



MEDIA RELEASE

Eastern Cape Conference

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

28 August 2009

East London – Earlier today, Zukisa Faku, East London Mayor, officially opened and welcomed delegates from all over South Africa to the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa's (IWMSA) Conference in the Eastern Cape. The conference focuses on the link between Waste Management and Climate Change.

Faku said today that it is encouraging for government to see more organisations taking an active lead on issues that face humanity at large, such as the critical issue of climate change. Faku reiterated that we should no longer be complacent, action needs to be taken, as waste management negatively impacts on tourism, investments and the economy of the country is ultimately threatened. It is important for organisations to educate people on waste management, and what exactly climate change is and what the impact is on everyone. People can only support an initiative if they understand exactly what it is about. Organisations need to steer away from buzz words and waste jargon.

Deidré Nxumalo-Freeman IWMSA Eastern Cape Chairperson, has indicated that the presentations that have been delivered today, are addressing the waste management issues at grassroots levels as challenged by the Mayor.

Landfill gas comprises of 60% methane and 40% CO₂, these two gasses are known as greenhouse gasses that are responsible for climate change. According to Alistair McMaster consultant at Pure Carbon Services Africa, the frequency of large flood events between 1967 to 2002 was every 12 years, this has increased to every 1.4 years from 2003 to 2008. The situation is getting worse. He also indicated that 18.1% of methane is produced by waste.

According to Deidré Nxumalo-Freeman, IWMSA Eastern Cape Chairperson one of the first steps that people can take to reduce their own carbon footprint is to specifically separate their organic waste. Organic waste is any waste from the kitchen such as egg shells, vegetable and fruit peels as well as garden cuttings etc. Once organic matter starts decomposing, it produces methane gas; this gas is approximately 21 times more harmful than CO₂. People are therefore encouraged to start their own compost heaps at home.

Experts in the realm waste management have descended on the Eastern Cape to discuss the pertinent issues of Climate Change and how best to address this critical issue from grassroots levels to large multi-national corporations. .

The Eastern Cape Conference is taking place until 28 August at the Regent Hotel, East London. For more information visit www.iwmsa.co.za or contact 043 721 0598

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