

## **Minister Nomvula Mokonyane to appoint experts to provide strategic and technical guidance towards effective management of sulphur dioxide emissions from power generation plants**

---

05 December 2018

The Minister of Environmental Affairs, Mrs Nomvula Mokonyane, intends to appoint a Panel of Experts to provide strategic and technical guidance towards effective management of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from old and existing power generation plants.

The decision to appoint a Panel of Experts comes as result of the challenges faced by chemical and energy sector-players such as Eskom power stations, Sasol and other related industries. The industries have been unable to adequately and effectively manage sulphur dioxide emissions, thereby failing to comply with the minimum emission standards (MES).

It is for this reason that the Panel will conduct a comprehensive review on the effectiveness of the implementation of the postponement provision and the associated SO<sub>2</sub> emission limits. It will also advise the Minister and affected companies in identifying and implementing mechanisms, technologies, technical and/or regulatory tools that would assist in addressing SO<sub>2</sub> compliance challenges.

In addition, the Panel will advise the Minister on air quality management related matters as they apply to compliance with SO<sub>2</sub> emission standards. It will also be expected to evaluate, assess and identify environmentally friendly and cost-effective technologies, strategies, action plans and legal instruments that would assist industries to comply with minimum emission standards (MES).

Furthermore, the Panel will identify areas of cooperation, mutual benefit and potential conflict that would arise among the affected parties as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Panel and provide guidance on how these could be managed.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has a constitutional mandate for ensuring the citizens' right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of the present and future generations. These rights are managed and enforced through the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA), including the Specific Environmental Management Acts (SEMAs) promulgated to deal with specific environment issues. The National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (AQA), whose main objective is to enhance the quality of ambient air, is the SEMA for air quality management in the country.

As part of the implementation of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (Act No. 39 of 2004) (AQA), the Atmospheric Emission Licences (AELs) are being used as one of the instruments to give effect to this mandate.

The Department is committed to ensuring that the Constitutional rights of South Africans to an environment that is not harmful to health and well-being are always taken into consideration, while ensuring that economic growth is not hampered.

For media inquiries contact:

Albi Modise

Cell: 083 490 2871