

## Australia Africa Universities Network: The Just Energy Transition

[CONCEPT DRAFT V 7.1: 1 July 2024 – Speakers and topics are subject to change]

**Perth, Australia, 1-3 September 2024**

**Forum Planning Group: Australia** – John Hearn, Grace Liu Flanagan, David Mickler, Matthew Neuhaus Treena Burgess, Kadambot Sidique; **Africa** – Aldo Stroebel, Sussy Munialo, Frans Swanepoel.

### 1. OVERALL PROGRAM:

#### SUNDAY 1 SEPT:

AAUN Ltd AGM [Board Members/VIP guests], 1600-1800 Pan Pacific/ Novotel Hotel. [Lead: JH/GLF]

Opening Reception, Murdoch University, 1800-2000 Pan Pacific Hotel. [Lead: Treena Burgess]

**MONDAY 2 SEPT:** AAUN Workshops, cultural activities, ECRs, dinner [Lead D Mickler]

**TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER:** AAUN Australia Forum, Curtin Centre, Perth [Lead JH/GLF, planning group]

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**2. INTRODUCTION.** There are several current developments and changes that influence AAUN's future:

- Change of government in Australia 2022, with some improvement in Australia Africa relations.
- Policies published in Security and Defence, Education Accord, and International Development.
- Continuing changes in AUKUS, CPP-TT influencing the Australia Africa Indo Pacific Regions.
- AAUN exploring links with selected African and Indo Pacific University Networks.
- AAUN continuing to review, consult and strengthen its Strategic Action Plan 2025-30.
- Establishment of the AAUN Early Career Researcher Network.
- AAUN launched PRDF 2024 with 50% funding each from AAUN Australia and AAUN Africa.

### 3. BACKGROUND DEVELOPMENT (see [www.aaun.edu.au](http://www.aaun.edu.au))

**The AAUN Australia Forum and AGM on 1-3 September 2024 in Perth** will further develop the rationale, priorities, and implementation of the AAUN Partnerships, through a lens of the just energy transition.

**The AAUN Africa Forum at the University of Mpumalanga 14-16 April 2024** reviewed research priorities, alignment with SDGs, and the engagement of early career researchers.

**The AAUN Africa Forum on 22 May 2023 at the University of Pretoria**, as a part of Future Africa Week, explored ways that selected strategic partnerships can address large, complex problems and deliver impact through teamwork.

**The AAUN Perth Forum during 4-5 Sept 2023** focused on the consolidation of AAUN activities under the theme Knowledge Teamwork: Policies, Priorities, People.

**The Forum in Canberra 27-28 October 2022** provided an integrated baseline framework 2022-30 for “The Five Securities” (i) Environment and Agriculture, (ii) Food and Nutrition, (iii) Health and Diseases; (iv)

Education, Employment and Economic Development. It is failures in these that fuel (v) Hard Security, in migration, terrorism, trafficking, cybercrime, corruption, and societal destabilization.

#### **4. CONCEPT: The Just Energy Transition and Sustainable Development**

**The Just Energy Transition** holds fundamental opportunities for beneficial change. Linking with the SDGs, and to the small AAUN-PRDF awards, there is a chance to engage in research with impact. The AAUN partners and stakeholders can contribute to future peace and wellbeing through international teamwork.

**Green Energy production, with social justice**, reducing dependence on fossil fuels while promoting alternatives, will provide clean and affordable energy, reduce energy poverty, and provide jobs in renewable energy sectors. Marginal communities should have equitable access to employment. Investment in education and training are crucial for an equitable transition, with opportunities for entrepreneurial company spin-offs.

**Environment and climate balance.** The energy transition is essential for mitigating climate change. Reducing emissions from fossil fuels (not a short-term reality) will stabilize the climate, preserve natural habitats and diversity, reduce pollution and land degradation and contributing to a more balanced ecosystem.

**Agriculture and Food Production.** Renewable energy can revolutionize agriculture, providing sustainable power for irrigation, processing and storage, reducing costs and emissions from diesel generators. Bioenergy from agricultural waste can enhance efficiency. A careful balance of energy and agriculture can be sustainable.

**Public Health and non-communicable diseases** (the current plague of Obesity, Heart disease, diabetes). Significant public health benefits open with reduced air and water pollution, decreasing cancers, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Allied to healthy lifestyle, exercise and physical activity, life course fitness is real.

**Education and economic development.** The energy transition drives economic development by creating new industries and jobs. Training in green technologies and sustainable practices is essential in providing a skilled intellectual leadership and a labour force – including in remote and under-served areas.

**Security and Conflict.** Reduction of imported fossil fuels can enhance national security. Domestic renewable energy independence fosters stability. But competition for rare earth metals, essential for renewable energy technologies, could fuel new conflicts.

**Australia – Africa Opportunities in the Just Energy Transition.** There are massive opportunities for partnerships in economic development, migration, social impact, solar, wind and hydrogen technologies, deploying through joint ventures. Universities can research, educate, and tailor approaches for similar climate and geographic conditions in the sectors above. There is scope for investment and financing with public-private partnerships, and Australia partnering with international development banks.

Capacity building and training can provide new research, education, and commercial opportunities. A major opportunity exists for advisory services and educational exchange at leadership and training levels, shadowing exchange programs, including an integration of grid and market mechanisms. There is opportunity to engage in grid modernization and expansion – extending access to remote communities. There can be cooperation in Agri-photovoltaics, reforestation, and carbon sequestration, creating sustainable income streams for farmers. Greater regional cooperation can build new energy markets, engage governments and business, and address disaster risk management relating to climate change.

A focus on these areas, and on others where Australia – Africa societies and sustainability needs leadership and teamwork, can enhance the advancement of the energy transition for both. Cooperation would help the global fight against climate change, while promoting sustainable development, energy security, and economic growth in both regions.

## Program, 1-3 September 2024

<b>AAUN PRE-PROGRAMME</b>	
<b>SUNDAY, 1 September 2024 – Pan Pacific Hotel</b>	
<b>1600-1800</b>	AAUN AGM
<b>1800-2000</b>	AAUN Welcome Reception – include a quick speaker for profile, perhaps two VCs (African and Australian)
<b>AAUN WORKSHOPS</b>	
<b>MONDAY, 2 September 2024 – Curtin University Bentley Campus, Kent Street, Bentley</b>	
<b>0900-0930</b>	Group bus pick-up from Duxton Hotel and drop off at Curtin Bentley campus
<b>0945-1145</b>	Workshops 1 & 2 (parallel) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Open Science</b></li> <li><b>2. University Transformation</b></li> </ol>
<b>1200-1300</b>	Lunch at St Catherine’s College Dining Hall
<b>1315-1515</b>	Workshops 3 & 4 (parallel) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. Indigenous Knowledge</b></li> <li><b>4. Establishment of AAUN Australia ECR Group</b></li> </ol>
<b>1530-1730</b>	<b>Indian Ocean Craft Triennial (IOTA24) Exhibition and Guided Tour</b> John Curtin Gallery <a href="https://indianoceancrafttriennial.com/exhibition/john-curtin-gallery/">https://indianoceancrafttriennial.com/exhibition/john-curtin-gallery/</a>
<b>1800-2030</b>	<b>Forum Dinner and Panel Discussion: Australia-Africa Science Diplomacy</b> Venue tbc
<b>AAUN AUSTRALIA FORUM – THE JUST ENERGY TRANSITION</b>	
<b>TUESDAY, 3 September 2024 – Curtin CBD Campus, 137 St Georges Terrace, Perth 6000</b>	
<b>0800</b>	<b>Walk from hotels: Duxton Hotel is a 10-minute walk</b>
<b>0830</b>	<b>Registration &amp; arrival coffee/tea</b>
<b>0900</b>	<b>Session 1 – Just Energy Transition, Security and Development: Insights from Australia and Africa</b>
<b>0900-0915</b>	<b>Chair: Prof John Hearn, Co-Chair, AAUN Australia</b>  <b>Welcome to Country</b> – Whadjuk Nyungar Elder (3-5mins)  <b>Welcome Remarks</b> (15 min total): Hon Tim Watts, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs – Welcome to Australia (video - tbc) Prof Harlene Hayne, Vice-Chancellor Curtin University – Welcome to Curtin University Prof Aldo Stroebe, Co-Chair AAUN Africa, DVC University of Mpumalanga (A/Prof David Mickler, Deputy Co-Chair AAUN Western Australia, Curtin University?)
<b>0915-1015</b>	<b>Chair: Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, AAUN Deputy Co-Chair, Africa and VC Makerere University</b> <b>Speakers</b> (5 min each) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. HE Ambassador Joe Tapera Mhishi, HC Zimbabwe and Dean African HOMS</b></li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Prof Sanjeev Sobhee, VC University of Mauritius</li> <li>3. Dr Thandi Mgwebi, National Research Foundation SA</li> <li>4. Australian VC or other, female</li> </ol>
<b>1015-1045</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
<b>1045-1145</b>	<b>Session 2: The Science of the Energy Transition</b> Chair: Prof Frans Swanepoel, Future Africa, University of Pretoria
	<p><b>Speakers</b> (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prof Kadambot Siddique, Director, UWA Institute of Agriculture</li> <li>2. Prof Treena Burgess, Murdoch University</li> <li>3. Prof David Norris, University of Botswana</li> </ol> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Female  <b>Discussion</b> (30 min)</p>
<b>1145-1245</b>	<b>Session 3: The Politics of the Energy Transition</b> Chair: Prof Andrew Deeks, Vice-Chancellor, Murdoch University
	<p><b>Speakers</b> (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prof Peta Ashworth, Director, Curtin Institute for Energy Transition</li> <li>2. A/Prof Kathryn Sturman, Sustainable Minerals Institute, University of Queensland</li> <li>3. Prof Maano Ramutsindela, University of Cape Town/Pretoria</li> </ol> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Prof Chris Isike, University of Pretoria  <b>Discussion</b> (30 min)</p>
<b>1245-1400</b>	<b>Lunch</b> <i>The lunch provides an opportunity for AAUN research groups to meet, and AAUN communities in alumni, ECRs and diaspora groups to engage</i>
<b>1400-1500</b>	<b>Session 4: The Economics of the Energy Transition</b> Chair: Dr Janet Dzator, Director CARE-P, University of Newcastle
	<p><b>Speakers</b> (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prof Kayihura Didas, VC, University of Rwanda</li> <li>2. Prof Kanayo Ogujiuba, University of Mpumalanga</li> <li>3. Prof Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, University of Pretoria</li> </ol> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Prof Nigar Sultana, Curtin University  <b>Discussion</b> (30 min)</p>
<b>1500-1600</b>	<b>Session 5: Launch of AAUN ECR Group: Building Future Australia-Africa Research Leaders</b> Chair: Dr Priscilla Mensah, Nelson Mandela University
	<p>AAUN Africa ECR Chairs: Dr Quinisani Qwabe (Nelson Mandela University), Dr Sussy Munialo (University of Pretoria)  AAUN Australia ECR Chairs: <i>To be elected on 2 September.</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> Prof Julia Richardson, Head of School, Management and Marketing, Curtin University</p>

1600-1645	<b>Closing Session: Conclusions, and PRDF Announcement</b> <b>Chairs: Prof Aldo Stroebe and Prof John Hearn</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Forum Summary</li> <li>▪ Announcement of PRDF 2024 Grants Winners</li> <li>▪ Welcome to new members (Edith Cowan University, Bahir Dar University)</li> <li>▪ Next AAUN Africa Forum: University of Rwanda, May 2025 (Prof Kayihura Didas)</li> </ul>
1700-1800	<b>Forum Reception for Participants</b>
1815-2030	<b>Note: Opening Reception of Africa Down Under Conference at Pan-Pacific Hotel</b>

**REGISTER – Please refer to the AAUN website [www.aaun.edu.au](http://www.aaun.edu.au) for current information**

- (i) **Those attending in Perth (100 capacity)** and those on Webex (150?) are requested to register at [www.aaun.edu.au](http://www.aaun.edu.au) Members and invited guests of AAUN will have priority seating in Perth.
- (ii) On 2 September there will be a Forum dinner (venue tbc) with a keynote lecture and panel on (theme tbc) registration is separate through invitation and the AAUN Forum webpage, and will include a cost (tbc)

**Accommodation** – We suggest the Duxton Hotel, 1 St Georges Terrace, Perth 6000, which will offer a discounted room rate of \$..... for AAUN delegates. Please make your reservations directly via [THIS LINK](#).

**Registration** attendance and Webex - opens 15 July [www.aaun.edu.au](http://www.aaun.edu.au) (Grace Liu – [aaun@unsw.edu.au](mailto:aaun@unsw.edu.au)).  
**Note: AAUN Members and invited guests will have priority for in-person registration. Places are limited.**

**SPEAKERS – Please send a 200-word bio, (a 200-word abstract and a power-point optional) by 15 August latest to be included in the program - [aaun@unsw.edu.au](mailto:aaun@unsw.edu.au)**

**CHAIRS** – Make sure **time is observed strictly** and discussions allow broad engagement. When the presentations in your session are complete, ask for comment from listed discussants (1-2 min each) and then open to Q/A – with short interventions. There is ample time for an inclusive discussion.

**REFERENCES**

Clean Energy Council, *Clean Energy Australia Report*, 13 March 2024: Available: <https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/resources/resources-hub/clean-energy-australia-report>

University of Queensland, Sustainable Minerals Institute, “Can affected communities expect a ‘just’ energy transition?”, 13 May 2024. Available: <https://smi.uq.edu.au/article/2024/05/can-affected-communities-expect-just-energy-transition>

AAUN Reference and Background Papers: [www.aaun.edu.au](http://www.aaun.edu.au)

1. AAUN Strategic Action Plan 2024-2026
2. AAUN Assessment Report
3. AAUN Submission to DFAT for the review of International Development 2023
4. DFAT International Development Policy Review (summary) – released 8 August 2023.
5. OECD Summary of AID/FDI to Africa

**ACRONYMS USED IN THIS PROGRAM**

**ACIAR** – Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research – AAUN Knowledge Partner.

**DFAT** – Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – AAUN Knowledge Partner.

**HOMS** – Heads of Mission – High Commissioners, Ambassadors.  
**NRF SA** – National Research Foundation of South Africa.  
**PRDF** – AAUN Partnership and Research Development Fund.  
**ACU** – Association of Commonwealth Universities – AAUN Knowledge Partner.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

**Student Ambassadors and volunteers**, assisting the Forum.

**KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS AND SPONSORS.**

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**Thanks to Curtin University, VC Harlene Hayne and Dean Global, Africa, David Mickler for hosting this AAUN Forum**

**MEDIA (TBC).** A Forum report will be circulated to partners, media, agencies and posted on the AAUN websites.

**CATERING.** Morning tea/coffee/juice; light lunch; Reception

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