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Tribute to Minister Edna Molewa

By Noel Oettlé

In this edition of the newsletter, we pay tribute to the late Edna Molewa.

Many of us in the adaptation community had the privilege of seeing her in action at events such as the UNFCCC COPs, where she led "Team SA". She created an environment in which all of us in the wider community of South Africans engaged in climate issues could feel that we were a part of a team, united in achieving common and ambitious goals. We were not only given opportunity to voice our concerns, insights and aspirations, but we felt heard and acknowledged. Edna Molewa recognized the strength that lies in true diversity of perspectives and knowledge.

In the international area, Edna Molewa led from the front. In Africa she was widely respected and served as President of the African Ministers Council on the Environment (AMCEN) and as President of the African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW). She served as head of the South African delegation in numerous international negotiations, including those of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the World Heritage Committee (WHC). She also contributed to the process that culminated in the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN.

It was in the field of international climate change negotiations that she left her greatest legacy, playing a pivotal role in securing the Paris Agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015.

Dr Molewa was a unique leader: she combined warmth with acumen, strategy with values, knowledge with empathy. One never doubted her sincerity or her motivation. She was dedicated to the greater goals of creating a better life for our people and conserving our unique environment so that it could be enjoyed fully by us and by future generations. We miss her sorely.

Hamba khahle, Comrade Edna Molewa!

Minister Edna Molewa, who fought for unity on climate change, dies aged 61

By Laurent Fabius and Laurence Tubiana

For our friend and colleague, minister Edna Molewa.

Edna Molewa's death shook us all, but her work to ensure a climate safe world will outlast us all.

In the diplomatic heat of the Paris climate conference we were lucky to have her alongside. Edna was someone who had fought for justice all her life. Struggle was in her DNA. Her cool head, passion for her people and for the environment stood out in Paris.

Let's be in no doubt: South Africa was an instrumental player in delivering the deal in 2015, not only as chair of G77 but also as guardian of the Durban platform. A member of the Basic group with China, India and Brazil – Pretoria has long been a major player in climate.

In Edna the South African government had – in the words of President Cyril Ramaphosa, one of its most “outstanding” daughters. She was a strong fighter for nature, wildlife and our global environment, evidenced by WWF's awarding her its coveted “Gift to the Earth” award in 2013.

She had always fought for the poorest, the most vulnerable – the very people who will suffer from increased climate impacts in Africa. And she was a bridge builder. In a world where we talk of walls and breaking alliances, she was the opposite. She could – and did – speak and negotiate with anyone with her very soft voice and her steely resolve.



Edna Molewa shares a moment with Forest Whitaker, UNESCO goodwill ambassador for peace and reconciliation at the UN in July, 2018 (Source: IISD)

There was a point ahead of Paris where it appeared the traditional split between developed and developing countries would be insurmountable. Where it seemed the pervasive lack of trust between traditional camps would undermine all we had worked on, we can remember her sound advice. It was to keep countries together throughout the process. No “friends of the chair group”. Keep building up the trust.

We can remember too her calm resolve in the last hour of tension and crisis to finalise the agreement.

And then there was Edna and her G77 presidency team. All of them forceful advocates for climate justice in public and private, and yet a champion for what diplomacy can achieve if we all walk together.

Each party put forward its own red lines. Each country did not obtain everything it wanted. If every country had 100% of its wish list fulfilled our collective efforts would have amounted to zero.



(Left to right) South African ambassador Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, Edna Molewa and Laurence Tubiana at the Cop21 climate talks in Paris in 2015 (Source: IISD)

As Edna often reminded us, we need to show the world our collective effort is worth more than the sum of our individual actions. Because the beauty of Paris was we came to focus not on the red lines but on green lines of universal commitment. Edna saw and spoke to us about the future she saw for her country: clean energy, sustainable and equitable agriculture, a just transition for all, more women in positions of leadership. It was a vision she lived. And it was one that also inspired her opponents.

Look at the generous tributes she received not just from the ANC, but also the Democratic Alliance and Economic Freedom Fighters. She was a daughter of the new South Africa, and they knew it.

The challenge for all of us – the opportunity for all of us – is to be a little bit more like Edna. That means recognizing we cannot all walk alone, that we all have to fight our corner but be open to new views, that climate change is a battle we can only win as one.

As the Paris Agreement closed, Edna took the microphone. “After climbing a great hill, one only finds there are many more mountains to climb,” she said, citing the words of another great South African leader, Nelson Mandela.

Indeed there are, and they may be steeper than the last. But with the spirit of Edna guiding us, we will continue on our long walk to a cleaner, greener planet.

Thank you to Climate Home News and the authors for allowing the republishing of this article. The original article can be found [here](#).

2018 Caux Dialogue on Land and Security

By Noel Oettlé

In July I attended the annual Caux Dialogue on Land and Security in Switzerland (<https://www.caux.ch/cdls-2018>). The Dialogue is a part of the annual Caux Forum that brings together around 1,500 participants from around the globe, enabling civil society, government and business to meet in a true diversity of ages, genders, cultures, sectors and beliefs and encourages individuals, groups and organizations to reflect on their roles, explore their resources and assess their responsibilities as change-makers who can build a just, sustainable and peaceful world.

The Caux Dialogue for Land and Security 2018 aimed to deepen understanding of the links between land degradation and human security and to build the trust needed for effective 'land-peace' partnerships on the ground. The main focus of this year's event was land restoration as a vehicle for conflict resolution in a world increasingly affected by devastating climatic impacts and political and economic turmoil.

The Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Mr. Pradeep Monga reminded the participants that the land agenda lies at the core of the world's food, poverty, migration, water, climate, biodiversity and security crises, creating an urgent need for investing in land restoration as a key instrument for conflict resolution and peace building. The participants also addressed the potential of cutting-edge and emerging technologies to unlock private financing, facilitate impact investments and enable participation of land users in land restoration projects.

In her address Olivia Lazard, Mediation Policy Officer for the European Institute for Peace brought into focus the state of insecurity in the world, and how the global economic and political system is destabilising communities that are home to many millions of people. Lawlessness in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is manifest in the presence of more than 80 armed groups, all of them brutal and some with genocidal roots. They survive by exploiting the natural resources of the country such as conflict minerals and timber and hiding in the communities. Their activities are driving ecological degradation throughout the country. Even in the national parks, most of the trees are gone, and the land is losing productivity. The government, army and businesses include individuals who have used their power to acquire vast areas of land. People without land are dispossessed and move from refugee camp to refugee camp. Elections cannot be held because of instability.

Predatory states have a unique and valued place in the global system as a source of strategic commodities, especially minerals. The digitalizing economy depends on resources that are easily available in countries that can be exploited. Our enthusiasm for alternative energy is one that depends on rare conflict minerals. This is driving these countries to collapse.

In the Sahel, there is increasing conflict between farmers and pastoralists and increasing cattle theft. Transhumance is practiced by largely Muslim groups, who are frequently regarded as foreigners. Extremism is growing in the most remote and deserted areas in the Sahel, which are also ignored by government. The jihadists tend to impose order and systems of justice that are frequently an improvement on the corrupt role of the army and government administrators.

Between 2006 and 2011, Syria suffered the worst drought in its history. 800,000 lost their livelihoods, and 200,000 lost their land. Dislocated to urban areas, they joined the 1.5 million refugees who had fled from the conflicts in neighbouring Iraq. Climate impacts combined with economic, market and political factors to deepen tensions and feed conflict.



Luc Gnacadja (former Executive Secretary, UNCCD), Pradeep Monga (Deputy Executive Secretary, UNCCD) and other delegates (Source: Noel Oettlé)

Lazard argued that conflict should be understood as a system, rather than a cycle. At all levels from very local to global, the conflict incentives run from the bottom to the top. Intergenerational conflicts, drug abuse, urbanized crime, the slave trade and gender violence are all on the rise. However, we don't feel the impacts of the global conflict because we externalize the costs.

Lazard noted that increasingly 'we forget to see ourselves as anything by reductionist versions of our ethnicity and our nationality.' She cautioned the audience that 'when we talk of regeneration, we have to be careful, because in some places regeneration (e.g. planting trees in DRC) can lead to conflict, violence and death. It must be accompanied by other processes to address the wider problems.'

The 2018 Caux Dialogue was a sobering experience that did not allow participants to escape into fantasy about the harsh realities of the evolving global order, yet the sharing of many positive experiences from around the world also allowed hope to flourish.

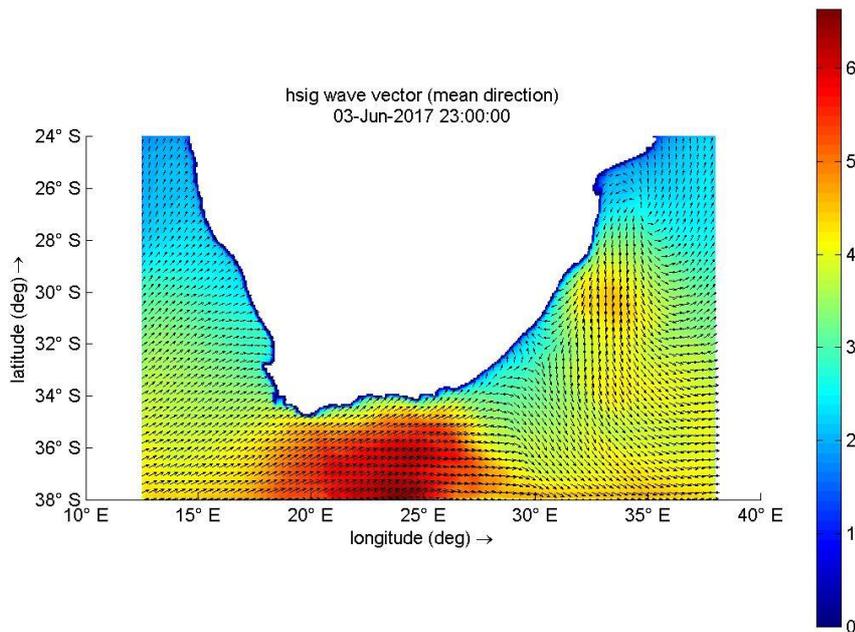
South African Weather Service new Marine Unit

By Dr. Christo Rautenbach

Earlier this year the South African Weather Service (SAWS) demarcated a dedicated Marine Research Unit. This exciting repositioning has its eyes on serving both social and commercial coastal users of South Africa. The methodology of the Marine Research Unit is to first establish the science underpinning tool developments through a series of international peer reviewed papers. Once the science and methodologies stood up against the peer review process, a particular tool will move on to the next phase of development.

Currently, the unit is in month five of the new unit and the first few papers have been submitted to international journals. The unit also had the privilege to represent South Africa at the Blue Planet Symposium in July 2018, where researchers met valuable international contacts and collaborators in the transdisciplinary fields of applied marine research.

As a quick highlight, product developments will focus on the new storm surge model for South Africa. In April 2018, a national workshop was held in Cape Town with the focus on gauging the importance of having an operational storm surge and wave forecasting configuration for southern Africa. Professor Kevin Horsburgh, Chief Scientist for International Development at the National Oceanography Centre in Liverpool, UK, was an invited guest at this workshop. After a productive day the decision was made that SAWS Marine will take the lead on the development with regular feedback to the stakeholder organizations. In August 2018, the first feedback meeting was held and received unanimous praise for the speed at which products were developed. On the 24th of August 2018 the SAWS Marine Unit saw the opportunity to implement the Beta version of the model to forecast an approaching storm noticed by the Weather Service forecasting team. Later that day the first high resolution wave and storm surge forecast was sent out. This was truly a historical event.



Significant wave height (colour bar) and mean wave direction (arrows) of the non-stationary wave simulation of a hind-cast example during Cape Storm 2017 (Source: Dr. Rautenbach)

Currently this model is being refined, calibrated and validated. Coastal output resolution will also be incrementally increased with the goal of 250m coastal storm surge and wave forecasting resolution. This high resolution information will prove valuable for both coastal managing agencies and everyday coastal users ranging from fishers, surfers and bathers.

Forthcoming training opportunities offered by the Adaptation Network

The Adaptation Network will offer adaptation practitioners the option of participating in one of three training courses in the latter part of 2018:

- The two-day Practical Adaptation for Vulnerable Communities course will be offered in Gauteng on 16th & 17th October 2018, and in the Northern Cape on 30th and 31st October 2018.
- A four-day Advanced Facilitation for Adaptation training course in Cape Town from 19th – 22nd November 2018.

The courses are offered at no cost for Adaptation Network members. Non-members are required to pay a R500 registration fee for the two-day courses, and R1,000 for the advanced course.

A limited number of travel bursaries are available for Network members only. A bursary application form will be mailed out to any member requesting it.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Network Coordinator Dania Petrik at danial@emg.org.za.

Join the Adaptation Network on social media!

The Network has been increasingly active on social media. Join us, like us, follow us, and share your news and project updates! Send pictures and updates to danial@emg.org.za for posting across the AN platforms.



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Credits

This newsletter is produced by the Adaptation Network Secretariat,
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Contributors to this edition:

Noel Oettlé - Adaptation Network, Environmental Monitoring Group (editor)

Laurent Fabius, President, Constitutional Council

Laurence Tubiana, CEO, European Climate Foundation.

Noel Oettlé - Adaptation Network, Environmental Monitoring Group (editor)

Dr. Christo Rautenbach, Chief Marine Scientist, South African Weather Service (SAWS)

Dania Petrik - Network Coordinator, Adaptation Network, Environmental Monitoring Group

Articles do not necessarily represent the views of all Adaptation Network members.

To contribute please email Dania Petrik: danial@emg.org.za

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www.adaptationnetwork.org.za

info@adaptationnetwork.org.za

Tel: +27 27 218 1117 Neethling Street, Nieuwoudtville, 8180, South Africa