

Activists demand end to TotalEnergies offshore drilling

By Qaqamba Falithenjiwa

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The French multinational company wants to drill for oil and gas along the coastline near Cape Town, the West Coast and the Garden Route.



Environmental activists came together to picket outside Parliament to oppose TotalEnergies' offshore drilling for oil and gas. Photo: Qaqamba Falithenjiwa | GroundUp

While Springbok supporters were painting the city centre green in Cape Town on Friday, environmental activists picketed outside Parliament to oppose TotalEnergies' [offshore drilling](#) for oil and gas.

Members of Extinction Rebellion 350 Africa, Green Connection, Project 90 by 2030, and African Climate Alliance chanted “phantsi ngoTotal” and “Umhlaba ngowethu, ulwandle lolwethu” which means, “Land is ours, the sea is ours.”

The French multinational company wants to drill for oil and gas along the South African coastline near Cape Town, the West Coast and the Garden Route.

In September, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) rejected the appeals against TotalEnergies' application to drill off the coast between Cape Town and Cape Agulhas. The company is also setting its sights on offshore drilling in the Deep Water Orange Basin off the West Coast between Port Nolloth and Hondeklip Bay, for which the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) has already granted the company exploration rights.

TotalEnergies also plans to drill between Mossel Bay and Cape St Francis which is currently in its public participation stage.



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Glen Tyler-Davies, a member of 350 Africa, said, "We are trying to power up climate justice and renewable energy. We have an amazing opportunity to not only avoid the impacts of climate change but also to power up community and social owned energy through renewable energy. Our parliamentarians need to seize this opportunity and stop the destruction."

Tyler-Davies said they expect Parliament to stop companies from exploiting the environment.

Community coordinator for Green Connection, Neville van Rooy, said, "We were shocked to hear of these decisions. We have the right to a clean ocean."

Van Rooy said these oil and gas ventures are to run for about 20 years which will put Africa in a climate crisis. "There are cleaner alternatives that we can use. Why are we not harnessing them instead of having fossil fuels forced on us?" he asked.

Among their [demands](#) was for oil and gas explorations to be halted immediately.

Their memorandum was handed to Masibulele Xhaso, Secretary to the National Assembly. He said, "We will make sure that it is taken through the necessary processes and refer it to the relevant committees."

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