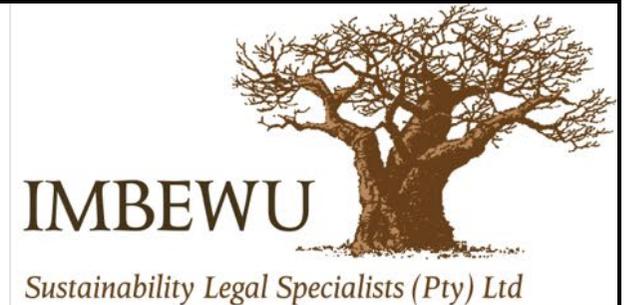


## SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022



# SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER & SHE LEGISLATION UPDATE

For a copy of the Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Legislation Update, please go to:  
<https://imbewu.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/SHE-legislation-update-Mar-2022.pdf>

### NATIONAL

#### GENERAL

**HIGH COURT VICTORY IN MPUMALANGA AIR POLLUTION CASE** – The Pretoria High Court has ruled in favour of the Vukani Environmental Justice Movement in Action and groundWork and has recognised the poor air quality in the Mpumalanga Highveld Region as a breach of residents' Constitutional right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being. In this ground-breaking ruling government has been ordered to implement and enforce the Highveld Priority Area Air Quality Management Plan.

**Source: Centre for Environmental Rights dated 18 March 2022**

<https://cer.org.za/news/major-court-victory-for-communities-fighting-air-pollution-in-mpumalanga-highveld>

**Judgement:** <https://cer.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TRUSTEES-JUDGMENT-DATED-18-MARCH-2022-1.pdf>

**ACIDIC WATER SPILL INTO THE WILGE RIVER FROM COAL MINE** – On 14 February 2022 a spillage of acid mine water was detected at the Thungela Resources Khwezela Colliery's Kromdraai site. The mine which was last operational in 1966 described the event as an “*uncharacteristic environmental incident.*” By 20 February, the spillage had resulted in a 100% biodiversity loss for a 58km stretch of river and had reached the Loskop Dam Nature Reserve. This incident has raised concerns over the more than 6000 abandoned mines in the country. Long term rehabilitation of the affected areas will be required.

**Source: Daily Maverick dated 17 March 2022**

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-03-17-acid-water-trail-of-death-reignites-concern-over-south-africas-abandoned-coal-and-gold-mines/>

**THEFT FROM TRANSNET DIESEL PIPELINE RESULTS IN CONTAMINATION OF THE MEUL RIVER IN THE FREE STATE** – After thieves pumped thousands of litres of diesel from a Transnet pipeline, the valve was left open resulting in diesel spilling into the Meul River affecting about 6000 square metres of the adjacent land and vegetation. Transnet spokesperson Saret Knoetze said “*The rehabilitation plan that we've put in place will make sure that it is cleared. And when we hand it back over, it will be as if it was before.*”

**Source: Daily Maverick dated 17 March 2022**

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-03-17-free-state-river-and-environment-contaminated-after-thieves-break-into-transnet-diesel-pipeline/>

**GAUTRAIN CONSIDERS SOLAR IN LOOK TO MOVE TO MORE SUSTAINABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS** – William Dachs, CEO of Gautrain Management Agency confirmed that feasibility studies will be conducted to see how Gautrain can make their operations greener. The Development Bank of Southern Africa has issued a tender for a study to be conducted and ultimately for an implementation strategy to be put in place for the supply of solar PV technology to power Gautrain facilities such as stations and depots.

**Source: Polity dated 8 March 2022**

<https://www.polity.org.za/article/gautrain-looking-into-solar-panels-to-power-its-stations-2022-03-08>

**LANDMARK LITIGATION AS CIVIL SOCIETY CHALLENGES ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION OF RICHARD'S BAY GAS POWER PLANT** – South Durban Community Environmental Alliance and groundWork filed review papers in April 2021 challenging the approval of an Environmental Authorisation for a 3000MW Combined Cycle Plant in Richards Bay that was granted to Eskom. The litigation raises concern about an inadequate assessment of climate change impacts and alternatives to this project including renewable energy.

**Source: IOL dated 10 March 2022**

<https://www.iol.co.za/news/environment/landmark-litigation-to-go-ahead-as-civil-society-challenges-governments-environmental-authorisation-of-richards-bay-gas-power-plant-828354db-3f2b-4ad2-92e3-fbae05dad22c>

**RHINO POACHER SENTENCED TO 53 YEARS IMPRISONMENT** – The South African National Parks have welcomed the sentence handed down to a 39-year-old male for poaching Rhino in the Kruger National Park. Mike Nyathi was convicted of 12 counts of poaching and will serve 23 years in prison as some of the sentences will run concurrently. Gareth Coleman, Managing Executive of the Kruger National Park said “*We commend the work done by the rangers, National Prosecuting Authority and the SAPS – a job well done.*”

**Source: OFM dated 22 March 2022**

<https://www.ofm.co.za/article/centralsa/314190/sanparks-welcomes-hefty-sentence-for-rhino-poacher>

## INTERNATIONAL

### GENERAL

**CONCERN OVER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF BITCOIN MINING** – Bitcoin’s estimated power consumption has risen from 6.6 terawatt-hours at the beginning of 2017 to 138 terawatt hours in early 2022 and their carbon emissions are estimated to be at 114 million tons of carbon dioxide per year. China has banned bitcoin mining and Tesla Cars will not accept Bitcoin tokens as payment until Bitcoin miners have switched to at least 50% renewable energy.

**Source: Bloomberg dated 16 March 2022**

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-16/why-bitcoin-s-energy-problem-is-so-hard-to-fix-quicktake-l0t1s8b0>

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED BETWEEN ANGLO AMERICAN AND EDF RENEWABLES** – Anglo American and EDF Renewables have agreed to work together to develop a regional renewable energy ecosystem (RREE) in South Africa. The RREE is expected to achieve 100% renewable energy supply by 2030 supporting decarbonisation in the country. Anglo American have already achieved this goal at all of its operations in South America. This is a step in the right direction towards Anglo American’s target of being carbon neutral by 2040.

**Source: Anglo American Press Release dated 18 March 2022**

<https://www.angloamerican.com/media/press-releases/2022/18-03-2022>

**ENVIRONMENTAL HARM IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT** – Attacks on Nuclear power stations, forest fires, damage to water infrastructure and damage to fuel storage areas have led to severe environmental damage in the Ukraine which is immediately visible. Previous conflicts have spurred significant improvements in environmental protection during times of war and the UN is set to vote on a set of international guidelines to protect the environment during wartimes later this year.

**Source: Open Democracy dated 24 March 2022**

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/ukraine-nuclear-war-environment/>

## PUBLICATIONS

**PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE COMMISSION REPORT** – A framework for a Just Transition in South Africa – Released by the Presidential Climate Commission towards a Just Transition dated February 2022

[https://pccommissionflow.imgix.net/uploads/images/South-Africas-Just-Transition-Framework-for-Stakeholder-Consultation-Feb-2022\\_2022-02-23-092221\\_xvt.pdf](https://pccommissionflow.imgix.net/uploads/images/South-Africas-Just-Transition-Framework-for-Stakeholder-Consultation-Feb-2022_2022-02-23-092221_xvt.pdf)

## CONFERENCES AND OTHER EVENTS

- 2 April 2022 – **4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Clean Energy and Electrical Systems (CEES 2022)** - Tokyo, Japan and online
- 25 April – **8 May 2022 – UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 15)** – Kunming, China
- 11-12 May 2022 - **Sustainability Summit Africa** – Online Event

**IMBEWU'S ONLINE Safety, Health & Environmental (SHE) Legal Registers** serve to link environmental and health & safety legal requirements, not only to clients' specific activities, but also to legislative provisions and legal commentaries. Our state-of-the-art online electronic SHE Legal Registers are cost effective, contemporary and streamlined for easy access with secure passwords, easy navigation, explanations of SHE legislation relevant to specific operations, access to a comprehensive searchable SHE legislation database (which is updated monthly) and include site-specific documentation.

For more information contact [sam@imbewu.co.za](mailto:sam@imbewu.co.za) or visit <https://imbewu.co.za/she-electronic-legal-registers/>

*"We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive."* – **Albert Einstein**

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