



## 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

This December we say goodbye to Gill Addison who has unselfishly given her all to groundWork over the last 23 years. If not for Gill, we would not be around today. She has nurtured every single one of the people that came through groundWork. This is found in [\*Saving the Planet one anthep at a time\*](#). We will miss you Gill!



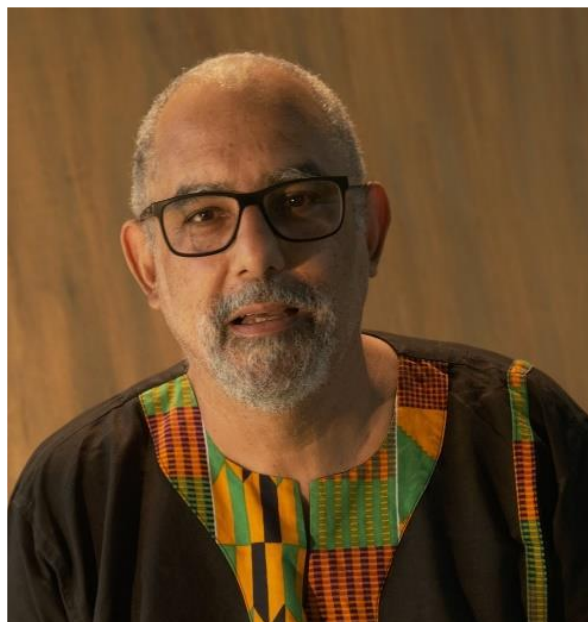
A big shout out to all in groundWork, our community and the NGO partners. Having to live through a 3 in 1 year, as the world tried to do all that it missed in 2020 and 2021, in 2022, this year was always set to be a tough one. Personally, it was a difficult year for me. I would have not got through it without the strong groundWork team. At times I feel conflicted as I sit in a room with the President, Ministers and corporate bigwigs wondering if we will ever get a peoples Just Transition. But when I work with and speak to the people we struggle with on the ground, they see for themselves clearly, Bobby as a groundWorker and Bobby within the Commission. The space of compromise. I can say this for [Makoma](#) of [Earthlife Africa](#) and [Melissa](#) of the [Centre for Environmental Rights](#) as well, as they grapple with this conflict daily.

But I am excited about what we achieved this year. After many years of thinking and working on the idea of a small grant for environmental justice activist, the [Environmental Justice Fund](#) by activist for activist was launched. On the energy front we had an early victory for #CancelCoal case where the [African Climate Alliance \(ACA\)](#), the [Vukani Environmental Justice Movement in Action \(VEM\)](#) and [groundWork \(gW\)](#), represented by the [Centre for Environmental Rights](#) (CER), brought an application to compel disclosure of the records in the Pretoria High Court by the Minister relating to the decision to include new coal power in the 2019 Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity (IRP), and to the 2020 Ministerial determination for new coal issued under the IRP. Instead of being stranded after the April floods, we are working together with various other social justice actors under the banner of the Durban Coalition to be part of governance within the city of Durban, rather than leaving governance to the domain of the politicians.

Please take a few minutes to glance over all the important victories and activities for 2022.

Peace,

Bobby



# CLIMATE & ENERGY JUSTICE

## Gas



We continue to push back against the senseless gas onslaught through [mobilization](#), [solidarity](#), [litigation](#) and [changing the gas narrative internationally, regionally](#) and [nationally](#) including the [Richard's Bay Eskom CCPP's](#) 3000MW gas to power plant and the [DMRE and Nersa's additional gas procurement plans](#). Uninformed communities face new gas plans in [Virginia](#) and onshore fracking from the [Karoo](#) and [Free State](#) (Rhino Oil and Gas) to the Highveld ([Kinetiko](#)). At the [Sasol AGM](#), we pointed out Sasol's lack of concrete plans for emissions and pollution reduction and [insufficient 'decarbonization' plans](#) that increase reliance on gas and false solutions such as carbon capture and storage.

## Climate Action Group

2022 also marked the revival of the Climate Action Learning Group, during which we put together the [8th People's Statement](#).

## Counter Cop

Because [the UNFCCC COPs have failed Africa](#) the World, together with the [African Climate Justice Collective](#) (ACJC) we hosted the second African People's Counter Cop ([APCC](#)), [events](#) and [produced the following Declaration](#).



## Urban Movement Incubator Energy Democracy Project (UMI ED)

[The Project](#) (a partnership with [Vukani Environmental Movement](#) (VEM), [Abahlali Base Mjondolo](#) (ABM) and [South Durban Community Environmental Alliance](#) (SDCEA), groundWork and [Sustainable Energy Africa](#)) was a success [against all odds](#). The project's Inception Phase kicked off with strategic planning, community research and a feasibility study. The installation of demonstration units, development of learning materials and community workshops formed part of the Implementation Phase. Year 1 concluded with Reflection and Adaptation which produced an independent case study and [documentary](#). The devastation from heavy floods in KwaZulu Natal in April and the shortage of PV components challenged the completion of the PV demonstration unit installations at the SDCEA and ABM sites. Abahlali suffered the ultimate loss – the [assassination](#) of three active leaders from their Ekhenana community: Lindokhule Mnguni (1992-2022), Ayanda Ngila (1992-2022) and Nokuthula Mabaso (1981-2022) during the period of the Project. Finally, their installation was completed on 11<sup>th</sup> November. CBOs now have an uninterrupted supply of electricity, and the demonstration units provide a learning and engagement opportunity for communities and government. The Project aims to encourage partnerships with government to reduce GHG emissions through community led processes for cleaner energy technologies that are affordable and accessible.



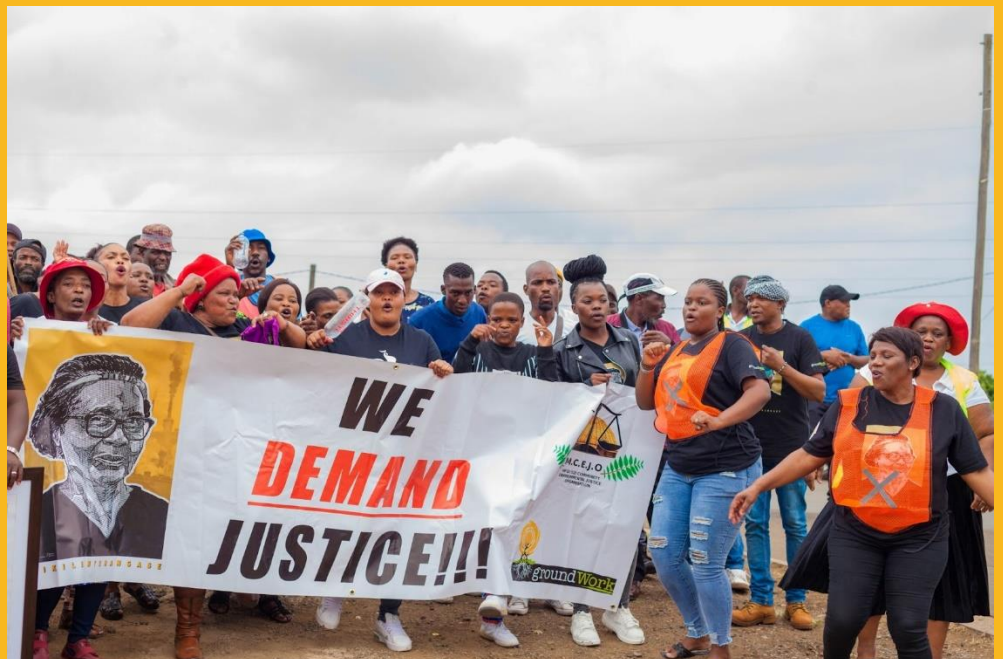
# COAL

## National Coal Exchange



groundWork organized a National Coal Exchange comprising 12 communities around the country to share knowledge and experiences in their environmental justice struggles. The exchange was held in St Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal and hosted by MCEJO (Mfolozik Community Environmental Justice Organisation). The exchange focus on the Just Transition process in South Africa whereby communities are consulted to make contributions in defining Just Transition in their own context.

The group also attended the [Somkhele Fikile Ntshangase protest](#) also organized by groundWork. The protest's objective was to put pressure on the South African Police Services and the President to make quick arrest of the killers of Fikile Ntshangase who was killed in 2020 for opposing the Somkhele coal mine.





## Africa Coal Network Conference

The third annual Africa Coal Network Conference was hosted in Durban this year. Civil society represented through the Network raised their voices, despite an increasingly hostile environment created to dissuade any substantial action and achievements on challenging fossil fuel extraction.

The African Coal Network (the Network), with 55 members in 21 African countries reviewed the outcomes of the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference - COP27 based upon [its position and demands for climate justice](#).



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

## PHASA conference

In partnership with Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) we participated at the PHASA annual congress where we made presentations during various sessions; hosted a plenary panel discussion; exhibited the Global Green & Healthy Hospital (GGHH) programme and climate; showcasing Health Care Without Harm, GGHH and the Sustainable Health in Procurement Project (SHiPP). We also worked with the Nurses Climate Challenge, the PHASA Special Interest Group on Climate, Energy and Health (CEH). We shared materials and initiatives on climate and health and further engaged to broaden our CEH community.





## National Department of Health

Following many years of advocacy and providing an evidence based motivation the National Department of Health is now participating in air quality governance in the Highveld Priority Area. The Department has launched their Air quality and Health Focus group as well as a National Climate Change and Health Steering Committee. Through these vehicles we will continue to advocate that climate change is at heart, a health issue!

### Climate Smart Workshop, Lusaka, Zambia

In August this year, groundWork hosted a workshop on Climate Smart Healthcare in Lusaka, Zambia and visited 4 healthcare facilities. The workshop focused on GGHH, SHiPP, capacity building on project management and interactive sessions on best practice sharing. Participants were mainly environmental health practitioners from various healthcare facilities around Lusaka.





# WASTE

## Simon Mbata: Farewell!

2022 we have seen the tragic passing of Simon Mbata, one of the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) founding members member of Global Alliance of Waste Pickers. This has shocked everyone in civil society nationally as well as abroad. This has left a big leadership vacuum within the SAWPA movement. May his soul rest in eternal peace.



## Warwick Zero Waste Project

The WZW Project Year 2 team has worked very hard this year. Our main highlights were the outcomes of the organic waste diversion pilot as well as the waste pickers and Glenwood residents engagement. The WZW Project team in partnership with the eThekweni Municipality Durban Botanic Gardens (Parks), Business Support Unit and DUT-Horticulture Department successfully demonstrated the organic waste diversion pilot which shows that organic waste should not go to landfill rather it be diverted back into the system and in this case through composting. The pilot demonstrates what should be done to reduce greenhouse gases, more especially Methane in cities such as Durban and the type of low tech and low cost zero waste solutions which can be replicated in parts of the city and the region as well. At the same time, the WZW Project in partnership with SAWPA and ETH Zurich hosted an evening with the waste pickers and Glenwood residents at the KZNSA Gallery. The aim of this meeting was to teach waste pickers residents about the importance of separation at source, waste and climate, and extended producer responsibility. Hence, the outcome of both initiatives were two videos which captured the work of waste pickers on the ground and the organic waste diversion pilot in order to raise awareness about waste, climate change and zero waste initiatives at local levels.



[https://youtu.be/IK080Td\\_GYc](https://youtu.be/IK080Td_GYc) (organic waste diversion demonstration pilot video)

<https://youtu.be/-5LNYzZcYWE> (waste picker and Glenwood residents' engagement)

## Thor Chemicals

The almost 30 years of workers and community struggle around Thor Chemicals is nearing to an end. Thor Chemicals imported toxic waste into South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s and attempted to incinerate it in Cato Ridge outside Durban. In the early nineties three workers died from mercury poisoning. Forty workers took Thor Chemicals to court in England and got compensation. However, more than 100 workers who worked at Thor Chemicals on formal contracts and as informal workers have consistently over the years - with the assistance of groundWork - placed pressure on the government to get compensation. make sure that ex-workers and their families (many ex-workers have passed away) get to achieve worker justice. We welcome the Department of Labour's approach of undertaking a health assessment of ex-workers.





## GAIA report launch

The Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), released a new report earlier this year titled, Zero Waste to Zero Emissions: How Reducing Waste is a Climate Gamechanger. The report provides the most comprehensive evidence of how better waste management is critical to the climate fight.

The report has case studies mapping the potential for greenhouse gas emission reductions in eight cities around the world. One is the city of Durban eThekweni, South Africa, which would see an emissions decrease of 63% and a reduction in landfill of 59% across the waste sector. We held a launch

To commemorate this, we held a report launch co-hosted by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Warwick Zero-Waste project at the Durban Botanical Gardens on the 7th of October, 2022. Read the report here: <https://www.no-burn.org/zerowaste-zero-emissions/>



## International waste picker exchange to Nairobi

In May 2022, waste pickers from Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Zambia and South Africa came together in Nairobi to share experiences and best practices for waste picker organising and integration across the continent.



# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

## EJS Class of 2022



After a hiatus of three years since 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, groundWork's sixth Environmental Justice School for Activists (EJS) resumed this year at Vuleka Centre, Bothas Hill, KwaZulu-Natal. Our 2022 graduates included activists from as far afield as Sekhukhuneland, the Highveld in Mpumalanga, the Vaal, Newcastle, Mamelodi, Pietermaritzburg, and south Durban, joining an alumnus of over 100 students from seven African countries that have since attended the School.

## EJE Booklets

We have developed two booklets for the Environmental Justice Education campaign [on Zero Waste](#) and Food Sovereignty (not yet published).



# MEDIA

## Deadly Air Case

Earlier this year in March, we celebrated a [landmark judgment in the #DeadlyAir case](#) as a victory for environmental justice in South Africa. In the judgment, the High Court recognised the poor air quality in South Africa's Mpumalanga Highveld region as a breach of residents' Constitutional right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being.



<https://gnhre.org/community/deadly-air-a-case-in-defence-of-the-right-to-breathe-clean-air/>  
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/24/south-african-court-urges-action-deadly-air-pollution>



TO 2023!

