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Presenter biographies

Stakeholder and public engagement on the National Energy Efficiency Strategy, NEES 2026-2035



Xolile Mabusela, Director: Energy Efficiency, Dept of Electricity & Energy
Xolile Mabusela, is the Director of Energy Efficiency: Department of Electricity & Energy (DEE) in South Africa with over 15 years of experience in energy and climate change management. He has been instrumental in developing and implementing energy efficiency policies in South Africa. He has BSc degree and honours in Chemistry, and BSc Honours in Atmospheric Sciences, and MBA and a MPhil in Development Finance. He obtained extensive experience through his work with the South African Weather Service, the Department of Trade, Industry & Competition (DTIC), and the City of Johannesburg, where he was responsible for Weather Forecasting, Environmental Compliance, Climate Change and Air Quality Management.



Joonkyung Seong, Senior Energy Economist, World Bank
Joonkyung Seong has over 18 years of experience in energy and finance across private sector and multilateral institutions. As Senior Energy Economist of the World Bank, based in Pretoria, South Africa, he is managing the Bank's energy sector programmes in the country, focusing on energy sector reforms, just energy transition and decarbonisation. Prior to his current assignment, Joonkyung was based in Beijing, China and led energy sector engagement in China and Myanmar and regional energy transition engagement in the East Asia and Pacific. He has extensive experience in facilitating energy transition in coal-dependent countries, developing renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, and structuring climate finance operations across Africa and Asia.



Theo Covary, NEES Coordinator

For almost twenty years, Theo Covary has focussed his efforts on energy transition policy development. He was a member of Workstream 5 (Demand Side Management) of the National Energy Crisis Committee, supporting the Department of Electricity & Energy (DEE) and is currently coordinating the development of the National Energy Efficiency Strategy (2026 to 2035) for the DEE. In 2016, the SA National Energy Association awarded him the Energy Project of the Year Award for his work on reducing the standby losses on residential geysers. Theo has a doctorate from the University of Cape Town. He has published multiple papers and a book on South Africa's municipal electricity undertakings.



Margaret McKenzie, NEES Author

Margaret McKenzie is the Managing Director of Urban Earth, with 29 years of experience in the environmental and sustainability sector. She has extensive experience developing climate change, energy and resilience policies and strategies for government entities in South Africa. She has worked across the energy sector and is a co-author of the draft National Energy Efficiency Strategy. Her work spans municipal energy management and energy-efficiency programmes, energy monitoring and management support, appliance standards and labelling, and gender and energy. Margaret holds an MSc in Environment and Development and a BSc Honours in Computer Science.



Astghine Pasoyan, NEES Author

Astghine Pasoyan is a senior energy efficiency, environmental economics and climate policy expert with over two decades of international experience across Central and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East and Southern Africa. Over the past 20 years, Astghine has managed energy efficiency planning and legal reform efforts, market assessment and investment identification in various sectors of economy, developing sustainable energy financing schemes, housing policy, capacity building, residential and public building energy efficiency programs and financing mechanisms, and public outreach. She holds a Masters degree in environmental economics and an Honors Diploma in International Economics.



Mthunzi Mangqalaza, Energy Efficiency Coordinator, DEE

Mthunzi Mangqalaza is the Project Coordinator: Energy Efficiency Projects at South Africa's Department of Electricity & Energy. With 10 years of experience coordinating, managing and monitoring municipal energy efficiency projects, Mthunzi has contributed to energy policy development, with a focus on advancing energy efficiency across various sectors of the economy. In his current role, he supports the implementation and coordination of initiatives that promote improved energy performance, sustainable energy practices and greater energy efficiency within municipalities and the wider industry and energy sector in South Africa. Mthunzi holds a Bachelor of Social Science, BCom Honours and a Postgraduate Diploma, and is currently pursuing an MBA.