocarbons extraction and oil-driven civilisation was uniformly reprehensible.

Read more here:

<https://nnimmobassey.net/2016/10/20/20-years-of-oilwatching/>

A group of approximately 20 people, mostly men, are standing outdoors in a grassy area with trees in the background. They are holding a large white banner that reads "OILWATCH AFRICA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016". The banner also features a logo on the left and a small image of a landscape on the right. The text "FISH NOT OIL: OILWATCH AFRICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016 RESOLUTIONS" is overlaid in large, bold, white and black letters on the bottom left of the image.

# FISH NOT OIL: OILWATCH AFRICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016 RESOLUTIONS

## **Fish not Oil**

Uganda Declaration of Oilwatch Africa on impacts of fossil fuels over land and Food Sovereignty in Africa

Oilwatch Africa network Members and the Albertine Oil rift community representatives met in Entebbe, Uganda, between 4-6th of September, 2016 and considered the negative impacts of fossil fuels on climate, land, food sovereignty, water, sea and well-being in Africa. The Participants at the conference shared experiences on impacts of oil, gas, coal extraction and other forms of mining on their countries and communities. The conference examined the environmental and social impacts of oil, gas, coal and other forms of mining. The impacts on food production, water pollution and deforestation were discussed as well as the growing trend of land grabbing on the continent.

Oilwatch Africa frowned at the trend where corporate interests aimed at profit are elevated above the interest of our peoples and environment on that altar of dubious investment and uninterrogated development. The conference noted that dependence on fossil fuels brings more corruption, engenders conflicts and distorts the value base of our

communities. Oilwatch Africa members regretted that the governments of African countries are silent before the suffering of the communities affected by oil extraction and mining.

The conference noted the serious impact on agriculture by the pollution of our lands, contamination of fresh waters and the destruction of fisheries as inimical to our economy and overall wellbeing.

The participants frowned at that the increasing restrictions of Civil Societies and activists to access information and to carry out legitimate activities in communities where fossil fuels and other minerals are being exploited. The meeting also noted that this Africa is still trapped in neo-colonial state that condemns that continent to remain merely as a source of raw materials with cash-strapped colonial and neo-colonial governments on the treadmill of cash cropping and mineral extraction for export. Oilwatch Africa noted that "leaving the fossils in the soil" and use of "Renewable Energy" is possible and is the inescapable path to protecting our nations, tackling global warming and securing a future for our children.

With a resolve that urgent actions must be taken to save the African continent from being wholly degraded, grabbed and destroyed, Oilwatch Africa declares and demands as follows:

1. Global distortions brought about by excessive consumption of fossil fuels and the externalisation of costs to parts of the world that consume less energy and fossil fuels lock in unacceptable injustices and must be urgently and openly addressed.

2. Africa is one of the most exposed regions of the world to climate change impacts, with average temperature rise of at least 50% above global averages. Global action to tackle this cannot be based on voluntary nationally determined contributions (NDCs) being pursued at the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

3. African governments must reject false solutions to global warming including those pushed through REDD, geoengineering and other strategies that are threatening to elevate the currently intolerable levels of land grabbing to that of a whole continent grab.

4. Floods, droughts and expanding desertification on the continent are all fed by the world's continual addiction to fossil fuels.

5. Obnoxious activities such as pollution and gas flaring which alarmingly continue in the oil fields of Nigeria, Angola, Algeria and elsewhere must be stopped and energy needs be met with abundant renewable alternatives. In particular, Oilwatch Africa encourages the government in Nigeria to continue the clean-up process of Ogoni land and the entire Niger Delta.

6. Oilwatch Africa declares that with uncontaminated lands and adequate support for local agricultural production Africa can feed Africans and levels of nutrition can be maintained without resort to commercially and politically driven genetic engineering of our staple crops for so-called enhanced vitamin levels. We insist that nutrition cannot be manufactured in laboratories and that our food systems must not be colonised.

7. We demand access to land and security of land tenure for women

8. Oilwatch Africa calls for stoppage of fossil exploration and other expansion activities on the continent, demands an audit of already accumulated impacts and full restitution for harm suffered.

9. Oilwatch Africa resolved to support the fight for justice by communities impacted by mining and other extractive activities in Uganda and elsewhere in Africa.

10. In line with the United Nation's declaration of 2016 as the Year of the Family Farming, Oilwatch Africa affirms that family farmers feed the world even when they go hungry. This unjust situation must be addressed with governments providing necessary supports to our farmers, pastoralists and fisher folks.

Oilwatch members and communities at the conference declared that Africans must stand together in the global struggle for food sovereignty, stand with the movements that say Yes to Life and No to destructive Mining and pledge to remain active in the movement for gender balance, climate and food justice all aimed at building a well-being economy inspired by the African spirit of solidarity economy and Ubuntu.

Finally, Oilwatch Africa called to memory the many martyrs of environmental justice struggles in Africa and around the world. Calling to mind that this year marks the 21th anniversary of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, Ogoni leader and activist and Africa's foremost environmental justice campaigner, Oilwatch Africa resolved that their struggles will not be in vain and calls for immediate release of the bus (made in the memory of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni martyrs) which has been detained by Nigerian customs for a year now.

**Signed by**

**Community and civil society members present and Oilwatch Africa representatives from Benin Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.**

**Entebbe-Uganda, 06 September 2016**

Source: <http://oilwatchafrica.org/content/fish-not-oil-oilwatch-africa-general-assembly-2016-resolutions/>



# **SEEDS OF AN OIL CURSE IN UGANDA AS RWAMUTONGA VILLAGE RESIDENTS LOCATED IN HOIMA DISTRICT FACE DISPLACEMENTS AND SWIM IN ABJECT POVERTY- IN THE NAME OF AN OIL WASTE STORAGE AND TREATMENT FACILITY**

**By Bwengye RajabYusuf (NAPE-Oil Watch Uganda)**

Land disputes in western Uganda's Lake Albertine region have become common in recent years. The discovery of oil and the building of refineries and waste facilities have raised the stakes in these disputes. Near the town of Hoima, allegations of illegal evictions and human rights abuses have underscored a need for governmental oversight in these land matters. In a small village outside Hoima, known as Rwamutonga, more than 700 residents are crowded onto a small scrap of land. They say they have been unfairly evicted and brutalized after a land dispute with their neighbor, Joshua Tibagwa.

In August, a court awarded Tibagwa the title for the land after a drawn out legal battle.

Tibagwa's land has attracted the interest of McAlester Energy Resources, an American company from Texas interested in investing in an Oil Waste consolidation and treatment facility. He says the company fronted him money to secure the land so it can be used for a petroleum waste water facility. After the judgment, an eviction notice was quickly sent out.

Residents say that on the fateful day, they awoke to a hail of bullets and teargas, followed by the burning and looting of their homes. The residents fled to the bush to escape and these chaos have continued with children and Women being affected most since August 2014 to date. Oil Watch Uganda –the Ugandan chapter of the Oil Watch Africa family opposed to extraction of dirty energy fossils across Africa and other parts of the globe has taken and popularized video clips that captures the cries of the voiceless Rwamutonga residents. And whereas some concerned members of the Ugandan parliament have visited the affected locals, a concrete action to rectify the situation is yet to be taken.

A barbed wire fence, which Tibagwa says was set up by McAlester, now cordons off 1,000 hectares of land - almost 10 times more than the court mandated. Armed private security guards, hired by Tibagwa, now patrol the area leaving the communities to live in fear and intimidation.

Local community leaders say the displaced residents have zero access to medical aid, food, water and are suffering from malnutrition. Oil Watch Uganda is currently using a community Green radio platform established by NAPE in Hoima District to amplify the voices of these affected residents.

# WEST AFRICA IS BEING SWALLOWED BY THE SEA ENCROACHING WATERS OFF THE COAST OF TOGO, GHANA, MAURITANIA, AND OTHERS ARE DESTROYING HOMES, SCHOOLS, FISH, AND A WAY OF LIFE

by MATTEO FAGOTTO

FUVEMEH, Ghana — The tide is just starting to come in when David Buabasah begins nervously checking the waters creeping up the coastline toward his partially destroyed home.

As the high tide mounts the steep shore of this small Ghanaian fishing village perched on a shrinking peninsula between the Atlantic Ocean and the Volta River estuary, he and other inhabitants prepare for the worst.

“When the big waves come, they can easily kill you. Last week, the ocean took away part of my house while my family was sleeping inside,” says the 32-year-old fisherman, gesturing toward a crumbling brick wall and a pair of door frames, the only remains of his family's compound.

Growing stronger by the minute, the tide begins to push wave after wave into the village, pounding the dilapidated dwellings with unrepentant force. House walls collapse under the fury of the ocean, and huge pools of saltwater fill the center of town. Those whose houses are the closest to the shoreline can only watch as the waves carry away all of their belongings.

Read more : [http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/21/west-africa-is-being-swallowed-by-the-sea-climate-change-ghanabenin/?utm\\_content=buffer00b88&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/21/west-africa-is-being-swallowed-by-the-sea-climate-change-ghanabenin/?utm_content=buffer00b88&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

## NNPC PLANS TO RETURN TO ITS DISCARDED BIOFUELS PROJECT.

The Nigerian state hydrocarbon company, NNPC (National Petroleum Corporation), wants to go back and pick up the Ethanol Project, which it abandoned five years ago.

The corporation says it would renew its collaboration with Benue State, a North Central state in the country, on an Ethanol project.

Maikaniti Baru, Group Managing Director of the NNPC, made this known while receiving a delegation from the Benue State Government at the NNPC Towers in Abuja. He noted that ethanol when blended with Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) otherwise known as petrol ensures excellent performance of vehicles, stressing that energy sufficiency and proficiency were part of the cardinal objectives of the NNPC.

Read more : <http://africaoilgasreport.com/2016/08/in-the-news/nnpc-plans-to-return-to-its-discarded-biofuels-project/>



# **“OILWATCH'S CALL FOR A DE-PETROLEUM-IZED HABITAT”**

October 27, 2016

The General Assembly of Oilwatch, which is celebrating its 20 years of existence, and met in Quito in the framework of the Social Forum Resistance to Habitat III, declares:

1. The United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements held in Vancouver in 1979, Istanbul in 1996, and Quito in 2016 are a clear testament to the relationship between the oil industry and the global urbanization agenda: expanding cities are the motor, justification and destination of hydrocarbons and their derivatives; constitute a source of energy; and allow for the profits and power of the oil, gas and coal industry, the vast car, petrochemical and mining industries as well as speculative financial capital to increase. This urban model is an expression of the oil civilization and is profoundly linked to the global environmental crisis.

2. Both the slogan and objective of the New Urban Agenda open the door to new patterns of “sustainable and responsible”

production, distribution and consumption of Nature and human labour; the sacrifice of bodies and territories to the extraction of oil, gas and coal, other sources of energy and inputs for the petrochemical industry.

3. Habitat III promotes and imagines a global future which is essentially urban, ignoring the importance of rural territories and the contribution of indigenous and peasant communities to sustaining life on Earth. Habitat III justifies land grabbing and the expropriation of the territories of ancestral peoples; the emptying of territories to provide raw material for industry; and the urbanization of the rainforests, forests and peasant communities with projects such as “housing for the poor”, Millennium cities and other projects that are presented as part of social agendas, conservation or “offsets.”

Read more here: [oilwatchafrica.org](http://oilwatchafrica.org)



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[/napeuganda@yahoo.com/nape@nape.org](mailto:napeuganda@yahoo.com/nape@nape.org)

Oilwatch Africa Secretariat  
National Association of professional Environmentalists (NAPE-Oil  
Watch Uganda

P.O.BOX 29909, Kampala-Uganda  
Zana -Entebbe Road, Plot No. 7138 Kampala

Website: [www.nape.or.ug](http://www.nape.or.ug)

Tel: +256414530181 Skype address: napeuganda