

MEDIA STATEMENT

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NATIONAL SUMMIT LAYS FOUNDATION FOR POLICY WHITE PAPER ON CLIMATE CHANGE BY 2010

"The 2009 Climate Summit was a seminal event. As a milestone on the road to building a national consensus on the country's long term climate policy, the Summit far exceeded our expectations. There could not have been a stronger expression of political will by government and other stakeholders, a deeper understanding of the compelling scientific evidence that will inform policy-making, or a greater commitment to moving forward with implementation than what we have witnessed over the past four days," said Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism today.

After intensive deliberations by 700 delegates from government, business, labour and civil society, the 2009 Climate Summit concluded with strong guidance on the strategic direction for an effective climate policy as well as an ambitious work programme for policy development.

The Summit laid the foundations for a participatory process that will culminate in a Policy White Paper on climate change by 2010, and the translation of this policy into a legislative, regulatory and fiscal package by 2012. In line with the Summit theme of "Climate Action Now!", and in order to meet the challenge of implementation, the policy development process will proceed with a sense of great urgency.

The Summit was designed to be forward-looking, translating political will and the best available scientific evidence into policy and action. The Summit was also a celebration of what we have achieved over the past four years. "Since the first climate summit in 2005, we have made major strides by integrating climate change issues with the daily work of government, business and civil society. We have much to be proud of," said van Schalkwyk.

Yet, important challenges and tough decisions lie ahead said the Minister.

"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. 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."

The Minister indicated that at the same time we will continue to grapple and engage on areas where consensus still eludes us, most importantly on the optimal energy mix for the country. This is the single most important area of work. In addition, various gaps were identified as priorities for future policy development. All stakeholders - from national, provincial and local government to business, the scientific community and civil society - have a clear understanding of these priorities and their respective contributions.

To access the outcome documents and for further information on the Climate Change Summit visit [www.ccs Summit2009.co.za](http://www.ccs Summit2009.co.za)

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