



THE WEEKEND READER

"Your Weekly Read on Debt, Development & Socio-Economic Justice"

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY: REFLECTION ON THE JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

A clean and safe environment is a fundamental right for the promotion of meaningful social and economic justice. Just like many African countries, Zimbabwe is a mineral resource rich nation, citing continued discovery of gold, diamond and lithium deposits, to mention a few. However, the extraction of these precious stones poses a grave threat on the environment. As a coalition, we recently commemorated World Environment Day which serves as a poignant reminder of our collective responsibility towards safeguarding the planet and utilizing the above resources responsibly. In Zimbabwe, the journey towards environmental preservation faces significant challenges while pursuing a 'Just Energy Transition'. Indeed, the transition promises a shift towards sustainable energy sources but it also poses risks to environmental rights. As the nation endeavors to embrace renewable energy alternatives, it must tread cautiously to ensure that the transition does not compromise the rights of its citizens to a clean and healthy environment.



World Environment Day was recognized on the 5th of June 2024

The Just Energy Transition in Zimbabwe brings to the forefront critical questions regarding equitable access to resources and environmental justice. Although renewable energy projects hold promise for reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change impacts, they often come at a cost to mining host communities and ecosystems. Zimbabwe is recorded as one of the largest producers of lithium, a precious and fundamental stone in the just energy transition era. However, the mining of lithium has caused mayhem in the form of land degradation, habitat loss, and displacement of indigenous populations, undermining their environmental rights. A case in point is lithium mining in the Bikita Minerals lithium owned Sinomine Resource Group. The Chinese mining entity is reported to have sidelined environmental and social standards in the scramble for lithium¹, thereby inhibiting the realisation of social and economic justice in the area. Therefore, any transition strategy must prioritize inclusive decision-making processes that empower communities and uphold their right to a healthy environment.

1. <https://news.mongabay.com/2024/04/locals-slam-zimbabwe-for-turning-a-blind-eye-to-chinese-miners-violations/>

Whilst recognizing World Environment Day and to ensure that natural resources are channeled to achieve pro-poor and people-centred socio-economic development, the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) recommends the following;

- Strengthening regulatory frameworks in mining- This is to ensure that the value derived from extraction trickles down to host communities and national development. To note, currently, the nation loses over US\$1.5 Billion annually to gold smuggling. Government should consider legally mandated corporate social responsibility that is hinged on a community development model for sustainable development and not on a charity model.
- Fostering public participation guided by Free Prior and Informed Consent Principles- Ensuring participation of local communities in determination of regulatory frameworks, consultation on Bills such as Mines and Minerals Bill etc.
- Ensuring the observance of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (for imposition of best practices on 'investors').
- Ring-fencing of mining revenues to drive domestic growth through investing in capital retaining projects such as infrastructure.
- Continued implementation of developmental policies that encourage beneficiation and value addition of minerals by government such as the banning on the export of raw lithium and black granite.

VACANCY NOTICE: FINANCE INTERN.

Download here: <https://zimcodd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/ZIMCODD-Vacancy-Notice.pdf>



Are you passionate about Social & Economic Justice?
Do you believe in the movement for equality?

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Become a registered member of ZIMCODD today:
<https://rb.gy/ewz45>
Join our Mailing List by sending us your email address to stay caught up on our activities, weekly & monthly reading resources on the Social & Economic justice movement.

SCAN NOW TO BECOME A MEMBER!

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Zimbabwe Coalition On Debt And Development
ZIMCODD

#Youth4Integritypledge

Are you a member of the youth (18-35 years) with a passion for fighting social and economic injustice? Do you want to join the action for Integrity? Do You want to become an Integrity Icon? If your answer to any of these questions is yes, take the pledge today: <https://rb.gy/9ogzgx>

2. <https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/africa/zimbabwe-to-start-gold-tracing-system-in-bid-to-curb-smuggling/#:~:text=Zimbabwe%20loses%20about%20%241.5bn,to%20the%20International%20Crisis%20Group.&text=Zimbabwe's%20sole%20authorized%20buyer%20of,a%20bid%20to%20stop%20smuggling>