

Clean Creatives South Africa is a campaign of Fossil Free South Africa (NPO 149-064)

Address: Stoep Startup, 3 Tiverton Road, Plumstead 7800, Cape Town, South Africa

Web: www.fossilfreesa.org.za/cleancreatives | Email: stephen@fossilfreesa.org.za

21 March 2023

This Human Rights Day, a coalition of 22 organisations is calling on South African PR and advertising agencies to decline future work from fossil fuel companies, industry associations and related front groups as they continue their decades-long efforts to undermine climate action.

The stakes could not be higher. From devastating floods to droughts and extreme heat, South Africa is already feeling the effects of climate change, and this is just the beginning.

The continued prioritisation of fossil fuels over cheaper, cleaner alternatives is hurting the economy, the environment and human health — with poor and vulnerable communities worst affected as they are least prepared to cope with floods, heatwaves, droughts and food shortages. Further, fossil fuel air pollution causes 1 in 5 deaths globally — an astonishing 8 million deaths annually¹.

As civil society, environmental and climate justice organisations, our work is undermined by advertising and PR campaigns that promote fossil fuel companies and deflect from the immense harm their activities are causing. These campaigns, which mirror those used in the tobacco industry decades ago, greenwash oil, gas and coal companies in an attempt to slow or block meaningful change.

They drown out the voices of concerned citizens across our country and around the world, while effectively silencing communities on the frontlines of this crisis. They are inauthentic and antithetical to the purpose and mission of our organisations.

It's time for PR and ad agencies to come clean, end their work with the fossil fuel industry, and be a force for good, rather than part of the problem. Scientists at the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have specifically called out the creative industry for hampering efforts to prevent a full-blown climate catastrophe, and we must heed those calls.

Together, we can stand on the right side of history, and support those organisations that are genuinely working to effect meaningful change — rather than those that only pretend to.

See Signatories on page 2 below.

¹ <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/news/fossil-fuel-air-pollution-responsible-for-1-in-5-deaths-worldwide/>

Signed:

Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation
Greenpeace Africa
The Centre For Environmental Rights
350Africa.org
The Green Connection
African Climate Reality Project
Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute, SAFCEI
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance
Just Share
Climate Action Network South Africa
Earthlife Africa
groundWork
African Climate Alliance
Fossil Free South Africa
Extinction Rebellion Cape Town
Don't Gas Africa
Friends of the Liesbeek
Green Anglicans
Goldfields Community Forum
WILDTRUST
The Wild Law Institute
UCT Green Campus Initiative

About Clean Creatives South Africa:

Launched locally last year, Clean Creatives South Africa is the local chapter of Clean Creatives (cleancreatives.org) a global movement of advertisers, PR professionals, and their clients cutting ties with fossil fuels. The South African arm of Clean Creatives is a project of Fossil Free South Africa (fossilfreesa.org.za).

For more information or interviews, contact Clean Creatives SA country director, Stephen Horn: stephen@fossilfreesa.org.za or 072 621 0457.