Virtual Study Tour:
CLIMATE CHANGE & URBAN RESILIENCE
CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

[Due to the unpredictability of the global landscape at this time, speakers may change without notice]

Belynda Petrie is CEO and co-founder of OneWorld, a sustainable development consultancy headquartered in South Africa and with an office in Brussels. OneWorld offers strategy formulation, policy development and programme evaluation services on these themes across Africa, Europe and Asia. Belynda is an internationally recognised expert in climate change, energy and water. She has over 19 years' experience in development cooperation, focusing on renewable energy, water and climate change and finance. She has extensive experience in reviews, evaluations, developing logical frameworks and the Theory of Change, including for renewable energy projects and programmes, particularly in southern and eastern Africa. Belynda is well-versed in developing climate finance solutions for renewable energy and climate adaptation investments and has worked extensively on the water energy nexus and the climate mitigation-adaptation nexus, establishing the co-benefits of renewable energy investments, across sectors and in socio-economic terms.

Ms Petrie has extensive experience in fostering and working within public-private partnerships. Throughout her career she has utilised participatory, multi-stakeholder approaches which leverage diverse networks and constituencies. She furthermore has a strong track record of being able to disseminate research to a broad audience using several mediums and media channels. She is frequently asked to contribute to conferences and facilitate knowledge learning and sharing platforms between diverse and multi-country stakeholders. Most recently, she was a Senior Practitioner and Facilitator in a project aimed at co-determining the vision and pathways toward a Just Transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient society in South Africa, on behalf of the National Planning Commission. The project was implemented through facilitating a series of bilateral, provincial and cross cutting social partner dialogues; Belynda led the design of dialogues, research and facilitation of plausible pathways and a social compact for achieving Vision 2050 through stakeholder engagement.

Dr. Sean O'Donoghue has a doctorate in marine pelagic ecology obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in 2010. In March 2011, Sean joined eThekwini Municipality, or Durban, where he manages the Climate Protection Branch. A key focus of the Branch is Community Ecosystem Based Adaptation, providing work opportunities for Durban's indigent populations. Sean manages a number of research, inter-city and community partnership projects, and is working closely with C40, particularly the Cities Finance Facility, who are helping to develop a business case for the city to self-fund its community stream management programme, Sihlanzimvelo. Sean is an IPCC lead author for the Special Report on Oceans and the Cryosphere in a Changing Climate. His affiliations are: Senior Manager, Climate Protection Branch, eThekwini Municipality (Durban) and Honorary Research Associate, University of KwaZulu-Natal

Dr. Kevin Winter is a Senior Lecturer in the UCT Department of Environmental and Geographical Science, Lead Researcher of the Future Water Institute and a member of the City of Cape Town's Section 80 Water Resilience Committee. He is the director of research at the Water Hub, Franschhoek, a research and demonstration site that uses nature-based treatment and green infrastructure to treat contaminated water for irrigating food gardens and supporting freshwater fish. His primary research interests are in integrated urban water resource management and he teaches on environmental engineering and catchment management courses at the University.
He sprang to public prominence in the approach to the near calamitous "Day Zero", a couple of years ago, when Cape Town almost became the first major city in the world to run out of drinking water. During the 2017-18 water crisis he was one of the experts most frequently asked to contribute to the understanding of the public and of government officials in relation to its origins and possible solutions. Kevin has a degree in Environmental and Geographical Science and a Master's in Education. His doctorate explored public involvement in environmental sustainability and resource management.

Dieter Brandt is a leading pan-African environmental and creative consultant. Namibian-born and a graduate in architecture from the University of Cape Town with distinction in 2002, Dieter specialises in spatial sciences and creates places that are a provocation for African ecological futures. Dieter served as the project architect for Freedom Park Museum and pan-African archive for the Office of Collaborative Architects in South Africa from 2006 to 2012 and later served as lead designer for the University of Witwatersrand's new Mathematical Sciences building on behalf of MMA Architects in Johannesburg, completed in 2014. Before establishing in Berlin, Dieter was the lead design consultant for Mmabatho Precinct, a Moiloa Office of Architecture + Design commission for an original, public, shared-space precinct in Mahikeng, the capital of North West province in 2016.

In 2018, Dieter founded Advanced Environmental Design Initiatives (AEDI) in Germany, Namibia, and South Africa. AEDI, an adaptation and mitigation partner, is a green concept consultancy and environmental advisory that specialises in climate action and spatial services. AEDI helps deliver sustainable strategies and development goals for organisations to meet their Africa-EU ESG related regulatory commitments. Solutions include circular economy initiatives, transition design strategies, and social-environmental integration. Project examples include project development for integrating metal/rubber industrial recycling processes to decarbonise and increase efficiency across platforms at Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone (SBDIZ); developing a handbook for the African Climate Development Institute (ACDI), a case for implementing nature-based solutions in African dryland informal settlements; project development for Iigadi Solwazi, an enterprise and knowledge garden, for re-thinking community urban city parks in a post-COVID world, a climate-proofing initiative between the University of Johannesburg and the City of Johannesburg.
Dieter has recently been invited as a Distinguished Research Associate at the newly established Centre of Ecological Intelligence (CEI) at the University of Johannesburg.

Amy Pieterse is an urban planner and researcher, working in the Urban and Regional Dynamics research group at the CSIR Smart Places in South Africa. Her expertise includes climate change adaptation planning, mainstreaming, policy analysis, and local government planning. She has a specific research interest in how local governments use research and evidence in planning and policy, with a focus on climate resilience. Amy was an innovator, developer, and manager of the GreenBook, an online planning system to support local government in South Africa with developing climate-resilient cities and towns.

McKenna Davis is a Senior Fellow at Ecologic Institute in Berlin. Her work focuses on the areas of green infrastructure, nature-based solutions (NBS), ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, ecosystem restoration, and biodiversity protection and the links to sustainable urban development, climate change adaptation and human health and well-being. A core area of her works focuses on the assessment of these solutions and their surrounding policy and governance frameworks, including barriers and enabling factors to implementation and upscaling. She is leading Ecologic's work within the H2020 project CLEVER Cities, including developing a guidance tool to support cities in the uptake and advancement of NBS to meet urban regeneration challenges. She also coordinates the development of an online database of NBS governance instruments for urban ecosystem restoration within the H2020 project INTERLACE. Previous projects included assessments of the legal, political and planning frameworks in place for supporting the deployment of NBS and assessment of socio-cultural ecosystem services.

Mikateko Sithole is the Deputy Director in the South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment within the Climate Change Adaptation Chief Directorate. She has over the past 15 years worked with the various spheres of government on various aspects of Environmental Management and has for 10 years been responsible for Climate Change. Upon her return to the Department in 2014, she instituted the Local Government Climate Change Support Programme (LGCCSP), amongst other subnational and national programs. LGCCSP was designed to take Climate Change Adaptation to the people i.e. as a vehicle of implementing the Lets Respond Toolkit. Ms Sithole has seen this evolution which is currently on its 5th phase, supporting Municipalities of mechanisms of accessing Climate Finance. She has also led processes that saw all nine (9) South African Provinces developing and/or reviewing their Climate Change Adaptation Response Strategies and South Africa developing its first Adaptation Research Agenda. As much as it seems a lot has happened, Ms Sithole feels its only beginning because for all policies and strategies to be real, they need to be implemented. For resilience to be enhanced, action has to take place. Ms Sithole has served in various committees Nationally and Internationally (Adaptation Futures) and continues to make a contribution in the Climate Change Adaptation Agenda.

Valeria Barbi is a political and natural scientist. As a project manager, her expertise ranges from climate policies, environmental communication, citizens engagement strategies and human-nature relations in the Anthropocene. She has about 11 years of experience on lecturing about climate change, sustainability, natural resources conservation and environmental protection.

.

SUPPORTED BY:

Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety

of the Federal Republic of Germany

This event has been organised with the financial support of the European Union's Partnership Instrument and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) in the context of the International Climate Initiative (IKI). The opinions expressed are the sole responsibility of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funders.