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# Going green is becoming popular

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A PREMIUM advertising-agency-styled serviced office space for business and entrepreneurs in South Africa, is enthusiastically pro-green and encouraging all to be eco-friendly.

The move towards going green in the commercial property sector is gaining momentum. Since 2009, the total number of green-building projects certified by the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA) has increased by 121%, with aspects such as energy, water, waste management, transport, emissions and indoor-environment quality all taken into account.

Banks, listed property funds, developers and certain government departments seem to be leading the charge.

Nedbank was the first, back in 2009, with the launch of its Sandton head office extension, and FNB, Absa and Standard Bank are following suit.

Growthpoint and Redefine have both said that all their new buildings will conform with GBCSA's minimum Green Star SA rating, with Attacq and Tower also striving to differentiate themselves in terms of green.

Rabie has had many of its Century City buildings certified green, and key government departments are following suit, including the departments of Environmental Affairs and Public Works, the Western Cape Government, the City of Cape Town and Ethekweni Municipality.

In May, we launched our fourth serviced office space building in two years to what was previously a private home that we renovated into a stunning R40m serviced office space

facility in Bryanston.

Each property is designed and furnished with some practical, easy to apply green thinking, with roofs solar panelled, insulation in the concrete, LED lighting throughout, gas cooking in the communal café dining space, recycled materials for the tables, chairs, desks and carpets, and chemical-free paint on the walls.

Some green measures are easy and quick to implement at both design and building stages.

Photovoltaic (PV) panels can be used for solar power, LED lights and light-switch timers can be installed, insulation can be incorporated into floor slabs and roofs, and double glazing can be used for windows.

Recycled material should be considered for furniture and finishes such as carpets.

Cube Workspace recently appointed a bottle recycling company to provide branded bottled water throughout their properties.

The beauty of a supplier like Bottleworx is that not only do they use the PET manufacturing process, which is inert and BPA-free but the upcycled product is used to build classrooms, clinics and houses in previously disadvantaged communities.

With no fewer than 100 initiatives designed by the GBCSA to score "green" in their Green Star SA rating tool for new buildings, business in South Africa is not only waking up the social prerogative but also seeing the better investment return that green buildings can hold for their owners.

*Anthony Manas is chief executive of Cube Workspace*