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## CONCEPT NOTE: ELECTRICITY GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA: PROMOTING INFORMED AND SUSTAINABLE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN PARLIAMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE ISSUES

October 21, 2011

The Electricity Governance Initiative of SA (EGI-SA) is a collaboration of partner organisations: Idasa, the SA Faith Communities Environment Institute, Green Connection, 350.org, Project 90 x 2030, Sustainable Energy Africa and WWF-SA, with technical advice from the Energy Research Centre at the University of Cape Town. We are affiliated with a wider network in developing countries, led by the Prayas Energy Group (India) and the World Resources Institute (USA).

EGI-SA has drawn the attention of policymakers, regulatory authorities and the public to electricity and climate-related issues through its engagement in the IRP2010 and other policy- and rule-making processes over the past three years. In doing so, EGI-SA has sought to encourage broad and informed engagement in an effort to promote transparent, participatory and accountable decision-making for sustainable outcomes. Idasa is an implementing agent in this project.

With funding from the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF), the activities described below will aim to facilitate opportunities for various civil society groups and formations (such as trade unions, civil society's COP17 planning committee (C17) and the Energy Caucus) and other identified stakeholders (such as renewable energy experts) to engage with one another as well as with Parliamentarians and parliamentary researchers on their respective perspectives on implications of energy related policy decisions and their impact on "green" economic development, particularly as a response to climate change. Proposed activities are:

### **1 full day Energy Caucus meeting**

November 1, 2011, 09:30-16:30, Institute for Security Studies

EGI-SA will support an Energy Caucus meeting in Cape Town for NGOs. The Energy Caucus is a loose network of South African organisations (ranging from faith groups, trade unions, academics and community organisations) involved in electricity, energy and climate change and related issues. It tries to meet once a year to exchange information, (informally) coordinate activities of members, brainstorm and share knowledge. It is not a formally constituted organization but members subscribe to a statement of principles (attached as Annexure A).

It is planned for the Energy Caucus meeting to focus on, among other matters, the approaching Durban COP. Aside from the usual coordination and strategizing this forum allows, this particular meeting will enable relationships between Caucus members and other CBO representatives, as well as between Caucus members and C17 – the coordinating committee of civil society action for the Durban COP.

As such, it is envisioned that the first half of the day will be spent on 'normal' caucus business. The second half will focus on C17 and its planned strategy and activities for the Durban COP.

### **Evening debate & networking event for MPs and Energy Caucus members**

November 1, 2011, 17:00-21:00, Marks Building Restaurant, Parliament

The one-day Energy Caucus programme will culminate with an evening event that will include a debate between a public representative (Minister Ebrahim Patel, pending confirmation) and one or two other persons (e.g. representatives of labour and a community-based organisation) on the implications of energy policies for a low carbon economy. The event will be designed to encourage networking and informal interaction between MPs and a broad range of civil society organisations.

### **Two roundtables**

*Organisations engaged in energy debates in the country often have quite different views and part of the Energy Caucus role is to encourage robust debate. However, many of these smaller organisations' views do not necessarily reach Parliament as many of these organisations do not have the resources to engage in formal parliamentary processes. As part of encouraging and facilitating civil society engagement with Parliament, two roundtable discussions will be held where Parliamentarians can discuss key energy issues with representatives from a variety of perspectives.*

### ***Parliamentarians' Roundtable***

*Renewable energy & economic growth: Contradictions and alignment with energy related policies / legislation*  
November 2, 2011, 17:00-20:00, Room M46 Ground Floor, Marks Building, Parliament

This will include select participants from the day and evening before, alongside MPs from the Energy; Economic Development; Public Enterprises; Trade & Industry; Labour; and Water & Environment Committees.

### ***Researchers' Roundtable***

*Current Research in Energy Governance*  
November 2, 2011, Parliament (Room to be confirmed)

This roundtable will provide civil society representatives and researchers with opportunities for discussing current scientific and political research having a direct bearing on energy governance, and civil society partners will share research on energy modelling (SNAPP) and nuclear energy contracts.

A number of short briefing papers will be prepared in order to ensure that key facts, figures and perspectives are available to participants as reference material. There will also be a written record of the two roundtables (to be held under Chatham House rules) to provide participants with the substance of discussions.

Several of the organisations likely to be present would also possibly participate in parliamentary processes on different pieces of legislation before Parliament during the latter part of 2011. After these roundtables, it is envisaged that MPs and local community organisations would continue their engagement, thereby strengthening civil society participation in democratic governance.



Gary Pienaar  
Senior Researcher, Economic Governance Programme  
[gpienaar@idasa.org.za](mailto:gpienaar@idasa.org.za)  
082 541 4221

CAPE TOWN DEMOCRACY CENTRE  
6 SPIN STREET • CHURCH SQUARE • CAPE TOWN • 8001  
PO BOX 1739 • CAPE TOWN • 8000 • SOUTH AFRICA  
TEL +27 (021) 467-7600 • FAX +27 (021) 461-2589  
e-mail: [info@idasa.org.za](mailto:info@idasa.org.za)

KUTLWANONG DEMOCRACY CENTRE  
CNR VISAGIE & PRINSLOO STREETS • PRETORIA • 0001  
PO BOX 56950 • ARCADIA • 0007 • SOUTH AFRICA  
TEL +27 (012) 392-0500 • FAX +27 (012) 320-2414/5  
e-mail: [info@idasa.org.za](mailto:info@idasa.org.za)

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