

Webinar Launch Agenda

23 October 2025



Enhancing Environmental Sustainability in South Africa: Insights from the ESGAP Framework

UCL, CST, BC3, SAIIA



The ESGAP framework: Implications for South Africa

South Africa stands at a critical juncture, facing the dual challenges of socio-economic development and environmental degradation. To navigate this, policymakers require clear, science-based metrics that move beyond economic indicators to assess the absolute health of the nation's natural capital.

This webinar marks the South African launch of a groundbreaking report that applies the **Environmental Sustainability Gap (ESGAP)** framework for the first time in the country. The ESGAP framework introduces a rigorous, metrics-driven approach to assess South Africa's environmental state against non-negotiable, science-based standards. It answers two critical questions: "How far is South Africa from a sustainable environmental state?" (measured by the Strong Environmental Sustainability Index - SESI) and "Is the country making progress towards closing this gap?" (measured by the Strong Environmental Sustainability Progress Index - SESPI).

The session will present the key findings of this assessment, highlighting both critical pressure points and notable successes across areas such as water resources, air quality, and ecosystem health. The subsequent discussion will focus on the concrete policy recommendations derived from the data, providing a vital evidence base for steering South Africa towards a truly sustainable and resilient future.

Agenda

Date: Thursday, 23 October 2025

Time: 11h00 – 13h00 SAST

Zoom Webinar Registration Link: <https://saiia-org-za.zoom.us/j/89713285770?pwd=LbS0SEPjaSz4KTZnK50smPZyK435Px.1>

Time	Session	Presenter
11h00 – 11h05	Welcome Introduction of panellists and overview of the webinar's purpose.	Dr Deon Cloete Head of SAIIA Futures Programme
11h05 – 11h10	Introduction Purpose of the research and intended impact.	Ms Marie-Hélène Loison Regional Director for Southern Africa, AFD
11h10 – 11h40	Opening Remarks: Overview of the paper and policy briefing.	Prof Paul Ekins Energy and Environment Policy, University College London Introduction to the ESGAP framework Dr Arkaitz Usubiago-Liano Research Fellow, BC3 Basque Centre for Climate Change

		Overview of the paper and policy briefing
11h40 – 11h55	Response from SA perspective: Insights from South Africa.	Prof Mark Swilling Distinguished Professor and SARCHI Chair for Mainstreaming Gender for Energy Security in Poor Urban Environments, Centre for Sustainability Transitions, Stellenbosch University
11h55 – 12h30	Panel Discussion: • <i>Partner, government, and intergovernmental body perspectives, moderated by Dr Hayley Clements, CST, Stellenbosch University</i>	Ms Marie-Hélène Loison Regional Director for Southern Africa, AFD Dr Mapula Tshangela, Director: Climate Change Mitigation Implementation DFFE Mr Mahlodi Tau, Chief Director: Biodiversity Information and Policy Advice, SANBI Moderator Dr Hayley Clements
12h30 – 12:55	Q&A Session	Moderator Dr Hayley Clements
12h55 – 13:00	Closing Remarks	Dr Deon Cloete Head of SALLA Futures Programme

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