







INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (2013 – 2014)


ANNUAL REPORT TO PARLIAMENT

Environmental Advisory Services




environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA




INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Act No. 107, 1998, Chapter 6 on International Obligations and Agreements, paragraph 26(1) the Minister must report to Parliament once a year regarding international environmental instruments for which she is responsible for.



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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

Oceans and Coastal Management

- **Antarctic Treaty** - Thirty-sixth Antarctic Treaty Consultative meeting and Sixteenth Committee on Environmental Protection Meeting
- **COMNAP** - Twenty-fifth (XXV) Annual General meeting of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs
- **London Convention** - Thirty Fifth Consultative meeting under the London Dumping Convention and Eighth meeting under the London Protocol
- **CCAMLR** - Thirty-Second meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and its scientific committee

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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

- **Abidjan Convention** - The Eleventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the East and Central African Region and related Protocols

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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

Biodiversity and Conservation

- **WHC** - Thirty-seventh session of the World Heritage Committee
- **UNCCD** - The Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

Chemicals & Wastes

- **Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm Conventions** - The Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- **Montreal Protocol** - Twenty-fifth meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol
- Diplomatic Conference for the **Minamata Convention** on Mercury

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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

Climate Change

- UNFCCC - Nineteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP19), and the Ninth session of the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP9)

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OVERVIEW OF 2013 – 2014

International Relations & Africa

- SADC Ministers of Environment and Natural Resources

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts

Multilateral Agreement:

- XXXVI Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting

Strategic Importance:

- The Antarctic treaty deals with matters relating to the governance and protection of the Antarctic continent. South Africa is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty

Key Outcomes:

- Steps towards entry into force of the Annex VI to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty: Liability Arising from Environmental emergencies Annex was accepted

Action required:

- Instrument of Ratification was deposited on 10 April 2014 at the depository
- Development of a National Policy on Antarctic tourism
- Develop as a matter of urgency a position on bio-prospecting

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts

Multilateral Agreement:

- XXV AGM of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs

Strategic Importance:

- Opportunity for national programme and logistics managers to share knowledge and experience to facilitate the Antarctic Treaty principles of international co-operation

Key outcomes:

The Accidents, Incidents and Near-Miss Reporting (AINMR) system

Action required:

- Liaise with departmental oil pollution section, SAMSA port of Cape Town to ascertain Cape Town's oil spill combatting capability and capacity.

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts

Multilateral Agreement:

- 35th Consultative meeting under the London Dumping Convention and 8th meeting under the London Protocol

Strategic Importance:

- Global conventions to protect the marine environment from human activities including marine pollution prevention

Key outcomes:

- Adoption of Revised Guidelines for the Assessment of Dredged Material

Action required:

- Establishment of an inter-sessional correspondence group to develop a Strategic Plan for the Convention and Protocol

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts

Multilateral Agreement:

- 32nd Meeting of the Convention on the conservation of the Antarctica Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

Strategic Importance:

- To highlight issues on the threat, protection and conservation of biodiversity, as well as “resource use”, ecosystem approach to fisheries and all issues related to fisheries stock assessment.

Key outcomes:

- Allocation of TAC of tooth-fish to 100 tons instead of 150 tons to South Africa and Japan due to the discrepancies in the tagging experiment.

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts cont.

Action Required:

- South Africa and France were encouraged to continue engaging in the planning and gathering necessary information for the planning of the MPAs in the Delcano Rise Proposed Ross Sea and East Antarctic MPAs.

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts

Multilateral Agreement:

- 11th Conference of Parties to the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the East & Central African Region & related protocols

Strategic Importance:

- COP11 was organised under the theme “Promoting Blue Growth in Africa”, which prompted discussion on how ocean and coastal resources could be further harnessed to support economic prosperity and job creation, whilst still ensuring ecological integrity.

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Branch: Oceans & Coasts cont.

Key outcomes:

- Adoption of the Cape Town Declaration on the Blue Economy for Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Domain of West Africa;
- Several new decisions were adopted on ocean governance, the management of Ecologically and Biologically Significant marine areas (EBSAs), conservation of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the economic assessment of marine and coastal areas and the development of South-South cooperation.

Action required:

- South Africa was nominated to chair the Convention Bureau over the next 2-3 years.

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Branch: Biodiversity & Conservation

Multilateral Agreement:

- 37th Session of the World Heritage Committee

Strategic Importance:

- WHC considered the state of conservation of some of the existing world heritage properties, new nominations to the world heritage list, implementation of the World Heritage Fund, implementation of the Convention and revision of the Operational Guidelines

Key Outcomes:

- A need to take forward the recommendations of the report on the African Expert Workshop on Extractive Industries and World Heritage Sites.

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Branch: Biodiversity & Conservation cont.

Action required:

- The following heritage sites need follow-up action:
 - Maloti Drakensberg Park:
 - Fossil Hominid Site of South Africa
 - Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape
 - Vredefort Dome

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Branch: Biodiversity & Conservation

Multilateral Agreement:

- 11th Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Decertification

Strategic Importance:

- RSA is a Party to the UNCCD and has areas affected by Desertification land Degradation and Drought (DLDD)

Key outcomes:

- Established a Science-Policy Interface to facilitate a two-way science-policy dialogue and ensure delivery of policy-relevant information, knowledge and advice on DLDD.
- Establish an IWG consisting of representatives from each region to develop a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas

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Branch: Biodiversity & Conservation cont.

Action Required:

- The department of Environmental Affairs under the Branch Biodiversity and Conservation is expected to chair and coordinate the African Group for the biennium and to host the Africa Regional preparatory meeting prior to the UNCCD COP 12.

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes

Multilateral Agreements:

- Ordinary and simultaneous meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Strategic Importance:

- To strengthen the implementation of the three conventions at the national, regional and global levels, promote coherent policy guidance and enhance efficiency in the provision of support to Parties

Key outcomes:

- SA secured a bilateral meeting with the GEF CEO where issues of critical importance not just in RSA but also in SADC were highlighted as priority issues especially since chemicals and hazardous waste respect no borders.

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes cont.

Action Required:

- RSA on behalf of Africa to deliver technical assistance and support for effective implementation of conventions
- GEF should provide financial support to project proposals submitted by the Regional Centers for the countries they serve
- There is still a continued need for DDT for malaria vector control until locally appropriate alternatives are found

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes

Multilateral Agreement:

- 25th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

Strategic Importance:

- Ensure that the interests of the country are protected; some of the chemicals discussed are used in the country, namely in the refrigeration industry, agriculture, fire fighting, air conditioning, etc

Key Outcomes:

- Percentage of HCFCs to be replaced by high-GWP alternatives;
- A regional breakdown of penetration rates of HCFC alternatives;

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes cont.

- the impact of blended ODS alternatives on the performance of the products and processes that they are used in; and
- how the TEAP's analysis of obstacles differentiated between developed and developing countries

Action Required:

- Parties to provide to the Ozone Secretariat information on reporting systems, policies and initiatives that are related to promoting the transition of ODS towards alternatives that minimize other impacts on the environment in particular the climate, by 1 March 2014. RSA will endeavour to comply

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes

Multilateral Agreement:

- Diplomatic Conference for the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

Strategic Importance:

- RSA has the most advanced and biggest chemical industry in Africa; the entry of the Minamata Convention on Mercury bans mining of mercury, restricts the trade in elementary mercury except for Parties with known excess stocks, and bans the use of mercury in some processes and products, where alternatives are available.

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Branch: Chemicals & Wastes cont.

Key Outcomes:

- The aim of participating at this meeting was to sign the Convention. The Convention has provisions for financial and technical assistance to developing countries; has provisions on information exchange, trade, national implementation plans, reporting, etc. One of the provisions of the Convention relates to the banning of primary mercury mining.

Action Required:

- RSA is the biggest emitter in Africa and there will be a requirement to use best available techniques and best environmental practices in future to reduce and ultimately prevent mercury emissions into the atmosphere. These may have some economic implications for the country

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Branch: Air Quality & Climate Change

Multilateral Agreement:

- 19th Session of the United Nations framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 19)

Strategic Importance:

- In Warsaw South Africa sought to achieve progress on the capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund (GCF);
- Ensuring that Adaptation is at the heart of the 2015 agreement;
- Resolving the issues of Loss & Damage;
- Ensuring that the ADP moves into a formal mode so as to produce a negotiation text;

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Branch: Air Quality & Climate Change

- Laying the bricks in the accounting and transparency discussion that can lead to the initial offers or pledges during the Paris COP.

Key Outcomes:

- finalisation of accounting rules under Kyoto
- Progress made in the negotiation of the climate change system to be implemented beyond 2020. This is to be captured in a new legal instrument for implementation post 2020 and is being negotiated under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP).
- Scale up ambition in the post 2012 and pre-2020 period of current emission reduction pledges

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Branch: Air Quality & Climate Change cont

- Finalisation of a very contentious negotiation on an international mechanism to deal with loss and damage caused by climate change.

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Branch: Environmental Advisory Services

Multilateral Agreement:

- SADC Ministers of Environment and Natural Resources

Strategic Importance:

- As the largest and dominant economy in the SADC region, South Africa has a key role to play in the sub-region's socio-economic development and regional integration agenda

Key Outcomes:

- Ministers re-iterated their commitment to strengthen the management of natural resources in particular, combating illegal harvesting of elephants and rhino

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Branch: Environmental Advisory Services, cont.

• **Ministers approved:**

- the Protocol on Environment for Sustainable Development, which aims to enhance the protection of the environment;
- promote equity and sustainable utilization of natural resources;
- promote the shared management of trans-boundary environment and natural resources; and
- promote effective management and response to impacts of climate change and variability.

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