

LEAD STORY APPROACHING NET ZERO

Racing to Zero

PHOTOS & WORDS BY GARETH GRIFFITHS

The 11th annual Green Building Convention entitled *The Race to Zero*, took place early in October in Cape Town and once again raised the bar on the delivery of an informative and impactful annual source of reference.

Opening the first convention plenary session, GBCSA President, Faieda Jacobs, made reference to the collaborative relationships that the GBCSA with the four C40 Cities (Tshwane, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban) Departments of Public Works and Environmental Affairs, South African Local Government Association NHBRC and the GBCSA look forward to expanding to reach all key public sector stakeholders.

‘Four of South Africa’s major metros are participating in the C40 South Africa Building Programme as part of their commitment to be carbon neutral by 2050. This is a commitment aimed at advancing implementation of the Paris

Agreement. GBCSA supports the open dialogue and information sharing between government stakeholders and agencies, the private sector and civic bodies required to help achieve this necessary goal,’ she said.

Green Building Council SA (GBCSA) CEO, Dorah Modise, went on to explain the significance of the GBCSA celebrating its 400th certification during September 2018.

Simply put, the physical impact of this has meant among other things:

- 5 700 000m² of developed property is now Green Star Africa certified, meaning a significant lowering of their environmental impact.
- the area of certified property covers 800 rugby fields, and that
- the equivalent of 530-million litres of potable water has been saved.

‘Since inception, significant progress has been made considering the starting point was a zero-base programme with no awareness mindset for many of the professional roleplayers, although assistance was available from the organised green building movement internationally, notably Australia. Now, the model has been rolled out continent-wide with the certification of African property as far afield as Mauritius. Clearly walking the talk, the GBCSA’s newly fitted office block was recently awarded a 4 Star rating by the Interiors Rating Tool. Now, the implementation of our new Net Zero certification sets the bar at zero impact such as at 78 Corlett Drive in Johannesburg which achieved its Net Zero Energy certification,’ Modise explains.

‘More recently the organisation has identified a great need for the raising of awareness levels among the hundreds of small operators in the SMME sector. Assisted by JP Morgan, plans are afoot to roll something out in this sector shortly,’ she adds.

DRAWDOWN – the lowdown

Inspirational speaker, Paul Hawken, author of *DRAWDOWN* and its sequel, *REGENERATION*, speak of the reality of the global crisis, reinforcing the sobering facts that CO₂ levels in the atmosphere are at their highest levels in 400 000 years, as illustrated by the ongoing readings being taken from north Greenland icecap.

As a visitor to the drill site located in an ice-cave, Hawken presented a graphic overview of the reality facing humankind. He is a critic of the sensationalist way that the effects of climate change is being



Dorah Modise