



19 July 2021

The Presidential Climate Commission Submits their NDC Recommendations to the Presidency

The **Presidential Climate Commission (PCC)** submitted their official recommendations, on 1 July 2021, to President Ramaphosa regarding South Africa's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The President established the Commission, a multistakeholder engagement platform, on 15 December 2020 to advise Government on pathways to transition South Africa to a low-carbon economy and climate resilient society.

Members of the Commission include representatives from business, labour, government and civil society. The **National Business Initiative's (NBI)** CEO, Joanne Yawitch, is one of the Commissioners advising the President.

What is South Africa's NDC?

The PCC's submission covers the Commission's recommendations on the level of ambition set out in South Africa's NDC. Every 5 years, countries who are signatories to the Paris Agreement are encouraged to submit a revised NDC, which demonstrate a ramping up of climate ambition over time.

COP26 is the deadline for the first set of submissions to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for revised NDCs. This represents a key moment for countries to strategically position themselves as thriving participants in a future, global, low-carbon world. South Africa is a signatory to the Paris Agreement and is committed to submitting a credible commitment at the COP26 Summit in Glasgow this November.

South Africa's Climate Ambition

South Africa's NDC provides information on what targets are set for emission reductions, as well as what climate actions will be undertaken over the next decade.

The revised NDC was released for comment in March 2021, followed by a series of stakeholder engagements, including a PCC hearing held on 7 May 2021. This hearing enabled all relevant stakeholders, including the NBI, to

share research and insight into what the revised targets could look like if South Africa is to demonstrate a credible and defensible level of ambition to the UNFCCC this year.

Based on the range of input shared, the Commission highlighted the economic risks South Africa faces from rapid global decarbonisation. Many of South Africa's trading partners have adopted net zero targets and will be looking to lower their emissions while imposing trade barriers on emissions-intensive products.

The Commission suggested that additional measures to lower emissions should be undertaken, such as:

- Decommissioning coal-fired power stations at the end of their commercial life;
- Increasing renewable energy investment and rolling out green transport initiatives at scale.

Having considered research shared by the NBI, Energy Systems Research Group (ESRG) at the University of Cape Town (UCT), CSIR and Meridian Economics, the PCC believe that more ambitious emissions targets will lower the transition risk, improve energy security and attract additional international finance. The PCC maintain in their submission that it is technically and economically feasible (with the requisite financial support) to achieve emissions by 2030 in the range of 350 Mt CO₂-eq at the bottom end and 420 Mt CO₂-eq at the top end, with minimal impact on GDP.

Why is this submission important?

The required levels of international ambition are vital for the world to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and South Africa has a key part to play in the transition to net zero. In addition, our ambition as a country is a clear signal of our intention to position ourselves as a credible trade partner in a low carbon future.

Click [here](#) to access a copy of the Presidential Climate Commission's report.

For more information on the NBI's Environmental Sustainability work, please contact Geeta Morar: GeetaM@nbi.org.za



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The National Business Initiative (NBI) is an independent and voluntary coalition of South African and multinational businesses launched in 1995 by the then President, Nelson Mandela.

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