

Press Release and Invite

Date: Wednesday, 4th of March 2009

People's Summit and Protest March at National Climate Change Summit

On the 5th of March 2009, Earthlife Africa Johannesburg [1] and groundWork, Friends of the Earth, South Africa [2] will be hosting a People's Summit on Climate Change at the Midrand Convention Centre. The People's Summit parallels the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism National Climate Change Summit.

At 14:00 on the 5th of March 2009, delegates from the People's Summit will march on the National Climate Change Summit and present a memorandum to DEAT. We have requested that Minister Van Schalkwyk accept the memorandum.

We are calling upon the Minister, in the name of rising carbon emissions and South Africa's position as a major emitter of greenhouse gases, to act urgently and with bold swiftness to reduce emissions and provide adequate mitigation measures. In specific, we are demanding that:

- A moratorium on building coal-fired plants after Medupi and Bravo (i.e. from 2013);
- An immediate moratorium on any new coal-to-liquid plants;
- An immediate moratorium on nuclear power;
- Treasury institutes its fossil fuel levy (ZAR0.02/kWh) with immediate effect and revenue from this to be ring-fenced for Free Basic Electricity (100kWh per person per month), which is to be followed by a staggered implementation of carbon taxation;
- A state subsidised roll-out of 1 million solar water heaters by 2020, which would substantially reduce household energy costs;
- A minimum of 15% of all electricity is to come from RE by 2020, 50% by 2050
- Energy efficiency in RDP housing be a mandatory measure by 2015; and
- An Industrial Manufacturing Strategy to service the basic needs and fundamental rights of people, rather than an export led industrial focus de developed.

It is highly unlikely that the National Climate Change Summit will take these bold steps, yet it is these types of actions that are required in order to avoid the worst effect of climate change. We need to reduce our emissions and provide protection for poor and vulnerable communities.

The People's Summit will have a panel discussion at 12:00 hrs [3] outlining these and other issues, including a critique of the Long-Term Mitigation Scenarios.

**Venue: Midrand Conference Centre (opposite Gallagher Estate)
Chagall Room
661 Pendulum Road
Halfway House Ext 12
Midrand**

End:

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Footnotes:

[1] The Earthlife Africa Johannesburg project the Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Project seek a just transition to renewable energy and a low-carbon economy. The SECCP works to promote local and global environmental and social justice on sustainable energy and climate change issues by changing policies and behaviour through building the awareness and capacity of civil society and government, to achieve an equitable future with respect for all.
http://www.earthlife.org.za/?page_id=14

[2] groundWork, Friends of the Earth, South Africa is an environmental justice organisation working with community people from around South Africa, and increasingly in Southern Africa, on environmental justice and human rights issues focusing on Air Pollution, Waste (including Health Care Waste) and Corporate Abuse. groundWork is a member of Health Care Without Harm.
www.groundwork.org.za

[3] **Agenda for People's Summit on Climate Change**

Date: 5th of March 2009

Venue: Midrand Convention Centre

1. Climate Change Science and Challengers and Responses
10:30 hrs to 11:45 hrs

Climate change science is a politically contested terrain, despite the overwhelming evidence that already peoples' environments as we know them are changing, impacting upon livelihoods, sustainability and, indeed, peace. Yet governments, including the South Africa government are not wanting to take the necessary steps to slow down, halt and reverse the impacts of climate change. Despite the required-by-

science scenario in the Long Term Mitigation Strategy presenting the need for immediate and urgent changes to the South African government climate and energy model, the South African government continues to cower to industrial greed for cheap energy for export led processes

Siziwe Khanyile, groundWork's Air Quality Campaigner, Lerato Maregele, Energy and Climate Change Outreach Officer at SECCP, and Trusha Reddy of the Durban Declaration will work with local people from the Vaal Triangle and Gauteng on the challenges of climate change and work at suggesting possible processes for community resistance, exposing South African contradictions and responding to the South African government's failure to deal with climate change and energy in a meaningful manner.

2. Kyoto and South Africa – failing our future
12:00 hrs to 13:30 hrs

The Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the South African government response to this via the Long Term Mitigation Strategy on Climate Change and financial institutions such as the World Bank, fail to deliver on an agenda needed to ensure peoples' environments are secure from climate change. This session seeks to expose the contradictions in the above institutions agenda's and suggests strategies for the South African government to ensure that the poor do not bear the brunt of climate change while holding up the continued practices of the rich.

Tristen Taylor, SECCP Energy Policy Officer, will deliver a critique of the LTMS, Ferrial Adam, Climate Change Researcher will speak about the failure of carbon trading and Clean Development Mechanisms, David Hallows, Independent Researcher will focus on the World Bank and their support of fossil fuels, and finally Bobby Peek of groundWork, FoE SA will present a brief synopsis of what a Industrial Manufacturing Strategy to service the basic needs and fundamental rights of people while responding to climate change might look like.