

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE DOCUMENTARY

“Voices from under a dark cloud: Towards a Just Transition in the coalfields of South Africa”

Wed, 20th April 2022

10h00 - 13h30

Sydney Choma Community Hall, Walter Sisulu Street, Middelburg Mpumalanga

Distilling the Just Energy Transition in South Africa:

Harmonising conflict and seeking opportunities

Background

South Africa has initiated the transition to a more sustainable development pathway that involves moving towards a low-carbon economy. At the same time, South Africa still faces a number of developmental challenges related to poverty, unemployment and inequality, and the climate crisis further threatens vulnerable communities and people. The need for a just transition to a low-carbon economy has emerged as an imperative to ensure the poor and vulnerable are not negatively impacted by the transition and are ideally better off through it.

In Mpumalanga, these challenges are exacerbated by the high reliance on coal-based economic activities, service delivery challenges, and environmental impacts from land, air and water pollution. These challenges have resulted in poor health, death and destruction to people, the communities and the environment. Encouragingly, in the transition process, many solutions are beginning to emerge that can help regions like Mpumalanga pivot towards more sustainable industries.

Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS), the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI), groundWork and Peta Wolpe are engaged as a consortium in a project which aims to facilitate and co-develop a coherent just transition plan for affected communities in Emalahleni and Steve Tshwete in Mpumalanga. In 2021, the consortium produced a documentary to highlight and capture some of the issues, opportunities and challenges that these communities in Mpumalanga face as coal is phased out and we enter a new era.

You are cordially invited to join the in-person launch of the documentary. It will be followed by a public conversation, led by Mavuso Msimang.

Please RSVP to Rozale@tips.org.za to confirm your attendance

Agenda

10h00	Arrival and refreshments
10h30	Welcome and introduction, Gaylor Montmasson-Clair, TIPS Remarks by Joelle Chesselet, Documentary Director
10h45	Documentary screening
11h15	Public conversation, facilitated by Peta Wolpe <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mavuso Msimang, public figure and political veteran- Masilela Petros Mhlonishwa, Executive Mayor, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality- Ronesa Mtshweni, Womanxndla Community Development- Promise Mabilo, Vukani Environmental Justice Movement in Action- Sam Lukhukeni, NUMSA (TBC)
12h00	Questions and open discussion, facilitated by Hameda Deedat, NALEDI
12h30	Closure and vote of thanks, Bobby Peek, groundWork
12h45	Lunch

About the Speakers:

Mavuso Msimang is a public figure and political veteran. He was very active in the struggle against Apartheid including working on Umkhonto we Sizwe, and later served as personal assistant to the African National Congress (ANC) President Oliver Tambo. He has worked for various international development organisations, including UNICEF and the World Food Programme. He also held several senior positions in public sector organisations, including South African Tourism and the South African National Parks. He was the Chairman of Corruption Watch and has served on various civic society, environmental management and private sector boards.

Masilela Petros Mhlonishwa is the Executive Mayor of the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. He started his political career as a young community activist and rose through the ranks of the African National Congress (ANC), obtaining leadership roles in various structures. His political career started in 2005, when he joined the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL). Prior to the mayoral position, he was a councillor in Ward 21, and was the Rules and Ethics Section Chairperson, serving as a Finance Portfolio Committee Member.

Promise Mabilo is the co-ordinator of Vukani Environmental Justice Movement in Action (VEM), a community-based organisation in eMalahleni, Mpumalanga. The organisation was established in 2016 with the vision of promoting awareness of and advocating for environmental justice within the Mpumalanga Highveld and the country.

Ronesa Mtshweni is a human rights activist and a feminist. She comes from Carolina, a mining affected community, and works for the Womanxndla Community Development. Prior to this, she was a senior mining planner at Exxaro.

Joëlle Chesselet has directed, co-directed & produced award-winning documentaries over the past three decades, notably “Pluck – a film not just about the chicken”, “Ochre and Water - Himba chronicles from the Land of Kaoko” and “This crazy thing called grace: Desmond Tutu and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission”. In collaboration with Lloyd Ross, she directed music videos for the SHIFTY record label as well as working on music documentaries including the award winning “The Silver Fez”.

About the Facilitators:

Gaylor Montmasson-Clair is a Senior Economist at Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS), where he leads work on Sustainable Growth. He has carried extensive research on the transition to an inclusive green economy from a developing country perspective, with a focus on policy frameworks, industrial development, just transition and resource security.

Hameda Deedat is the Executive Director of the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI). She is an expert on key issues that impact labour and the working class in South Africa and internationally, including climate change and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Bobby Peek is the Director of groundWork and a Commissioner on South Africa’s Presidential Climate Commission (PCC). He has worked on environmental justice issues since 1995. In 1998, he received the Goldman Prize for Africa for uniting the Durban communities against polluting industry in south Durban, South Africa, through the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance.

Peta Wolpe is an Energy and Climate Change Practitioner. She has extensive experience of working in urban energy and climate change, focusing on energy poverty and local level governance and policy. She was the Managing Director of Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA) for over 12 years. She is also an Associate Director of SouthSouthNorth.

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