

The Political Ecology of Oil and Gas in the DRC

This research project analyses the social, economic, environmental and territorial impacts of oil and gas extraction in the DRC, with a particular focus on the Muanda region. Drawing on a political ecology and environmental justice approach, the project seeks to understand how hydrocarbon extraction is transforming the territories, local economies and ways of life of the affected communities.

Our initial findings highlight:

- the limitations of an extractive model that generates few lasting social benefits despite several decades of exploitation;
- the impacts of pollution on health, fisheries, agriculture and aquatic environments;
- land-use conflicts between customary rights, oil concessions and state control of land;
- the social and cultural effects of oil exploitation on local solidarity and forms of community cohesion.

Our current research focuses on:

- the production of more accurate data on the various forms of pollution and their effects;
- the national political economy of oil and gas in the DRC;
- extending research to other oil and gas-producing areas, particularly around Lake Kivu and Lake Albert;
- environmental conflicts, local mobilisations and the conditions for fairer energy transitions.