

# Mtunzini

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## SOS Mtunzini news update NO. 4, 15 May 2011.

**SOS** Mtunzini (Save Our Sands) is the joint campaign of the MRA (Mtunzini Residents Association) and the Mtunzini Conservancy to address the proposed sand dune mining to the North and the South of Mtunzini. The **Mtunzini Residents Association** (Reg. No. 2003/022172/08) and the **Mtunzini Conservancy** (Reg. No. 2007/006455/08) are both Section 21 companies. The Mtunzini Conservancy has Section 18A tax status and can issue tax certificates for donations made.

Things are certainly starting to happen pretty fast now, and much has happened since Newsletter No. 3. The much awaited piece on 50:50 (SABC TV2), in which Exxaro chose not to participate, was shown on the 9<sup>th</sup> May. The keenly anticipated meeting forming part of the PPP (Public Participation Process) took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> May. For those who did not see the 50:50 program, there are clips on our SOS Facebook site, and on Youtube – so check it out there.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcThpRG5uS0,](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcThpRG5uS0)

The PPP meeting was completely unsatisfactory for a number of reasons. The EAP (Environmental Assessment Practitioner) appeared to be trying to sell the mine to the residents and surrounding community, rather than dealing with the severe impacts that the mine is likely to have on the environment and community. Our complaint to ACER in this regard is set out at the end of this news letter for those who are interested in the detail (also on the SOS Mtunzini Facebook site). Our request for another PPP meeting has been turned down by ACER and

Areas south of Mtunzini and west of N2 that will be covered over and destroyed by the slimes dams



Riverine forest and wetland that will be destroyed by the mining operation



we will very soon respond to this rejection. You can also see Andrew Venter's comment on the meeting, EXXARO MOUNTAIN OF GREED II, on his Blog:

<http://andrewventer.wordpress.com/2011/05/15/exxaro-mountain-of-greed-ii/>

The period for comment on the dBAR (draft Basic Assessment Report) has been extended to Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May. We are still participating, **but under protest**, in this fatally flawed process while we await the Minister's response to our appeal to have the wrong decision to do the shorter, quicker BA (Basic Assessment) overturned. We are insisting that the lawful process to follow in the case of a development proposal of this magnitude and impact is that of a comprehensive S and EIA (Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment). We are accused by Exxaro of merely trying to delay the process, but in reality Exxaro are trying by devious means to take a short cut to save time and maximize profit. While our ultimate objective is to stop the Exxaro Fairbreeze mine, we are now trying to at least get the process back onto a legally correct trajectory to ensure that all the aspects of this huge, high impact project, are thoroughly and comprehensively addressed, and that the Minister has ALL the information necessary to make an informed decision. We are opposed to what appears to be a "sweet heart" EIA!

The registration form for I&AP's is attached. Please take the time to register as an I&AP (Interested and Affected Party) and comment. It is your right to be heard and to be part of the process.

From our point of view the dBAR, which we are now commenting on, appears to be a real shocker! We already have over a 100 questions with respect to apparently wrong information, unsubstantiated claims, information that does not cross reference properly etc., etc. This, together with the fact that the meeting was run in such a way that we could not ask these questions of Exxaro, does not inspire confidence in Exxaro and the EAP running the process. We could add this list of questions for you, but it makes the Newsletter far too long. If anyone is particularly interested in this aspect and detail they are welcome to contact me, Jim Chedzey on 083 326 0698 or send me an e-mail to [chedzeyj@agricare.co.za](mailto:chedzeyj@agricare.co.za).

## **Contributions**

Also, a big thank you to everyone for past support and contributions to funding the SOS Mtunzini campaign. Sadly, with a



Area up to 100 m from Mtunzini that will be mined.



project of this size and scope and with so much profit at stake, the only way that we can effectively participate in the process to try and stop the mine in its present form is professionally and legally. This requires funds – the fire has been lit and the furnace needs to be fed! The single most significant thing that you can do right now to help us in this campaign is to contribute to our SOS Mtunzini fund.

The Mtunzini Conservancy is a Section 21 Company with s18(a) Tax status which means we can issue tax certificates. If you have any queries in this regard please contact me, Jim Chedzey on 083 326 0698, or one of the other Committee members.

Contributions may be made to Mtunzini Conservancy at any branch or via the internet to.

**FNB, branch code 220130.**

**Cheque Account no. 62093027475**

Use your business name or surname and initials as reference.

Please fax both pages with proof of payment to 086 512 6476

For those interested in some detail, I am attaching the Complaint to ACER regarding the PPP meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May in Mtunzini.

If you have any queries please call:

- **Stan Whitfield 083 655 8983**
- **Barbara Chedzey 083 326 0699**
- **Doggy Kewley 083 630 1839**
- **Wendy Forse 082 722 3333**
- **Jim Chedzey 083 326 0698**

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COMMENTS ON THE PPP MEETING HELD AT MTUNZINI TOWN HALL ON 10 MAY 2011 INRESPECT OF THE PROPOSED EXXARO FAIRBREEZE MINE.

To ACER and EXIGENT

12 May 2011

Dear Sirs,

I would like to set out the following comments about the PPP meeting held at Mtunzini Town Hall on 10 May 2011 in respect of the proposed Exxaro Fairbreeze mine:-

- The meeting started at 6:17PM, after the convener Karin Bowler had given an exhaustive and unnecessarily long introduction.
- Neels Oosterhuis (Exxaro) gave a brief overview from 6:20PM to 6:20PM
- Jacolette Adam (EAP) gave a presentation on most aspects of the specialist reports from 6:20PM to 6:50PM. Jacolette did not appear to be independent. Later in the meeting Jacolette even held up Exxaro's Hillendale rehabilitation brochure and stated that this was evidence of successful rehabilitation, and that the content of the brochure had not been "photoshopped".
- Karin then opened the floor to questions. Stan Whitfield of the Mtunzini Conservancy immediately stood up and requested that he make a statement (see **attached**). Stan Whitfield duly made the statement much against Karin's wishes.
- The questions started, but there were major problems in the procedures, such as:-
  - Many attendees from local communities appeared to have been introduced into the meeting. These community leaders were allowed most of the questions. These questions were nearly all in Zulu and in fact were long drawn out statements, not questions. One person actually spoke for ten minutes in Zulu without Karin trying to stop him. All of the responses were in English with no translation. It was obvious that the Zulu speakers understood English perfectly well.
  - Without exception the community members sang the praises of Exxaro and their only question was in fact about jobs.
  - We respect the rights of the local communities to state their views and ask questions, but Mtunzini residents must be allowed enough time to air their own concerns.
- As a consequence the meeting dragged on and was very unsatisfactory to the actual residents of Mtunzini. We understood that the local communities had already had their own PPP meetings. We could not understand why the Mtunzini resident's meeting was taken over by other communities, with little or no attempt by Karin to control matters.
- The SRK surface water person stated that the dams etc. had been designed for 50 year weather events. We had understood that the structures were designed for 100 year weather events and would have liked to have discussed this thoroughly.
- Lance Coetzee of SGS (Air Quality) stated that the effects of dust on health had never been investigated by anyone. This needed to be addressed in detail in the meeting.
- Neels Oosterhuis made statements which were inconsistent with the specialist reports and much more clarification and discussion was needed.
- The Socio Economic expert – Paul of Graham Muller Associates - was obviously not aware of any regulations about gum tree plantations, since he suggested that Mondi

- could simply grow some more trees somewhere else.
- When the meeting ended at 9:00PM a few attendees shouted out that another meeting was needed. Stan Whitfield stood up and stated that to allow only two and one quarter hours to ask questions about a 20 year mining project was not acceptable (see attached statement). Especially when key issues such as rehabilitation were not discussed in any detail. We deserved much more time to question Exxaro.
- It was obvious at the end of the meeting that residents did not achieve clarity about key points (such as rehabilitation, slimes dams, destruction of wetlands etc.)
- The residents would have liked to discuss feasible alternatives to slimes dams, wetland destruction, processes etc.

**We would like to lodge an official complaint about the unsatisfactory meeting.**

We are grateful that Exxaro have agreed for a one week extension to submit comments, but before we can submit our final comments, we suggest that ACER urgently call and advertise another public meeting in Mtunzini before PPP comments are due in.

If ACER do not organise this meeting there is a grave danger that the residents of Mtunzini will remain extremely unhappy about the PPP process. We suggest that the PPP meeting should be held at 6:00PM on Tuesday 17 May 2011 at the Mtunzini Town Hall.

We suggest a few changes to the meeting format:-

- Questions must be limited to one minute, questions must not become statements.
- The convenor/facilitator must merely facilitate and not give his/her opinions.
- The key matters which the residents wish to discuss must be chosen by a show of hands before the meeting begins (with time allocated accordingly). These matters should include (but not be limited to):-
  - dust,
  - rehabilitation,
  - slimes dams,
  - destruction of wetlands,
  - alternative processes,
  - Exxaro to explain why their "possible" contribution to local communities is only R4 million per annum when Exxaro's projected profits are R1 billion per annum before tax.
- At least three hours must be allowed for the meeting –

say from 6:00PM to 9:00PM.

- Attendees must be limited to residents of Mtunzini.
- English must be the only language in the meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you.