



# African Climate Reality Project

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 27 March 2017

## **Moving Johannesburg to 100% renewable energy: creating jobs and improving the living conditions and health of residents**

Residents of Johannesburg are urged to get behind the call to switch Joburg to 100% renewable energy. This will very quickly start to make the city more sustainable as it creates jobs.

Just the greater use of solar power can create 12 times the number of jobs when compared to coal per Megawatt (MW) of power. Renewable energy also saves water and other essential resources and improves the city's health and appearance which appeals to residents and visitors alike.

The initiative is a collaboration between the African Climate Reality Project (ACRP) and Climate Action Network International (CAN) and kicks off on 27 March 2017. ACRP recognises that addressing climate change is a journey that residents, organisations from public and private sectors and government need to travel on together. Working with these role-players strengthens awareness and ensures a positive and impactful result.

The latest endeavour advances Joburg Mayor, Herman Mashaba's, goal: "We are going to bring change that will bring jobs. Let's get this city working again."

ACRP emphasises that the City of Joburg has a duty to look after the public good. This necessitates a divestment from fossil fuels and an investment in solutions to climate change – such as boundless solar and wind power.

"We're witnessing extreme weather conditions, such as the recent cyclone Dineo. These are caused by climate change that threatens the existing infrastructure and security of our citizens and costs money which the city cannot afford to waste," says Gillian Hamilton, manager of the ACRP in South Africa.

The switch towards 100% renewable energy has practical and reachable advantages, such as:

- Power generation uses substantially less water than fossil fuels – a factor that is pivotal in a water-scarce country like South Africa.
- The resulting decrease in the cost of energy enhances energy equity and equality, making energy more accessible and affordable to people of all income levels.
- Air or water become cleaner as we reduce pollution which has a direct impact on the health of the city.

"Through our community work in South Africa, we have realised that concepts like climate change and renewable energy are scientific and currently not close to everyone's heart."



Yet, our survival depends on us changing the way we approach the environment around us – and our city needs to catch up with the likes of Tshwane, Durban and Cape Town by committing to a roadmap that takes us away from fossil fuels towards 100% renewable energy,” explains Hamilton.

Residents meanwhile have numerous positive choices to adopt as part of their lifestyle – including the Big Five quick-wins included with this statement.

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Note to editor

The African Climate Reality Project (ACRP) is the African chapter of former Vice President Al Gore's Climate Reality Project and is hosted on the continent by Food & Trees for Africa. Gore has trained close to 600 African Climate Leaders in South Africa, from government, NGOs, youth, media and scientists across the continent. ACRP's aim is to spread awareness and action and mobilise communities from Algeria to Zimbabwe to find solutions to climate change. Through the work of Climate Leaders across the continent, the movement urges people to take climate action now and communicates the urgent need for countries to act on their commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. ACRP is building support through media campaigns and various events, such as the monthly Green Drinks. For more information go to [www.climatereality.co.za](http://www.climatereality.co.za)

The Climate Action Network - International (CAN) is a worldwide network of over 1200 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) members in more than 120 countries, working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. For more information go to <http://www.climatenetwork.org>

**Big Five quick wins**

- Ask your community leader or ward councillor what they are doing towards the move to renewable energy and ask what you can do to help;
- Retrofit all municipal buildings with renewable energy installations;
- Place solar panels on all municipal buildings to reduce their reliance on electricity for energy;
- Provide an incentive for residents and businesses to feed back their electricity into the grid
- Ask your ward councillor what the city is doing to provide green public transport



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## **What are other cities in South Africa doing?**

**The City of Tshwane** has a target to reach 50% renewable energy at community-scale by 2030, and has indicated a clear political interest in exploring the 100% renewable energy pathway. Recent city initiatives include:

- Biogas recovery from waste;
- Fuel for city-operated bus fleets runs on concentrated natural gas;
- They have installed two solar powered electric vehicle charging stations in October 2016;
- Municipal buildings are being retrofitted with renewable energy installations; and
- They are encouraging the installation of solar water heaters for private homes.

**The City of Durban/eThekweni Municipality** is moving away from reliance on electricity by introducing the following:

- The Durban Solar Map has been developed as part of the Durban Solar City Project - a collaboration between eThekweni Municipality, Camco Clean Energy and Astrum Energy;
- In January 2017, eThekweni launched its Solar Photovoltaic (PV) project at the Ushaka Marine World Theme Park. The project has seen the installation of Solar PV panels on five municipal buildings as a pilot project that aims to promote the use of embedded rooftop solar PV generation and reduces dependence on the national energy grid.

**The City of Cape Town** has set a target of sourcing 20% energy needs from renewable energy 2020. This includes:

- Plans to build its own renewable energy plants and to buy directly from independent power producers;
- Bringing natural gas to the Western Cape;
- The implementation of a feed-in tariff for businesses and residential customers who are able to feed electricity into the city's grid.
- The city is retrofitting the lights in its buildings, traffic lights and street lights. All 1 500 traffic lights in the city have efficient light-emitting diode (LED) light bulbs and more than 25 000 street lights had been retrofitted. These initiatives, conducted progressively over the past six financial years, had saved over 70 000 MWh, which translated into savings of over R100-million. The lighting retrofitting of Cape Town's Civic Centre is currently under way, where around 20 000 light fittings are being upgraded to LED technology with occupancy sensors linked to timers and daylight harvesting. The payback period was less than three years and the electricity demand saving of 1.2 MW would save an additional R6-million in the first year, with more than R36-million saved over the next five years.