

## **MEETING WITH SANRAL CONTRACTOR OBSTRUCTED BY BUSINESS FORUMS**

By: Amadiba Crisis Committee

09 March 2024

On Wednesday 6 March, 60 villagers gathered in Sigidi to meet a representative of M Kona Engineers Consulting, a contractor employed by SANRAL to survey in the village for the proposed N2 Wild Coast Toll Road.

The villagers want to move N2 from the coast to the inland of Amadiba. Contractors arriving to work have been told to leave several times. This meeting with the contractor was obviously meant to get permission from landowners to survey for N2 in Sigidi anyway.

But to our surprise, a packed 15-seater taxi also arrived from Lurholweni township. The crew in it was led by Sanral's Public Liaison Officer for Mtentu bridge build, Mr Zeka Mnyamane. The people in the taxi said they were Sanral's Public Liaison Committee ("PLC") for the part of N2 planned by Sanral to run along the coast.

Asked who appointed them and who they answer to, they one by one replied: Delangokubona Business Forum (based in Durban), Forces of Change Business Forum, Amadiba Business Forum, the Councilor of Ward 24 in Lurholweni township, a woman from Ward 23 in Lurholweni (no specification), Mbizana Men's Forum (new to us), Development and Empowerment Negotiating Team (a man in Lurholweni known for intimidation of an expert in our technical team), Mngungu Development Forum (not known), Active Citizenship Organisation (not known for any activities), Mdatya Trust (established by five mining supporters accused for the 2015 Christmas Shootings).

To control the demand for moving the N2 to the inland of Amadiba, Sanral has stuffed its PLC for the coast of Amadiba with "pro-Xolobeni-mining" and tenderpreneur factions.

All the individuals from Lurholweni are unknown in Sigidi and on the Umgungundlovu coast. They were first time seen on 7 November at the inland Komkhulu of Dangeni. The ACC and our experts had been invited by Chief Lunga Baleni and his Council to present the Alternative Inland Route for N2 in Amadiba. These people, now called "the PLC", arrived to shout down ACC's technical team. They behaved like thugs but failed to shut down the presentation. The presentation was finally made by Nonhle Mbuthuma before 500 who had come to listen.

On Wednesday in Sigidi, the so called "PLC" was told by the meeting to go and sit in their taxi and let the contractor speak to the meeting. Led by Sanral's PLO, they refused. The Councilor of Ward 28 chaired and closed the discussion after an hour.

He was instructed by the meeting to demand from Sanral to come and explain how all these people from the township have been appointed and to tell Sanral that the 6 March meeting with the contractor didn't take place.

The highway is planned to run through Mdatya, Sigidi and the Mzamba area 3km from the coast. Save for supporters of the Xolobeni Mining project (stopped by the Court in 2018), people on the coast want the road to be moved inland. N2 inland will serve the whole of Amadiba and it has growing support. The necessary upgrade of R61 will include Lurholweni in the project and in the economy, instead of having N2 bypassing the township. At a community conference in July 2022, hosted by ACC, the national Department of Environment undertook to fast track a new application from Sanral, should they agree to shifting the route inland. Apart from not serving the whole of Amadiba, of major concern is that the current route is running through environmentally classified areas, including critical biodiversity areas (map attached).

On 17 November and 12 December, the Alternative Inland Route was presented to infrastructure experts at the National Treasury and to members of Infrastructure SA at the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure. They committed to facilitate a meeting with Sanral's Board.

Like all big corporations, Sanral pretends that no discussion is going on, to demoralise us as rural landowners and make us feel that we have no rights. "You have no rights!", Sanral's PLO exclaimed on Wednesday.

ENDS

Amadiba Crisis Committee

Picture attached (ACC's technical team):

Environmental Classification map according to the Provincial Gazette, 19 October 2020:

SANRAL's Preferred Route [blue] & the Alternative Inland Route [red]

More information about the meeting: Nonhle Mbuthuma 0734262955; Sizwe Dlamini 065 863-2156

*Amadiba Crisis Committee is on Facebook*

*This press statement was released by Amadiba Crisis Committee on 9 March 2024.*