

Facing Downturn in U.S. and Global Markets, Big Oil Targets Africa to Dump Plastics

By 350.org

Global Research, September 02, 2020

350.org 1 September 2020

Region: [sub-Saharan Africa](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Environment](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Oil and Energy](#)

American oil companies are keen to export more plastics to Africa through Kenya. According to the [New York Times](#), a lobby group representing Big Oil and chemical companies, including Shell, Exxon and Total, has been pushing the US government to use a [US-Kenya trade deal](#) to dump petro-chemicals and plastics across Africa, to prop up Big Oil's dwindling profits amidst a global pandemic and an [oil crash](#).

Letters from the lobby group, identified by [Unearthed](#), also call for the lifting of limits on the plastics waste trade, a move which experts say amounts to an attempt to legally circumvent existing [law in Kenya banning plastics](#) which could have a domino effect in many other countries across Africa that have banned the single-use of plastics.

In reaction to these developments, **Landry Ninteretse, Africa Team Leader at 350.org**, said:

“It’s not surprising that oil companies are feeling the heat, with science consistently demonstrating the link between fossil fuels and climate change. Big oil’s time is up; the world is moving away from oil and gas. This proposal by oil companies to use their oversupply of oil to manufacture plastics and dump them in Africa is completely unacceptable.

For decades, Big Oil has used its power and influence to deny climate change and exacerbate social injustices and inequalities. But its treacherous actions are now being exposed. Africa is not their garbage dump. Instead of bringing more pollution here, they must pay for years of damage already done. Africans are more vigilant than ever, and we will not accept any more destructive activities to take place across the continent - be it in Kenya, or any other country.

We strongly condemn the actions of the American Chemistry Council and the big oil companies behind this lobby group and call upon the Kenya and US governments to throw out this proposal. The same energy and resistance demonstrated against the proliferation of fossil fuels on the continent will be deployed to combat this unfortunate adventure of a declining industry.”

On February 6, President Trump and President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya announced their intent to begin free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations. If successful, it would be the first U.S. FTA with a country in sub-Saharan Africa, but it is now being hijacked by Big Oil.

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