



**April 2023**

## **Proposal for a Development Bank of Southern Africa Civil Society Forum**

### **Introduction**

The Fair Finance Coalition of South Africa (FFCSA) is a collection of Civil Society (CS) Organisations working towards ensuring Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) invest in a socially and environmentally responsible manner in Africa. The coalition focuses on issues of climate change and transparency.

In a meeting on the 3rd of November 2022, the DBSA indicated its interest in the creation of a civil society forum to allow for greater consultation, and invited the FFCSA to submit a proposal for such a forum. We also understand that the DBSA is moving forward with plans for a CS meeting in April of 2023, and we hope that this proposal can complement and add to those plans. We acknowledge and appreciate the Development Bank of Southern Africa's (DBSA) commitment to consulting multiple stakeholders in the development of policy and strategy that will lead the country to a just and sustainable energy transition.

Traditionally, decisions made by Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) such as the DBSA have lacked transparency and their policies and procedures have not had sufficient community and CS engagement. We welcome the opportunity to engage in greater depth with the DBSA through the inception of a forum between CS and the DBSA.

Through this forum, FFCSA hopes to achieve the following aims. It is important to note that these are only the aims of FFCSA. We hope to broaden the focus of this forum once sufficient input and feedback have been given by DBSA and other forum participants regarding their aims of engagement.

### **Aims**

- Exchange information and best practices to support each organization's long-term climate justice and sustainability goals. Particularly - serve as a way to remedy the issues with past engagement between the DBSA and CS with commitments made to these rules of engagement moving forward.

- Create space for CS to hear about and submit comments on DBSA strategy, draft policies, and policy changes. CS members must be given at least 30-day notice on new policy and comments submission processes.
- Facilitate the building of relationships between CS and other key climate stakeholders, particularly those with whom the DBSA regularly works with such as climate scientists and policymakers.
- Create space for discussion of DBSA projects which have implications for climate goals (particularly environmental and human rights impacts).
- Serve as a test-format for future DFI consultation/forum processes.
- Be part of monitoring and oversight mechanisms for DBSA's role in the JET-IP

The structure and format of the forum should be as follows:

### **Structure**

- Chaired by two co-chairs, one nominated by CS and the other from the DBSA. Chairs will be rotated each meeting and are to be nominated in the previous sessions by each group they represent (CS and DBSA).
- We encourage the participation of civil society representatives from each significant climate sector/thematic area. These thematic areas are energy, environment, mining, water, agriculture & food security. These Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should form part of the forum because of their policy expertise, community-based networks, and knowledge of development finance.
- Representatives from DBSA including those with decision-making power.
- The forum should have the ability to call on other independent experts as necessary, with the current co-chairs to jointly approve the experts' (such as academics, scientists, and journalists) participation in the forum and forum meetings.
- A mailing list should be set up for members of the forum to communicate with each other outside of meetings.

### **Format**

- Quarterly meetings.
- Hybrid (online and in person) meeting with the venue communicated to the mailing list 3 weeks before the meeting.
- The meeting agenda will be set in advance by co-chairs and informed by previous meetings. This agenda will be sent to the mailing list 3 weeks before the meeting to allow enough time for input from forum members. Chairs will be responsible for facilitating the inclusion of input into the agenda. These comments must be submitted within one week of receiving the agenda (2 weeks before the meeting) and the agenda finalized and sent out as such 1 week before the meeting.
- The meeting needs at least 70% of DBSA representatives and 5 CS representatives in order to continue otherwise it should be rescheduled.

## Participants:

The forum participant list is open to applications by CSOs and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). Initially, a call for applications will be made, with a motivation for joining requested and a deadline set. The DBSA and FFCSA will review applications. Either entity may veto the inclusion of an organization, provided a reason is provided to the opposite party. Once the initial list is confirmed, additional applicants whether from the DBSA or CS should be reviewed and accepted or rejected following the same system, but by the current forum chairs as representatives of the DBSA and CS. The current list includes;

- 1 representative from each of the 7 FFCSA members.
- DBSA representatives to include:
  - 1 board representative.
  - 1 operation c-suite representative.
  - 1 social/environmental responsibility representative.
  - Other representatives to be determined by DBSA

We interviewed multiple CS members about their participation in forums with DFIs and researched similar forums. Based on this information, we anticipate the possibility of facing the following challenges & have developed strategies to avoid them:

Challenges	Solutions
CS stakeholders may be funded by lobbyists, or by those who greenwash and may be captured by industry interests.	The Forum stakeholder list needs to be checked and decided upon using the process outlined above.
It is important to ensure participants are not notified late about agenda items and allow for sufficient time for feedback and comment on the agenda, policies, and strategies set by the DBSA.	The forum must be given a 30-day notice of new policies and strategies, and any agenda changes should follow the process outlined above.
Meeting agendas could be set by one participant in the forum and not be open to feedback and collaboration.	Meeting agendas need to be collaboratively drafted and not solely determined by either party. The process outlined above should ensure collaboration on agenda setting.
Possibility of Bank forum members being unable to answer questions or provide correct information to CSOs.	Ensure those with relevant DBSA portfolios are nominated to sit on the forum.

<p>This forum may run into an issue of confidentiality. It will therefore be important to ascertain the level of disclosure the DBSA can undertake and would allow.</p>	<p>As a principle, the public needs to be able to access information about the DBSA and the forum. This will need to be confirmed by the DBSA. If full transparency can not be achieved, an explanation must be provided by the DBSA.</p>
---	---

This proposal has been collaboratively developed by the Fair Finance Coalition Southern Africa.