

IMBEWU

Sustainability Legal Specialists (Pty) Ltd

FACILITATING LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Our services include:

- Online SHE Legal Registers
- Customised SHE Legislation updates
- Corporate Sustainability & ESG



SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

For a copy of the Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Legislation Update, please go to:

<https://imbewu.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Monthly-SHE-leg-update-Jan2025.pdf>

For copies of the last three Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Legislation Updates, please go to:

<https://imbewu.co.za/publications/>

NATIONAL

ESKOM AIMS FOR FULL YEAR WITHOUT LOADSHEDDING AFTER REACHING 300-DAY MILESTONE - Eskom's Group Executive for Generation, Bheki Nxumalo ("Nxumalo"), announced that the utility is focused on helping South Africa achieve a full year without load shedding by midnight on 26 March 2025. This follows the milestone of 300 days without load shedding, which was reached on 21 January 2025, this is something that hasn't been seen since June 2018.

Since March 2023, Nxumalo has been leading the Generation Recovery Plan, which has been credited with reducing unplanned breakdowns. He attributes this turnaround to the efforts of Eskom's 40,000 employees. Nxumalo noted that the past 300 days without load shedding have significantly reduced unplanned outages, which have long posed major challenges. Additionally, there has been an approximately 7% improvement in the energy availability factor, along with savings in diesel expenditure amounting to R16.42 billion.

The "elimination" of load shedding has become a key message for South Africa's delegation at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Electricity and Energy Minister Dr. Ramakgopa ("Ramakgopa") is utilising this platform to highlight the reforms that have occurred in the electricity sector to encourage private sector participation and competition. Ramakgopa further stated that the South African government aims to increase generation capacity from 48

GW to 78 GW by 2035, with significant investments planned in renewable energy, natural gas, and nuclear power. Eskom CEO, Dan Marokane, who also attended the forum in Davos, emphasised that the recovery is a critical factor contributing to positive sentiments about South Africa's growth prospects, which are expected to reach up to 2% this year.

Source: <https://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/eskom-now-targeting-full-year-loadshedding-free-milestone-as-it-breaches-300-day-mark-2025-01-21>

GOVERNMENT RAISES FISH ALLOCATIONS BY 36% TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN COASTAL REGIONS - Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, Dr. Dion George, has announced a 36% increase in the allocation of key fish species to small-scale fishers in South Africa. This decision aims to empower fishing communities, strengthen local economies, and ensure the sustainable use of marine resources. The increase in fish allocations specifically for personal use and small-scale fishing operations is designed to improve the livelihoods of local fishers, with the broader goal of fostering socio-economic development in coastal areas. South Africa's coastal communities, many of which rely heavily on fishing for their income, should now have greater access to vital marine resources, which will help stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and provide more opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

George emphasised that this decision is part of a comprehensive strategy to support small-scale fishers, acknowledging the importance of this sector as a cornerstone of South Africa's coastal economy. By prioritising small-scale operations, the government is ensuring that these fishers have the resources they need to become central players in driving local, sustainable development. This approach also aligns with the country's commitment to marine conservation and sustainable fisheries management, with a focus on protecting South Africa's rich marine biodiversity for future generations. The government's strategy to increase fish allocations for small-scale fishers is not just about economic empowerment, but also about creating a more inclusive and resilient fishing industry. Small-scale fishers often face challenges such as limited access to markets, inadequate infrastructure, and competition from larger commercial fisheries. With increased fish allocations, these communities will have more resources to invest in their businesses, improve their practices, and ensure that their fishing activities are both economically viable and environmentally sustainable.

Source: <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/government-increases-fish-allocation-36>

ZAMA ZAMAS' FAMILIES SET TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AFTER GOLD MINE TRAGEDY IN STILFONTEIN - The families of illegal mineworkers, known as Zama Zamas, who died in a disused gold mine in Stilfontein, North West, are preparing to take legal action against the government. Reports suggest that many of the workers, trapped underground for months, died from starvation. This tragedy has sparked outrage, prompting the General Industries Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA) to call for a thorough investigation.

A total of 78 bodies were recovered after a Gauteng High Court order mandated the initiation of rescue operations. GIWUSA President Mametlwe Sebei announced that the mining-affected communities united to hold the government accountable. Additionally, there are proposals for a commission of inquiry to investigate issues related to artisanal mining and the crisis of abandoned mines.

The Zama Zamas had been trapped underground since July of 2024, largely due to police actions, which, according to GIWUSA, disrupted rescue efforts. The South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) has stated that if post-mortem results confirm starvation as the cause of death, they will push for government accountability. The police are blaming illegal mining kingpins for the deaths of these miners.

Source: <https://thestar.pressreader.com/article/281496461943751>

INTERNATIONAL

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMENTS ON THE US'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PARIS AGREEMENT - On 20 January 2025, Donald Trump was inaugurated as the president of the United States. Shortly after taking office, President Trump signed an executive order directing the U.S. to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. As a result, the U.S. became one of only four countries not party to the agreement, joining Iran, Libya, and Yemen. The withdrawal will take effect one year after the official notice. Dr Dion George, the South African Minister environmental affairs, responded by stating that U.S. participation in the Paris Agreement represented a significant victory for global efforts to address climate change. He emphasised that it reflected the scientific consensus on the urgency of taking action against the climate crisis. He argued that the U.S. withdrawal not only undermines the global responsibility we share towards humanity but also damages multilateralism, international law, and the trust built between nations. As one of the largest contributors to global emissions, the U.S. has a moral obligation to lead by example in reducing emissions. Additionally, it should support developing economies and provide aid to poorer countries that are experiencing the impacts of climate change.

At COP 29, the U.S. communicated its mitigation target for 2035. However, with President Trump in office, it appears that these commitments may not be fulfilled. Dr George acknowledged the significant contributions that previous U.S. administrations have made to South Africa in response to the climate crisis, particularly regarding the recent support for South Africa's Just Energy Transition Partnership. He urged the Trump administration to take its commitments under international law seriously and to carefully consider the consequences of its planned withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.

Source: <https://mg.co.za/the-green-guardian/2025-01-23-dion-george-slams-us-exit-from-paris-agreement-urges-continued-climate-action/>

GREAT BARRIER REEF STRUCK BY MOST WIDESPREAD CORAL BLEACHING - A recent study found that over 40% of corals monitored around One Tree Island in the Great Barrier Reef were killed last year during a severe bleaching outbreak. Researchers tracked 462 coral colonies after heat stress caused them to turn white in early 2024. Only 92 colonies escaped bleaching, with 193 dead and 113 still affected by July 2024.

Professor Maria Byrne from the University of Sydney, who has studied the island for 35 years, noted the "catastrophic" state of the reef. In November 2024, the Australian Institute of Marine Science reported a 41% decline in hard coral cover in the Capricorn-Bunker sector, the largest annual drop since monitoring began in the mid-1980s. Similar trends were observed in the northern section, described by a government scientist as a "graveyard of corals." The study, initiated in February 2024, used temperature loggers and direct observations to monitor twelve coral types. While some corals can recover from mild bleaching when temperatures drop, this is not always the case. Certain genus of coral, such as the Goniopora, may bleach and then develop the flesh-eating disease known as black band.

Another University of Sydney scientist remarked that the reef has become unrecognisable, with many colonies covered in algae or dead. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority linked the bleaching primarily to heat stress, reporting temperatures 1.2 degrees Celsius higher than usual. The head of oceans at WWF-Australia emphasised the need for increased efforts to protect the reef amid growing climate change pressures.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jan/22/catastrophic-great-barrier-reef-hit-by-its-most-widespread-coral-bleaching-study-finds>

IMBEWU'S ONLINE Safety, Health & Environmental (SHE) Legal Registers serve to link environmental and health & safety legal requirements, not only to clients' specific activities, aspects and risks, 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 and a search engine. Access to a comprehensive searchable SHE legislation database (which is updated monthly), is included as well as site-specific documentation.

For more information contact admin@imbewu.co.za or visit <https://imbewu.co.za/she-electronic-legal-registers/>

The logo for Warburton Attorneys Inc Sustainability Law Specialists features a green background with a close-up of water droplets on grass on the left. To the right, there is a stylized green gear icon. The text 'Warburton Attorneys Inc' is in a large, dark green font, with 'Sustainability Law Specialists' in a smaller, lighter green font below it. Contact information '011 447 6848 | admin@warburtons.co.za' and the website 'www.warburtons.co.za' are listed at the bottom in a light green font.

Warburton Attorneys Inc
Sustainability Law Specialists
011 447 6848 | admin@warburtons.co.za
www.warburtons.co.za

16 February 2025- World Whale Day <https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/world-whale-day/>

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in IMBEWU's Sustainability Newsletter and Legislation Update has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. IMBEWU does not warrant the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information.

If you would no longer like to receive IMBEWU's Newsletter and Legislation Update please email admin@imbewu.co.za