



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Landfill airspace in Gauteng: Industry leaders gather to discuss current- and future state

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Caption: The Landfill Airspace in Gauteng workshop hosted by the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) today, 29 March 2017, provided a platform for waste management industry leaders to discuss the current requirement for additional landfill airspace in Gauteng. The plans for waste diversion from landfill in future were also discussed. Kobus Otto [above], Director of Kobus Otto & Associates (Waste Management Consultants), spoke about the current state of landfilling in Gauteng and the need for future waste transfer. Zingisa Smale, the Director of Waste Management of the Gauteng Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (GDARD), was also a speaker at the event and discussed landfill airspace and plans for increased recycling in Gauteng.*

Gauteng's population of 13.2 million people<sup>1</sup> accounts for 24% of the South African population.<sup>2</sup> The Gauteng province is the country's industrial and economic hub, generating nearly 34% of South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>2</sup> As a result, Gauteng is faced with many waste management

challenges, such as the legal compliance and environmentally sound practices of landfilling; as well as the implementation of alternative waste management solutions, addressed at the workshop today.

Landfill is still the most widely used waste disposal option in South Africa. The National Waste Information Baseline Report<sup>3</sup>, a study conducted in 2012, indicates that 91% (98 million of 108 million tonnes) of the waste generated in South Africa during 2011 was disposed of at landfills. “Our reliance on landfill has come at a cost. The remaining air space at some landfill sites in South Africa is fast approaching capacity, and so is the available space to extend landfill sites while complying with stringent waste legislation,” says Jonathan Shamrock, Vice-President of the IWMSA.

Currently, a total of 599 landfill sites are listed on the South African Waste Information Centre (SAWIC) permit database for South Africa. Of this number, 102 (17%) are based in Gauteng of which 13 are municipal landfill sites.<sup>4</sup> The National and Provincial waste management strategy is geared towards waste beneficiation and diversion from landfill. As plans for waste diversion from landfill and increased recycling are gathering momentum in Gauteng, however, landfilling as a waste management option remains a necessary reality, at least for the immediate future.

“Gauteng is by far the biggest generator of waste, including hazardous waste, in South Africa; generating approximately 33% of the country’s waste,” says Kobus Otto, Director of Kobus Otto & Associates. “The province is not only in need of landfill airspace, it is in need of legally compliant and environmentally sound airspace,” he continues.

“Until we find alternative solutions that can substitute landfill entirely, we must explore the strategies, science and technology that will improve the practice and counter the negative environmental effects. Advancing knowledge about the state of landfilling and finding ways to improve the future of waste management in South Africa is of paramount importance to the IWMSA, which is why we invest in workshops such as this one and events such as Landfill 2017,” mentions Reon Pienaar, Vice Chariman of the IWMSA’s Central Branch.

The Landfill 2017 biennial seminar will take place from Wednesday, 18 to Friday, 20 October 2017. This year the seminar will be hosted at the Buffelsdraai Landfill Site and it will be the first time that this event takes place on an operational landfill site. The seminar will host several well-renowned industry bodies that will contribute to discussions on capacity building, and share valuable knowledge on technology and practices that will ultimately improve landfilling; addressing the risks that it poses to the environment and human health.

“The call for papers and abstracts to be submitted for the Landfill 2017 has been extended to 25 April 2017 and we urge all interested parties to submit their papers to Chris McKay at [mckaycga@skcm.co.za](mailto:mckaycga@skcm.co.za),” says Shamrock.

For more information about the Institute of Waste Management Southern Africa and their Landfill 2017 event, visit [www.iwmsa.co.za](http://www.iwmsa.co.za). You can also follow IWMSA on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/iwmsa>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/IWMSA>).

<sup>1</sup>Statistics South Africa (2015). Statistical release P0302: Mid-year Population Estimates 2015.

<sup>2</sup>The Real Economy Bulletin (2016). Provincial Review 2016.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Environmental Affairs (2012). National Waste Information Baseline Report. Department of Environmental Affairs. Pretoria, South Africa.

<sup>4</sup>Department of Environmental Affairs (2016). South African Waste Information Centre. Permit database.

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