

PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE COMMISSION JUST TRANSITION FRAMEWORK

DIALOGUE ON WATER SECURITY: 26 OCTOBER 2021

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES

1. Mr. Dhesigen Naidoo

Dhesigen Naidoo is a leader, a scientist and an activist for positive social change. He is currently a member of the Presidential Climate Commission and President of the global NGO Human Right 2 Water and a Founding Member of the Water Policy Group. He is a Senior Research Associate at the ISS. He has led the Water Research Commission (WRC), South Africa's dedicated national Water and Sanitation Innovation, Research and Development Agency for 10 years. He has previously served in senior positions in the South African national government and South African universities having begun his career as a medical scientist in a specialist children's hospital. He is a Councillor of the South African National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI) and a Fellow of the Mapangubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA). He counts his lovely wife and beautiful children as both his primary source of inspiration and vanguard of his humility.

2. Minister Senzo Mchunu

Edward Senzo Mchunu is the Minister of Water and Sanitation. Previously, he served as the Minister of Public Service and Administration. He also served as Premier of KwaZulu-Natal from 22 August 2013 until 23 May 2016. He a former provincial chairperson of the ANC in KZN.

Mchunu was born in April 1958 at eNhlwathi in the area of Hlabisa in northern KwaZulu Natal. He was educated at the University of Zululand and the University of South Africa, qualifying with a BA in Education and International Relations. From 1985 he worked as a high school teacher, resigning to become a full-time politician in 1991.

3. Ms. Ruth Beukman

Ruth Beukman is a leading water professional with 27 years of experience in the fields of land & water management and development issues. In her current position with WWF, she plays a dual role - to lead the WWF freshwater team (focused on securing

South Africa's strategic water source areas and associated ecological infrastructure) and provide strategic guidance on cross-cutting policy issues given the centrality of water in the country's development priorities.

Ruth has a long association with the Global Water Partnership (GWP), where she was responsible for strategic positioning and responsive programme development on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the SADC region. Driving IWRM as a means to attaining water security and climate resilience. In this role she also developed pivotal partnerships with key mandated institutions at multiple levels and facilitated the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms.

She has an MSc in Botany/Plant Ecology from the University of Cape Town and – while her early career focused on natural resource management, rural development and land reform – the last 20 years have been dedicated to the central role of water in tackling development challenges in the SADC region and South Africa.

4. Prof. Sylvester Mpandeli

Sylvester Mpandeli is an Executive Manager at the Water Research Commission of South Africa and Adjunct Professor at Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture at the University of Venda (Univen). He is managing the Key Strategic Area (KSA) that deals with Water Utilisation in Agriculture. His research interest is on climate change adaptation, agricultural water management, food security and water-energy-food (WEF) nexus etc. Prof. Mpandeli has published more than 140 journal articles, book, book chapters, peer-reviewed conference proceedings, technical reports, policy briefing notes, and popular articles. He is a Chairperson of the Water JPI Advisory Board of the European Commission. He is a former Chairperson of the African Regional Working Group (AFRWG) of the International Commission of Irrigation and Drainage (ICID).

5. Mr. James Reeler

James Reeler has worked on climate change issues around impacts, mitigation and adaptation for more than 18 years. He has worked within academia, the private sector and the public sector, including developing adaptation projects for several UN agencies. Over the 8 years that he has been with WWF, he has played a role in assessing carbon markets, interacting with national and international policy, and engaged with many partner organisations to provide technical inputs into climate change issues.

Most recently, he has headed a project evaluating the supply of sustainable aviation fuels in South Africa, Brazil and Ethiopia. James has an MSc in Climate Change and Development from UCT.