

# SUSTAINABLE ENERGY NEWS on EMAIL (SENSE) number 21

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Welcome! SENSE is a service of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Partnership (SECCP), a project of Earthlife Africa Johannesburg in partnership with WWF, Denmark.

SENSE is a monthly publication, edited by Elin Lorimer. We welcome any feedback and submissions. Also let us know if you wish to be removed from this list, know someone else who should be receiving SENSE, or if you'd like to receive our separate Climate Change email newsletter, CCEN.

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## CONTENTS

1. **SECCP News:** Meetings in February shifted; SECCP appoint new staff.
2. **SA's Sustainable Energy Progress:** Manuel to introduce pollution taxes; Energy audits at Parliament
3. **Unsustainable Energy:** Nuclear Energy Summit in February; Koeberg hides medical evidence.
4. **General Sustainable Energy News:** WWF warn new EU Members won't attract RE investment; China set to roll out solar energy; London Mayor backs solar energy.
5. **SA Energy Bills:** Electricity Distribution Industry Restructuring Draft Bill; Energy Regulator Bill; National Vehicle Emissions Strategy published; National Radioactive Waste Management Strategy deadline extended; Environmental Management Co-operation Agreements.
6. **Upcoming Events:** A preview of energy events February – April 2004.

## 1. SECCP News

### Meetings in February shifted

*By Elin Lorimer*

As reported in last month's SENSE, the SECCP is currently involved in organising a series of meetings in February, including the second Energy Caucus meeting, the Renewables 2003 preparatory workshop and the second meeting of the Southern African Regional Climate Action Network (SARCAN). The meetings will now take place from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> February, at the Alpha Conference Centre, just north of Johannesburg.

So far the meetings look to be a huge success, with over 60 participants attending the Bonn Renewables preparatory meeting alone. Participants range from NGOs to community based organisations and labour representatives, and will come from all over Africa for this meeting.

### SECCP appoint new Staff

*By Elin Lorimer*

The SECCP is happy to announce that they are back up to full strength again, as the post vacated by Mamashoabathe Noko has been filled. Claire Taylor has been appointed the new Information Coordinator, while Elin Lorimer will provide the secretariat to the South African Climate Action Network. Claire is a welcome addition to

our staff, and we look forward to having her on board. She has started working part-time from February, and will take over as editor for SENSE from next month.

**Top**

## **2. SA's sustainable energy progress**

### **SEA conduct research on Energy, Gender and Poverty**

*Source: E-SEED*

Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA) is planning to conduct research on the link between energy, gender and poverty in South Africa. The research, which is to take place in the Cape Town suburb of Khayelitsha, will take a new approach and look at the link between gender issues and electrical appliances through quantitative research.

SEA have noted that preliminary findings from their pilot study show surprising results, and indicate that thinking around gender, energy and poverty may require a major paradigm shift. Contrary to commonly held views, women seem to be more empowered in domestic matters and don't consider cooking a burden. Energy consumption in poor households with access to electricity also indicates a high dependence on electricity for all services besides space heating, again contrary to the common view. SEA noted that this might imply that energy policy is based on an outdated understanding of such matters, and might therefore prove ineffective.

Following a workshop on the preliminary findings earlier this year, SEA have decided to conduct further research on this issue. The research will include a literature review of projects in South Africa, interviews with researchers in the field on current thinking on these topics and the use of a questionnaire.

For more information contact Mark Borchers at Sustainable Energy Africa

Tel: (021) 702-3622 E-mail: [mark@edq.co.za](mailto:mark@edq.co.za) or Wendy Annecke

Tel: (021) 788-4728 E-mail: [wannecke@hrsc.ac.za](mailto:wannecke@hrsc.ac.za)

### **Manuel to introduce pollution taxes**

*Source: Business Day*

Finance Minister Trevor Manuel's 2004 Budget is to moot new environmental tax reforms aimed at promoting a switch to cleaner technologies. This will essentially amount to "tweaking" the existing tax structures in sectors such as petroleum and energy, which are damaging to the environment. Manuel initiated these changes in order to reduce air and waste pollution levels in South Africa and raise the country's profile in terms of environmental tax reform.

Director-general of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Crispian Olver, assured tax payers that they will not have to pay more for these changes. Taxes will not automatically be raised – in some cases they will be lowered, creating tax incentives in the right places to ensure environmental benefit. South Africans had their first taste of such reforms when the plastic bag levy was introduced last October.

### **Energy Audits at Parliament**

*Source: Contact Trust*

As part of the national Energy Efficiency Programme, energy audits have been conducted by the Department of Minerals and Energy at the Parliamentary buildings. Similar audits are also scheduled to be conducted soon at the Union Buildings and other government buildings, with a view to retrofitting the buildings.

For more information contact Dr Crompton at (012) 317 9390 or email:  
[bescrom@mepta.pwv.gov.za](mailto:bescrom@mepta.pwv.gov.za)

[Top](#)

### 3. Unsustainable Energy

#### **Nuclear Energy Summit in February**

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Environmental Affairs and Tourism is to host a summit on nuclear energy titled: "The future of Nuclear Energy in South Africa". The summit, which will be the first real opportunity for stakeholders to meet and discuss the impact of Nuclear Energy with parliamentarians, is to be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of this month. The summit will bring together representatives from NGOs, community organisations, labour, industry and government.

Civil society organisations such as Earthlife Africa have welcomed the summit as an overdue opportunity to debate the supposed merits of the nuclear industry. This is especially important as Environmental Affairs Minister Valli Moosa is currently considering appeals against the positive records of decision made on environmental impact assessments of the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor programme. The summit has designed to be a participative discussion, but will also include several local and international experts who will give introductory comments on a range of issues.

Civil society organisations have organised to hold preparatory workshops prior to the summit. Contact Trust and the Environmental Justice Networking Forum hosted 3 workshops in Springbok, Gauteng, and Cape Town.

For further information on the summit, e-mail the committee clerk, Sabelo Mzanywa: [smzanywa@parliament.gov.za](mailto:smzanywa@parliament.gov.za) or call 021 403 3848. The programme available on Earthlife Cape Town website: <http://www.earthlife-ct.org.za>

#### **Koeberg hides medical evidence**

*Source: Noseweek*

It appears Eskom's Koeberg Nuclear Power facility in Cape Town is responsible for withholding vital health information from one of their former employees. Ron Lockwood, a former "radiation worker" of Koeberg, now suffers lymphatic leukaemia, which should have been identified during his regular health checks while he still worked for Eskom. In fact, the pathologists' reports from that time do reveal abnormalities in his blood which he was never informed of, pointing to a cover-up by the company.

Lockwood worked for Eskom at Koeberg for 15 years until 1996, when he was persuaded to take an early retirement package while ostensibly still in excellent health. Two years after this retirement, however, a blood test revealed abnormalities in his blood cells which led to the identification of the lymphatic leukaemia. The disease was in such an advanced stage that it pointed to the fact that it must have been present for some years already. After obtaining the pathologists' reports from his time at Koeberg, Lockwood discovered that the first signs of the illness were in fact recognised as early as 1986. Although this was noted on his files, this information was consistently not passed on to him, despite increasing signs of abnormalities.

Following a complaint in this regard, Eskom promised to investigate the medical set-up at Koeberg. However, the results of the subsequent report have not been made public and were withheld from Lockwood himself.

[Top](#)

## 4. General Sustainable Energy News

### **WWF warn new EU Members won't attract RE investment**

*Source: WWF Press Release*

The WWF announced last month that new EU member states could lose billions of Euros in investments if they don't create a more favourable environment for renewable energy investment. This follows the release of a report by the WWF and partner NGOs which ranks the performance of 8 central European countries in implementing the European Union (EU) Directive on Renewable Energy. If new member states are to meet the goal of increasing the share of renewable energy to 11% by 2010 (from 5.4% in 1999), they will need to both reform their legislation and speed up incentives for renewable energy projects.

There is considerable potential for renewable energy in the new member states from wood, agricultural residues and wind energy. It is estimated that just under 20 000 MW renewable energy could be produced, with an associated 40 000 to 60 000 permanent jobs. However, the WWF believe that current policy under development will not give investors clear signals of government guarantees on renewable energy projects, and will therefore not attract foreign or local private investment worth billions of Euros.

The EU Directive is supposed to be implemented by May 2004, fitting in with the EU international obligation under the Kyoto Protocol of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 8% by 2010. The current major stumbling blocks for governments are in transposing the EU legislation into national law to create a clear and predictable environment, sorting out complex administrative procedures and guaranteeing a sufficiently high price for renewable electricity supplied to the grid.

For more information contact: Giulio Volpi, Climate Policy Officer, Tel + 32 4 97 506 805

To view the report see: [www.panda.org/epo](http://www.panda.org/epo)

### **China set to roll out solar energy**

The State Development and Reform Commission in China has announced that the country is ready to invest 10 billion Yuan in solar energy over next 5 years. This follows the development of a solar energy exploitation plan by the Commission and the Ministry of Science and Technology, which aims to promote the development of the photovoltaic industry and technology.

The World Bank has also indicated that it is ready to offer China a US\$25 million subsidy to install 10MW of photovoltaic capacity in rural areas, which could allow up to 10 million impoverished people in China access to electricity. China currently has around 1 million kW installed solar energy capacity - by 2005 this is expected to reach above 300MW.

### **London Mayor backs solar energy**

London Mayor Ken Livingstone has given solar energy a boost with the launch of the London Energy Partnership and in the new London Plan. Livingstone, who has installed solar panels at his own home in North West London, has strongly advocated the installation of further solar capacity in the Greater London area. He said "It would be ridiculous if the vast majority (of homes) did not have solar panels."

The London Plan, which is the development strategy for London for the next 20 years, is to be approved by Government in February. This will require all new strategic developments to include a proportion of renewable energy sources, with the aim of reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions. Although it is still unclear how high this proportion will be, it will definitely total less than half of the energy requirements of a development. It is also estimated that around half of the new homes in Greater London will need to include solar panels. The London target has been set for a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide by 2010 compared to 1990 levels. The final Plan is to be published in March, and the Mayor's full Energy Strategy will be published later this year.

Livingstone has emphasised the need to build a strong sustainable energy sector, and said he would like to see a solar panel on every roof. He said that if more people install solar panels, it will create a stronger market, and once a critical mass is reached this will in turn bring down the price of panels. Samantha Heath, Chair of the Assembly Environment Committee, said that saving energy will lead to notable economic gains and has the added benefit of being good for the environment.

This bold move has disturbed some stakeholders, who worry that this will mean that fewer homes will be built due to the high cost of solar panels. It is also unclear how this policy will be enforced, but it is clear that there will not be sudden shift. In the meantime, however, some London Boroughs are already one step ahead of the Mayor. Merton Council is the first Local Authority in the country to adopt a pro-renewables planning policy, and will now expect all new non-residential buildings larger than 1000 m sq to source at least 10% of predicted energy requirements from onsite renewables such as solar PV and solar thermal. Others expected to follow suit include GLA, Croydon, Ealing, Waltham Forest, Bromley, Barking and Dagenham, North Devon, Sefton, Oldham and Westminster.

For more information see:

<http://www.edie.net>

<http://www.solarcentury.co.uk>

<http://society.guardian.co.uk>

[Top](#)

## 5. SA Energy Bills

### **Electricity Distribution Industry Restructuring Draft Bill**

*Source: Contact Trust*

The current version of the Electricity Distribution Industry (EDI) Restructuring Bill is being reviewed to ensure that constitutional issues are adequately dealt with. The Department of Minerals and Energy is hoping to have completed this process and have the Bill ready to submit to Cabinet in March. Once the Bill is passed, the transformation of the currently fragmented EDI into Regional Electricity Distributors (REDs) can begin.

For more information contact: Matthews Bantsijang at (012) 317 9524

### **Energy Regulator Bill**

*Source: Contact Trust*

The Energy Regulator Bill, which is to consolidate the national regulators for electricity, gas and petroleum pipelines, is currently being examined by the State Law Advisor. The Department of Minerals and Energy is in the mean time continuing with the administrative requirements such as the development of a business plan and budget.

For more information contact Dr Crompton at (012) 317 9390 or email:  
[bescrom@mepta.pwv.gov.za](mailto:bescrom@mepta.pwv.gov.za)

### **National Vehicle Emissions Strategy published**

*Source: Contact Trust*

The Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) and Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) jointly released a draft implementation strategy with new guidelines for regulating vehicle emissions at the end of 2003. The document has been published in the Government Gazette and is currently available for public comment. The strategy will give effect to the provisions in the new air quality management legislation, and aims to implement clearly defined standards for vehicle exhaust emissions and appropriate fuel specifications.

The strategy will mandate tailpipe standards for petrol and diesel vehicles, initiating the phase-in of European level standards. As the air quality and health impacts of fuel specifications have not yet been adequately dealt with in South African legislation, fuel qualities have also fallen behind – the aim is to bring these back in line with international standards. One of the challenges of this strategy is to balance various priorities such as the affordability of vehicles, the economics of fuel production, the cost of fuel and air quality standards.

The strategy mainly comprises of an implementation timetable for bringing vehicle exhaust emission limits up to European standards. These standards will first be implemented in 2005 for newly homologated vehicles, and will be put into full effect in 2006 for all new vehicles. Fuel specifications are set to change in 2006 with a total ban on leaded petrol. This is in line with the Vehicle Emissions Policy currently being developed by the DEAT, which will outline the specifications for all vehicles to comply with the requirements for unleaded petrol. The long-term solution to this challenge lies in the reconfiguration of refinery processes to produce quality fuels without heavy metal additives. Consequently the National Treasury is currently investigating financial incentives for cleaner fuel investments.

The document is currently available on the DEAT website. For more information contact Tsietsi Mahema:  
(012) 310 3404 or email: [tmahema@ozone.pwv.gov.za](mailto:tmahema@ozone.pwv.gov.za)

### **National Radioactive Waste Management Strategy deadline extended**

*Source: Contact Trust*

The deadline for comments on the National Radioactive Waste Management Policy has been extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> April 2003. This strategy complements the National Radioactive Waste Policy currently under development by the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME). The strategy is to be based on the DME's investigation into the current state of radioactive waste management.

For more information or to send in comments on the strategy, contact Dr Schalk De Waal, Director of Nuclear Safety at DME: Tel: 012 317 9283 or E-mail:  
[sdw@mepta.pwv.gov.za](mailto:sdw@mepta.pwv.gov.za)

### **Environmental Management Co-operation Agreements**

*Source: Contact Trust*

The government is currently revising the document on Environmental Management Co-operation Agreements (EMCA's), which are agreements between industry and

communities under Section 35 of the National Environmental Management Act. These agreements are voluntary in nature, and are intended to encourage organisations and communities to set and achieve their own goals for the environment through letting organisation choose the methods for achieving the regulated objectives. A national workshop is also being planned for early February, and the document will be gazetted during 2004.

For more information contact Anden Pillay at 012 - 310 3951 or email:

[Apillay@ozone.pwv.gov.za](mailto:Apillay@ozone.pwv.gov.za)

[Top](#)

## 6. Events

- February 16 – 17**      The future of Nuclear Energy in South Africa  
Cape Town  
Contact: Parliamentary Portfolio committee clerk,  
Sabelo Mzanywa  
Tel:021 403 3848  
E-mail: [smzanywa@parliament.gov.za](mailto:smzanywa@parliament.gov.za)
- Feb 23 -24**              Energy Caucus Meeting  
Alpha Centre, Johannesburg  
Contact: Elin Lorimer  
Tel: (011) 339 3662  
Fax: (011) 339 3270  
E-mail: [elin@earthlife.org.za](mailto:elin@earthlife.org.za)
- Feb 24- 26**              Renewables2004: Southern African Civil Society Preparatory  
Process Workshop  
Alphas Centre, Johannesburg  
Contact: Makume Tlaleane at the HBS  
Tel: ++27-11-447 8500  
Email: [makume@boell.org.za](mailto:makume@boell.org.za)
- Feb 26 – 27**              SARCAN workshop and SA-CAN meeting  
Alpha Centre, Johannesburg  
Contact: Richard Worthington  
Tel: (011) 339 3662  
Fax: (011) 339 3270  
E-mail: [richardw@earthlife.org.za](mailto:richardw@earthlife.org.za)
- Feb 23 - 25**              Enviro-Legal Compliance for Sustainability  
Park Hyatt Hotel, Rosebank, Johannesburg  
Contact: IQPC  
Tel:(011) 707 9200  
Fax: (011) 707 9219  
E-mail: [registration@iqpc.co.za](mailto:registration@iqpc.co.za)
- March 1 – 2**              Coaltrans South Africa  
Arabella Sheraton Grand Hotel, Cape Town  
Registration Fee: US\$1045  
Contact: Coaltrans Conferences Ltd  
Tel: +44 20 77798945  
Fax: +44 20 7779 8946  
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Website: [www.coaltrans.com](http://www.coaltrans.com)

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Tel: (011) 463 6001  
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Website: [www.powergenerationworld.com](http://www.powergenerationworld.com)

A full calendar of energy events for 2003, local and international, is available on request from: [seccp@earthlife.org.za](mailto:seccp@earthlife.org.za)

**Top**