

A Citizen's Guide to Oil and Gas Extractivism: Impacts and Advocacy

Presented by: Y. Alexis Stephens

Preparation for Mercy Emerging
Leaders Fellowship
11 July 2024
Dublin, Ireland



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- **The Guyana Context**
- **Oil & Gas Bonanza**
- **Gold Mining & Indigenous Lands**
- **Impacts of Extractivism**
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- **Colonialism and Decolonialism**



Guyana Context

- Guyana, former British colony
- Located in the northeastern corner of South America
- Landmass - 83,000 square miles.

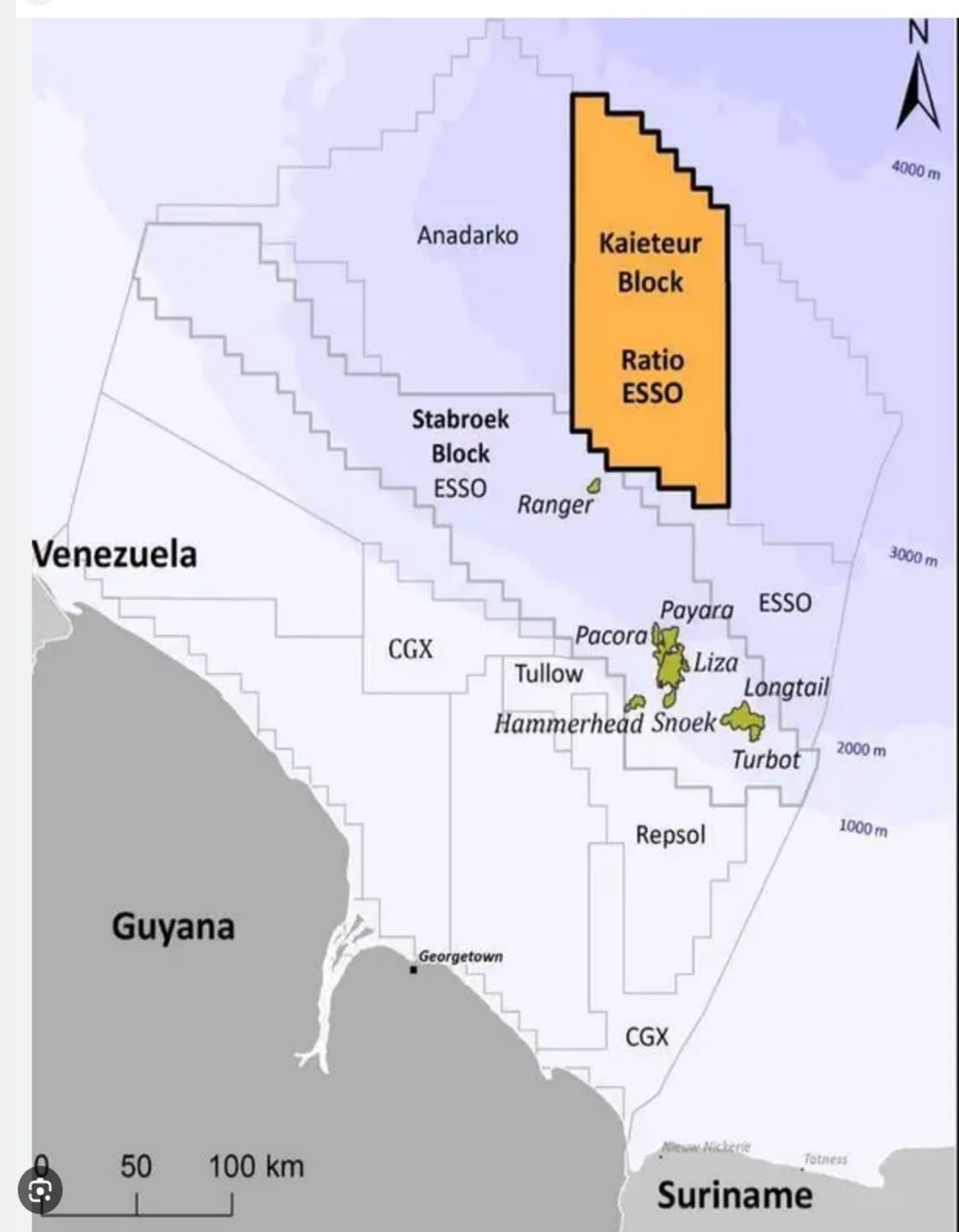


Population:
approximately 850,000

Has rich reserves of
bauxite, gold, silver and
other minerals

Guyana's Oil Bonanza

- **2015 - Crude oil discovered**
- **2019 - Commercial drilling commenced**
- **Guyana's GDP went from US\$5,577 in 2015 to US\$17,000 in 2023.**
- **One of the fastest growing economies in 2023 + 2024**
- **Estimated reserves: 11.2 billion oil-equivalent barrels**
Estimated 17 trillion cubic feet of associated natural gas reserves
- **oil production now stands at approximately 645,000 Bpd.**
- **Exxon's largest oil development outside the Permian Basin**



Oil - Who benefits?

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WORLD ECONOMY

This is the world's fastest-growing economy, and it could grow an 'explosive' 100%

PUBLISHED TUE, SEP 26 2023 7:18 PM EDT | UPDATED WED, SEP 27 2023 11:30 AM EDT

Lee Ying Shan @IN/YING-SHAN-LEE @LEEYINGSHAN WATCH LIVE

KEY POINTS

- The world's fastest-growing economy is on track for more than 100% growth, largely fueled by profits from its oil production and export sector.
- Guyana, a country in South America with a population of about 800,000 people, is projected to grow 38% by the end of the year, according to recent GDP forecasts by the International Monetary Fund.

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Will Guyana's oil bonanza benefit its poorest people?

10 April 2024 Share

By Stephen Sackur, HARDtalk, Smith Creek, Guyana



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FIGHTING TO END POVERTY IN GUYANA

48 percent of the Guyanese population lives below the poverty line, with indigenous people being disproportionately affected.

HELP NOW

A photograph of a woman in a blue patterned dress holding a young child, with another woman in a blue tank top standing next to them.

A Budget for
the Rich!

BUDGET 2024

AMOUNTS TO:

\$1.146 TRILLION

- ✓ 46.6 PERCENT LARGER THAN BUDGET 2023
- ✓ THE LARGEST BUDGET EVER
- ✓ FULLY FINANCED WITH NO NEW TAXES



People in the way of development!

- A woman protesting the destruction of her home and business in the village of Mocha Arcadia on the East Bank of Demerara.
- The Government defended its decision saying the residents were in the way of development.





Guyana launches "El Dorado" project to eliminate mercury use from small-scale artisanal gold mining

NEWS / February 1, 2017



A bird's-eye view of gold mines in Guyana. Photo by Evelyn Swain.

Gold mining is the main driver of forest loss and ecosystem degradation in Guyana. But not only are forests at risk, mercury is used in the gold mining process, further contaminating the environment and putting humans and other species' health at risk.

The Rush for Gold

Gold Mining and the Battle for Indigenous Ancestral Lands

Chinese Landing - Small Indigenous Community in the north of Guyana



Active mining pit



Mercury contaminated water source used for bathing and drinking

Impacts of Resource Extraction





Oil, Gas and the Myth of Salvation

- **2016 - lopsided Production Sharing Agreement gives Exxon 75% of all monthly revenues for cost recovery.**
- **12.5 % of remaining 25 and 2% royalties goes to Guyana.**
- **Exxon routine flares above prescribed limits.**
- **Guyana citizens using litigation and Lawsuits to fight back.**

5 years after first oil

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Carbon bombs Oil

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We can't eat a new road': Guyanese voice fears over true cost of Exxon's oil bonanza

Multibillion-dollar deal promising to lift country out of poverty may be false dawn with dire impact on climate, warn campaigners



Over time, the Guyanese environmentalist Arnette Arjoon grew to suspect Exxon was indifferent to the dangers of an oil spill to the coast and rivers of one of the best preserved parts of the Amazon biome. Composite: Fidal Bassler/Guardian/Reuters


Guyana: Citizens file climate case about ExxonMobil massive project...
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

The content is also available in the following languages: 简体中文, 繁體中文

Article
26 May 2021 Center for International Environmental Law

Guyana: Citizens file climate case about ExxonMobil massive project concerning its social and environmental impacts

See all tags



Read more

"Guyanese Citizens File Climate Case Claiming Massive Offshore Oil Project is Unconstitutional", 21 May 2021

...Guyanese citizens filed the first constitutional climate case in the Caribbean to challenge fossil fuel production on the grounds that it exacerbates global warming and threatens human rights. The case, before Guyana's Constitutional Court, claims that Guyana's approval of a massive, ExxonMobil-led oil and gas buildout off the country's coast violates the government's legal duty to protect the rights to a healthy environment, sustainable development, and the rights of future generations. The case comes

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The Intercept

HOW EXXON CAPTURED A COUNTRY WITHOUT FIRING A SHOT

Guyana is poised to become Exxon's top global oil producer. Where the company ends and the government begins is increasingly unclear.

By Matt Zwarg
June 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m.



SUPPORT US →

People wait at the Shabbar Market in 1972, across the Demerara River, from a container ship in Georgetown, Guyana, on April 12, 2022. Photo: Nathan Delacour/IFP

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GUYANA'S HIGH COURT handed down a historic ruling in May against both the country's Environmental Protection Agency and Exxon Mobil's subsidiary in the region. If it sounds strange that the EPA and Exxon were co-defendants in a case, yes, that's precisely the point.

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Guyana

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Guyanese citizens challenge ExxonMobil offshore drilling on climate grounds

Case is first in Caribbean to challenge fossil fuel production on climate and human rights grounds



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ECO FLOW PORTABLE POWER SYSTEM Net
Exclusive Reseller Starting from - \$66,800

ExxonMobil pays Guyana \$930M for flaring of gas

By Rehana Ahamad | December 24, 2021



FOR SALE
Active sand mining business on 4 acres of land with 2 miles of river natural water spring and tour attraction.

Contact: 075-331-9825
sandmining@shabbar.com

Harming the environment!

Exxon Breached Guyana Environmental Permit, High Court Rules

- Judge orders Exxon to provide 'unlimited' oil-spill guarantee
- Guyana has become a major production zone for the oil giant



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LATEST NEWS **e - President Ali tells Caribbean Investment Forum** • Aggressively pursue reform

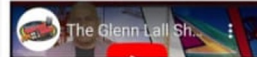
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High Court dismisses case against EPA over permit that allows Exxon to flare gas

Oct 05, 2023 Court Stories, ExxonMobil, Features / Columnists, News, Oil & Gas

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The Glenn Lall Show | July. 10th, 2024



ECONOMICS

Guyana's environmental protection agency is coming to Exxon's defense

The country's regulators are appealing a court ruling against the oil and gas giant

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May 4, 2023, 7:47 PM GMT+1

Exxon Breached Guyana Environmental Permit, High Court Rules (1)

Kevin Crowley
Bloomberg News



- Judge orders Exxon to provide 'unlimited' oil-spill guarantee

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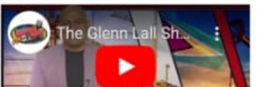
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Govt. says Court has no jurisdiction to order release of Exxon's US\$2B guarantee

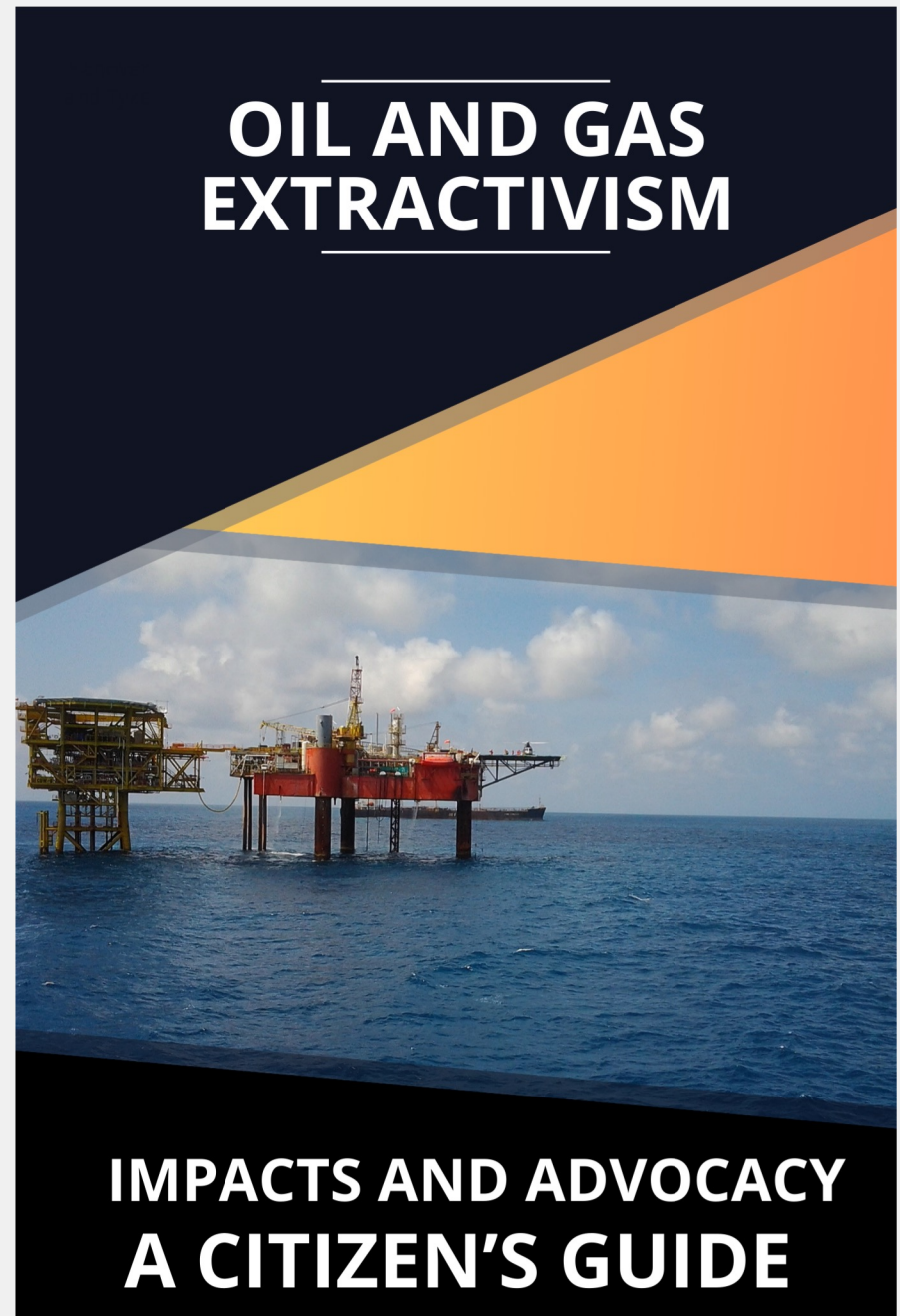
Jan 19, 2024 Court Stories, ExxonMobil, Features / Columnists, News, Oil & Gas

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Why this Guide?



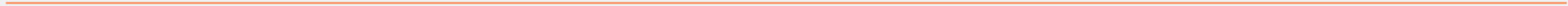
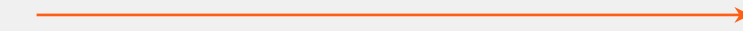
MAKING THE CONNECTIONS: COLONIALISM

EXTRACTIVISM
Western worldview
of
resource exploitation

**URBAN AND
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

DISPLACEMENT
(Social injustice/Racialized
inequality)

**LAND/SEA
DEGRADATION**
(Ecological and Climate
Crisis)



MAKING THE CONNECTIONS: DECOLONIALISM

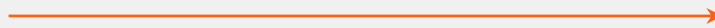
EXTRACTIVISM

- Discontinue resource plunder
- Interrupt colonial ideology/inequalities
- Promotes well-being of people and the environment in extraction practices .



URBAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Sustainable/alternative model based on community input



SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

- Socially just practices
- Equality
- Respect for both human and non-human world
- Autonomy of racialized groups over their land and resources
- Sustainable management of the environment.

Prevailing Narratives/Actions

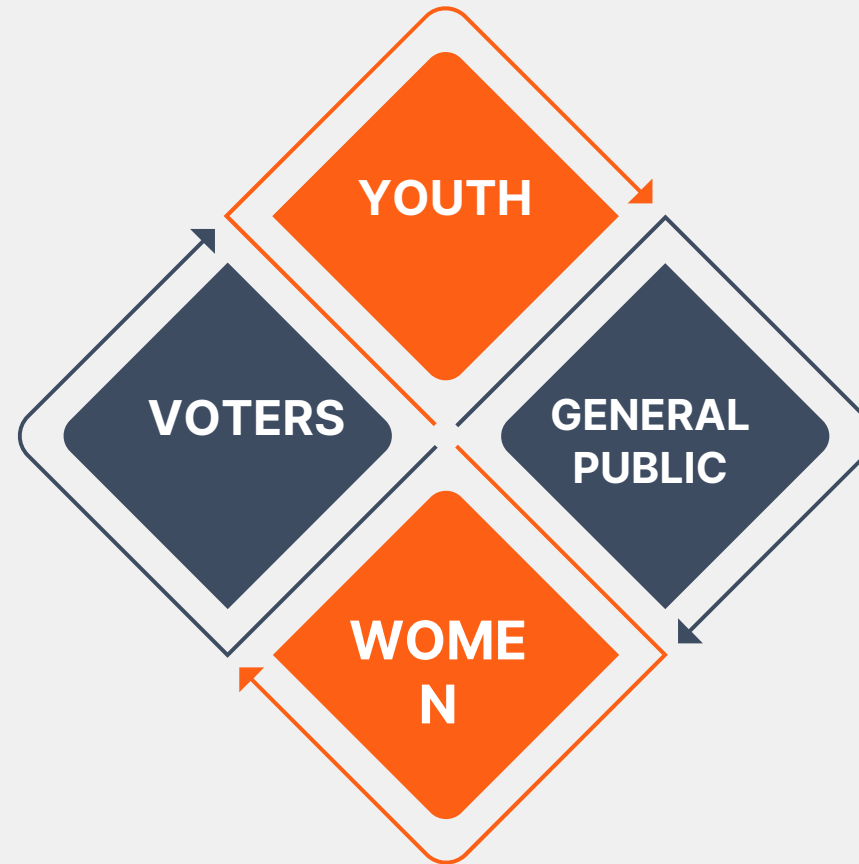
Exxon Mobil

- Big Red Bus Effect
- Greenwashing
- Community inducements

Government /State

Media

- Cash transfers as proof of oil benefits
- Minimizing environmental hazards
- Fines over environmental enforcement



Audience Segments

Independent

Ongoing critique of: **Media**

- Loopside PSA
- Reporting from EM on oil recovery figures

Civil Society

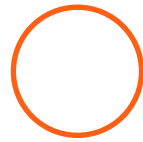
- Ongoing Litigations .

Creating Awareness | Promoting Action



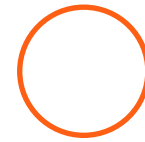
Highlight the Issues

- Environmental damage
- Social Impacts
- Economic unsustainability
- Colonialism
- Decolonialism
- Neocolonialism



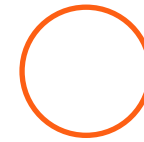
Empower Community Voices

- Capacity building
- Community Organizing
- Promote understanding of techniques such as :
 - greenwashing
 - Big red bus phenemon
 - Community inducements



Shift the Narrative

- Advocate for renewables
- Demand accountability from government and oil companies for environmental damage



Engage in Strategic Action

- Awareness Campaigns
- Travelling Exhibitions
- Building local and international alliances (especially in the Global South)



Discussion/ Activity Guide

Discussion/Activity Guide

Introduction (10 minutes):

Brainstorming: Begin by asking participants what they know about colonialism. Briefly discuss the concept and its historical context.

Activity (20-30 minutes):

Understanding the Impact of Colonialism: Divide participants into small groups. Present participants with a scenario or historical event that illustrates the impact of colonialism in Guyana (environmental degradation, political instability, cultural erasure). Encourage them to discuss their opinions/feelings about the scenario.

Reflection (20 minutes):

Encourage participants to think about how legacies of colonialism are still present in their communities or the country. How are they impacted?

Action/Advocacy (30 minutes)

Encourage participants to discuss what actions they can take in groups or individually to address the issue they identified during the reflection.

**THANK
You!**

Y. Alexis
Stephens

