

## **THE URBAN ENERGY/FOOD NEXUS: THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERI-URBAN AGRICULTURE IN THE ATTAINMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE CITY - A CASE OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.**

Gareth Haysom

### **ABSTRACT:**

The doubling of the population in African cities within the next two decades poses distinct questions on how city functions are planned and executed. Globally the world is facing a convergence of a number of interdependent and mutually reinforcing sustainability oriented crises. The energy/food nexus is a core component of these crises. Addressing these two dominant, but mutually beneficial, urban challenges requires fundamentally different urban governance strategies. Globalised food distribution approaches are the norm in South African cities. Cape Town's location amplifies these challenges. As a result, 44 percent of Cape Town's ecological footprint can be attributed to energy and 41 percent to food. The consequence of this unsustainable model means that those that can least afford these inefficiencies, the environment and the poor, bear the brunt of this. Cape Town has valuable peri-urban food assets, not only areas for peri-urban agriculture, but also areas that can assist in closing metabolic flows by converting urban wastes into productive urban inputs. These areas are however under severe stress and at risk of being appropriated for developer driven housing estates and shopping malls. Conflicts linked to the protection of these peri-urban agricultural areas mean that planners, other officials and civil society are having to defend these vital endowments in order to ensure the transition to a sustainable urban region. Specific cases will be discussed to illustrate these tensions, particularly, a 1000 hectare peri-urban agriculture zone, the Philippi Horticultural Area. These tensions mean that fundamentally different approaches to food and energy governance are required, something that is emerging but requires dramatic shifts in paradigm.

Gareth Haysom  
Chercheur associé  
Réseau africain sur la sécurité alimentaire  
African Center for Cities-University of Cape Town  
Afrique du Sud