

SA government wields carbon carrot and stick

According to Independent Online, Environment Minister Edna Molewa said that government is going to pursue a carrot and stick approach on carbon tax.

"We must finalise this matter in such a manner that it is actually dealt with very sensitively," said Molewa, noting that details of the carbon tax were still being finalised. "We believe that it actually is supposed to be much more of a deterrent to those who are polluters, rather than (a) broad carbon tax for everybody else who is... behaving very well," she told reporters in Cape Town.

Molewa added that the country's industries would each be allocated a carbon budget. Each sector would have to "do its best and spend to reduce emissions". "It will not be correct for us now to say [if and how the tax] will impact on electricity prices because it may well come out to be something completely different that is a stick more than a carrot." According to Independent Online Molewa conceded, however, that the energy sector in South Africa would have to pay more carbon tax "than any other" because it produced the most carbon emissions.

Earlier this month, the Mail and Guardian reported that South Africa joined 25 other countries who met in Moscow to voice their objection to a controversial European Union law that forces airlines landing in Europe to pay for their carbon emissions. While it is unlikely that the government would ban South African airlines from using airports in the 27-nation union, it joined governments and the Airlines Association of Southern Africa in throwing their weight behind the "coalition of the unwilling", as the 26 countries opposed to the emissions trading scheme have been dubbed.

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