

**Action Alert:**

**SHERRITT MUST BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR**

**ALL HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE AMBATOVOY PROJECT.**

Canadian Sherritt International Incorporated, currently in a joint-venture with Sumitomo – a Japanese company, Kores –South Korean company and SNC Lavalin- a Canadian company, signed an agreement for cobalt and nickel extraction in Ambatovy with the then Malagasy government in 2006.

The building of the mine and smelter infrastructure was completed in 2011. This included open-pit mine sites and a mill in Ambatovy near Moramanga, a hydro-metallurgical smelter in Tanandava about 10 kms from Toamasina, and a 220 km pipeline that will move the milled ore mixed with water (a slurry) to the smelter. The processing will use sulphuric products - some of which are toxic. The concentrated cobalt, nickel and ammonium sulfate will then be shipped to Asian markets from the Harbour. The toxic tailings from the process will be stored in perpetuity near the process plant. <sup>(1) & (2)</sup>

The project benefits have been well promoted in the media. However, the negative consequences of the construction phase of the project to the health and lives of the affected people nearby only reached public attention when there was a serious accident. At least four sulphur dioxide leaks during start-up testing at the plant between the 26<sup>th</sup> of Feb and 13<sup>th</sup> of March led to the deaths of two adults and 2 babies and the illness of about 50 people. The company headquarters stated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March that the leaks were ‘normal’ and that the 800 inhabitants living near the plant should be relocated. The Council of Ministers stated that the company was far from doing what they had promised about the victims’ care and that the water of Ranomainty river was at risk of pollution.<sup>(3)</sup> According to recent news, an inter-ministerial team made a visit in Tanandava last Wednesday to verify that all the conditions had been met before the government issues the approval for production to begin.<sup>(4)</sup>

Precisely which elements will this Committee audit? What are the criteria and conditions that will determine if the central authorities deliver the approval to start production? **All citizens, especially the inhabitants of Tanandava, Toamasina, Ambatovy and the surrounding communities who are anxious about their land, the water they drink, their health and for their futures, have the right to be informed about the project’s completed and current activities, about the concrete measures taken by the company and of its precise commitments during the phases of pre-production, the 27 years of production and the post-production phase.**

**Before the Ambatovy project is allowed to continue and before the delivery of approval to start production, the rights and needs of peasants and people affected by the construction phase - in regard to impacts on land, water, fish and forests - must be respected; the costs for compensation as result of removals, damage and accidents must be paid; the promises made to communities when they were relocated must be fully honoured. The further displacement of people for the project must cease immediately.**

To date the governmental authorities only talk of the risk of pollution of the Ranomainty river. **However, according to the PGEDS terms and conditions <sup>(5)</sup>, other rivers also have to be monitored for negative impacts: the small river Andranofisotro, the rivers Ivondro and Mangoro, the small river and marsh Torotorofotsy. In addition, there is concern about potential contamination of sea water at the port.**

Instead of relying on the permanent relocation of people from the Tanandava site following the sulphur dioxide leaks, **Sherritt must ensure that its industrial process is completely trustworthy, using the “latest generation” equipment and avoiding any risk to the health of nearby peoples from its operations.** Immediately, and **before the approval to start production is granted, the government must ensure that the company plans for the storage of waste from the mill and hydrometallurgical smelter in tailings impoundments is subjected to independent and careful scientific review to prevent any pollution of earth and water in the future.**

In order that civil society and the affected communities will be able to monitor corrective and preventive actions related to the environmental and human impacts of the Ambatovy Project, **the complementary document to the Environmental Specific Management Plan (PGES) for the Ambatovy project process plant in Tanandava which was signed on 17 Nov 2011 between the Ambatovy project and the National Office for Environment<sup>(6)</sup>, as well as the other specific plans described on the PGEDS page 3<sup>(5)</sup> and the entire environmental impact study<sup>(7)</sup> must be made available to the general public.**

The accidents that have already occurred, the complaints of the injured families, the general anxiousness of the affected people require from all involved parties:

- monitoring and enforcement of the project effects on the environment, and the people's health and socio-economic life
- research into measures that can be taken to improve environmental and health

**Collectif pour la défense des terres malgaches - TANY – 2 mai 2012**

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<http://www.facebook.com/TANYterresmalgaches>

(1) <http://www.sherritt.com/getattachment/bbf5ac56-8bb2-4cd7-927c-2c3018dbf9eb/Sherritt-s-locations-in-Madagsacar>

(2) <http://www.sherritt.com/getattachment/7954b6d6-1098-4f0a-8ce9-dca23b74eaf6/Process-Plant-Addendum---French>

(3) <http://terresmalgaches.info/spip.php?article49> also see the documents attached below this article.

(4) <http://www.aoraha.com/fitrandrahana-ho-avy-ny-bemidina-ao-ambatovy-toamasina/>

(5) Mentioned in PGEDS pages 3 to 21 : [http://terresmalgaches.info/IMG/pdf/PGEDS\\_AMBATOVOY\\_20061201.pdf](http://terresmalgaches.info/IMG/pdf/PGEDS_AMBATOVOY_20061201.pdf)

(6) <http://www.pnae.mg/pnae11/index.php/Suivi-Environnemental/signature-du-plan-de-gestion-environnementale-specifique-de-lusine-de-traitement-du-projet-ambatov.html>

(7) <http://www.sherritt.com/getattachment/b93bf454-7a76-4001-a494-9352898c295b/Environmental-Assessment---English>