National Climate Change Response Green Paper 2011

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Introduction

- The SDCEA is troubled that the most important trend to affect our lives over the coming decades climate change is being ignored by our own people, our municipal representatives, and by companies doing business in our neighbourhoods.
- SDCEA views climate change with the utmost concern and last year we issued a pamphlet to help residents understand the implications for our weather, our vulnerabilities to natural disaster and the ways we should begin adapting.
- But we also think that the mitigation of the problem is a responsibility of our organisation. After all, our neighbourhoods are full of climate tsotsis, especially in the petro-chemical, transport and pulp/paper industries.
The impact of climate change will especially be felt in several of our community’s vulnerable area’s:

- Low lying sites
- Many wetland area’s of south Durban
- The ability of the beachfront to withstand the bruising waves and torrential storms
- Our landscape has been covered with asphalt and cement
- Fishing – sea water temperature

- Small-scale agriculture sector
- Street and market traders
- Jobs in the air transport, shipping / trucking and auto sectors will be radically changed by the imposition of carbon taxes
- The proposed Transnet pipeline
Recent History of Climate Change

- Droughts have become more related to El Nino and have become stronger.
- During La Nina events rainfall has been increasing and are the cause of the recent floods globally.
- Africa is more vulnerable because it is faced with multiple stresses such as poverty, overpopulation and overgrazing.

Isipingo Flooding
Source: SDCEA Archives (2008.03.12)
March 2007

Durban's Lower Marine Parade
19 March 2007
Photo: Jeff Wicks

Meteosat-8
19 March 06h00 UTC
Courtesy EUMETSAT
November 2008
In South Africa on 4 January 2011, Ladysmith was hit by floods, approximately 50 houses were flooded and the central business district brought to a standstill.

- Heavy down pours cut off roads, uprooted trees, damaged bridges, marooned farms.
- 3 people lost their lives.
- In Northern KwaZulu-Natal, a bridge was severely damaged.
- 2 children drowned in the flooding of the Gola river in Folweni.
- Bergville in KZN was without water after its pump systems broke down due to flooding.
- Tshwane in Gauteng was also hard hit by heavy rains.
- Several informal settlements in Mamelodi were affected.
- 8469 shacks had been flooded.
The GP Principles:

- The precautionary principle
- The polluters pay principle
- A people centred approach for greater equity
- Economic sustainability
- Informed participation by all and particularly by vulnerable and disadvantaged person’s
- Intergenerational rights
Policy actions

- The emissions inventory is for the year 2000 and consequently misses a decade of high growth in ghg emissions.
- Even so the figures given in GP (446mt/y) and NC2 are not spontaneous combustion on coal mines are not accounted for.
- Policy actions are defined in sectorial terms, distinguishing between adaption sectors’ (water, agriculture and health) and mitigation sectors’ (energy, industry, transport).
- Additional sectors are disaster risk management and natural resource sectors which, bizarrely, includes commercial forestry.
Failures in Cancun (COP 16)

- The haphazard Copenhagen Accord that was not adopted in Copenhagen was adopted in Cancun.
- Climate issues are second on the agenda to economic development and politics which is the basis on which decisions are made.
- World leaders want to use capitalist methods to manage climate change.
- A Green Climate Fund was developed by the World Bank and thereafter protests followed to remove the World Bank from climate financing due to their investments in many non-green activities including, mining; privatisation of energy (ESKOM); and funding in the fossil fuel sector.
Failures in Cancun (COP 16) cont...

- The **funds pledged from the North** to aid the South are of **concern** as it comes in the **form of loans, not grants**.
- The agreements encouraged carbon markets and offsets, **all but an actual commitment to diligently reduce carbon emissions**.
- It is falling squarely on the shoulders of civil society to ensure a legally binding emissions reduction agreement at this year’s COP17.
Expansion of the fuel Industry

- The Port Elizabeth Coega smelter provided coal fired electricity to the industrial sector from receiving huge subsidy increases.
- The project failed in 2008 when the supply of electricity became subject to load-shedding.
- Draft green paper on climate change raises issues of concern over the nuclear energy path that the South African government wishes to pursue as well as engaging in the carbon trading market leading to greater CO2 emissions.
- Although the fossil fuel industry is expanding the price of electricity and petrol continues to soar.
History of Fires and Explosions in the South Durban Basin

- Left: 25 October 2008, flaring incident, one of many at SAPREF and Engen
- Above Right: 21 September 2007, Island View Storage (IVS) facility, tank explosion
- Below Right: 18 September 2007, during the explosion at the IVS facility.
Polluting Industry – 500 000 people
18 January 2005, Benzene tank exploded at the Engen Refinery
Other Environmental Impacts in the South Durban Basin

1. Pictures 1 & 2: 1 February 2010: High levels of waste material contributing to water pollution at the Durban Harbour
2. Pictures 3 & 4: 24 June 2008: SAPREF pipeline leak
Gas & Oil Exploration

Fracking in the Karoo
- Shell refinery wants to explore for shale gas in the Karoo.
- It will cover 90,000 km² and go to a depth of 5 km.
- Farmers will have to vacate their land.
- It may result in groundwater contamination.
- It is a method that has come under scrutiny in the US due to its environmental and health impacts.
- Right: Shale rock in the Karoo

South Africa’s Coastline
- In September last year BHP Billiton was granted rights to explore the west coast of South Africa.
- Given the recent BP disaster in the Mexican Gulf it is a wonder how the S.A govt. can approve the rights.

Source: www.savingwater.co.za/2010/09/05/14/fracking-may-ignite-Karoo-water-conflict/
Retrieved: 03.02.2011
Impacts to Society

- Health:
  - Asthma, lung cancer, nasal infections and other respiratory diseases
  - Leukaemia
  - Skin irritations
- Poor air quality
- Re-zoning of land
- Unemployment and poverty

What are the Solutions?

- Corporate Accountability and transparency
- Binding Social responsibility programs and legislation.
- Compensation to those who are subject to the negative externalities from the corporate
- Urgent action needs to be taken against corporate there must be no development on flat, sea land and development must be sustainable.
- Paradigm shift- we need a new economic model that includes the poor
This Green Paper lacks the initiative to act on holding Corporate Polluters and government Accountable.

- Legislation must be introduced to hold the Corporate accountable for their actions.
- Government departments must be held accountable for their failure to carry out the constitutional mandate.
- Urgent plans must be developed to reduce the causes and contributions to climate change.
Conclusion

In summary, we observe that the LTMS shows that an adequate response to climate change cannot be made within the confines of current planning models. The assumption that informs these models is that economic growth constitutes the central organising principle of development. This is not because growth is needed to alleviate poverty but because it is needed to reproduce capital. This is what determines the bounds of realism in planning and it is this realism that has produced the crisis of climate change, the crisis of peak oil and the political and economic crisis gripping global capital.

Thus, the LTMS energy modelling assumed ever increasing demand but could not reconcile this with even the inadequate carbon reductions of its ‘required by science’ scenario. The GP, like the LTMS, is founded on an absolute commitment to growth. To address climate change and meet the needs of people, there must be a radical redefinition of what is meant by development and who defines it.
First, the central organising principle should be sustainable development founded on economic, social and environmental justice.

Second, localisation is essential to any serious programme of mitigation and requires that national resources should be focused on supporting people’s capacities to direct local development.

Third, if we are to address climate change another energy future is necessary. We call for people’s energy sovereignty founded on democratic and local control.

Fourth, the transition to a different energy and development order will require energy inputs from the declining fossil fuel system. If these investments go into the declining system, they will represent a permanent loss. What remains of the carbon budget should therefore be used to build the new system.
Continuation...

- Fifth, food is the most basic form of energy for people and the food system must be thoroughly transformed to enable people to define and take control of production and consumption and hence of their own futures.

- Finally, we believe that a ‘people centred approach’ means an open-ended process of transition to a society in which people are actively and consciously making the decisions that shape their collective future.
“When we breathe the air of freedom we do not wish to choke on hidden fumes”

Judge Albie Sachs