

## Press Invitation

### Launch of The groundWork Report 2008 Wasting the Nation: Making trash of people and places

**Monday, 9 February 2009**

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February groundWork [1] releases its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual review of the State of Environmental Justice in South Africa [2]. This review focuses on waste in South Africa at a time when President Kgalema Motlanthe is about to sign the National Environmental Management: Waste Bill into force.

You are invited to attend the launch of the report:

Date: Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February  
Time: 12:00 Hrs  
Venue: Boiketlong Hall  
Erik Louw Road (road from the Centre of Sasolburg)  
Zamdela  
Sasolburg

The groundWork Report 2008 reviews the politics of waste in South Africa, and how capital has shaped the creation of waste and how it determines its destruction, along with the destruction and wasting of peoples' lives.

The report reviews the failure of the South African government to produce accurate and legitimate figures on the production of waste in South Africa, how the new waste legislation is a process of deferred action rather than clear guidance and regulations that are needed urgently now, the creation of and toxification of waste, the municipal waste stream and the struggles of poor people whose livelihoods depend on reclaiming waste from landfill sites.

Finally, it looks at how the present system of capital accumulation and over consumption results in undemocratic practices, the continual creation of a disposal society, thereby further impoverishing the poor, and calls upon unions and social movements to unite to ensure that production is challenged and democratised to occur without waste.

Annie Leonard [3], an expert on international sustainability and environmental health and author of 'Stuff' [4] says:

Waste is not an isolated technical problem but is a symptom, a physical manifestation, of much deeper problems with the current economic, political and social systems. Waste is the visible face of a development model built on the assumption that some people matter more than others, that pollution is the inevitable price of progress and blind economic growth is the highest possible good.

At the launch the following people will share the present context of waste struggles and speak to the report:

**Musa Chamane** (Waste Campaign Manager – groundWork)

- \* Introduction and where to from here?
- Simon Mbatha** (Director of the Ditamating Scrap Metal Project)
- \* Fighting for a legitimate right to maintain livelihoods
- Victor Munnik** (Independent Researcher and Co-Author)
- \* Key Challenges in Wasting the Nation
- Bobby Peek** (Director – groundWork)
- \* DEAT and Incineration: Is our government failing us?

For more information:

Musa Chamane – 082 589 7928  
Bobby Peek – 082 464 1383

**Footnotes:**

[1] groundWork 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](http://www.groundwork.org.za)

[2] <http://www.groundwork.org.za/Publications/gWReport2008.pdf>

[3] Annie Leonard is an expert in international sustainability and environmental health issues, with more than 20 years of experience investigating factories and dumps around the world. Annie communicates worldwide about the impact of consumerism and materialism on global economies and international health. She is the co-founder of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives which was launched in Johannesburg in November 2000.

[4] Please visit [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com) for an international critique and fast-paced, fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns.

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