

Greenpeace slams new nuclear plant plans

Greenpeace Africa has responded with outrage to [Eskom's announcement](#) that it would be building and operating a nuclear power plant at Duvnefontein, Western Cape, after getting the green all clear from the Department of Environmental Affairs.



Melita Steele, senior environmental campaigner: Greenpeace Africa. Photo: [IISD Reporting Services](#)

"Greenpeace is strongly opposed to the authorisation of a 4,000MW nuclear power station at Duvnefontein. This decision flies in the face of rational decision-making and due process. It is inconceivable that the minister of energy has accepted that the country's nuclear determination is no longer valid as a result of the court case that Earthlife Africa Jhb and Safcei brought at the beginning of this year, and yet approval for a nuclear power station has been given," says Melita Steele, senior climate and energy campaigner at Greenpeace Africa.

"One of the 'key factors considered in making the decision' include the need for 'increased base-load electricity generation', which is ridiculous given that the demand for electricity is actually suppressed in South Africa due to rapidly increasing costs of electricity, and new renewable energy projects are clearly cheaper and delivering faster than a new nuclear power station could.

The court case was not, in fact, about building nuclear power stations but the validity and transparency of the vendor contracts former energy minister, Tina Joemat-Pettersson, signed with Russia, the US and South Korea.

"The authorisation notice also mentions that 'generation by means of nuclear power...is supported by South African

government policy including the Integrated Resources Plan'. This is an outright disparity as the Integrated Resource Plan is currently being updated, and is due by the end of February next year. It is inconceivable that an outdated plan can be used as a reason for authorising a nuclear power station while the minister of energy has put all decisions related to electricity infrastructure on hold, pending the finalisation of the Integrated Resource Plan, and Integrated Energy Plan.

"The reality is that nuclear is unaffordable and South Africans will end up paying the price for any new nuclear power station through rapidly escalating electricity prices. The fact that nuclear is never safe also means that any new nuclear power station will increase the risk of a catastrophic nuclear accident occurring in South Africa. Greenpeace will consider its options in terms of formally opposing this authorisation," Steele says.

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