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8 November 2023

UCT hosting high-profile gathering on interactions between inequalities and climate change

8–9 November 2023 | 08:30–17:30 | UCT Academic Conference Centre, Graduate School of Business, V&A Waterfront

The African Centre of Excellence for Inequality Research (ACEIR) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) is one of the organisers of the international research-for-policy conference on Inequality, Work, and Nature: Strategic Dilemmas and Policy Resolution scheduled for 8–9 November 2023 in Cape Town.

The event brings together the political, academic, and international development spheres to discuss how the trade-offs between inequality and environmental change are shaping development pathways, and how to build consensus and move forward on the policy front. The South African Presidency, the European Union, and the French Development Agency – Agence Française de Développement (AFD) – are the other organising partners.

Professor Murray Leibbrandt, ACEIR’s director from UCT’s Southern Africa Labour and Research Development Unit (SALDRU) explains: “The reduction of inequality is crucial to tackling climate change. But we need to recognise that a different kind of growth is needed to reduce inequalities; and that must be intertwined with the actions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.”

On the first day, high-profile speakers from the South African Presidency, National Treasury, and Presidential Climate Commission will join senior officials from the Colombian government, the European Commission, the AFD and the Overseas Development Institute for two plenary discussions. Most of the day is dedicated to parallel presentations of 40 research papers from especially the Global South on the strategic dilemmas that appear when designing long-term development trajectories to be both ecologically and socially sustainable.

Professor Daya Reddy, UCT Vice-Chancellor (interim), will on behalf of UCT, welcome participants to the policy deliberations on the second day when high-level government officials and practitioners engage on specific and meaningful concessions aimed at shaping policy solutions. Among these are Colombia’s vice-minister of finance; the programme lead of the Presidential Employment Stimulus in South Africa; the executive director of South Africa’s Presidential Climate Commission; the head of the Energy Transition Unit in the

Ministry of Oil and Energies in Senegal; and the chief financial officer of the Development Bank of Southern Africa.

Speakers from South Africa's National Business Initiative, the environmental non-profits groundWork and the Global Energy Alliance for the Planet and the People, AFD and European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the International Labour Organisation will bring perspectives from the civil society, private, and developmental sectors. One of these, a climate activist from the African Climate Alliance, is currently completing his undergraduate studies at UCT.

The conference is part of a research partnership between the AFD and the European Union. The first phase of the EU-AFD Research Facility on Inequality developed more than 20 policy-focused research projects in over 30 countries aimed at identifying drivers, trends, and policy levers to tackle inequality. In its [second phase](#), the facility is focusing on four countries: South Africa, Colombia, Indonesia and Mexico, to study the interactions between inequality, climate change and sustainability, with the aim of helping governments design policy actions to address these interlinked challenges.

[Register to attend the conference in person.](#)

[Register to attend virtually.](#)

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Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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