

## Summit Statistics

- Total number of Registered Delegates = 743
- Number of delegates attending the opening plenary = 698
- Total number of Summit website hits = 115,254 to date
- Number of "virtual delegates" participating through the website = 123

# SUMMIT NEWS



The daily newsletter of the National Climate Change Response Policy Development Summit, Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand, Gauteng, compiled by the Summit Organising Committee. Although attempting to provide an executive summary of proceedings, it is recommended that readers consult the actual speeches and presentations on the Summit website – [CCSummit2009.org.za](http://CCSummit2009.org.za)

## *Wednesday, 4 March 2009 – Summit Opening Edition*

### **The Summit Gets Underway**

The National Climate Change Response Policy Development Summit got underway at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Gauteng on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2009. Over 650 delegates representing all spheres of government, business, industry, organised labour, NGOs, CBOs and private and public research institutions filled the ballroom at 14:00 to attend the opening ceremony and listen to various South African leaders present their vision of a climate change policy.

### **Message from the IPCC**

Proceedings got underway with a message from the Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Dr Rajendra Pachauri. The IPCC is the pre-eminent source of climate change science – their work being recognised in 2007 through the sharing of the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore. Dr Patchauri's message, delivered via "carbon-friendly" video, was one of urgency and real concern around the slow international progress in mitigating climate change. He specifically noted that developed countries were showing little leadership. Dr Patchauri's message was clear – greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced now to avoid unimaginable harm to the planet and that it was the poorest regions of the world that will be most affected.

Dr Patchauri emphasised that with unmitigated increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions the impacts are going to far exceed the capacity of countries and communities to be able to adapt to the extent of changes that would take place. He stressed that it was absolutely vital that the global community must realize that it is essential to bring about a reduction in the emissions of GHGs. He submitted to the Conference delegates that South Africa along with India, China and some of the other developing countries have to join hands to ensure that the developed world, which has the capability both in economic and technological terms, comes to the party in a meaningful way.

### **Setting the Scene**

Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, then set the scene that provided the

international and local backdrop for the Summit. The Minister highlighted the substantial progress that had been made since the initial National Climate Change Conference held in Midrand in October 2005. Amongst the progress noted was the fact that climate change had shifted from being a peripheral issue in government to centre-stage. Strong leadership on climate change from the developing world was also highlighted as a significant milestone.

The Minister's message was one of equity and that "no nation has a plausible excuse for not doing its fair share." Turning to the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 15) in Copenhagen in December this year, the Minister noted that the post-2012 climate change regime "must balance the international adaptation and mitigation responses, it must balance climate stabilisation and sustainable development, and it must address the means for developing countries to implement effective policies and measures."

Van Schalkwyk added that the global mitigation efforts should be informed by the most ambitious IPCC scenario for climate stabilization. For developed countries this means a cut in emissions of at least 80%-95% below 1990 levels by 2050, underpinned by credible mid-term targets towards the upper end of the 25%-40% range below 1990 by 2020.

In respect of South Africa's own GHG profile, the Minister announced the development of mandatory GHG monitoring and reporting requirements.

### **The President shows the way**

President Kgalema Motlanthe formally opened the Summit by reminding the summit about the fundamental laws of nature, stating that without food there could be no life and whereas nature provides human beings with the means to support life, it does not present these means on a silver platter. Therefore the challenge posed by the president was the need for the accumulation of knowledge and the understanding of this law of nature. He emphasized that the deliberations of the summit will define the future response of our nation to the far reaching and growing global challenge of climate change.

To this end, he said that the Summit should lay a foundation for the policy development process for South Africa and also that the outcomes should resonate

globally as South Africa takes its place with other nations to engage in the complex post-2012 negotiations. He called on COP 15 to address four building blocks of the future climate change regime, including: (i) adaptation to changing climate; (ii) mitigation of greenhouse gas emission; (iii) transfer of climate friendly technology; and (iv) financing all of these measures.

He ended his address by challenging the Summit to answer Wangari Mattai's question - "what can I do for the earth?" As government's response to this question, the President reiterated that: (i) South Africa's GHG emissions must peak, plateau and then decline; (ii) South Africa will put an escalating price on carbon, be that through market mechanisms such as a carbon tax and/or other regulatory instruments; and (iii) we must diversify the energy mix.

### **Looking Forward to Copenhagen**

In another video message to the Summit, Ms Connie Hedegaard, the Chair of COP 15 and Danish Minister of Climate and Energy, reemphasised the need for equity in the global deal and noted that developed countries must commit to paying their fair share.

In this regard, she emphasised the need for strong leadership and political courage.

### **Government's vision on mitigation**

The Minister of Minerals and Energy, Buyelwa Sonjica, noted that, due to South Africa's reliance on fossil fuels, the energy sector faces a particular challenge with regard to GHG reductions. However, she also noted the opportunities, especially in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors, and noted that the climate change response policy must assist in promoting these opportunities. To this end, she noted that international funding sources, such as the Clean development Mechanism (CDM), must be "extensively tapped."

The Minister also noted that the Renewable Energy Feed-In Tariff (REFIT) currently being developed "could play an important role in stimulating the renewable energy market in South Africa."

Although the Minister reiterated the importance of ongoing efforts in respect of the active promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency, she also cautioned that "the energy sector will be required to adopt a balanced approach towards

mitigation, one that maximises on available opportunities and 'win-win' scenarios, but also recognises that certain efforts may be prohibitive."

Finally, the Minister noted that her department's Energy and Climate Change Strategy is being developed for completion by the end of September 2009 and that the strategy would ensure that her department "contributes meaningfully to mitigation efforts."

Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Transport, Dr Jabulani Mzaliya, Deputy Director-General of Transport Policy and Economic Regulation in the Department of Transport, noted the development of an overall climate change response strategy to deal with the management of emissions from all modes of transport. In this, Mzaliya mentioned that an effective transport system will need to meet our environmental obligations on GHG emissions and that this would require, among others, a modal shift in transport, e.g. from private cars to public transport and from road to rail, and the introduction of 'intelligent' transport systems.

Mzaliya also noted that cutting GHGs will require strong leadership from towns and cities.

### **Government's vision on adaptation**

The Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Lindiwe Hendricks, opened her address by noting that the dual challenge of responding to climate change is "to avoid the unmanageable through mitigation; and manage the unavoidable through adaptation." The Minister then provided numerous examples of the potential impacts of climate change that presented adaptation challenges for South Africa. In this regard, the Minister particularly singled out disaster management response, water resource management, agriculture, infrastructure and health as areas that need immediate attention.

The Minister reiterated and reinforced a recurring message from almost all speakers that the impacts of climate change will fall most heavily on the poor and that climate change responses were effectively poverty alleviation responses.

Finally, the Minister noted the need for cooperative government around climate change with DEAT facilitating this coordination and cooperation.

### **The Municipal vision**

Councillor Sophie Molokoane-Machika, the Deputy Chairperson of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), speaking on behalf of Councillor Amos Masondo, the Executive Mayor of City of Johannesburg and Chairperson of SALGA, stated that climate change has "imposed itself onto the development agenda" and admitted that "in some cases it has found us inadequately prepared to deal with it". The recent floods in Soweto exemplified this unpreparedness. Climate change science has improved considerably and it is clear that quick adaptation is required. Since these

impacts are often very localized, municipalities "become strategic units for focused action". From the SALGA perspective local government is "strategically positioned to be in the frontline in tackling climate". Partnerships are being formed and all municipalities are being encouraged by SALGA to develop local climate change response plans, with targets and time-frames. SALGA has identified that the smaller municipalities require support so they too can respond to climate change. Climate change will be a focal point at the forthcoming SALGA National Members' Assembly scheduled for May 2009.

### **Industry's vision**

The CEO of Business Unity South Africa (BUSA), Mr Jerry Vilakazi, pointed out that "the energy intensity of our economy in itself presents a significant challenge..." However, business and industry is already committed to: (i) participating in the debate around instruments which promote cost effective carbon reduction; (ii) providing GHG emission information to the National Inventory; (iii) exploring every means of improving energy efficiency; and (iv) incorporating mitigation into the Industrial Policy Action Plan.

Vilakazi noted that there should be greater recognition of the private sector to ensure a successful post-2012 mechanism and that "climate change response should be coordinated across the whole of government" and welcomed government's increasing references to policy coherence. Vilakazi also noted that energy planning must be part of any climate change response. With reference to economic instruments, Vilakazi noted the importance of maintaining and improving the CDM and recognised "the potential usefulness of economic instruments that may include taxes." Although he also noted that "using taxes purely as a revenue raising mechanism should be avoided".

With respect to boosting the renewable energy sector, Vilakazi noted that this "will require a high level commitment to a particular target and aggressive investment in the necessary research and development..."

### **Labour's vision**

Bheki Ntshalintshali, the Deputy General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), iterated that climate action is a government-wide responsibility and requires "a strong and innovative multilateral solution". He highlighted the plight of the poor, "the worse-off and most vulnerable", who are most greatly affected by the current global crises and are "the main victims of climate change". Cosatu sees the "struggle to adapt to climate change" as part and parcel of "the fight against poverty and in favour of a more just and egalitarian society". Cosatu envisages a transition to a low carbon economy and the creation of green jobs, provided that "the poorest [do] not carry the heaviest burden." "Green jobs can

make a major contribution to clean economic growth, development and poverty reduction", Ntshalintshali asserted. It is also an opportunity to build "a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable society". The impact of climate change on poverty requires "quality public services and strong public sector leadership at all levels of government".

### **Civil society's vision**

In her presentation, Ms Dora Lebelo, CEO of the Greenhouse Project representing the South African Climate Action Network (SACAN), presented the following vision "We must ensure that vulnerable people and fragile ecosystems are protected from the impacts of climate change and not burdened with the costs of climate change or response measures. ...we call on the government... to bring about the following, adhering to the overarching principles of empowering the poor and reducing inequality" – (i) Low-carbon development as a defining feature of sustainable economic growth; (ii) emissions to peak / stabilise in 2015 at no more than 100Mt above 2000 levels, followed by a steep decline after no more than a decade; (iii) Policy must be informed by full-cost accounting; (iv) Big emitters and emissions-intensive industry must table plans to stop emissions growth, with public reporting of progress and independent verification; (v) Adopt medium term renewable energy targets, including 15% electricity from renewable resources by 2020 and 25 million m<sup>2</sup> solar water heating by 2020; Financing of solar water heating as a 'virtual power plant' of about 5000 MW capacity; Start programmes to assist vulnerable communities to develop indigenous and local models of adaptation; Establish a national adaptation fund; More efficient water use and demand management with careful reassessment of water financing, allocation and tariffs; Conservation and restoration of ecosystems; Rural communities supported to understand the impacts of climate change; Pro-poor, gender and youth specific programmes and strategies as part of response; Accelerate transport modal shift - affordable public transport and road-to-rail; Urgently pursue electrification of mobility (transition away from liquid hydrocarbons); Transform the economy – shift from emissions-intensive to climate-friendly sectors, which are also more employment-intensive and avoid resource depletion; Terminate all forms of subsidy to nuclear industries.

### **Evening highlight**

Summit Gala Dinner guests were entertained by youth insights provided by Anade Situma, Headgirl of Clarendon High School for Girls and the runner-up winner of the South African Agency for the Advancement of Science and Technology schools debate on climate change. She made sure that the audience understood that dealing with climate change meant not overlooking the simple solutions and involving the youth.