



## Young voices on Climate Change II

In our last post we included, as part of our Lotto Environmental Justice Programme we carried articles from two of the interns on the project Abonga and Sizwe, and three of their friends Xolisa, Loyiso and Lonwabo, who are participating in the *Climate Tracker: Path to Paris Programme*. These short pieces focused on aspects of Climate Change that interest them and count towards helping them get to Paris for the COP21. The great news is that Sizwe is in Paris as this is being posed! Congratulations Sizwe! Here is a picture of him at the airport with his friends saying Bon Voyage!

*To keep the Environmental Justice Flag flying in South Africa while Sizwe is away Abonga, Xolisa, Loyiso and Lonwabo have written more excellent articles which you can read below.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SOLAR POWER IN SOUTH AFRICA - by Abonga Tom

If wind and solar power can be build in homes many can benefit and even more jobs can be created ,

Like in china 25 000mw of wind power have station generating far been built , Europe has been planning to build 100 000mw of offshore wind power alone. Why are these countries

building these renewable energies they have noticed that in to save their resources they can use renewable energies.

Every country in Europe is using solar power to limit their electricity problems ,in South Africa solar power is in full demand but yet the government is not responding with solutions that can lead to less electricity power cuts.

Government needs to take notice of what is happening because our country is facing many challenges that can be limited by these renewables energies . Nuclear power is not a solution because it has many waste product gases that can cause some explosions and problems in the future so let us do what is best for this country and this planet.

## **WATER IS NOT AN INFINITE RESOURCE - by Lonwabo Mfenguza**

Natural resources are the basic things for living things as know no living things can survive without water in planet earth.

But in our days water will be scarce because of ways we use water such as washing cars irrigating plants in order to grow food. Also the industries that cause climate change by producing lots of carbon dioxide will also make an imbalance that will stop us from getting clean water that come from rain. There will be acid rain in the future if they keep on producing lots of carbon dioxide.

Corporates companies are busy draining oils from underground. This is poisoning our underground water because after that process our land is degraded such that we are not able to grow plants and get pure underground water.

All these problems will affect poor people because they don't have resources to protect themselves in order to have other options of getting water. Now in my county South Africa low income locations are having water management devices (WMD) installed. They have a certain allowance of water per day, if they exceed that then the devices cut off their lines of getting water. This is a new thing to us. We used to use water freely, without restricted access for a day.

Why does government not stop these corporate companies who have huge influence in polluting our water and climate? Instead of dealing with problems, they accept an innovation of reducing wastage of water.

But what I know is that everyone must have access to natural resources without paying any amount to fulfill them.

## **SUSTAIN THE PEOPLE - by Loyiso Hulushe**

### **What is Renewable Energy?**

Renewable energy is way of ensuring a sustainable lifestyle by generating energy through natural resources such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides and geothermal heat, which are renewable (naturally). Renewable energy can be used for technology ranging from solar power, wind power, hydroelectricity, biomass and biofuels for transportation.

### **Challenges and opportunities:**

Solar is a relatively new technology in South Africa, and interests in this clean, free source of energy is steadily growing. There's still much work that needs to be done in order to educate people about its benefits. A mindset change is needed but this will take time since South Africa has for many years enjoyed cheap and readily available coal power. Further guidance is needed on the initial outlay required in purchasing a solar power system. Without crystal clear figures, businesses will struggle to understand how solar makes financial sense.

### **Why it is not so abundant to people?**

The government is only focusing and wasting money on nuclear power that will harm the country in the future. The government only want people to buy every time and not informing people about the benefits of this renewable energy- telling them how to sustain themselves by using renewable energies and sustainable livelihoods such as organic food gardening, solar power, etc. The government is also focusing at fossil fuels such as oil, coal, etc. i.e. mining to develop the economy of the country.

### **Conclusion**

The government should start to spread the word about renewable energy and inform people about its imperatives so that people can be enlightened about sustainable ways of living. Our planet at risk of collapsing any time due to the human way of living that is negligent and ignorant towards sustainability.

## **ENERGY CRISIS IN THE DARK CONTINENT OF AFRICA - by: Xolisa Bangani**

The demand for electricity is rising rapidly and energy companies are struggling to maintain has become a catastrophe. In developing countries such as South Africa where there is a high rate of population , poverty, crime and unemployment things can go from bad to worse.

During the 1994 elections when the country became an independent and democratic country, people where promised to have access to electricity and yet since then this promise has never been fulfilled. Some claim that the government failed to address people about self-reliance instead they would depend public sector in order to fulfill their needs. People need to know that there is enough renewable energy (not fossil fuels) on earth to meet all the electric needs of all the population centers in the world for hundreds of years to come. The problem is that this energy is either in remote regions or is being used

only in certain political fiefdoms. The idea of linking the world's electrical power networks fueled by renewable energy resources such as the sun, wind and water should be practice and popularized.

Renewable energy is essential to meeting basic human needs – food production, running water, heat, light and transport are all dependent on energy access. Poor access to energy has severe impacts on health, quality of life, education and economic productivity.

A research made by International Energy Agency show that, 1.3 billion people around the world lack access to electricity – 84% are in rural areas. Women and children in many of these areas walk several miles every day to obtain water and firewood – basic tools for survival. With access to electricity people can pump water from the ground, illuminate a health clinic and refrigerate food and medicine. Currently South Africa is experiencing load shedding and blackouts even in the big cities with its economy being threatened.

The threat of local power initiatives is not so much that they can be done and are needed, but that they have the potential to alter the very pathway of future energy supply. This is perhaps what the national energy regulator and Eskom (South Africa's energy company) both fear most. When the crisis hit in 2007, it was a case of demand exceeding supply – meaning we had enough power generating capacity to produce the maximum rated level of power. But the growth of the economy exceeded Eskom's ability to supply the necessary power at the time.

Today the problem is different, as we have less demand on top of coal plants not being able to generate at full capacity. This is due to the fact that coal plants should have 90% generation availability in a year, but are operating at 70-75% availability today.

In other words, the same number of power plants are generating less than they did before. Renewable energies are needed especially in the poor or rural societies where people cannot afford to pay for electricity. There are also arguments for energy saving methods.