



2022 DURBAN FORUM DEEP DIVE

PCCB Follow-up Webinar to the 11th Durban Forum on Capacity Building

Coherently implementing the climate and development agendas in the context of sustainable recovery: Building capacities for green skills and climate innovation

29th September 2022, 15:00-16:30 CET



forestry, fisheries
& the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

The science is clear—tackling climate change will require:

- Significant and unprecedented changes across all sectors of the economy.
- Innovations in the energy system, including a massive shift to low-carbon energy sources, as well as changes to the way land is used and how we grow our food.
- However, making these changes will not be easy, hence in South Africa we talk of a just transition - leaving no one behind.
- SA is in one of the regions in the world that is most impacted by climate change, frequently experiencing droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events associated with global warming.
- These events have already caused enormous damage to infrastructure and livelihoods, and displaced thousands of people.
- SA is also one of the most vulnerable countries to transition risk—the changed forced upon people and the economy as a result of changes in the global demand for goods and services, changes in technology, and changes in global policy.
- Therefore, capacity building for skills development to support climate innovation and just transition of the workforce is an important enabler in climate action, the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and sustainable recovery.



Just Transition, Green Skills and Innovation – Case for SA

- Just transition is about seizing opportunities and managing risks towards a climate resilient and low carbon economy, while improving the lives and livelihoods of South Africans, particularly the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- Successful transition to a low carbon economy will only be possible by ensuring that workers are able to adapt and transfer from areas of decreasing employment to other industries and that human capital exists and is maximized to develop new industries.
- Hence, the importance of green skills.
- These are skills needed to adapt products, services and processes to climate change and the related environmental requirements and regulations.
- Skills that will be needed by all sectors and at all levels in the workforce.
- Skills that are crucial for making a transition from energy and emission-intensive economy to cleaner and greener production and service patterns.
- In order for a successful transition there is a need for greater integration of climate and energy policies with measures to support employment, and innovation and responsive vocational education and training (VET) policies that encourages the development of skills needed by a low-carbon economy.



Just Transition, Green Skills and Innovation – Case for SA

- Just transition has the potential to create more jobs, that are equitable and inclusive.
- SA's reliance on coal and other fossil fuels have created a carbon-intensive economy that potentially puts us at risks – our exports penalized, and investments restricted.
- Hence, a structured way of reducing our GHG emissions and growing new green industries is crucial to building our country's medium- and long-term economic competitiveness and jobs.
- A just transition responds stems from the following:
 - How do we empower people and communities in the transition to a low-emissions economy?
 - How do we ensure that the most impacted do not get left behind? (thinking about future and current workers, communities, women, young people, industries, etc)
 - How do we support the goals of social inclusion and decent work for all?
 - How do we continue to solve South Africa's triple challenges (inequality, poverty, and unemployment) based on the roadmap laid out in the National Development Plan?



Just Transition, Green Skills and Innovation – Case for SA

Skills Development and Education

- Developing new skills for those impacted, the poor, the youth, women, communities and job-seekers—empowering them to seize the opportunities offered by the new industries;
- Re-skilling workers whose jobs may be lost because of the transition, with a focus on creating decent work and preserving job location;
- Expanding access to skills, including with certification;
- Providing reliable and affordable internet access in affected areas, for online learning and job searching;
- Investing in the basic education system, helping young learners understand the impacts of climate change and preparing them the shifts that lie ahead;
- Investing in the higher education system, providing school leavers and graduates with the competencies they need to find a job or set up an enterprise in a climate-resilient and zero-emissions society;
- Maximising decent work and labor-intensive industries in the low-carbon economy such as renewable energy and battery manufacturing, production of electric vehicles and green hydrogen



Just Transition, Green Skills and Innovation – Case for SA

Innovation:

- Developing competitive industries to produce inputs and support services (design, engineering, and maintenance) for low-carbon and climate resilient technologies, including renewable energy inputs, battery cells, e-vehicles, green hydrogen, and net-zero cement or cement alternatives, all of which may target domestic, regional, and where viable overseas markets;
- Establishing regulatory frameworks that promote new technologies, including by changing regulations that restrict them unnecessarily (as in the case of renewable energy for electricity);
- Setting technical standards that enable and encourage new technologies;
- Ensuring the South African National System of Innovation is “climate-aware” and fosters innovations which support low-carbon and climate-resilient activities;
- Disseminating information about new technologies, including their up-front financial and technological requirements and longer-term viability;
- Managing lobbying from established producers that aim to protect older, uncompetitive production sites, and resist technological change and innovation;
- Focusing on technological advances that can generate employment and broaden ownership of productive assets, in a manner that supports a just transition;
- Balancing support for innovation between large companies/enterprises and small and medium businesses/cooperatives, in a manner that considers both the aim of greater inclusion and the realities of power, capacity, and historic responsibility.



THANK YOU!

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Thank You



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