

## Greenpeace founder backs nuclear energy, plug-in hybrids

**G**reenpeace founder Patrick Moore says any environmental activist who opposes nuclear energy is doing more harm than good.

Addressing a media conference recently in Johannesburg following a visit to South Africa to investigate the state of the country's energy programme, Moore said one of Greenpeace's mistakes had been to make the word nuclear so evil that nuclear energy was automatically associated with nuclear weapons. "We couldn't have been more wrong," he said. "We need to get the message out that it is possible to get what we need to survive from nuclear energy, while simultaneously reducing risk to the environment."

Moore says the effectiveness of the message lies in a combination of change in practice and change in technology. He uses the simple analogy of a light bulb. "When we turn off the light because we are not in a room, we change our practice. When we change the light bulb to an energy efficient bulb, we reduce energy consumption by 30% whenever we use it. That's a change in technology."

Moore says the need to curb climate



Patrick Moore... nuclear energy is the way forward

change and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is reaching a critical point – but he is confident that the problem can be controlled through the use of nuclear fuel. "The move toward nuclear power is happening all around the world," he says.

"Nuclear energy is one of two technologies that reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the other being hydro electric energy."

Currently, 90% of South Africa's energy is powered by coal – the energy source responsible for the highest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – with 5% from nuclear sources and 5% from hydro stations.

"I understand that you are experiencing an energy crisis and this has forced certain decisions," says Moore, "but in a country which has uranium in abundance, nuclear energy should be first choice."

In terms of the motor industry, Moore said that plug-in hybrids would be the cars of the future, with bio-fuel used for heavy commercial vehicles. "We need to find a new bio-fuel that can be developed from woody materials. This will shift the focus off maize and avert the food crisis that is emerging," he said.