



## South Africa to host inaugural event to strengthen African insurance industry's contribution to sustainable development

**Geneva/Cape Town/Johannesburg, 9 April 2018**—The United Nations and Santam, South Africa's largest general insurer, will co-host this month the first African conference of [UN Environment's Principles for Sustainable Insurance Initiative \(PSI\)](#), which will focus on strengthening the industry's ability to contribute to sustainable development across the continent.

The conference, which will be held from 16 to 17 April in Johannesburg, marks a successful return to South Africa, where the global consultation process that produced the PSI kicked off in March 2011.

This 2018 event will shape the sustainable insurance agenda in Africa across the insurance industry's triple role in sustainable development as risk managers, insurers and investors. Representatives from leading insurance organisations doing business in Africa, city/local and national government officials, key international initiatives, business and industry, civil society organisations, and academia are confirmed to attend.

*"We look forward to welcoming our African insurance industry colleagues and key stakeholders to examine ways we can better address major sustainability challenges and opportunities across the continent such as the insurance protection gap, urban and infrastructure resilience, and the sustainability of food and agriculture systems,"* said **Vanessa Otto-Mentz, Santam's Head of Group Strategy and UN Environment PSI's Board Member for Africa.**

Endorsed by the UN Secretary-General and insurance industry CEOs, the PSI serves as a global framework for the insurance industry to address environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities. It is also a global initiative to strengthen the industry's ability to building resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities and economies.

*"Seven years ago in Johannesburg, the African insurance industry demonstrated leadership by starting the global consultation process to develop a set of sustainability principles for the global insurance industry. Since then, the Principles for Sustainable Insurance have led to the largest collaborative initiative between the UN and the insurance industry,"* said **Butch Bacani, who leads the PSI at the United Nations.**

*"This year, we're going back to Johannesburg to strengthen the African insurance industry's contribution to economic, social and environmental sustainability—in other words, sustainable development—in line with the aims of global policy frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. It's all about implementation and action,"* **Bacani added.**



Nearly 120 organisations worldwide have adopted the four Principles for Sustainable Insurance since their launch at the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development. They include insurers representing more than 25% of world premium and USD 14 trillion in assets under management.

*“By working together with our peers and stakeholders, we aim to produce an agenda for change in the African insurance industry, and contribute to the global effort of insuring for sustainable development,”* **Otto-Mentz added.**

The PSI African conference is meant to complement other key African events and initiatives. These include the idea of the UN Secretary-General’s A2R Climate Resilience Initiative and the UN Environment-backed [Global Adaptation Network](#) to establish a learning platform on climate risk insurance for Africa; the [45<sup>th</sup> African Insurance Organisation \(AIO\) Conference and Annual General Assembly](#) in Accra, Ghana this May; and the [14<sup>th</sup> International Microinsurance Conference](#) co-organised by the Munich Re Foundation and the Microinsurance Network in Lusaka, Zambia this November.

For more information on the PSI African conference in Johannesburg, please visit [www.unepfi.org/psi/psi-santam-event](http://www.unepfi.org/psi/psi-santam-event) or e-mail [psi-africa@unepfi.org](mailto:psi-africa@unepfi.org).