

PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE COMMISSION JUST TRANSITION FRAMEWORK



DIALOGUE ON GOVERNANCE FOR A JUST TRANSITION:

05 NOVEMBER 2021

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES

1. Ms Melissa Fourie

Melissa Fourie is the Executive Director of the Centre for Environmental Rights, a non-profit organisation of activist lawyers who work with communities and civil society organisations in South Africa to realise the Constitutional right to a healthy environment by advocating and litigating for environmental justice.

Melissa started her career in 1998 as attorney at law firm ENSAfrica, followed by a stint at Australian law firm Ashurst. After completing a Master's degree in London on a Commonwealth scholarship in 2003, she joined the Research & Policy Unit of the South African Country Office of the IUCN (World Conservation Union). She was appointed Director: Enforcement in the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism's Environmental Quality & Protection branch in 2005, where she was responsible for both administrative and criminal enforcement of national land use, pollution and waste legislation, as well as the roll-out of the Environmental Management Inspectorate, until 2008.

Melissa holds the degrees BA LLB from the University of Stellenbosch, and an MSc in Environment & Development from the London School of Economics. She also holds certificates in tax law, environmental law and environmental compliance and enforcement from the Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand and Pretoria respectively. She is an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa currently serves as a Commissioner on the Presidential Climate Commission.

2. Dr Neva Makgetla

Dr Neva Seidman Makgetla has been Senior Economist: Trade and Industrial Policy at Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS) since November 2015. She was Deputy Director General for Economic Policy in the Economic Development Department from 2010 to 2015. Before joining EDD, Makgetla worked for the Presidency, the DBSA and COSATU as well as other government departments. Prior to 1994 she worked in various universities in Africa and the

United States. She is currently a member of the National Minimum Wage Commission.

Makgetla's research and publications centre on industrial policy and value chain analysis, with a focus on mining dependency, and on socio-economic challenges facing South Africa, especially employment creation, inequality and the climate emergency, and more recently the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Dr Mbongiseni Buthelezi

Mbongiseni is the Executive Director of the Public Affairs Research Institute. He holds a PhD in English and Comparative Literature from Columbia University, New York. He graduated from both the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the University of Natal. Working in various academic and activist capacities, Mbongiseni has been interested in the role of the state in land governance, heritage and public archives. With various collaborators he has researched and written on the state's roles in the construction of the identities in KwaZulu-Natal through heritage discourse and commemorative events. He has also written on land governance and the role of traditional leaders in rural South Africa, as well as the dire state of public archives and its implications for accountable government.

Mbongiseni serves on the boards of the Alliance for Rural Democracy and Agora Energiewende (Germany) as well as on a sub-committee of the Board of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

4. Mr Thomas Mnguni

Thomas Mnguni is the Coal Campaigner for environmental justice group groundWork, and heads up its office in Middelburg, Mpumalanga. Thomas works actively to bring together communities, workers and trade unions on the Mpumalanga Highveld around coal mining, climate and just transition. He is one of the co-founders of the Greater Middelburg Residents Association, which focuses on service delivery and socio-economic issues. He was a member of



the Freedom of Expression Network, which aims to protect people from abuse and illegal arrest, especially during protest action.

Thomas matriculated in 1992 and worked for Columbus Stainless Steel until 1996. He later joined the board of the Highveld Entrepreneur Development Centre and became part of management. He joined the groundWork team in 2015.