



MEDIA RELEASE

#Beating air pollution on World Environment Day 2019

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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This coming Wednesday, 05 June 2019, is World Environment Day, themed #BeatAirPollution. The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) has recognised that this theme has come at a time that is specifically relevant to South Africa as a new Carbon Tax Bill which will come into effect as of 01 June 2019. The IWMSA is taking the opportunity to shed some light of this new piece of legislation and how it will affect business, consumers, and the environment.

“It is important for us to talk about the new carbon tax as our organisational vision is to support the promotion of a clean and healthy environment,” says Leon Grobbelaar, President of the IWMSA. “The waste sector is a significant carbon contributor and therefore it is important that we provide guidance on how to offset this, at a corporate level and at a consumer level”

South Africa is the fourteenth largest¹ carbon emitter in the world, largely due to the country’s heavy reliance on coal for power generation. While we all need electricity as a daily commodity, we can look at ways we can reduce our carbon footprint in other aspects of our daily lives.

As a consumer here are a few ways to reduce your carbon footprint:

1. Reduce your red meat consumption. Beef in particular is a massive contributor towards green house gases. This type of live stock also takes up a lot of land. Red meat consumes 11 times more water and produces five times more emissions than poultry².

2. Adopt energy efficient habits at home. While the new carbon tax is planned through a phased implementation, which will not have an immediate influence on electricity prices, the IWMSA would like to encourage consumers to install energy efficient alternative of everyday appliances, such a LED light bulbs. This can significantly reduce your electricity consumption.

3. Drive less (or make use of public transport). The new carbon tax will add 9 cents per litre on petrol and 10 cents per litre on diesel. Refunds cannot be claimed against the carbon tax³. “Now is a good time to start planning ahead in terms of making use of public transport, lift sharing or even working remotely,” says Grobbelaar.

As a business owner the new carbon tax bill will have a phased influence with a slow tax increase for carbon emitting activities over two phases.

The phased implementation takes into account South Africa's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions according to the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, signed in 2016. The first phase will be from 01 June 2019 to 31 December 2022, and the second phase from 2023 to 2030.

"The phased introduction of the carbon tax will provide business owners with the opportunity to plan ahead and to adopt business models and innovative technology aimed at carbon reduction. The next decade will see a more rapid move toward a low carbon, green economy; something that South Africa has needed for a while," says Grobbelaar.

While the carbon tax bill is aimed at addressing the carbon dioxide, there are many air pollutants that we need to address. This is why the theme for World Environment Day is focused on creating awareness around air pollution. At an individual level you can help create more awareness by participating in the global campaign, the World Environmental Day [Mask Challenge](#). Nine out of ten people breathe polluted air. Face masks are a great symbol to show leaders we want to breathe clean air. Alongside celebrities, influencers and creators, the World Environment Day campaign invites everyone to decide what action you are going to take to #BeatAirPollution. Take a photo of your mask and share it on the IWMSA's [Facebook page](#) and share your approach to reducing air pollution.

For more information on the IWMSA, visit www.iwmsa.co.za. The IWMSA is also on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/IWMSA>).

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