

DRAFT INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN 2023: FACTSHEET



Comments on the draft IRP 2023 are due on the 23rd of March 2024 and can be submitted via email to:
IRP.Queries@dmre.gov.za

WHAT IS AN INTEGRATED ENERGY PLAN (IEP) AND IS THIS DIFFERENT TO AN INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN (IRP)?

- An IEP contains the bigger picture for the entire energy sector (such as industry, transport and electricity generation) while the IRP is a specific sub plan that focuses on the electricity sector within this bigger picture.
- Both plans are important tools for guiding energy-related decision-making, ensuring a sustainable, reliable, and affordable energy supply for South Africa.



ACCESS TO RELIABLE, CLEAN AND AFFORDABLE ENERGY IS CRITICAL TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT!

WHAT IS ENERGY PLANNING?

- Energy Planning requires us to look at how much energy we need, what type of energy, how we use this energy wisely and how we can save energy.
- Energy planning is the process of developing a long-term strategy to help guide the future of an energy system. Careful energy planning is important given that energy supply infrastructure often requires significant start-up-costs and could have a limited lifespan.
- Energy planning is done by computer modelling. The computer model is able to give us an idea of what energy types would be best for South Africa and how these energy types can be used to help us meet our climate goals, rehabilitate the environment, create jobs and be affordable to all of us.

WHY DO WE NEED A PLAN?

- South Africa needs to plan to make sure we have enough energy to meet our needs. We need to make sure we can have enough energy for hot water, lights, industry, farming, transport. And we need a plan that gets updated every year and that all South Africans can have an opportunity to comment on.



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·In 2023, The Green Connection, together with Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute, went to court to force Government to implement section 6 of the National Energy Act which makes it compulsory for Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) to produce a plan and revise it every year.



WHAT IS THE INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN (IRP)?

- The IRP is the electricity plan that is supposed to set out the government's plan on how they will seek to ensure electricity security for all.
- The IRP is supposed to calculate how much electricity we need (the demand) and how we use electricity wisely and efficiently and then how to supply the electricity we need in the future.
- The DMRE is supposed to produce a plan regularly, but the last IRP was in 2019.

HOW DOES THIS IMPACT ME?



·If the government chooses an expensive electricity generation system, your electricity bill will be very high and you will not be able to afford this. But if you buy only cheap electricity but it does not work all the time, then we still have a problem. What we want is electricity that is clean, affordable and reliable. The way to ensure this is to look at a mix of different electricity generation options and to ensure that this mix is able to keep the lights on all the time and also be affordable.

·You have a right to have your say on the latest IRP draft. This is why it is important for you to comment on the Draft IRP 2023 and tell government if you are happy with what they are proposing and if not, what should be in the plan.

WHAT DOES THE 2023 DRAFT IRP SAY?

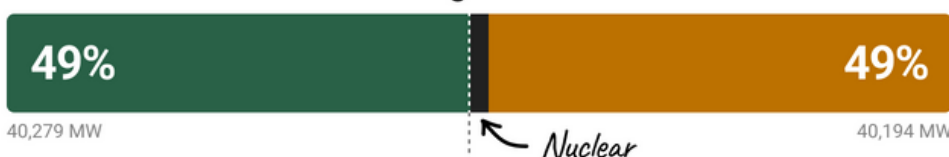
South Africa is a country with a lot of sun, wind and other renewable energy potential. But the draft IRP has less sun and wind than the previous plan which was published in 2019, even though solar and wind are more affordable now.

2030 plans vs 2023 reality

In 2019, the IRP put forward plans that acknowledged the need for South Africa to invest in renewable electricity and lower our reliance on fossil fuels by 2030. In 2023, the amount of renewables in our electricity mix was still well behind our 2030 target, and the Department of Minerals and Energy (DMRE) backslid on their planned commitments to renewables.

Renewables vs Fossil Fuels

IRP 2019 Targets set for 2030



IRP 2023 Targets set for 2030



What was achieved by 2023



What you can do about it?

Reject the 2023 IRP and demand a more transparent and sustainable peoples electricity plan!

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·The plan does not provide detailed numbers about the costs of the different types of electricity the model uses. It is therefore very difficult for experts to check the plan and comment on it.



·The plan will not solve load shedding and proposes power stations that take a long time to build and are very polluting – eg coal, gas, nuclear.

·One concerning part is that the plan says load shedding is likely to continue for the next 6 years. It is important to remember that the cost of renewable energy will continue to decrease in the coming years.

·South Africa needs more jobs and those jobs need to be safe, healthy and sustainable. South Africa used to have solar and wind factories but government policy stopped renewables and those factories closed.

·So we need an IRP that commits to increasing renewables to create jobs that are long term.



WHY IS GAS NOT A GOOD OPTION?

- Gas is an extremely polluting fossil fuel that has contributed to global warming and climate change. Despite expert studies showing that we do not need large amounts of gas power plants, the IRP 2023 continues to include this in our electricity supply options.

·South Africa has already been hit badly by climate change as we have seen an increase in droughts, flooding and burning gas causes less carbon emissions than coal but more than solar and wind. However, gas (methane) which can escape from pipelines into the atmosphere (called fugitive emissions). Methane is more damaging can cause 85% more climate damage than coal over a 20-year time period.[1]

·Oil and Gas companies claim that we need to use gas as a ‘transition’ fuel, however the cost of renewables have decreased significantly and will continue to do so. This means that there is no need for gas and the construction of the infrastructure needed for this to be used in our energy mix. If we spend billions of Rands on building gas pipelines and drilling for gas in our oceans, those pipelines and drilling platforms will no longer be needed but we will still have to pay for them, and they would pose a risk to the environment and people.

·Gas is also a global commodity meaning that its price is set on the international market. In other words, the price and supply of gas can be impacted by war, shipping disruptions or geo-political conflicts making it an unreliable source of energy. Gas needs to be imported and bought in US dollars. So, if the Rand/Dollar exchange changes, then gas becomes expensive.

·Gas also poses the risk of being a ‘stranded asset’. There is a large amount of money needed upfront for the new infrastructure to support that gas industry and this will simply prolong our dependence on this fossil fuel. This inevitably delays our transition to renewables, and will make us lag behind the rest of the world as they divests from fossil fuels. Soon, we will no longer be using gas as the costs of renewable technology continues to fall making all the investment in gas infrastructure a waste of public money.

·Gas extraction also poses a risk to harming local communities and the environment. The mining process for gas (both on-shore and off-shore) is destructive and has negative consequences for the ocean, air, human health and biodiversity.

[1] [Grasping-For-Gas-Report-22042021-1.pdf](https://thegreenconnection.org.za/Grasping-For-Gas-Report-22042021-1.pdf)
(thegreenconnection.org.za).

Why you should care!

Now that we can see how far South Africa is from reducing its reliance on fossil fuels, let's take a look at the impact of fossil fuels and the negative impacts they have on our health of citizens, the finances of the country and the outcomes for our environment.

Renewables

vs

Fossil Fuels

Much better health outcomes



Health



Increase in illness and disease

Going down and more predictable



Costs



Going up and unpredictable

Prevent further damage



Environment



Unsustainable and damaging

What you can do about it?

Reject the 2023 IRP and demand a more transparent and sustainable people's electricity plan!

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PROBLEMS WITH THE IRP

- The draft IRP 2023 is not a people's IRP. It does not put forward energy that is affordable, clean and won't pollute or cause health problems. It will worsen climate change and push more people into energy poverty.
- The draft IRP 2023 instead, puts forward a fossil-heavy electricity generation system with at a time when the world is transitioning to low carbon economies and will come at a massive cost to human wellbeing, health and the environment.

THE PEOPLES IRP:

- We need Energy that meets our climate goals, creates employment, and leads to us having affordable electricity.
- A people's IRP will recognise that climate change will impact food security, human health and takes into account the need to consider future generations.

We therefore demand an electricity plan (IRP) that gives us :

- Electricity generation that will not increase the pollution of our air, water or deprive us of our land
- Electricity that is affordable - for all marginalised and vulnerable communities.
- Electricity generation options that create sustainable, safe and healthy jobs.
- Electricity that will address our climate change crisis.

HOW TO HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD - PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The draft IRP is open for public comment until 23 March 2024.

You can submit your comments to IRP.Queries@dmre.gov.za

Civil society can challenge the plan by asking questions or commenting. Here are some questions to think about:

- Do we have enough understandable information to make a meaningful input into this plan?
 - Does this plan meet our criteria for a people's energy plan?
 - Do we need fossil burning gas, especially if government wants to drill in our oceans for gas?
- Do we think that coal fired power stations should continue beyond their shut down dates – even if this harms people's health?
- Renewable Energy is climate friendly and can create many jobs – why does the draft IRP reduce the amount of renewable energy into the future?
- Experts have struggled to understand how the draft IRP results were obtained; the costings are not transparent – do we need more explanations?

The Green Connection believes that we should reject this IRP and first produce an IEP that plans our entire energy system before we look at the electricity subset.

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