



WasteCon2012 Wrestling with Waste

Immediate Release

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East London – WasteCon2012, Southern Africa's largest and most comprehensive waste management conference has successfully opened at the East London International Convention Centre this morning to a just over 500 delegates and 100 exhibitors. It is hoped that ideas, knowledge and expertise will be shared during the next three days on all levels of society to effectively and efficiently minimise the growing waste situation in South Africa. Wrestling with waste is not something that can be done in isolation.

In its 22nd year, WasteCon2012 is the flagship bi-ennial waste management conference in South Africa, spearheaded by the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA).

"As the country's landfills are dangerously nearing capacity, waste treatment alternatives need to be investigated and we have to instil a culture of 'reduce, reuse and recycle', with disposal to landfills being the absolute last resort," says Obed Baloyi, WasteCon2012 Programme Manager from the Department of Environmental Affairs.

Steve Kalule, Chairman for WasteCon2012, added, "We are very proud to be hosting WasteCon2012 in the Eastern Cape this year. It is humbling to have all the experts in waste management descending on the Eastern Cape to share their knowledge and experience.

"We are all faced with the challenge of wrestling with waste in our respective fields and sectors," continues Kalule, "Together we can work together and put our minds and expertise together to find a solution to diminish the challenges of waste".

Councillor Melitafa from the Amatole District and Khanyisa Gazi, Acting Head of Department (HOD) of the Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) both concurred with the sentiment that we all need to work together and take responsibility to find solutions when it comes to managing and minimising our waste.

Melitafa added, "the sad reality is that delivery by municipalities are unfortunately below the desired standard to deal with the waste generated, the legal compliance is low and insufficient budget allocation for effective waste management. Government cannot do it alone, we need to call on all stakeholders within the waste management sector in government, the private sector and general

public to work together towards a waste minimisation solution. We cannot buy another planet; our lives and future generations all depend on this planet.”

Gazi reiterated that “A green economy and job creation especially within the recycling industry will therefore be encouraged going forward by the DEDEAT.”

Stan Jewaskiewitz, immediate past president of the IWMSA, “working with the municipalities have always been extremely important for the IWMSA, and it is encouraging that capacity building programs such as the Department of Environmental Affairs’ Waste Khoro also took place this week in East London; it is good that the two conferences have been planned back to back, which shows that we are working very closely with each other. The first two days of the week provided the Municipalities with capacity building opportunities, and the next three days will provide them with the very important networking opportunities that are needed.” Approximately 70% of the delegates are from municipalities.

Deidre Nxumalo-Freeman, President of the IWMSA, echoed the views of the speakers of bringing all stakeholders together, “education about waste management needs to be done at grass root levels, something which is very close to my heart; everyone needs to play their part in a clean and green environment. For this reason the exhibition area is open to the general public; we are encouraging everyone to visit WasteCon2012 and to become part of a sustainable waste management solution, that is not just a once-off, but that can be a part of life every day. People can only take action if they are armed with the right information.”

For more information on WasteCon2012, please visit www.wastecon.co.za.

The IWMSA is a professional, multi-disciplinary organisation with voluntary membership established to promote the science and practice of waste management and is a non-profit organisation. For more information, contact the IWMSA visit: www.iwmsa.co.za

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