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Mabola Coal Mining Project Unravels – Unlikely To Go Ahead

By GREEN BUILDING AFRICA - NET CARBON ZERO BUILDINGS AND CITIES – January 29, 2019 No Comments



Pic: Open cast coal mine - pexels.com

- Mpumalanga MEC Vusumuzi Shongwe has backtracked and withdrawn his notice of intention to exclude the area proposed for mining from the Mabola Protected Environment.
- The coalition opposing the coal mine is reassured by the MEC's decision not to go ahead with the exclusion
- The Mabola Protected Environment will now remain intact as is and the proposed coal mine is unlikely to ahead.

The members of the coalition of civil society organisations who have been challenging mining company South Africa's proposed new coal mine inside a Mpumalanga strategic water source area welcome the decision of Mpumalanga MEC Vusumuzi Shongwe to withdraw his notice of intention to exclude the area proposed for mining from the Mabola Protected Environment.



US Dollar Exchange Rates

	1 USD
South African Rand	13.6
Kenyan Shilling	100.8
Ugandan Shilling	3666
Botswana Pula	10.4
Tanzanian Shilling	23
Zambian Kwacha	5189
Namibian Dollar	13.1
Mauritian Rupee	34.
British Pound Sterling	0.
Euro	0.8
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	6.7

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MEC Shongwe had published his intention to exclude the proposed mining area from the Mabola Protected Environment in October 2018, and had called on the public to submit their comments and objections. The coalition submitted a comprehensive objection to the proposed exclusion in December 2018.

The eight coalition members are the [Mining and Environmental Justice Community Network of South Africa](#), [groundWork](#), [Earthlife Africa Johannesburg](#), [BirdLife South Africa](#), the [Endangered Wildlife Trust](#), the [Federation for a Sustainable Environment](#), the [Association for Water and Rural Development \(AWARD\)](#) and the [Bench Marks Foundation](#).

The intended exclusion would not have been legally defensible, and the coalition would have been obliged to apply to the High Court to set aside such a decision. The coalition is reassured by the MEC's decision not to go ahead with the exclusion, and relieved that it does not have a further legal challenge on its hands.

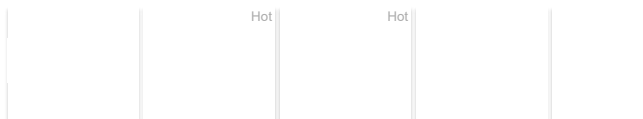
Last week, the Pretoria High Court refused Atha Africa leave to appeal the November 2018 judgement in which the court set aside the original joint permission given to Atha Africa in 2016 by former Mineral Resources Minister Mosebenzi Zwane and the late Environment Minister Edna Molewa for this large new coal mine.

The upshot is that, should Atha Africa persist with its intention to mine for coal in the Mabola Protected Environment, it requires new permission from both the Environment and Mineral Resources Ministers under the Protected Areas Act. Without that permission, commercial mining may not proceed inside a declared protected area.

The proposed mine area also falls within a [strategic water source area](#).

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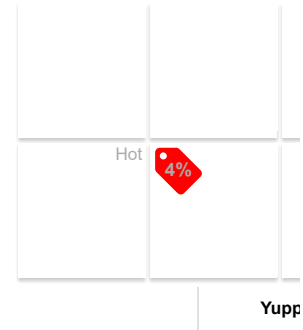
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