

EARTH HOUR:

Saturday, 25 March 2017

8:30pm – 9:30pm



#EarthHourZA

In order to track local interest in South Africa, we ask you to please make use of this hashtag.

KEY MESSAGE

Use Your Power.

Say YES to Renewable Energy.

Sign the petition @ wwf.org.za/earthhour

We are driving focus towards this one action – to gain mass traction around the petition to Eskom – in order to STOP Eskom putting the brakes on renewables.

Please use the key message in all your Earth Hour communications and activities.

WHY SHOULD WE SAY YES TO RENEWABLE ENERGY?

- The bulk of South Africa's carbon emissions come from fossil fuel generated electricity (coal, oil etc), and like most countries in the world, South Africa needs to address this by bringing more renewable energy (solar, wind etc) into the country's electricity mix.
- Not only does renewable energy reduce carbon emissions, but it is scalable and rapidly deployable which means that it can be built quickly to match the country's need for energy. Far quicker than large coal and nuclear new builds.
- Some renewables already supply cheaper electricity than the newest coal power plants. The cost gap will only increase in the future, with renewables getting cheaper and coal likely to get more expensive.
- The Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme is South Africa's plan to bring more renewable energy to the energy grid. It has been hailed globally and locally as one of the most advanced and successful programmes. It has and continues to generate many benefits such as:
 - attracting foreign direct investment,
 - creating much-needed decent jobs,
 - increasing skills which can be used locally and internationally,
 - reducing carbon emissions, and
 - giving South Africa the opportunity to become a global player in this growing industry.

WHY IS THIS PETITION IMPORTANT NOW?

- Runaway climate change (drought, floods etc) will impact all South Africans severely – especially the poorest of the poor.
- In order to avoid the extreme impacts of runaway climate change, we need to reduce our carbon emissions urgently. To do this, every country needs to honour their climate action commitments to the Paris Agreement immediately.
- The bulk of South Africa's emissions come from coal-based electricity, therefore, moving to a renewable energy dominant electricity mix is essential to cut our carbon emissions.
- Eskom is preventing South Africa from realising the multiple benefits of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme by not signing the remaining, agreed contracts. Refusing to sign puts the entire energy programme at risk.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- For the everyday electricity user, rising prices are a depressing reality. The majority of households cannot afford enough electricity to experience a decent basic standard of living.
- Over three million households don't even have access to modern electricity services.
- Communities living around coal mines and near to power stations suffer bad health effects.
- All this adds up to a huge threat to the country's developmental goals, and gains, as set out in the National Development Plan for poverty and inequality to be eliminated by 2030.
- If we do not decrease our emissions, runaway climate change will impact the poor the most, and stop the government from meeting our developmental goals.

WHAT IS EARTH HOUR?

- Celebrated on the last Saturday in March – for one hour from 8:30pm to 9:30pm local time – people are encouraged to switch off their lights as a symbolic gesture of unity to reflect on our impact on the planet.
- Earth Hour is a global citizen movement of positive change for the environment.
- Started by WWF Australia, in 2007, it is now celebrated in 178 countries around the world – including South Africa.
- The Earth Hour movement has over time developed into more than just switching off lights for one hour. It's about collective action towards combatting climate change. It's about going beyond the hour through daily decisions aimed at conserving our natural resources and about being informed and spreading awareness about opportunities for collective action.