



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

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Australia supporting a clean energy future for Africa

Leading Australian climate change scientist Professor Ray Wills is visiting South Africa this week as part of an Australian Government-sponsored science diplomacy tour of Africa. While in South Africa, Professor Wills is hosting a series of public lectures and government/industry roundtables on developments in the clean energy sector.

According to the Australian High Commissioner to South Africa, HE Ann Harrap, the Australian Government has recently introduced a 'Clean Energy Future Package', a range of legislative measures to drive greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The legislation came into effect on 1 July 2012.

"The package includes a carbon pricing mechanism - a significant economic reform which will cut pollution and drive investment, while ensuring that Australia can compete and remain prosperous in the future. In addition, the package also provides for significant support for renewable energy, promotes initiatives for energy efficiency across the economy and introduces support for action to store carbon in the land sector", Ms Harrap said.

"Australia is also providing assistance for climate change mitigation in developing countries, including South Africa. Australia's global fast-start funding commitment totals \$599 million over three years, from 2010-2013", Ms Harrap added.

Australia and South Africa have agreed on two specific areas of collaboration as part of Australia's \$1 million fast-start commitment to South Africa. Australia's collaboration with South Africa through the fast-start program builds on the existing climate change cooperation which was formalised in 2006 under a bilateral Climate Change Partnership Agreement.

In particular, Australian fast-start funding is supporting capacity building in South Africa for measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of emissions in the land sector, including through workshops, the placing of specialist MRV experts in the Department of Environmental Affairs, and the development of a strategic plan detailing how South Africa will develop land sector MRV tools in the future.

Australian funding is also supporting the second phase of the Cato Manor project, which commenced as part of the COP17 in 2011. This is a project, facilitated by the Green Building Council of South Africa, which will retrofit low-income homes in Durban with various energy and environmentally efficient facilities, including solar water heaters, LED street lighting and rainwater harvesting. Up to 26 homes will be retrofitted by local teams, ensuring that the skills and knowledge acquired through the project are retained by the local community. Professor Wills will visit the Cato Manor project while in South Africa.

The Australian Government has also been working closely with the South African Department of Science and Technology and over the next year will be deploying a volunteer to assist them to undertake a stocktake of Climate Change 'Readiness' in SADC countries.

Professor Wills has had a wide-ranging career with substantial expertise in ecology, sustainability, climate change science and the effects of expected future climates on Australia, as well as functional responses to mitigate and adapt to global warming. Professor Wills was recognised as one of the Top 100 Global Leaders in Sustainability in 2011, an honour renewed in 2012.

For media enquiries or to request an interview with Professor Wills, please contact Ms Natalie Mendelsohn [REDACTED] or Mr Will Butler (email will.butler@dfat.gov.au - tel +27 12 423 6188)