

Australia Africa Universities Network: The Just Energy Transition

[CONCEPT DRAFT: 7 August 2024 – Speakers and topics are subject to change]

Perth, Australia, 1-3 September 2024

Forum Steering Group: Australia – John Hearn, Grace Liu Flanagan, David Mickler, Jacqueline Lo, Kadambot Sidique; **Africa** – Aldo Stroebel, Sussy Munialo, Frans Swanepoel.

1. PROGRAM SUMMARY:

SUNDAY 1 SEPT: Welcome Reception, 1800-2000 Pan-Pacific Hotel, Perth CBD

MONDAY 2 SEPT: AAUN Workshops, gallery exhibition, dinner & panel, Curtin Bentley (main) Campus

TUESDAY 3 SEPT: AAUN Australia Forum & AGM, Curtin Perth CBD Campus

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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.
- The launch of the AAUN PRDF 2024, with 50% funding each from AAUN Australia and AAUN Africa.

3. BACKGROUND DEVELOPMENT (see 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 Perth Forum during 4-5 Sept 2023 focused on the consolidation of AAUN activities under the theme Knowledge Teamwork: Policies, Priorities, People.

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 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

| AAUN PRE-PROGRAMME | |
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| SUNDAY, 1 September 2024 – Pan Pacific Hotel | |
| 1800-2000 | AAUN Welcome Reception Facilitator: Dr Janet Dzator , Deputy Co-Chair (EA), AAUN Australia Australia welcome: Bill Repard , Executive Chairman Paydirt Media; Convenor, Africa Down Under Africa welcome: Prof Kayihura Didas , VC, University of Rwanda |
| AAUN WORKSHOPS | |
| MONDAY, 2 September 2024 – Curtin University Bentley Campus, Kent Street, Bentley | |

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| 0900-0930 | Group bus pick-up from Duxton Hotel and drop off at Curtin Bentley Campus |
| 0945-1145 | <p><u>Workshops 1 & 2 (parallel)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open Science (30 capacity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Led by Curtin Open Knowledge Institute (COKI) ● Dr Thandi Mgwebi, Group Executive: Business Advancement, South African National Research Foundation ● <i>Other speakers TBC</i> 2. University Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Led by Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES) ● Prof Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, VC, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar ● Dr Vathi Papu-Zamxaka, DVC Research, Innovation and Engagement, Tshwane University of Technology |
| 1200-1300 | <p><u>Lunch at St Catherine’s College Dining Hall, Curtin Bentley Campus</u> https://stcatherines.curtin.edu.au/our-facilities</p> |
| 1315-1515 | <p><u>Workshops 3 & 4 (parallel) (30 capacity each)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Indigenous Knowledges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jenna Woods, Dean, School of Indigenous Knowledges, Murdoch University ● Prof Felix Asante, PVC Research, Innovation and Development, University of Ghana ● A/Prof. Robyn Heckenberg, Dean Learning & Teaching, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University (tbc) ● Dr Selorm Dorvlo, University of Ghana 4. The Future of Australia-Africa Relations: Establishment of AAUN Australia ECR Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Facilitators (first hour): Melissa Permezel and Aletana Ajulo (Australian National University)</i> ● <i>Facilitators (second hour): A/Prof. David Mickler and Prof. Julia Richardson, Curtin University</i> <p><i>(*By invitation only) Meeting of AAUN PRDF 2024 grant winners, facilitated by Prof. John Hearn and Prof. Aldo Stroebel</i></p> |
| 1530-1700 | <p><u>Indian Ocean Craft Triennial (IOTA24) Exhibition and Guided Tour</u> John Curtin Gallery. See: https://indianoceancrafttriennial.com/exhibition/john-curtin-gallery/</p> <p><i>(*By invitation only) Feedback workshop for Australia Awards Africa scholars, facilitated by Ms Shontal McLintock, Palladium (25 capacity)</i></p> |
| 1700-2000 | <p><u>Reception, Forum Dinner and Panel Discussion:</u> Nesuto Hotel, Curtin Bentley campus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Panel theme: Australia-Africa Science Diplomacy, chaired by A/Prof. David Mickler ● Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ H.E. Dr Wilson Kogo, High Commissioner of Kenya (tbc) ○ Ms Melissa Permezel, National Security College, Australian National University ○ Other panelists (tbc) |

| AAUN AUSTRALIA FORUM – THE JUST ENERGY TRANSITION | |
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| TUESDAY, 3 September 2024 – Curtin CBD Campus, 137 St Georges Terrace, Perth | |
| 0800 | Walk from hotels: Duxton Hotel is a 10-minute walk |
| 0830 | Registration & arrival coffee/tea |
| 0900 | Session 1 – Just Energy Transition, Security and Development: Insights from Australia and Africa |
| 0900-0920 | <p>Chair: Prof. John Hearn, Co-Chair, AAUN Australia</p> <p>Welcome to Country (5 mins) – Whadjuk Noongar Elder Mrs Robyn Collard, with grandson Tryse Rioli on didgeridoo.</p> <p>Welcome Remarks (5 mins each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prof Xiaotian Zhang, DVC Global, Curtin University ● Prof Aldo Stroebe, Co-Chair AAUN Africa, DVC Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, University of Mpumalanga ● Prof John Hearn, Co-Chair AAUN Australia, University of New South Wales |
| 0920-1015 | <p>Chair: Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, AAUN Africa Deputy Co-Chair, & VC, Makerere University</p> <p>Speakers (5 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HE Joe Tapera Mhishi, Zimbabwe Ambassador, and Dean African HOMs in Australia 2. HE Kate Chamley, Australian High Commissioner to Mauritius 3. Dr Thandi Mgwebi, Group Executive: Business Advancement, South African National Research Foundation <p>Panel (2-3 mins each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prof Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, VC, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar ● Other attending Diplomatic Heads of Mission (tbc) |
| 1015-1045 | Coffee |
| 1045-1145 | Session 2: The Science of the Energy Transition |
| | Chair: Prof Frans Swanepoel , Future Africa, University of Pretoria |
| | <p>Speakers (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof Kadambot Siddique, Director, UWA Institute of Agriculture 2. A/Prof. Martin Anda, Harry Butler Institute, Murdoch University 3. Prof David Norris, VC, University of Botswana <p>Discussant: Western Sydney University (tbc)</p> <p>Discussion (30 min)</p> |
| 1145-1245 | Session 3: The Politics of the Energy Transition |
| | Chair: Prof Jacqueline Lo , Director, Indo-Pacific Research Centre, Murdoch University |

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| | <p>Speakers (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof Peta Ashworth, Director, Curtin Institute for Energy Transition, Curtin University 2. A/Prof Kathryn Sturman, Sustainable Minerals Institute, University of Queensland 3. Prof Christopher Isike, Director, African Centre for the Study of the United States, University of Pretoria <p>Discussant: Prof Pamela Maseko, Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Nelson Mandela University</p> <p>Discussion (30 min)</p> |
| 1245-1400 | <p>Lunch & AGM</p> <p><i>The lunch provides an opportunity for AAUN research groups to meet, and AAUN communities in alumni, ECRs and diaspora groups to engage</i></p> <p>AAUN Board and invited guests will meet in the Boardroom for the AGM (virtual link will be provided)</p> |
| 1400-1500 | <p>Session 4: The Economics of the Energy Transition</p> <p>Chair: Dr Janet Dzator, Director CARE-P, University of Newcastle; AAUN Deputy Chair (Eastern Australia)</p> |
| | <p>Speakers (7 min each)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edith Cowan University (tbc) 2. Prof Kanayo Ogujiuba, University of Mpumalanga 3. Prof Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, Dean, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, University of Pretoria <p>Discussant: Prof Nigar Sultana, Curtin University</p> <p>Discussion (30 min)</p> |
| 1500-1600 | <p>Session 5: Launch of AAUN ECR Group: Building Future Australia-Africa Research Leaders</p> <p>Chair: Dr Priscilla Mensah, Nelson Mandela University</p> |
| | <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>Launch of <i>John Hearn-Cheryl de la Rey Annual AAUN ECR Prize</i> by Prof. Aldo Stroebel and A/Prof. David Mickler</p> <p>Discussant: Prof Julia Richardson, Head of School, Management and Marketing, Curtin University</p> |
| 1600-1645 | <p>Closing Session: Conclusions and PRDF Announcement</p> <p>Chairs: Prof Aldo Stroebel and Prof John Hearn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forum Summary ▪ Announcement of PRDF 2024 Grant Winners ▪ Welcome to new members (Edith Cowan University, Bahir Dar University, Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar) ▪ Next AAUN Africa Forum: University of Rwanda, May 2025 (Prof Kayihura Didas) |
| 1700-1800 | <p>Forum Reception for Participants</p> |
| 1815-2030 | <p>Note: Opening Reception of Africa Down Under Conference at Pan-Pacific Hotel</p> |

REGISTER – Please refer to the AAUN website www.aaun.edu.au for current information

- (i) **Those attending in Perth (100 capacity)** and those on Webex are requested to register at [This Link](#) 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 on 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 AUD\$225 for AAUN delegates. Please make your reservations directly via [THIS LINK](#) (with the Corporate Code: AAUN).

Registration attendance and Webex - opens 15 July www.aaun.edu.au (Grace Liu – 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

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.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING PAPERS

Maina Waruru, “Kenya-Australia: Research Nexus to Promote Green Energy Research and Training”, *University World News: Africa Edition*, 9 May 2024. Available:

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20240507181305319>

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>

Jordan McLean and Adrian Joseph, “The Geopolitics of Energy Minerals: How Africa Can Lead the Green Energy Transition”, South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA), 15 July 2024. Available:

<https://saiia.org.za/research/the-geopolitics-of-energy-minerals-how-africa-can-lead-the-green-energy-transition>

Jakkie Cilliers and Alize le Roux, “African Futures—Thematic Futures: Energy”, Institute for Security Studies, 12 July 2024. Available: <https://futures.issafrica.org/thematic/guide.pdf?thematic=15-energy>

AAUN Reference and Background Papers: 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.

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Thanks to Curtin University: VC Prof. Harlene Hayne, DVC Global Prof. Xiaotian Zhang, and Dean Global, Africa, A/Prof. David Mickler for hosting this AAUN Forum.

MEDIA. 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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