



A CONTEXT FOR GREENING

Chapter One

THE FUTURE **STARTS NOW**



"South Africa aspires to be a sustainable, economically prosperous and self-reliant nation state that safeguards its democracy by meeting the fundamental human needs of its people, by managing its limited ecological resources responsibly for current and future generations, and by advancing efficient integrated planning and governance through national, regional and global collaboration."

A Vision for a Sustainable Society - National Framework for Sustainable

1.1 Introduction

There is a growing awareness of the rising social and economic costs of environmentally unsustainable development paths such as our historical and ongoing dependence on cheap, non-renewable sources of energy.

It is thus imperative that South Africa moves towards a low carbon, resource efficient economy. For South Africa, this means reducing inequalities by supporting an increased standard of living for the poor majority and sufficient rather than over-consumption for the rest.

The draft National Strategy on Sustainable Development and Action Plan 2010 – 2014 (NSSD) provides a roadmap for the development path required if South Africa is to achieve the vision of a sustainable society. The Action Plan outlines five strategic priorities with strategic goals, key interventions, targets and indicators proposed for each.

The National Greening Framework (NGF) consolidates the relevant strategic priorities, goals and interventions outlined in the NSSD into a vision for sustainable human settlements and sustainable events management, focusing on the entire planning, funding and implementation process, including sustainable spatial and land-use planning from planning, sustainable procurement and incentives, to sustainable infrastructure. It builds on the momentum generated through the “greening” the 2010 FIFA World Cup™. Event greening for major events such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ has proven to be an accelerator for capital investment in sustainable infrastructure development, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between event greening and greening of the built environment.

This chapter provides a rationale and context for the development of the National Greening Framework, by highlighting how greening offers specific opportunities for addressing South Africa’s challenges and priorities and how greening is integral to sustainable development and to mitigating climate change by moving to a low carbon, resource efficient economy.

The NGF compliments other related policy developments including the development of the National Climate Change Response Green Paper, the Green Economy Plan and the

government’s priorities to the end of this political term of office encapsulated in the Framework Policy for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System.

This chapter consists of five sections. Firstly, it locates the framework within the challenges and opportunities of South Africa. Secondly, it defines and provides a context for greening within the concept of sustainable development. Thirdly, it describes the purpose of the framework. Fourth, it outlines the methodology undertaken in the development of the framework, and finally provides a synopsis of each chapter to follow.



Soccer City - Johannesburg

Greening the 2010 FIFA World Cup™

Global events of the size of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ have a significant environmental impact and South Africa decided to use the unique opportunity presented by this event to demonstrate to the World its commitment toward responsible environmental management, to use the publicity for the event to promote responsible environmental living, to build South Africa’s experience in hosting events in environmentally responsible ways, and to contribute to future expanded greening programmes across the country.



South Africa's freshwater resources are at crisis point in terms of quality and quantity, the quality of the air we breathe continues to deteriorate, soils continue to be depleted or eroded, our rich plant and animal life continues to be destroyed to make way for farmland, industry or urbanisation. Furthermore, our society and economy are characterised by the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources.

1.2 The South African Context

South Africa is a country of enormous opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it is endowed with a suite of valuable mineral resources including gold, diamonds, iron, uranium and coal, as well as a host of other natural resources such as fertile soils for agriculture, spectacular landscapes and rich biodiversity that make South Africa one of the world's prime tourism destinations. It is also one of the strongest economies in the African region (WHO, 2009).

On the other hand, the very natural assets on which South Africa relies for its growth and prosperity are being degraded. The overall success of our economy (measured as a percentage increase in GDP) is achieved by consuming natural resources and degrading our habitat at accelerating rates.

South Africa's freshwater resources are at crisis point in terms of quality and quantity, the quality of the air we breathe continues to deteriorate, soils continue to be depleted or eroded, our rich plant and animal life continues to be destroyed to make way for farmland, industry or urbanisation. Furthermore, our society and economy are characterised by the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources. On the one hand, a minority enjoy high living standards with access to sophisticated infrastructure and reliable services, whilst on the other hand, many South Africans live in degraded environments, struggling under the burden of poverty, poor skills and unemployment. Less than a third of the adult population has completed secondary school (Stats SA, 2007) while approximately 25% of South Africa's estimated population of 50 million is unemployed (Stats SA, 2010).

In addition, many people either live in rural areas or informal settlements in towns or cities, where access to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity remains a huge challenge. South Africa's attempt to provide both universal access to basic services for all those living in South Africa while simultaneously maintaining a reliable supply for high-end users and ongoing economic activities, is placing additional pressure on already strained resources and infrastructure. This was witnessed during the electricity crisis that began in 2008 and by increased service delivery protests.

Moreover, the country is experiencing major threats to its strong growth path as a result of the effects of the global economic recession.

In 2009, South Africa experienced its first recession in seventeen years. South Africa's real GDP was 1.8% in 2009 (IMF World Economic Outlook, 2010:67) and its projected growth was 2.5% in 2010 and 3.5% in 2011 (IMF World Economic Outlook, 2010:65). Between April 2008 and June 2009, the labour market contracted by 360 000 jobs (Stats SA, 2009), amounting to 4,125 million people becoming unemployed, which is 23.6% of the working-age population (Stats SA, 2009).



Gold mine head gear, Johannesburg

In the long term, Africa is projected to be one of the continents most severely impacted upon by climate change, due to the range of projected impacts, multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity (DEAT, 2008).



While many still do not see the direct linkages, it is clear that the 2008 economic crisis and its continued unpredictability and instability cannot be uncoupled from the biggest challenge that we as humanity have ever faced – human-induced climate change. As noted in the National Framework for Sustainable Development (NFSD) (DEAT, 2008), “In its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), adopted in November 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recognised that the impacts of climate change are more imminent and severe than previously thought, that it will affect every part of the globe, in particular poor countries and communities, and that the negative impacts of climate change pose an increasingly serious risk to the achievement of sustainable development.”

Extreme unpredictable weather patterns have wreaked havoc, from floods in Asia (destroying millions of lives, livelihoods and infrastructure), the droughts in Russia (with a loss of a quarter of its annual grain production, grain exports have been banned until at least December 2010), Mongolia’s winter of white death (where 1.7 million livestock died resulting in food shortages and extreme poverty for thousands of Mongolian nomads) or closer to home, severe drought in the Western Cape that resulted in failed crops and huge costs in terms of national drought relief.

In the long term, Africa is projected to be one of the continents most severely impacted by climate change, due to the range of projected impacts, multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity (DEAT, 2008). Food security is likely to become increasingly threatened. Wheat production is likely to disappear from Africa by the 2080s (Fischer et al., 2005), and Southern Africa could lose more than 30% of its main crop, maize, by 2030 (Lobell et al, 2008). In addition, by 2080, up to 30% of Africa’s coastal infrastructure could face the risk of coastal flooding due to rising sea levels and an increase in storm intensity and frequency (DEA, 2010c).

The western parts of South Africa are projected to become drier, resulting in chronic water shortages, severely impacting upon key agricultural sectors and threatening natural ecosystems of global importance (such as the Cape Floristic Kingdom and the Succulent Karoo). The average rainfall is expected to increase in the north-eastern parts of the country and increased risks of flooding and damage to property from tornadoes and tropical storms (DEA, 2010c).

It is thus clear that long-term social and economic sustainability and wellbeing can only be achieved if the degree of human-induced climate change can be curtailed and that governance systems and industrial practices throughout the world “ensure that people do not progressively consume the ecosystems and resources on which their continued well-being and survival depends” (DEAT, 2008).



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DEAT, 2008

1.3 Why Greening?

This question can only be answered with an understanding of what greening is, and how it fits into the vision of a sustainable South African society.

1.3.1 What is Greening?

Greening represents a wide array of practices and policies, such as the procurement and delivery of environmentally safe products and services, the promotion of energy and natural resource efficiency, the reduction of waste and pollution, improvements to hazardous waste disposal, and the greening of an organisation’s workplace and customer environments.

The National Greening Framework applies this definition to greening of event management, the built environment and procurement.

1.3.2 Greening, Sustainability and Sustainable Development

Applying the principles of sustainability to all aspects of infrastructure planning, design, procurement, production, installation, operations and maintenance is essential for transitioning to a resource-efficient low-carbon economy.

The National Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Development (DEA, 2010c:5) makes an important distinction between ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’ where the former is seen as the ultimate goal whilst the latter is the process that is developed and applied to achieve that goal. The strategy provides further clarity on the understanding of sustainability, which it defines more narrowly as “ecological sustainability”.

It acknowledges that human wellbeing is dependent on healthy ecosystems and natural resources, and that there is indeed a limit to the goods and services that they can supply.

This approach to sustainability considers human beings as “part of nature and not separate from it.” With this in mind, sustainable development is presented as a process to select and implement development options that produce “appropriate and justifiable social and economic goals (based on meeting basic needs and equity) without compromising the natural system on which it is based.”

Sustainability

The acknowledgement that human wellbeing is dependent on healthy ecosystems and natural resources, and that there is indeed a limit to the goods and services that they can supply. It is the goal to conserve the resources we have for future use.

Sustainable Development

The integration of social, economic and environmental factors into planning, implementation and decision-making so as to ensure that development serves present and future generations (NEMA 1998).

Sustainable development is the **pathway** to sustainability...



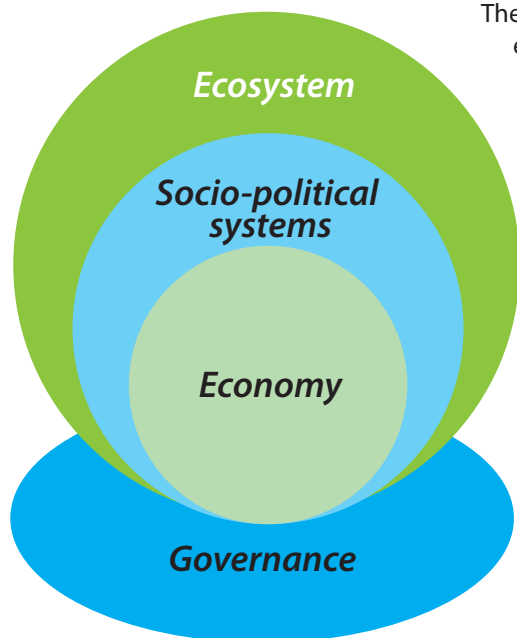


Figure 1: A representation of sustainable development

The pursuit of social and economic needs within the limits of ecosystems' production abilities is presented in Figure 1, using three concentric circles with the outer layer representing ecosystem goods and services and their sustainable use. The next layer incorporates socio-political systems, which are the systems that enable the choice of development

options. At the centre of the system lies the economy, which can only function optimally when there is proper valuation and use of ecosystems goods and services. These layers rest on a governance platform, which supports the entire system through good corporate and co-operative governance.

Sustainable development requires consideration of the environmental impacts of decisions taken and investments made, and ensuring that the negative environmental impacts of these decisions are minimised, while simultaneously resulting in a positive socio-economic impact.

Use of products and processes that reduce the negative impact on the environment by conserving resources, using resources more effectively and/or minimising pollution contribute to the ultimate goal of ecological sustainability while simultaneously supporting economic and social sustainability through stimulating an economy that develops and grows within ecological limits. Thus, while the framework is not a guideline for a Green Economy, it supports the broader process of greening the economy in relation

to events and the built environment by highlighting the opportunities for growth in the green industry sector and supporting a shift in the economy as a whole towards cleaner industries and sectors with a low environmental impact compared to its socio-economic impact.

1.4 Purpose of the Framework

The imperatives driving the National Greening Framework are the dual challenges of climate change and poverty. The approach is guided by the goal of sustainability and inclusion of sustainable development principles.

The National Greening Framework offers a vision and strategic perspective on how to shape greening in respect of events, built environment and procurement in South Africa. It seeks to ensure that the impacts of greening are beneficial from both a social and an economic point of view through community involvement and local economic development. The role of awareness and education in the mainstreaming of green thinking is also considered alongside guidelines that provide practical pointers for the greening of events and built environment projects. This is done against the backdrop of the policy and legal context for greening, where greening may not be the focus but is an outcome. Since the application of greening is a multidisciplinary process, it takes into account policies of those entities whose functions affect the environment and its management.

Defining a Green Economy

A system of economic activities related to the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that result in improved human well-being over the long term, while not exposing future generations to significant environmental risks or ecological scarcities.

(EDD et al, 2010:5)





1.5 Outline of the Framework

The NGF consists of six thematic chapters and seven appendices. A brief description of each of these chapters is provided below:

Chapter 2	This chapter provides the international and national policy context for greening and how it supports the transition to a low carbon, resource efficient economy
Chapter 3	This chapter focuses on greening of the built environment and is also based on key themes, including outlining the opportunities and challenges for greening of the built environment.
Chapter 4	This chapter examines the greening of events focusing on key event greening themes, including how it can be achieved, and the levers for and challenges to the greening of events.
Chapter 5	This chapter defines the concept of greening of procurement, how it can be achieved and processes to be followed in pursuing sustainable public procurement.
Chapter 6	This chapter discusses the role of education and awareness in creating the shift in attitudes and behaviours that would be required to sustain any initiative aimed at promoting sustainable development.

Appendix A	Overview of Policies and Legislation relevant to the Framework
Appendix B	Greening Guideline for the Built Environment
Appendix C	Green Driving Code
Appendix D	Greening Guideline for Events Management
Appendix E	Monitoring Tool for the Stadiums and Host Cities for 2010 FIFA World Cup™
Appendix F	Green Procurement Criteria for Products
Appendix G	Communication Strategy for NGF