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## SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

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

<https://imbewu.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Monthly-SHE-leg-update-May25.pdf>

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

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

## NATIONAL

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL PRACTITIONERS ARE OFFICIALLY BEING REGISTERED BY EAPASA** - The Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) has formalised the recognition and registration of **Environmental Control Practitioners (ECPs)**, with a view to enhancing the professionalisation of environmental governance in South Africa. This new designation includes a wide range of environmental professionals who provide essential services for post-decision impact assessments, ensuring compliance, monitoring, governance, and communication regarding environmental performance throughout the lifecycle of development projects.

Since the beginning of August 2024, with the approval of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), EAPASA has been authorised to professionally register ECPs. These practitioners play a crucial role in the environmental sector by overseeing and coordinating governance, monitoring, evaluation, and communication related to compliance with environmental authorisations, licences, permits, and associated documentation. ECP assessments also involve verifying project compliance with environmental management programmes, general environmental management plans, closure plans, rehabilitation plans, due diligence reports, and various audit and performance reports.

The key responsibilities of ECPs include on-site environmental management and post-decision environmental monitoring and evaluation. They also conduct environmental risk assessments and due diligence assessments while ensuring adherence to environmental compliance obligations, international standards, and best practice guidelines.

EAPASA is the sole registration authority appointed by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) for the registration and regulation of Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAPs) in South Africa. This initiative is in line with the National Framework for the Professionalisation of the Public Sector, launched by the National School of Government in October 2022. The framework aims to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are appointed to positions of authority, contributing to the development of a professional, ethical, capable, and developmental public sector.

**Source:** <https://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/eapasa-formalises-registration-of-environmental-control-practitioners-2025-05-26>

**THE MINERAL COUNCIL INTRODUCED THE DRAFT MINERAL & PETROLEUM RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT BILL** – The Minister responsible for Mineral and Petroleum Resources published the draft Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Bill on 20 May 2025. In addition, the Minerals Council released the Critical Minerals and Metals Strategy. The Minerals Council commented on the launch of both documents by highlighting the necessity for South Africa to realise its mining industry's potential, emphasising the importance of growth and sustainability in the sector, which both the bill and strategy aim to achieve.

The bill and strategy aim to encourage investment in exploration, the development of new mines, and the long-term sustainability and expansion of mining operations. Key takeaways from the introduction of the bill include its focus on addressing longstanding issues within the department and providing policy and regulatory certainty to enhance investor confidence.

Furthermore, the bill aims to align existing mining legislation with evolving policies, economic conditions, and global trends, ensuring that it meets industry needs and government priorities. It proposes a streamlined approach to administrative processes across existing environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 and the National Water Act 36 of 1998, to ensure proper alignment, avoid inconsistencies, and facilitate a quicker turnaround time for mining rights, permits, and regulatory approvals.

The bill also includes measures to promote the local beneficiation of minerals and provides for enhanced consultation and sanctions. It aims to foster equitable access to South Africa's mineral resources by designating specific areas for small-scale and artisanal mining. The licensing process aims to ensure compliance with environmental, safety, and labour regulations while reducing the risk of illegal mining activities.

Additionally, the bill establishes a regional mining development and environmental committee. Members of the public are invited to comment on the bill and have until **13 August 2025** to do so. There have been reports of dissatisfaction and criticism with the draft Mineral and Petroleum Resources and Development Bill. Kindly see the link below for an overview of the concerns raised:

**Source:** <https://iol.co.za/business-report/economy/2025-05-29-criticism-of-south-africas-new-mineral-resources-bill-a-disaster-in-the-making/>

**Source:** <https://bd.pressreader.com/article/281599541410288>

**CORPORATE LOBBYING DERAILED SOUTH AFRICA'S CLIMATE GOALS** – The activist organisation “Just Share” has released a report claiming that South Africa's largest polluters are paying the least in carbon tax, resulting in minimal reductions in their greenhouse gas emissions. This situation stems from corporate

lobbying against climate policies, which has led the government to make concessions and delay two key climate bills: the Carbon Tax Act 15 of 2019 (CTA) and the Climate Change Act 22 of 2024 (CCA).

According to Emma Schuster, a senior climate risk analyst at Just Share, these policies disproportionately affect poorer communities. The report highlights that South Africa ranks among the top fifteen countries for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, primarily from industrial sources, and that some high emitters have lobbied against climate action by framing it as harmful to the economy.

Progress on climate policy has been slow since the government's National Climate Change Response Strategy was published in 2004. The report utilised publicly available information, including policy papers and parliamentary records, and noted that the CTA, initially designed to reduce emissions, has become one of the lowest carbon taxes in the world due to industry pushback.

Additionally, the CCA has faced delays, and key sections, such as corporate carbon budget allocation, remain unimplemented. The report criticised the lack of penalties for companies exceeding their carbon budgets and called for improved transparency and accountability, recommending that communities and civil society should have a greater role in shaping climate policies based on evidence-based research.

**Source:** <https://groundup.org.za/article/corporate-lobbying-derailed-sa-climate-goals-report-finds/>

## INTERNATIONAL

**UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSES CONCERNS OVER MELTING OF HIMALAYAN GLACIERS IN NEPAL** - UN Secretary-General António Guterres has issued a stark warning to the Nepalese government about the rapidly melting Himalayan glaciers, urging immediate action to confront the climate crisis. Guterres acknowledged that, despite Nepal's negligible contribution to global emissions, the country is already experiencing severe consequences from rising temperatures.

Nepal has witnessed a surge in extreme weather events, including droughts, forest fires, water scarcity, floods, and glacial lake outbursts. In his remarks, Guterres highlighted that the country has lost nearly one-third of its glacial ice over the past thirty (30) years. Alarmingly, glaciers in Nepal are now melting 65% faster this decade compared to the previous one.

Reaffirming global climate goals, Guterres reiterated the importance of adhering to the 1.5°C temperature limit and delivering on the \$1.3 trillion climate finance target agreed at the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP29). He described this financial commitment as "an insurance policy for humanity," emphasising its potential to safeguard billions of lives while promoting job creation, economic growth, and access to clean, affordable energy.

His warning coincided with the opening of Nepal's Sagarmatha Sambaad, a dialogue forum initiated by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to raise global awareness about the critical role of the Himalayas in climate protection. Named after Mount Everest (Sagarmatha), the world's highest peak, the forum aims to foster meaningful dialogue, shared learning, and collective climate action.

In the lead-up to the forum, children and youth presented a formal declaration to government leaders, demanding urgent climate action and recognition of their role as "legitimate climate actors and rights-holders."

Guterres had previously visited Nepal in 2023, where he stressed the urgent need to reduce fossil fuel emissions to protect the country's future. Geographically situated between two of the world's largest fossil fuel producers—China and India—Nepal faces unique and disproportionate exposure to transboundary air pollution and climate impacts.

**Source:** <https://www.jurist.org/news/2025/05/un-chief-raises-international-alarm-over-melting-of-himalayan-glaciers-in-nepal/>

**THE WHA INTRODUCES THE PANDEMIC AGREEMENT** – The World Health Assembly (WHA) has officially adopted the Pandemic Agreement, establishing an international, legally binding framework grounded in the One Health approach. This concept emphasises the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.

FOUR PAWS, a global animal welfare organisation, has praised the WHA for this groundbreaking agreement—the first of its kind—calling it a vital step toward pandemic prevention. The organisation urges all nations not only to sign the treaty but also to begin implementing its provisions. A central tenet of the agreement is the recognition of animal welfare as essential to protecting human health. This marks a significant evolution in global health policy, shifting the focus from merely managing symptoms to proactively addressing the root causes of disease outbreaks before they overwhelm health systems.

Beyond reaffirming the role of animal welfare in health policy, the treaty represents a strong commitment to international collaboration in tackling global challenges. By formally adopting the One Health approach, governments are encouraged to develop multisectoral strategies that reflect the complex interdependencies among human health, animal health, and environmental integrity.

Over 70% of emerging infectious diseases in humans originate from animals, often as a result of human actions affecting animals and their habitats. Countries such as Uganda, through its National One Health Platform, demonstrate the success of interministerial collaboration in preventing zoonotic disease outbreaks. With a proven track record in responding to threats like Ebola and anthrax, Uganda prioritises disease prevention and preparedness, serving as a model for others to follow.

**Source:** <https://capeargus.pressreader.com/article/281621016253709>

**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 legislation 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](mailto:admin@imbewu.co.za) or visit <https://imbewu.co.za/she-electronic-legal-registers/>



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8 June 2025- World Oceans Day <https://www.un.org/en/observances/oceans-day>

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