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## SA to tackle climate change policy with 'urgency' – Deat

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South Africa's second National Climate Change summit drew to a close on Friday and set the ball rolling for collation of information, further research and comment submissions, to be gathered by May, after which a draft zero Climate Change policy would be released for comment in August.

The ultimate goal was to see a policy white paper on Climate Change by 2010, which would translate into a legislative, regulatory and fiscal package by 2012.

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Deat) said that the policy development process would proceed with "a sense of great urgency" so as to meet the challenges of policy implementation.

The initial draft paper, founded through the discussions at the summit, would also inform South Africa's participation at the international climate change negotiations under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December.

Deat DG **Joanne Yawitch** explained that agreements resulting from the Copenhagen meeting would also then contribute to the so called 'green paper'. Following this, Parliamentary engagement on the document would be sought.

She added that the department was hoping for a "much more inclusive policy", and this was evident from the array of stakeholders present and contributing at the summit.

Intensive deliberations from 893 registered delegates representing government, business, labour, and civil society contributed guidance on the strategic direction for an effective climate change policy, and an ambitious programme for policy development.

"I am encouraged by the strong resolve to meet the dual challenges of adaptation and mitigation by placing sustainable development and poverty eradication at the forefront," said Minister of Environmental affairs and Tourism **Marthinus van Schalkwyk**.

"The strong consensus on making the transition to a climate resilient and low carbon economy and society will underpin our future work. Parallel to the policy development process, we will actively continue to implement our priority actions. Early gains can be achieved by massively up-scaling our efforts in respect of energy efficiency and renewable energies," added the Minister.

The Minister noted that further engagement would take place on areas where consensus was difficult to find. "Most importantly on the optimal energy mix for the country – this is the single most important area of work," he stated.

Department of Science and Technology GM science & technology (S&T): economic impact **Imraan Patel** noted that the summit provided reinforcement of South Africa's need to play a part in building up S&T capabilities related to climate change. Not only to take advantage of the potential of 'green' industries and jobs, but to also play a role in technology development, or co-develop technology where South Africa could jointly own the intellectual property for innovations.

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