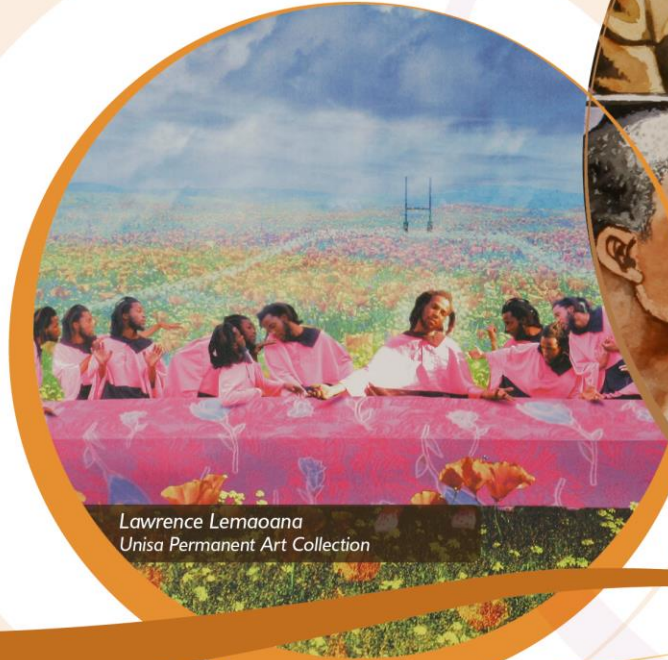


# eThekweni's Water Security and Climate Change Strategies: Locked-in by an Epistocracy?

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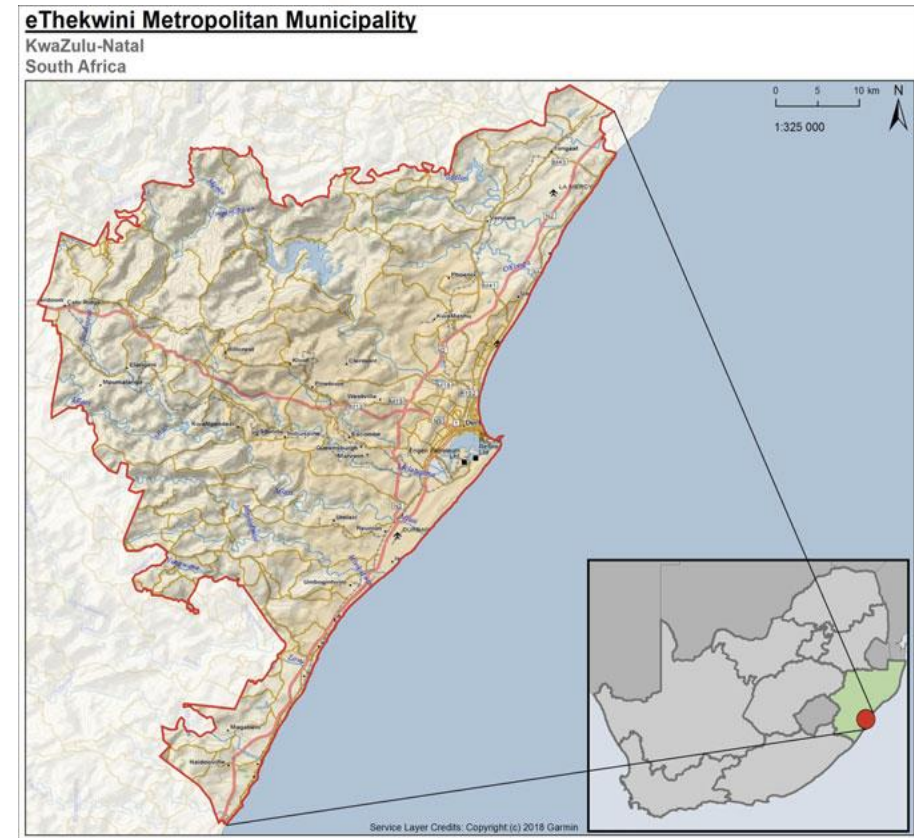
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# eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

- eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality governs the City of Durban
- KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa
- Durban is an important tourist destination and the Port of Durban a large container port



# Water (In)Security Concerns

- Water insecurity concerns
  - Water quality
  - Water scarcity
  - Flood risk
- Linked to environmental and human security concerns
- Local governments are constitutionally water service authorities
- Governing apparatus closest to the people

# Green and Ecological Infrastructures

- These could be a food source, buffer against floods, improve water quality, climate change adaptation and mitigation mechanism
- Urban planners have varying views of their purpose
- Epistemologically rooted in the natural sciences and engineering – solving problems
- Sited on their specific benefits (climate change adaptation) and not considering a suite of socio-economic, political and environmental benefits.

# Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department

- Implements climate adaptation and mitigation strategies.
- Active in the IPCC – co-authored reports.
- Municipal officials and scientists.
- Collaborates with various institutions: CSIR, SANBI, UKZN, WESSA, DUCT.
- Scientific or epistemic network locally and internationally.
- Epistemological and ontological consensus or meaning of GI and EI and its role in the uMngeni.



# Epistocracy

- “Rule of experts or knowers”, or “who have a superior knowledge of politics”.
- Wield political power in a specific political arena, e.g., GI and EI.
- eMM and EPCPD are political organs.
- Municipal council approval of GI and EI is a political function.
- Epistocrats could improve instrumental policies
  - superior knowledge informing governance and politics.

# Epistocracy

- EPCPD officials have an aptitude to inform GI and EI with local and international political structures.
- Improve municipal policies through improved biodiversity and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Knowledge informs GI and EI governance and politics.
- Limited epistocracy - seemingly non-political issues that are politically relevant.

## Lock-in

- Epistocracy - GI and EI from perceived non-political issue into a political one through expert infused practices in the political arena.
- Yet, treating GI and EI as apolitical – limited number of experts locally and internationally to implement the policies.
- Uses mainly empirical research to inform policy development and execution.
- Technical and technocratic lock-in with limited moral knowledge – limited values and norms and no public and policy critiquing voices.



# Conclusion

- Concept “lock-in” should be problematized not only from a societal but also a climate adaptation and mitigation-friendly perspective.
- Climate scientists can also be locked-in when:
  - Producing empiricist knowledge
  - Network with like-minded peers (groupthink)
  - Exclude the public and policy critique
  - Operate using structural hegemonic (scientific) processes – hegemonic control hiding structural inequalities.
  - Focus exclusively on empiricist practices on the environment and pay less attention to normativity and social structures.

**Thank you**

**Define tomorrow.**

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