

Environment Quarterly

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Spotlight on CoP28



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GOOD GREEN DEEDS

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About the back cover image:

Soetwater Wind Power Station, Northern Cape

The Soetwater Wind Power Station is an operational 147 MW (197,000 hp) wind power plant in South Africa. The power station is located outside of the town of Sutherland, in Karoo Hoogland Municipality, in Namakwa District, in Northern Cape. Soetwater Wind Farm is located approximately 61 kilometres, south of Sutherland. The power station is located about 600 kilometres southeast of Springbok, the headquarters of Namakwa District.



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Editorial: Adapting to a climate-resilient future



Dear Valued Stakeholder,

Hello and welcome to this special edition of the Environment Quarterly. We have packaged this edition with a special focus on climate change. We know that 2023 was recorded to be the warmest year on record. With climate change being one of the biggest facts and realities of our time, the time is now to take collective climate action in order to reduce the severity of extreme weather patterns and hopefully, save our planet.

The series of strong rainfall events and cyclones in many parts of the world, hitting the world's poorest communities

and contributing to more hunger and less opportunities are just some of the reasons behind the gathering of more than 90 000 delegates from nearly 200 countries in Dubai to discuss what governments are doing to prevent this disaster from continuing.

South Africa has not been spared the devastating effects of climate change after extreme rain and storms hit KwaZulu-Natal in April 2022, causing flooding and mudslides in Durban and surrounding areas.

Going into the recent Conference of Parties (CoP28) in Dubai, South Africa held a strong position and plan to reduce its carbon emissions with Cabinet's newly-approved Just Energy Transition Implementation Plan to move the country away from fossil fuel towards cleaner sources of energy.

Accordingly, South Africa also welcomed the decision by the CoP which according to Minister Creecy are in line with our national framework on Just Transition, in particular the recognition of a country's right to pursue its climate resilience path in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

At local level, the Minister mentioned key interventions that are being employed to help people and nature cope with climate change including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the White Paper on Conservation

and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity as well as the Ecosystem-based adaptation.

While all of us are affected by climate change, some people are more susceptible and that includes women and children. Climate change is worse for women because they are less likely to bounce back to jobs and opportunities after climate disasters. They also have access to less financial independence.

The voices of women must be heard for climate action. CoP28 launched partnerships to support and empower women by investing in women's economic empowerment because there is an increasing international call for women and young girls to sit on the decision-making table of climate action.

Read more on page 12. South Africa is working at creating and implementing nature-based solutions in addressing the challenges related to climate change.

As the biggest contributors to climate change, we humans need to work harder to make sure that we have a safe place to live for generations to come.

Until next time!

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Erica

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GOOD GREEN DEEDS

South Africa's response to COP28

South Africa welcomes the landmark decision to adopt a Global Goal on Adaptation here at the COP 28 at the Dubai Climate Change conference. This is something our country together with the African continent and other vulnerable nations have struggled to achieve for many years.

"The decision recognises different theme areas for adaptation action, it has measurable targets that are time bound. It also recognises the importance of securing adequate public finance for adaptation from developed countries. This is a big step forward," said Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms Barbara Creecy.

In this context South Africa welcomes the language in the Global Stocktake which recognises and underscores that the impacts of climate change will be much lower at the temperature increase of 1.5 degrees compared with 2 degrees.



Above: South Africa has welcomed the landmark decision to adopt a Global Goal on Adaptation at the COP28 summit in Dubai Climate on Wednesday. *Image by AFP.*

"Throughout our facilitation of the Global Stocktake, South Africa emphasised that climate ambition must be balanced across mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation. We also emphasised that equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities should underpin all asks on developing countries," the Minister added.



Above: Germany's special envoy for the Just Energy Transition Partnership, Rainer Baake addresses COP28 delegates at the SA pavilion. *Image by Lameez Omarjee.*



Above: President Cyril Ramaphosa addresses other heads of state at the United Nations climate summit in Dubai on 1 December 2023. *Image by AFP.*

Accordingly, South Africa welcomes the decisions on the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund, Just Transition Pathways work programme, the Mitigation Work Programme and the Global Goal on Adaptation.

"These decisions are in line with our national framework on Just Transition, in particular the recognition of a country's right to pursue its climate resilience path in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

For the first time we have language which calls for transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems in a just, orderly and equitable manner so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science," said the Minister.

COP28 has adopted a decision, co-facilitated by South Africa, to implement the new work programme on just transition pathways.

The decision underscores the importance of finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building support to achieve just and equitable transitions, nationally and globally.

This all-of-society and all-of-economy transition approach represents a progression and evolution in the international community's collective understanding of just transitions, that in the past tended to focus narrowly on only the energy sector and related workforce issues.

South Africa particularly welcomes the strong human rights, inclusive and participatory approach in the decision to nationally defined just transitions, in which all stakeholders have a role to play and the Right to Development is respected. This is fundamental to the achievement of climate justice, at both the national and international level.

We are also pleased to see that the final text takes a stand against unilateral measures (such as Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism - CBAM).

The decision emphasises that "unilateral measures should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade".

Instead, the decision calls for greater cooperation and support aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth and development in all countries, thus enabling them to better address the problem of climate change.

The decisions lay out a clear process to move forward current discussions on the new finance goal for the post 2025 era. It mandates that the new goal should aim at achieving parity between mitigation and adaptation finance.

The decision underscores the importance of reforming the multilateral financial architecture. It also calls for scaled up support for climate action from multilateral financial institutions through grant-based and concessional instruments.

“

The decision underscores the importance of finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building support to achieve just and equitable transitions, nationally and globally.

Biodiversity: A natural defence against climate change

By Zibuse Ndlovu



Above: Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment Minister, Ms Barbara Creecy addressing a side event at South Africa's Pavilion at COP28, Dubai, in the UAE. *Image by GCIS*

Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment Minister, Ms Barbara Creecy has called for urgent action to address the growing threat posed by climate change to biodiversity and ecosystems. Minister Creecy was speaking at the Paper Manufacturers Association of South Africa Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) Event on 09 December 2023, at COP28, in Dubai.

"South Africa's biodiversity is under immense pressure from the commonly known global change challenges that include climate change. Biodiversity is currently declining at the fastest rate observed in human history with over one million plant and animal species now threatened with extinction," said Minister Creecy.

Minister Creecy said climate change was ranked amongst the major drivers of ecological change. "It is expected to exacerbate the existing threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, and this

will debilitate the ability of nature and ecosystems in helping people to mitigate and adapt to climate change at local, national, regional and global levels," said Minister Creecy.

Biodiversity and ecosystems are crucial for society and human existence. "Healthy and functional ecosystems are crucial for the provision of ecosystem services that benefit human culture, well-being, health, quality of life, drive economic activity and can help us to adapt to climate change.



South Africa's biodiversity is under immense pressure from the commonly known global change challenges that include climate change. Biodiversity is currently declining at the fastest rate observed in human history with over one million plant and animal species now threatened with extinction-
Minister Creecy.

"The adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) occurred at a very important time to stem the loss of biodiversity to secure our own health and well-being alongside that of the planet. In addition, the framework provides concrete measures to address biodiversity loss and restore ecosystems for current and future generations. Furthermore, together with the Paris Agreement, it paves the way towards a climate-neutral, nature-positive, and resilient world by 2050, and beyond," said Minister Creecy.

Subsequent to the adoption of the KM-GBF, South Africa adopted the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable use of South Africa's Biodiversity. The White Paper provides overarching policy guidance for conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable access and benefit-sharing of South Africa's biodiversity, while contributing to the transformation of society, the well-being of people and nature, and to the prosperity of society.

South Africa will implement the KM-GBF through the four goals of the White Paper thereby contributing to all the KM-GBF targets but more importantly, Target 2 (Restoration of Ecosystems), Target 3 (30x30, i.e. conservation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems) and Target 8 (implementation of measures to minimise the impacts of climate change). Targets 3 underpins the implementation of the White Paper, supported by the respective goals of the White Paper that will contribute to all targets of the KM-GBF.

"This will set the country on a strong path of sustainable development, considering the historical, socio-economic, and environmental

context of South Africa, including the aspirations and needs of its people," said Minister Creecy.

Furthermore, there are several policies and strategies in place that are supporting the use of biodiversity to help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA).

In South Africa, EbA is recognised for its potential to support poor and rural communities who are more directly dependent on natural resources and ecosystem services in adapting to climate change.

"The co-benefits of EbA contribute towards a broader set of socio-economic and development goals, including job creation, poverty reduction and rural/peri-urban development. In addition, EbA can be applied on diverse land and seascapes, including natural areas, human modified landscapes such as agricultural areas and urban regions.

The benefits of implementing EbA include multiple social, economic and cultural co-benefits for local communities, contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, contribution to climate change mitigation, by conserving carbon stocks, reducing emissions caused by ecosystem degradation and loss, or enhancing carbon stocks," said Minister Creecy.

With the concept of NbS relatively new, substantial knowledge gaps persist, including how to overcome barriers to implementation such as quantitative evidence on the benefits of NbS, especially in developing country contexts and with regard to evidence of cost-effectiveness.

"It is precisely the reason why South Africa is working hard together with other countries under the ambit of the United Nations Environment Programme to develop guidelines/criteria aimed at guiding the design and implementation of appropriate nature-based solutions.

The aim here is to ensure that nature-based solutions will be impactful and beneficial to both people and nature. We are all responsible for biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. Working together we can do more. Success in this regard is in our hands as the custodians of nature," said Minister Creecy.



About the contributor: Zibuse Ndlovu

Zibuse Ndlovu is the Assistant Director in the Communications and Advocacy Chief Directorate at the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

South Africa at COP28

President Ramaphosa leads Team SA in Dubai



Above: President Cyril Ramaphosa leads Team South Africa on a walkabout of the Dubai Expo City, the venue of the climate-focused Conference of Parties (COP28). *Image by GCIS.*

President and Minister Creecy participate in G77 + China Summit on Climate Change



Above: President Cyril Ramaphosa with Minister Naledi Pandor and Minister Barbara Creecy participate in the Inaugural G77 + China Summit on Climate Change during the United Nations climate-focused Conference of Parties (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Image by GCIS.*

President Ramaphosa meets UN Secretary on Just Transition



Above: President Cyril Ramaphosa engaged in a meeting with United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, delving into discussions on the critical topics of Just Transition and Climate Change at the United Nations Conference of Parties in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. South Africa's active involvement in the conference is framed within its national commitment, articulated in the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan. This plan outlines the country's dedicated efforts to substantially decrease emissions, aligning with the objectives laid out in the 2015 Paris Agreement. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*

Climate Investment Funds ACT side-event



Above: Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, Ms Barbara Creecy addressed the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) ACT side-event at UNFCCC COP28, emphasising South Africa's ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution with challenging emission reduction targets. Acknowledging the country's heavy reliance on coal-based energy, she highlighted the importance of international support, particularly through partnerships like the JET Partnership and collaboration with CIF's ACT programme. Stressing the significance of a "Just Transition," the Minister outlined a comprehensive approach, including front-loading socio-economic interventions, repurposing energy infrastructure, and ensuring benefits for affected communities. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*

SA delegation praised for robust representation at COP28



Above: President Ramaphosa visits the South African COP28 Pavilion in Dubai hosted by the government through the DFFE, in partnership with National Business Initiative South Africa (NBISA). During his visit, President Cyril Ramaphosa engaged with the South African delegation, commending their robust representation at UNFCCC COP28. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*



Above: The President lauded the delegation's unity, spanning government, private sector, communities, NGOs, and students, recognising their collective effort in addressing climate concerns. This interaction underscored the commitment of diverse sectors in contributing to South Africa's presence and influence on the global climate stage. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*

Just Energy Transition



Above: During the High-Level Roundtable on Just Transition at UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai, Minister Creecy highlighted South Africa's Implementation Plan for a Just Energy Transition, emphasising its focus on critical areas such as electricity infrastructure, green vehicles, and skills development. Minister Creecy stressed the need for a financial system that responds appropriately to the challenges faced by developing countries in accessing finance for their Just Transition Journeys. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*

Gender-Responsive Just Transition for all

In her address, Minister stressed the challenges faced by women and children due to climate change: "Often the world's poorest bear disproportionate effects due to their reliance on threatened natural resources. It is vital to recognise women's roles as formidable leaders and catalysts for climate action, drawing from their extensive knowledge, historical perspectives, and nurturing expertise."



Above: Minister Creecy during a High-Level Dialogue on delivering a gender-responsive Just Transition for All at UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai, UAE. *Image by Paul Sigutya.*

"Just Transitions ought to consider a comprehensive shift involving all facets of society and the economy, aligning with sustainable development and the entitlement to development to tackle issues like poverty, inequality, and joblessness," said Minister Creecy.

Minister Creecy unpacks SA's Just Energy Transition Plan

Speaking at the side event, Minister Creecy said the approval by Cabinet of the Implementation Plan was another milestone in South Africa's commitment to a Just Energy Transition (JET). "Our commitment to implementing a long-term and well managed transition to a low carbon economy at a pace and scale that is appropriate to our national circumstances and developmental needs is now concretised in the Implementation Plan which is based on the Investment Plan and importantly on the outcomes of the consultative process run by the Presidential Climate Commission with stakeholders in the first quarter of this year," said Minister Creecy.

The Implementation Plan aims to bring transparency into the climate finance space and proposes mechanisms such as grants register for the JET and a funding platform to match available funds to projects.

"It commits us to support the development of capacity at community and worker level to build the projects and initiatives that will ensure that the benefits of the JET are felt by those most affected and it aims to direct resources and funding to the infrastructure and initiatives that would have the most impact and ensure the greatest spread of benefit," said Minister Creecy.



COP28 announces new partnerships to advance urban development



Above: Representative of South Africa speaks at the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanisation and Climate Change during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 06 December 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28 / Stuart Wilson.*

Over 40 ministers met during the COP28 Multilevel Action, Urbanisation, Built Environment and Transport Day, held in partnership with United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for COP28, announcing new initiatives to drive climate action in cities, spanning buildings, waste, transport, water, and nature.

The announcements span sectors including buildings, waste and resource management systems, urban water resilience, and urban nature restoration. They build on the 1 December launch of the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships for Climate Action (CHAMP) to include cities and regions in the design of federal climate commitments and strategies.

"Meeting the aims of the Paris Agreement and keeping 1.5°C within reach depends on the leadership and support of the world's mayors and governors," said COP28 President, Dr Sultan Al Jaber.

"That is why at COP28 we have empowered leaders and communities by launching CHAMP and working with organisations like UN-Habitat and Bloomberg Philanthropies to recognise and support the important roles cities and their leaders can play in addressing climate change," he said.

Ministerial Pairings at COP28



Above: Minister Barbara Creecy, and Denmark's Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Mr Dan Jorgensen during the press briefing hosted by the COP28 President on the Introduction of Ministerial Pairings at COP28 in Dubai UAE. *Image by COP28.*

World Climate Action Summit



Above: President Cyril Ramaphosa, speaks at the G77+ and China Leaders' Summit during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 02 December 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28/ Mahmoud Khaled.*

KEY highlights at COP28

By Zibuse Ndlovu

World leaders gather in Dubai for COP28



Above: World Heads of States at Al Wasl during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 01 December 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28/ Mahmoud Khaled.*

The UN Climate Change Conference (the official name for Climate Conferences of the Parties) has happened every year since 1995. These two-week summits are an important space for world leaders, politicians, experts and a whole host of other relevant parties to discuss the climate crisis on a global level.

The annual conferences bring together those who signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) an international environmental treaty addressing climate change 30 years ago.

Ministerial Family



Above: Ministerial Family Photo at Pre-COP in Abu Dhabi from 29-31 October 2023. *Image by COP28.*

Climate finance unlocked for vulnerable countries



Above: COP28 Finance Day unlocked significant progress on international financial architecture reform to support low-income and vulnerable countries fight climate change.

Major international financial institutions and countries made new commitments to offer climate-resilient debt clauses (CRDCs) in their lending. These clauses allow debt service to be paused to provide breathing space when countries are hit by climate catastrophes.

The United Kingdom, France, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and African Development Bank made new commitments to expand CRDCs in their lending. In total 73 countries called on donors to expand the use of these clauses by 2025.

This marks significant progress to reform the global climate finance architecture by making climate finance available, accessible, and affordable.

This has been the central vision of the COP28 UAE Declaration on a Global Climate Finance Framework launched at the World Climate Action Summit at the beginning of COP28.

"I've said all along that if we fail to include the developing world in our solutions to climate change we will all fail. The announcement of new SDR pledges for Africa, and the broad adoption of climate-resilient debt clauses is essential. It will help those most vulnerable to the shocks and disasters caused by climate change," said COP28 President Dr. Sultan Al Jaber.

"I want to thank you all for the extraordinary courage to do the right thing. We can always bring back our debt, but we cannot bring back our society," said the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley.



Above: UNFCCC COP28 High-Level-Roundtable Finance discussions on climate-resilient debt clauses. The World Bank announced it will start offering CRDCs in existing loans, which will pause debt as well as interest for two years in the event of a natural disaster, the World Bank has committed to covering all transaction costs. *Image by COP28.*

COP28 launches partnership to support women empowerment

By Zibuse Ndlovu

“Climate change is not gender neutral – it disproportionately impacts women and girls.” These were sentiments shared by Ms Razan Al Mubarak, a High-Level Climate Champion for COP28.

Commenting at the event launch held on 04 December 2023, Ms Al Mubarak said the climate crisis already amplified existing gender inequalities and that it posed a serious threat to women’s livelihoods, health and wellbeing.

“To deliver a just transition, we must reform the architecture of the global financial system and ensure finance flows to the regions and the people who need it the most. But we must also invest in women’s economic empowerment to ensure no one is left behind,” said Ms Al Mubarak.

The new partnership builds on objectives previously outlined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Gender Action Plan, which set out activities under five key priority areas to advance understanding of gender-responsive climate action. In particular, the new COP28 Gender-Responsive Just Transitions and Climate Action Partnership centres around three core pillars: Better quality data to support decision making in transition planning; More effective finance flows

to regions most impacted by climate change, and education, skills and capacity building to support individual engagement in transitions.

UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous said: “The rights of women and girls must be at the centre of climate action, including here at COP28. We must ensure that women have a seat at the decision-making table. We must strengthen inclusive decision-making so that the voices of feminists, youth, indigenous and other grassroots movements can be heard loud and clear from the local to the global level.”

Endorsed by over 60 Parties, the Partnership includes a package of commitments that signatories will implement over the next three years before reconvening at COP31.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 1.2 billion jobs are at risk due to global warming and environmental degradation and women are expected to be most severely impacted due to their high representation in sectors particularly vulnerable to climate change.



Above: H.E Razan Al Mubarak, UN High-Level Champion for COP28 speaks during High-Level Dialogue on Gender-Responsive Just Transitions & Climate Action at Al Waha Theater during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 04 December, 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. **Image by COP28 / Christophe Viseux.**

COP28 mobilises action to protect forests

By Zibuse Ndlovu



Above: Group picture with Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil and Marina Silva, Minister of the Environment, Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia and Climate Change of Brazil and His Excellency Dr. Sultan Al Jaber. President Lula da Silva and the COP28 Presidency announced a two-year partnership to mobilise new resources and political support for nature on the road to COP30 in Belém. *Image by COP28 / Stuart Wilson.*

The Conference of Parties (COP) member countries have committed to urgently address climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation. In a joint statement issued on 10 December 2023, member countries committed to better align national climate, biodiversity and land restoration strategies in the next round of national climate targets and adaptation plans.

A number of landmark commitments on forests, mangroves, landscape restoration, nature finance and the ocean, were announced, reaffirming that near-term action on nature is essential to deliver the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Speaking at the summit, the UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for COP28, Ms Razan Al Mubarak said there was no path to fulfilling the Paris Agreement and keeping 1.5°C within reach without protecting and restoring nature, land, and the ocean. “We must work in partnership especially with the indigenous peoples and local communities who steward these critical assets. The diverse, incredible turn-out for Nature, Land Use, and Ocean Day at COP evidences the support for this dual nature-climate agenda and its centrality to the response to the Global Stocktake. I am delighted that we also have a clear pathway for nature to COP30 in Belém,” said Ms Al Mubarak.

Over \$186 million of new financing for nature and climate towards forests, mangroves and the ocean was announced during the Nature, Land Use and Ocean Day. This funding builds on the \$2.5 billion mobilised to protect and restore nature during COP28’s World Climate Action Summit (WCAS) on 2 December. “The COP28 Presidency; the UAE, have demonstrated real action for Nature, one that is backed by significant financial commitments. The journey to 1.5 as we all know, is not possible without nature, and this level of action must be expedited to achieve real progress by COP30,” said Mr Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana.

Reversing nature-loss can provide upwards of 30 percent of the mitigation action needed to keep 1.5°C within reach by 2030. Nature also has a crucial role to play in reducing climate-related hazards, such as floods and fires. Nature preservation can also contribute a potential USD \$10 trillion worth of new business opportunities and provide almost 400 million new jobs.

At COP26 leaders agreed to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 and, earlier this year, adopted the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), with its goal to protect 30 percent of the land and ocean by 2030. These goals depend on investment in and leadership from indigenous communities, who steward some 80 percent of global biodiversity.

World Climate Action Summit



Above: General views during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 02 December 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28 / Christopher Edralin.*

COP28, Climate Summit 2023



Above: Dubai, United Arab Emirates: Activists from various traditions join hands in speaking up for gender justice at the climate negotiations of the United Nations climate summit COP28, under the slogan 'No climate justice, without gender justice'. *Image by LWF/Albin Hillert.*

Youth, Children, Education, and Skills



Above: General views during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on December 2, 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28 / Christopher Edralin.*

COP28's flagship youth day hosted the first ever Youth Stocktake, bringing together thousands of young people from across the globe under the banner of climate action.

COP28 President Dr. Sultan Al Jaber said: "This COP is working to build a global legacy and a better future for

youth and children. This is a turnaround COP that will ensure full inclusivity is at the heart of the climate process."

Youth, Children, Skills and Education Day convened in Dubai on 8 December 2023, with the COP28 Presidency delivery on its commitment to put young people at the centre of climate diplomacy. The day finished with a graduation ceremony for the first-of-its-kind Youth Climate Delegates Programme.

Around one billion children are currently at extreme high risk from the impacts of climate change and many young people are already leading climate action all over the world. However, young people still have limited input into climate policymaking.

Acknowledging the value and necessity of meaningful youth inclusion in the COP process, COP28's Youth, Children, Skills and Education Day brought together young leaders to discuss central youth policy proposals for COP28 and to formulate a 2023 Global Youth Statement.

Nature, land use and oceans

FROM AGREEMENT TO ACTION

Harnessing 30x30 to Tackle Climate Change

Nature, Land Use and Ocean Day | 9 December, 9:00-10:30

Al Waha Theater, COP28



Above: From Agreement to Action: Harnessing 30x30 to Tackle Climate Change at Al Waha Theater during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on 09 December 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28 / Christopher Pike.*

Health and Relief, Recovery and Peace



Left: From Agreement to Action: Harnessing 30x30 to Tackle Climate Change at Al Waha Theater during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 at Expo City Dubai on December 9, 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Image by COP28 / Christopher Pike.*

Content sourced and generated from the COP28 UAE outcomes' media statements/press-release: [Link/ https://www.cop28.com/en/news-and-media](https://www.cop28.com/en/news-and-media)



COP28 UAE

What you need to know about COP

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the main decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It brings together the 198 Parties – 197 nations plus the European Union – that have signed on to the Framework Convention. The inaugural COP gathering took place in Berlin, Germany, in March 1995, and today the COP secretariat is headquartered in Bonn. COPs are hosted annually in different countries, under the auspices of the UNFCCC, with the UAE hosting COP28.

Why is COP important?

COPs serve as the formal meeting place each year for the Parties to negotiate and agree on how to tackle climate change, reduce emissions and limit global warming. A primary task at COPs is the examination of national reports and emission inventories submitted by participating countries. These reports offer essential insights into each country's actions and their progress toward achieving the overarching goals of the Convention.

How does the COP Presidency rotate?

The COP meets every year unless the Parties decide otherwise. The COP Presidency rotates among the five recognized UN regions - Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and others. This rotation ensures that different corners of the world have the opportunity to host and showcase their commitment to addressing climate challenges.

When is COP28 UAE?

The COP28 conference took place from 30 November to 12 December at Expo City Dubai. COP28 UAE was a milestone moment for the world to unite around tangible climate action and deliver concrete solutions.

Who can participate in COP28 UAE?

As the world's highest decision-making process on climate issues, COP28 hosted delegates, including heads of state, world leaders, non-government organizations, companies, youth groups, and other stakeholders who met to build consensus and facilitate progress on climate action among parties.

What is the UNFCCC and what does it do?

The UNFCCC secretariat is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change. The secretariat was established in 1992 when countries adopted the UNFCCC, and was originally based in Geneva, Switzerland before moving to Bonn in 1996.

What is the Kyoto Protocol?

In 1997, at COP3 in Kyoto, Japan, 'developed' countries committed to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions – the first legally binding agreement on emissions. Known as the Kyoto Protocol, this entered into force in 2005, with 192 Parties signing up to it and it remains a historic landmark in the fight against climate change.



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Tips on how to mitigate Climate Change



1. Save energy at home

Much of our electricity and heat is powered by coal, oil and gas. Use less energy by reducing your heating and cooling use, switching to LED light bulbs and energy-efficient electric appliances, washing your laundry with cold water, or hanging things to dry instead of using a dryer.



2. Walk, bike or take public transport

The roads are filled with vehicles, most of them burning diesel or petrol. Walking or riding a bike instead of driving will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help your health and fitness. For longer distances, consider taking a train or bus and carpool whenever possible.



3. Plant indigenous trees

Most insects will not eat from exotic trees, consider replacing exotic trees with indigenous plant species. Indigenous trees consume little water and provide food and habitat for animals.



4. Reduce, reuse, repair and recycle

Electronics, clothes, plastics and other items we buy cause carbon emissions at each point in production. To protect the climate, buy fewer things and only what you need, use what you buy and compost any leftovers, shop second-hand and repair what you can.



5. Speak up

Speak up and get others to join in taking action. It's one of the quickest and most effective ways to make a difference. Talk to your neighbors, colleagues, friends, and family. Let business owners know you support bold changes – from plastic-free products and packaging to zero-emissions vehicles. Climate action is a task for all of us. And it concerns all of us. No one can do it all alone but we can do it together.



More heatwaves to hit SA in future

By Tshegofatso Ndhlovu

Scorching weather temperatures are becoming more frequent all over the world due to climate change and South Africa is no exception. With climate change, comes a series of changes in the earth's general weather conditions as a result of global warming. While weather refers to the short-term change in the atmosphere, climate represents the statistical distribution of weather patterns over time, and this has on a global scale changed very slowly in the past, allowing time for the earth's bio-physical systems to adapt naturally to the changing climatic conditions.

Currently, the global climate is changing at a much more rapid pace than usual as a result of global warming, leading to, among others, the melting of polar ice, sea-level rise, changes in rainfall patterns, more frequent floods and droughts and an increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heatwaves.

Defined as hot weather that can last for several days, a heatwave can have a significant impact on society, including a rise in heat-related deaths. Heatwaves are known to be one of the most dangerous of natural hazards. They form when high

pressure in the atmosphere moves in and pushes warm air toward the ground. That air warms up further as it is compressed, and we begin to feel a lot hotter.

The high-pressure system pressing down on the ground expands vertically, forcing other weather systems to change course. It even minimizes wind and cloud cover, making the air very hot. This is also why a heat wave can be experienced over several days or longer. Since the beginning of the summer season of 2023, parts of South Africa have reached temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius and according to weather scientists, more days like this are looming.

Heatwaves pose many threats to human health and can sometimes become fatal. Extreme heat can trigger a variety of heat stress conditions in the human body. These are conditions such as heat strokes which occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature and body temperature starts rising rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body cannot cool down causing permanent disability and even death if emergency treatment is not given. It is therefore essential for us to adopt mechanisms to keep our selves safe during heatwaves.



About the contributor: Tshegofatso Ndhlovu

Mr Tshegofatso Ndhlovu is a Senior Communications Officer in the Communications and Advocacy Chief Directorate. He holds an Advanced Diploma in Journalism from the Tshwane University of Technology and is an avid sports fan with his favourites being Tennis and Formula 1.

Here are a couple of ways to beat the heat and stay safe;



Keep cool: Trying to keep your body temperature from rising is very important. You can do this by making use of fans and air conditioners, wearing light and loose-fitting clothes, taking lukewarm showers or even wrapping yourself in a damp towel.



Hydration is key: It is very important to keep yourself hydrated during a heatwave. Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink water. Aim to drink water throughout the day especially when going outdoors.



Do not expose yourself to the sun: Planning ahead during a heatwave is important. One should try to limit the number of times they go outdoors especially if it's not essential as keeping yourself away from direct sunlight will keep you cool.



Eat light foods: Heavy meals especially those filled with protein can warm the body and cause metabolic heat. One should consider eating light meals throughout the day for energy. Fruits such as watermelons and peaches also aid in keeping the body hydrated.



Stay grounded: It is well known that warm air rises in a room, therefore one should try sleeping on the floor as many mattresses are not very breathable, they absorb and retain the heat from your body.



Lookout for signs of heat strokes and heat exhaustion: Sweating profusely, nausea, weakness, thirst, dizziness and confusion are all common signs of heat strokes and exhaustion, therefore, it remains important for one to keep a lookout for these signs as they can help save a life.



Above: Extreme heat events are becoming more frequent globally because of climate change. *Image by Freepik.*

information sourced from:

- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/how-to-cope-and-stay-safe-in-extreme-heat>
- <https://www.dffe.gov.za/climate-change-and-air-quality#:~:text=Introduction%20and%20background,referred%20to%20as%20global%20warming.>
- <https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/a-quick-and-simple-guide-to-surviving-the-heatwave-5aa80d27-fce3-4054-92f3-49baa59e25ba>
- <https://earthjournalism.net/stories/part-two-extreme-heatwave-predicted-for-south-africa#:~:text=High%20temperatures%20could%20potentially%20lead,experience%20heatwaves%20of%20unprecedented%20intensity.>



Climate change threatens biodiversity

By Dimpho Matlanato



The Earth is now about 1.1°C warmer than it was in the 1800s. Based on current projections, global temperatures will rise by 2.7°C by the end of the 21st century. As a result, ecologists have noticed significant changes in the condition and distribution of wildlife around the world. At the moment, these changes are affecting at least 10,967 species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. As such, some of the biggest climate-driven threats for endangered species will include:

Habitat loss: The primary impact of climate change is habitat loss and fragmentation. Many animals rely on specific habitats to survive, but as temperatures rise and weather patterns change, these habitats are disappearing. In addition, farmers are illegally cutting down forest trees and burning them for charcoal, destroying animal habitat and resulting in hunger and death.

Forced migration: Climate change is already affecting the seasonal migratory patterns of many animals that rely on temperature as a gauge for their movements. The Salmon, for example, naturally seeks colder water during their annual migration. As colder water becomes scarcer, they will be forced to seek out deeper streams and rivers

in order to survive, altering their migration patterns and potentially reducing their species count.

Extinction: Many animals may become extinct as a result of the combination of these challenges. The world's most vulnerable species will soon disappear from the face of the earth because of habitat loss.

Ecological changes: Rising temperatures have led to ecological changes including the migration of Chinook Salmon to Arctic rivers, while behavioural changes in species include earlier breeding times for North American tree swallows. Climate change is also causing significant physiological changes to the endangered green sea turtles. The warmer temperatures during egg incubation are causing imbalanced female to male sex ratios among the species with females accounting for 99% of newly hatched turtles on some nesting beaches.

Altered food chains: The effect of climate change even on the smallest species can endanger ecosystems and other species up and down the food chain. Increased sea-ice melt and ocean acidification, for example, are reducing krill populations in the Arctic Ocean, threatening the survival of whales, penguins, and seals that rely on krill as a primary food source, eventually throwing the entire food chain off-balance.

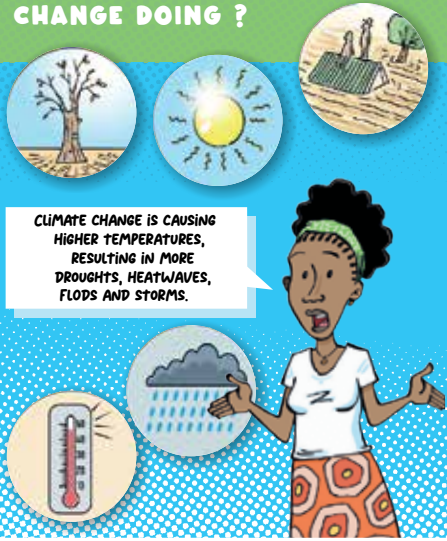


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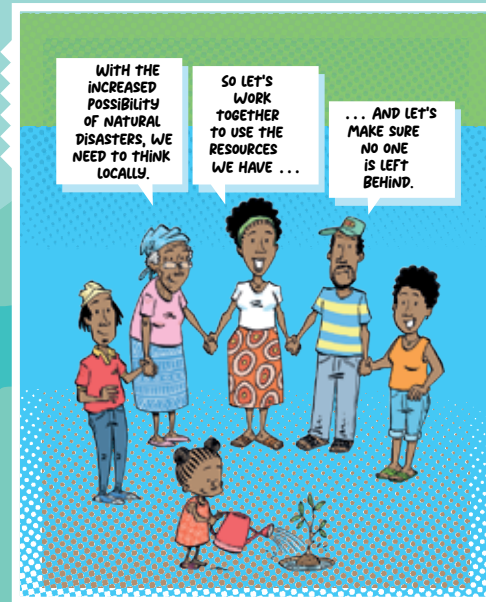
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CLIMATE CHANGE & EXTREME WEATHER

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