



# The Greener Option

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Volume 10, Issue 3

— CREATING GREATER AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PRACTICE —

## Inside this issue:

<i>Editorial</i>	2
<i>Pouring savings down the drain?</i>	3
<i>Guest column An issue of sustainability</i>	4
<i>Greenline's first gold!</i>	5
<i>Green Globe News</i>	6
<i>Miss Earth - home @ Tsoyo Sun</i>	7
<i>Members' news</i>	8



- 1 October**  
UN World Habitat Day
- 7 November**  
World Responsible Tourism Day
- 21 November**  
World Fisheries Day
- 11 December**  
International Mountain Day

## Heritage introduces online Eco-Beds portal

**W**ith online travel reservations now expected to represent almost one third of all bookings made by the end of 2012\*, the need for direct access to responsible tourism products has become greater.

The latest initiative by Heritage now makes it possible for the more responsible traveller to now source and book accommodation online at environmentally certified hotels, lodges and resorts across Africa and the Indian Ocean region.

Heritage's online Eco-beds.net portal is a one-stop, on-line and free booking service for all properties in the Heritage Programme. The service, which represents the first of its kind in Africa, provides a 'push' facility linking prospective guests directly with the on-line reservations platform of their selected hotel.

Eco-Beds provides travellers looking for more environmentally and socially responsible with a single source service for countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands where Heritage is represented. It guarantees travellers that the impacts their visit have on their chosen destination have



been minimised through onsite effective and on-going management practice by providing access to independently certified tourist accommodation facilities.

"By utilising Eco-beds.net, travellers will experience a number of advantages over the more traditional reservation services," says Heritage MD Greg McManus. "The benefits of using Eco-Beds include not having to pay a booking commission; the reassurance that only certified properties are represented on the portal; instant booking confirmation through direct linkage with the on-line reservations platforms at selected hotels, resorts or lodges, and 24/7 access to the selected supplier. This all ensures limited down-time and delays when planning travel in South and southern Africa" he adds.

Eco-beds.net is the latest in a range of certification initiatives offered by Heritage to reduce the impact of tourism and travel to southern Africa and to the continent as a whole. It is also the first consumer-orientated promotions initiative and will represent the consumer-face of Heritage after its launch.

\* Global Online Travel Report 2012

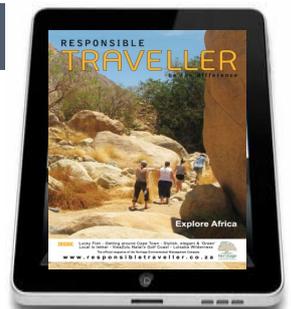
## Responsible Traveller available online

**R**esponsible Traveller magazine, published in association with Heritage, is a print and online publication showcasing Southern Africa as a responsible tourism destination. Its goal is to inform, educate, entertain and inspire its readers to make informed decisions, to manage their impact on the environment and to 'be the difference' in tourism today.

Having established itself as a world-class printed publication, Responsible Traveller has now gone digital by offering the first digital edition of any responsible travel magazine on the market. "Using the latest technology in digital magazines has made our move into the App world relatively easy," says Tessa Buhmann, managing editor of the magazine. The digital edition allows Responsible Traveller to be read by a global audience using either the Apple and Android systems by downloading the App directly from the App Store.



Tessa says that the fact that a complete edition can now be downloaded and read anywhere and at any time is an absolute bonus and from a reader's perspective, the Responsible Traveller App is easy to use. This can be demonstrated through download numbers increasing – especially from international readers, which is great for the Southern African products featured in the publication. In addition this means that readership figures can grow dramatically without added cost impacts on the environment," she adds. "The digizine offers a unique platform to existing and potential advertisers, not only as it the first of its kind for the local hospitality industry but its also reaches a global audience," says Heritage's md Greg McManus.



In Proud Association With:



## Editorial

There is on-going debate about the value of environmental certification and in fact, whether external verification makes any real difference in today's highly competitive world.

While some research shows that environmentally certified properties achieve an average 10% higher room rate than their non-certified neighbours, or that they achieve a 15% higher occupancy than uncertified properties, there is no empirical evidence to support these claims.

What we do know is that the demand for responsible accommodation and tourism products is growing at an increasing rate, and that this 'niche' is out-performing more traditional travel demographics than expected. There is no longer doubt that the need for more responsible tourism products is setting the pace for future growth and that global players such as Marriott, Carlson Rezidor, Hilton International and Scandic Hotels have taken the lead in responsible business practice not for environmental recognition - but because it makes business sense.

Being 'green' is not just about saving energy or reducing your



water consumption and waste levels. It is about becoming more responsible about the way that your business interacts on all levels with the environment, local communities, your own staff and future generations. It is about changing the way we do business and perhaps this is where the true value of certification lies. Gone are the days when businesses can simply carry-on as usual. There are consequences for irresponsible business, both financially and at corporate level, but the most important consequence is about BRAND. How your business is seen by consumers can make or break your ability to be sustainable, and unless you seriously change the way that you operate, you will be out of business faster than you imagine.

Certification provides an independent and totally unbiased opinion of your overall performance, and it provides your guests and clients an assurance of the seriousness with which you view your environment. It is essentially a guarantee offered on your behalf to responsible patrons, and provides a marketing and operational differential in an increasingly competitive world.

If you believe you don't need certification - or still believe you can get along without it, start re-evaluating your position before it is too late. Certification and responsible business are no longer the peripheral responsibility of the maintenance manager. Certification is a management issue, representing the future of your business environment and ultimately, your success.

There is one thing you can be certain of as you go to sleep tonight - your competitor is already being convinced of the benefits of certification!

Greening the office does not mean spending a lot of money or eliminating creature comforts in the name of sustainable living. In fact, many green choices can save the company money instead of being a fiscal drain. For the most part, greening the office requires conscious choices, choosing reusable over disposable, and conservation over immediate convenience. Given how much time people spend at work, greening the office is a logical extension of people wanting to find eco-friendly solutions elsewhere in their lives.

**STEP 1.** Replace the office coffee with a fair-trade, shade-grown or organic version. Fair-trade coffees are produced and purchased from farmers with livable wages for both themselves and their employees. Shade-grown coffee was grown under the canopy of trees, which means that rain forests were not cut down to grow the coffee beans. Organic coffees are grown without treatment from toxic pesticides and herbicides, lowering both the consumers' and the earth's exposure to toxins.

**STEP 2.** Replace disposable paper cups with washable, reusable mugs. Have everyone in the office bring their own mug from home instead of using paper cups for water, tea and coffee every day. An office of 15 people replacing their three paper cups a day each with a washable, reusable mug would save 11,250 paper cups from being purchased and tossed. This step saves the company money and space in the local landfill.

**STEP 3.** Use the energy-saver settings on all electronics and turn them off when you leave for the day. Have the computers set to go into sleep mode if untouched for 10 or 15 minutes. Use motion sensors or timers on overhead lighting to prevent lighting empty rooms. Power down printers, fax machines and computers at the end of the day to save electricity and lower the power bill.

**STEP 4.** Use 100 percent recycled paper for all of your printing needs. It takes a lot of resources to cut, produce and bleach virgin wood

for paper. Recycled paper takes postconsumer waste and recycles it into paper to conserve resources and make use of materials that would have otherwise been waste in a landfill

**STEP 5.** Purchase eco-friendly office supplies. Many retailers now offer green options for traditional products, with items made from reclaimed or recycled materials as well as those that use less resources and material to make.

Some items are reusable themselves such as refillable ink cartridges or pens.

**STEP 6.** Go as paperless as possible. Do not print an email if you don't have to: instead, archive and save it. Send contracts via email and electronically sign them if possible instead of printing and faxing. While few offices can go totally paperless, most can cut down a majority of their printing projects to just the essentials.

**STEP 7.** Offer recycling options in the office. Have bins set up to hold paper, plastic, metal, ink cartridges and even batteries. Recycling helps conserve natural resources by reusing materials from broken, worn and discarded items.

**STEP 8.** Encourage eco-friendly transportation. Offer incentives to employees for carpooling or public transportation use. Allowing even part-time telecommuting cuts office costs, makes a lighter ecological footprint and can improve employee morale.

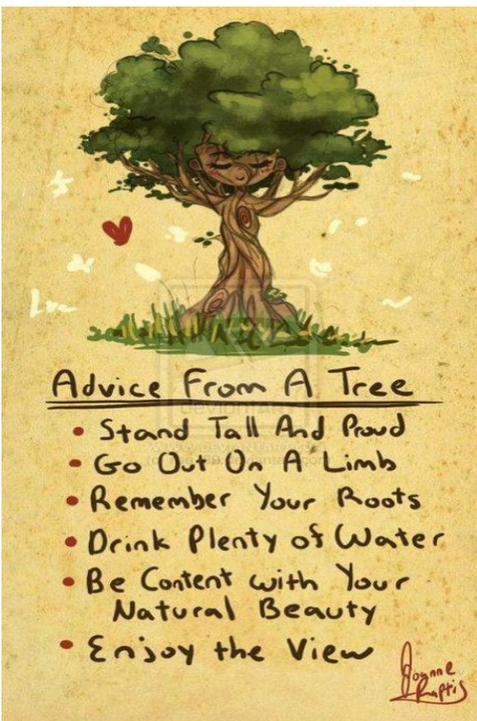
**STEP 9.** Run the air conditioning and heating a little less. During the winter, set the temperature to no higher than 68 degrees Fahrenheit and no lower than 78 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer. This act alone will save most offices hundreds of dollars over the course of a year (see Reference 5). With these thermostat settings, people can dress more to the weather instead of how hot or cold the office will be.

**STEP 10.** Use eco-friendly products to clean the office. Many of the toxins people are exposed to regularly come from the toxic cleaners sold to clean, sanitize and deodorize homes and businesses. With so many brands now offering effective and affordable nontoxic, eco-friendly cleaners, cleaning green is a viable option.

*Greenliving.nationalgeographic.com*

## Greening your office





## Life's a gas on this pig-powered farm!

**A** Bela-Bela, Limpopo Province, farmer is using the waste generated by his 17000 pigs to create methane gas, which is then converted into electricity. The farm uses at least 30kW of electricity daily from a hi-tech generator, housed in a 6m-long shipping container, that converts the biogas into electricity.

Electricity generated from pig effluent, including pig urine, is used to run all the farming operations - including the electrical motors that process food for the 26 pig pens - as well as the heating and temperature control in the grower houses, the boreholes and for domestic use in the farmhouse.

At least 9000 tons of pig effluent at the 520ha farm is stored in a bio-digester - a 60m x 60m storage tank that is almost 5m deep. The air-tight tank is sealed with thick plastic to prevent leakage into the groundwater.

Gas captured under the plastic cover is channeled through a 300m pipe to the generator in the shipping container, where it is converted into electricity.

The project was started after complaints from neighbours, including owners of guesthouses, about the overpowering smell from the farm.

It is the only full-scale biogas power plant in the country that is embedded in the national grid.

In the Bela-Bela region there are four piggeries involved in electricity generation, which could be used to supply electricity to about 200 homes. [govenderp@sundaytimes.co.za](http://govenderp@sundaytimes.co.za)

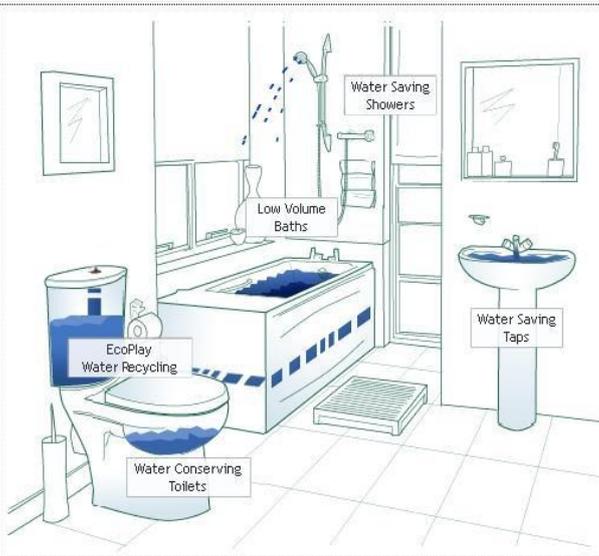


If you are the owner or general manager of a hotel built before 1993, you could be losing money with every flush and use of the sink and shower. While you can't control your hotel guests' use of utilities, you can control your operating costs, and through simple, environmentally friendly renovations to your plumbing, you can significantly lower expensive water/sewer bills.

Let's use the example of a 25-year-old, 100-room property with a 50% occupancy rate that hasn't had any updates to toilets, shower heads or sink aerators.

On average, a guestroom toilet is flushed 15 times a day (between two guests and housekeeping), using up to 198.45 litres of water per day based on an older 13.23 litre-per-flush toilet. Multiply that by 365 days and by 50 rooms and that amounts to 3 621 618 litres flushed away in a year. But if newer, 3.0 litre-per-flush toilets are installed, the total is reduced to 827 820 litres a year.

Move to the shower, which is on for an average of 23 minutes a day by two guests and housekeeping. For an older shower head that uses 11.34 litres per minute, that equates to 4 759 965 litres in a year. By changing to a 3.78 litre per minute flow, the total is now



1 586 655 a year, preventing you from pouring your money down the drain.

The same goes for the hand sink. Two guests and housekeeping combine to use it an average of twelve minutes a day, which consumes 1 793 610 per year based on an out-of-date, 8.31 litre-per-minute sink aerator. A new 3.78 litre-per-minute aerator cuts usage to 827 820 litres in a year.

Add it all up, and three wise investments to each guest bathroom will save more than 6.8 million litres of water each year, which is the definition of being eco-friendly and will give you a return on your investment within less than three years.

The above cost saving doesn't include the energy used to heat water in the shower or sink, or the water used in lobby restrooms, kitchens/breakfast areas, and laundry facilities.

Remember to keep in mind, if you do make any of the above-mentioned improvements to find out about any utility rebates or incentives that promote water conservation.

Investing in some simple renovations to plumbing can positively affect your property from a financial and environmental perspective, helping you to become not only a greener hotel, but also have a greener bottom-line.

*Green Lodging News.*

## Are older hotels... Pouring savings down the drain?

## SA takes lead in development of new fishing law

**S**outh Africa is to take the lead in developing an implementation plan for the UN's 30-year-old international law of the sea - and have it ready for a vote by the UN General Assembly in December 2012.

When adopted, the plan will regulate high seas fishing beyond national jurisdictions - something only a handful of nations have been pushing for until now, in terms of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea which was concluded in 1982.

[www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za)



# Guest Column

## An issue of sustainability

**Helen Lockhart**

*Communications and Sustainability Manager, Two Oceans Aquarium*

**T**wo Oceans Aquarium hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> International Aquarium Congress (IAC) from 9 to 14 September 2012 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. Held every four years, the IAC is the only international platform for the global public aquarium community to share and learn about new developments in the fields of amongst others animal husbandry, research, technology, management, education, conservation and sustainability. This is the first time that the IAC was held in Africa and in the southern hemisphere.

### Quest of local suppliers

The overall theme of the 8<sup>th</sup> IAC is *"The Global Aquarium Community: sharing experiences and collectively inspiring change"*. Underpinning this theme was the issue of sustainability which was incorporated in a number of elements within the conference.

In line with the 8<sup>th</sup> IAC's sustainability policy and the Two Oceans Aquarium's Platinum certification, the IAC Local Organising Committee (LOC) committed to sourcing suppliers and products which are environmentally-friendly and which support local communities.

"There was much debate about which conference accessories, like bags and lanyards, we should make available to delegates coming to the 8<sup>th</sup> IAC. We didn't want to produce items simply because that's what you are traditionally given at a conference. After all, few people ever use these items after the conference," said Helen Lockhart, Communications & Sustainability Manager for the Two Oceans Aquarium. "However, we decided that we would produce bags, lanyards and T-shirts, using environmentally friendly materials wherever possible, and make sure that local communities were given the opportunity to benefit financially from their production. We've partnered with local organisations to give the delegates high quality African products which don't cost the earth."

The conference lanyards, sponsored by Advanced Aquarium Technologies in Australia, were made by the Positive Beadwork Project in Cape Town. These stylish conference accessories were made by HIV/AIDS-affected women who support their families with the income they generate from beadwork.

### Hemp conference bags

Our conference bags, sponsored by ISIS, were produced by the non-profit skills development and job creation organisation Learn to Earn with hemp fabric supplied at cost by Hemporium. Hemp was a good choice of fabric for the bags as it is strong, durable and comes from a renewable re-

source. It is a fast-growing, environmentally responsible crop, which has multiple uses including building materials, clothing, food, paper and cosmetics. Although the fabric for the conference bags was imported, research is currently underway in South Africa to establish the viability of cultivating industrial hemp in this country.

Although we hope that delegates will want to keep and continue using their bags when they returned home, the LOC had a bag collection point on the last day of the conference at the CTICC for delegates who wanted to leave their bags behind. These bags are to be donated to underprivileged school children for use as school bags.



The T-shirts were sponsored by Coutant Aquariums in France and manufactured locally in Cape Town by Homebrewed. This organisation, under the banner of EcoWarrior, produces T-shirts made from bamboo fabric. Like hemp, bamboo is a fast-growing plant and can be used in multiple ways. The advantages of growing bamboo in South Africa are that it grows in poor soils and requires little water. A number of pilot projects are currently underway in the Eastern Cape Province, which has high rates of unemployment and poverty, particularly in rural communities.

### Café Conversation methodology

One of the aims of the LOC was to provide delegates with opportunities to engage in discussions and participate actively in the conference. We decided to use the Café Conversation methodology to facilitate discussions around business sustainability and the sustainability of collecting animals from the wild for display purposes. Café-style sessions require more intimate seating arrangements than the traditional tiered auditorium, so many small tables were required. We decided to have tables made rather than to hire them and sourced local company Eco-furniture Design to produce eco-friendly tables made from reclaimed or sustainably harvested timber and recycled materials. During the Congress delegates had the opportunity to 'buy' the tables which are to be donated to under-resourced schools in Cape Town.

## Study finds fish size will shrink by 2050

**F**ish are likely to get even smaller on average by 2050 because of global warming. A study by Canada's University of British Columbia released last month states that the phenomenon will cut the amount of oxygen in the oceans in a shift that may also mean dwindling catches.

Average maximum body weights for 600 types of marine fish, such as cod, plaice, halibut and flounder, will contract by 14-24%.

The smaller sizes are expected to have large implications for the ocean ecosystem and for human fisheries and global protein supply. The reductions in body size will affect whole ecosystems. The smaller sizes are also expected to have large implications for ocean food webs.

The consequences of failing to curtail green-

house gas emissions on marine ecosystems are likely to be larger than previously indicated.

Global warming, blamed on human burning of fossil fuels, will make life harder for fish in the oceans largely because warmer water can hold less dissolved oxygen, vital for respiration and growth

According to the study which was based on computer models, as the fish grow bigger and bigger it will be difficult to get enough oxygen for growth. There is more demand for oxygen as the body grows and at some point the fish will simply stop growing. As water gets warmer, it also gets lighter, limiting the mixing of oxygen from the surface layers towards the colder, denser layers where many fish live. Rising water temperatures would also add stresses to the metabolic rates of fish.



The scientists say fish stocks are likely to shift from the tropics towards cooler seas to the north and south. Average maximum sizes of fish in the Indian Ocean are likely to shrink most, by 24%, followed by a decline of 20% in the Atlantic and 14% in the Pacific. The Indian Ocean has most tropical waters of the three. SABC

## QR codes can spread your message!



**W**e have all seen those quirky little squiggles on advertising by now, but QR codes (abbreviated from Quick Response Codes) have become the latest trend to hit the US green lodging industry.

QR codes are the two-dimensional square barcodes that are increasingly being used in signage and advertisements. Because most people today have

smartphones that include barcode readers, companies are now using QR codes to direct clients and potential clients to helpful information. QR codes have the potential to educate your guests about anything either on or off your property related to sustainability. A QR code can be created in a few seconds using one of the QR code generators found online. Hostelling Inter-

national Boston are using QR codes throughout their recently opened, 480-bed hostel in downtown Boston. Stickers with QR codes have been placed in hundreds of locations throughout the building to explain how the hostel was constructed, how water is being conserved, how energy consumption is being reduced, etc. The stickers have also become part of a **Green G Tour** the hostel has started.

Next month, Hyatt will launch a Flavor Journey website where kids and parents can learn more about organic foods using QR codes on Hyatt's "For Kids By Kids" menu while also enjoying games and activities.

Today, we see QR codes on almost all advertising undertaken by the commercial sector, but the internal value of QR codes is perhaps still to be understood as a marketing and awareness tool by the hospitality and tourism sectors. QR Codes could be used for everything from guest in-room directories, to menu's, evacuation instructions and internal marketing, while the use of QR codes at tourist attractions and sites would ensure the most up-to-date information to visitors around the clock.

Watch this space for the New Heritage QR initiative for your business.

*Green Lodging News.*

## Greenline's

# First Gold

**C**ape Town's Dongola Guest House is the first Greenline member to achieve gold status and one of the industry's few smaller accommodation facilities to be independently audited for its environmental commitment.

The guest house was awarded Gold status, by Heritage's Greenline Responsible Tourism Certification Programme, after having implemented a formal environmental management document which includes policy statements and procedures for environmentally responsible and sustainable business practice.

The GreenLine Programme®, which is compliant with the South African National Standard for Responsible Tourism, recognises accommodation facilities of fewer than 20 rooms in nine main performance categories: purchasing and procurement; air quality; energy management; hazardous material, chemical and pesticides; waste management; training and awareness; water management; and social initiatives.

*Some of the guest house's achievements include:*

- Despite a 5% growth in occupancy in 2012 compared to previous years, the guest house has managed to reduce water consumption by 19%
- All light bulbs have been replaced with energy-saving bulbs
- Geysers are set at 55 degrees Celsius
- Daylight switches have been installed to reduce energy consumption on exterior lights
- A worm farm has been developed on the property, and the staff now feed their worms approximately three kilograms of waste per week
- Recycling efforts have helped the guest house reduce its solid waste output

by 50% to one 240 litre dustbin per week

- Over the past 16 months about 500kgs of recyclable waste was donated to the "Friends of the Constantia Valley Green Belts" and the money earned from this used for Dongola Guest House's conservation work
- Gardens have been landscaped with water-wise, indigenous plants
- Dongola has embarked on a partnership with "Learn to Earn" which is a training facility in the Township of Khayelitsha with the philosophy of "a hand up - not a hand out." Dongola House supports this initiative in two ways, through the non-profit sale of the arts and crafts on display in its reception area, and the sponsorship of a prize in the Learn to Earn annual charity golf day.



"Many guest house and B&B operators seem to expect government incentives to implement more environmentally responsible practices, but what they fail to realise is that if they do not change their mind-set and begin now to implement measures to make their business more sustainable they will soon be out of business. Sustainability brings with it much needed cost savings and it also gives them a marketing edge in SA's highly competitive hospitality industry. I hope Dongola's example will spur other guest house owners on to changing the way they think about the need for environmental responsibility," says Heritage Operations Director, Neal Dickinson.

## When decomposition becomes a matter of time

**E**ver wondered how long it takes for goods to decompose when dumped at a landfill site? The following makes for interesting reading and might make you consider your actions and impacts (global greenhouse effect) when you next toss waste into the bin without recycling.

- Paper towel: 2-4 weeks
- Banana peel: 3-4 weeks
- Paper bag: 1 month
- Apple core: 2 months
- Cardboard: 2 months
- Orange peel: 6 months
- Plywood: 1-3 years
- Milk cartons: 5 years
- Cigarette butts: 10-12 years
- Tin can: 50 years
- Plastic cups: 50 years
- Rubber-boot sole: 50-80 years
- Plastic containers: 50-80
- Aluminium can: 200-500 years
- Plastic bottles: 450 years
- Disposable diapers: 550 years
- Plastic bags: 200-1000 years

**"The typical person in a developed country produces about 1.2 kg garbage a day. That would mean the average man, weighing 79 kg produces his weight in trash every three months."**

*The Atlantic*





# Green Globe international news

The Chaaya Reef Ellaidhoo Resort in the Maldives, Indian Ocean was recently re-certified by Green Globe. Since the initial onsite audit two years ago, the property had implemented a number of improvements and far exceeds the required certification pass scores for most Green Globe indicators.

"Our commitment is reflected in our management principles and daily practices, which aim at building a sustainable future for the generations to come," said Mr Kumar Prem, General Manager at the resort: "We strive to



Maldives  
**Chaaya Reef Ellaidhoo Resort  
recertified**

Over the past two years, we have seen a 30% per guest drop of energy con-

sumption." include our partners, customers, staff, and local communities where relevant and to the extent possible in accordance and compliance to all local environmental regulations. We minimise waste by evaluating operations and ensuring efficiency by adapting environmentally-friendly waste disposal practices, composting programmes, and actively promote reuse and recycle programmes.

sumption."

The resort's water bungalows are now fitted with Energy Management Systems, which will also be implemented in beach bungalows during the next refurbishment. CFL bulbs replaced LED bulbs in most areas, and a heat recovery system provides hot water to the guest rooms. All chemicals used on the property by kitchens, housekeeping, and laundry are biodegradable. Furthermore, the resort has implemented collateral on energy and water conservation, waste management, as well as marine life preservation and cultural etiquette that should be observed when visiting local communities. Local culture is promoted through "Theme Nights," which feature traditional Maldivian cuisine and entertainment, in addition to local island excursions, available for guests.

The realities of the location in which the property operates present a challenge when it comes to waste management and obtaining environmentally-certified products that are largely unavailable in the Maldives. While the resort separates its waste and sends waste plastic bottles back to the supplier for recycling, styrofoam, cardboard, and metal waste is currently sold for reuse, and future innovative plans include in-house paper recycling. Most vegetables and herbs are grown on the resort's own hydroponics garden, and environmentally-preferable products are being purchased to as great a degree as possible. Take-back and packaging minimisation policies are in place, and all procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to continually improve performance.

As the first hotel in Belgium to join GG several years ago, the Crowne Plaza Hotel - Le Palace, in Brussels, continues to demonstrate social responsibility and commitment to sustainable operations.

Two years ago, the hotel installed a combined heat and power system (CHP), which enables the hotel to generate its own electricity by collecting and releasing heat. With this system in place, its energy consumption has been reduced by 46% for electricity, 1% for gas, and 17% for water. It has also set up a special Green Team, consisting of 20 employees from different departments and with various responsibilities to shape realise its environmental goals.

The hotel implemented a long-term

sustainability management system; greenhouse gas emissions from all sources controlled by the hotel are strictly measured. Guests are encouraged to support a carbon-

neutral stay and to minimise their environmental footprint. Cleaning of bed linen and bathrooms are provided on request, or every three days; all cleaning products are non-toxic and eco-labelled; and the hotel offers a line of amenities free of petrolatum, mineral oil, synthetic colours, animal ingredients, parabens, and solvents. The commitment extends to the hotel's restaurants, and all menus offer local, seasonal dishes with organic ingredients. Packaging is reduced to a minimum, and local suppliers adhering to sustainable practices are given preference.



Belgium  
**Le Palace recognised for  
sustainable operations**



Portugal  
**Estoril Congress Center gets thumb up!**

GG recently announced the re-certification of the Estoril Congress Center (ECC), which is situated on the Estoril Coast in Portugal. For years, the ECC has demonstrated leadership and innovation in the fields of operational efficiency and corporate social responsibility. Following the green trends in the market and striving to expand its commitment to the environment, the ECC has integrated a new business strategy, providing sustainable products and services for all types of events that take place in this venue.

The ECC has been a carbon-neutral venue since 2010, and its certified recycling programme allows it to operate with zero waste.

Its "Easy Guide To Green Events," offers green solutions to customers, with some of the best practices including; an energy management system to reduce and control energy consumption, use of eco-certified cleaning products and recycled materials, and staff specifically trained in procedures on green events.



## Green Globe encourages studies!

News just in from the Island of Antigua, in the Caribbean, is that six happy Haitian students have just been presented with five new notebooks courtesy of GG Inc. to help them with their studies at the Hospitality School in Antigua.

*Pictured l-r: Celene JOULOUTE Resort Management Association; Fabiola PARIS- IEN Culinary Arts Association; Prefma LEXIS Resort Management Association; Widlande PIERRE Hospitality Management Association; Pascale CICERON Resort Management Association; and Christina DENIS Resort Management Association.*

## Tsogo Sun new home of Miss Earth 2012

**M**iss Earth has a new home – with Heritage member Tsogo Sun. Miss Earth this year celebrates a decade of commitment to a greener South Africa through a strong focus on greening, tree planting, recycling, energy efficiency and carbon-conscious lifestyle choices. Beautiful young women are the ambassadors for the programme, dedicating their time and their passion for the environment to initiatives that reach communities across the country.

Miss Earth's activities attracted the attention of Tsogo Sun, which is renowned for its on-going commitment to environmental management through its SunCares programme. Tsogo Sun hosted the Miss Earth finalists at Montecasino in the week leading up to the gala awards dinner, which took place on Saturday, 25 August, also at Montecasino.

Tsogo Sun will continue its support of Miss Earth throughout the year's activities, all of which are aimed at raising awareness of environmental issues.

The Miss Earth 2012 national finalists comprise an exciting group of diverse women, from students, to Environmental Science graduates, an Electrical Engineer, a medical doctor, professional dancers, educators and a chartered accountant. They have participated in alien vegetation clean ups with Rand Water's chemical removal team, water testing with local high schools, educational programmes in schools across the country, community driven projects, the annual stationery drive and much more.

Tsogo Sun has a distinctive green tinge to its image as careful environmental management has seen the group reduce its energy consumption by more than 10% through the installation of heat pumps and energy efficient lighting at all gaming and hotel properties and become Africa's largest environmentally-certified hospitality group. "We have installed many innovative property management systems that allow us to track and monitor usage of critical resources such as water and energy. It is through this continuous



Miss Earth contestants

monitoring and a burning desire to act responsibly towards the environment that effective steps are being taken to reduce the consumption of natural resources," comments Rob Collins, Chief Marketing Officer: Tsogo Sun.

"The sustainability of our business practices and our communities is core to our business strategy and Tsogo Sun is proud to be a catalyst for change through this new partnership with the effective Miss Earth programme," says Collins. "There is no doubt that the next generation of consumers are more aware of the impact that their behaviour has on the environment. Through our partnership with Miss Earth we aim to further educate and change the behaviour of the youth, by profiling the environmental awareness of their peers, who are credible ambassadors for a sustainable environment."

**S**ometimes, the future arrives with alarming speed. In the 1990s, and again in 2000, climate scientists warned that – unless urgent action was taken – the Arctic Ocean could be clear blue water in summer by 2050. This August researchers making a first analysis of data from the European Space Agency's observation satellite CryoSat-2 were startled to find



Arctic sea ice shocker

that the loss of sea ice – as measured both by depth, and by area – was far more dramatic than their own forecasts had predicted. The summer Arctic could be an open sea within a decade.

It is the ice cap that keeps the Arctic cold. Sunlight that hits white ice bounces back into space. Dark ocean absorbs light, and therefore warmth, making the next winter's ice pack thinner, and less enduring. The difference between the torrid tropics and the icy Arctic governs weather patterns in the northern hemisphere. The frozen ocean and permafrost at the perimeter prevents ground methane from escaping into the atmosphere and thereby accelerating global warming. The polar seas drive the marine ecosystem and fuel the north Atlantic fish stocks. So the consequences of ice loss could be considerable, although nobody with political authority seems so far to have sufficiently considered them.

Bad news from the far north has just been

matched by a bleak warning from the tropics. German, US and Australian scientists reported in Nature Climate Change in September that the double menace of increasing greenhouse gas emissions and rising ocean acidity could spell the end for most of the world's coral reefs. These extraordinary and beautiful structures flourish at the limits of their tolerance. They like it hot, but not too hot. They tend to "bleach" and even die as temperatures rise: during 1998, 16% of all living corals perished in one exceptional tropic summer. Coral reefs deliver coastal protection, tourism and fishing for millions: the reefs are home, habitat and hunting territory for about a quarter of all marine species. The researchers used 19 different climate models to predict the effects of a 2C increase in global average temperatures, and found that by 2030 around 70% of the reefs would suffer what they politely call "long-term degradation".

[www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)



### SA lauded for high standard of sustainability reporting

**S**A's expertise in corporate sustainability and integrated reporting has led to the country being asked to help other countries. The request was made at the recent United Nations (UN) sustainability talks held in Brazil, in September.

The country's recognition comes as a world leader in corporate sustainability reporting, with the King 3 Code requiring companies listed on the JSE to produce a report integrating their financial and sustainability performance, or explain why they could not do so. [www.bdfm.co.za](http://www.bdfm.co.za)



# Members' Green News

## TOA educator wins environmental award - for second year in a row!



Khonzani helping learners discover marine environments and issues.

**K**honzani Lembeni, a teacher at the Two Oceans Aquarium Environmental Education Centre, recently won the "Best Presentation" Award at the Marine and Coastal Educators' Network (MCEN) annual conference. This is the second year in a row that Khonzani has scooped this award.

MCEN is a network of educators who teach children and adults about marine and coastal environmental issues. These educators are either from the formal education sector (schools and universities) or from the informal education sector (aquariums, zoos and government).

Each year, the group meets in a different part of the country to network and share ideas with like-minded people as well as to explore the issues facing that particular area of the coast. This year's conference, with the theme "Sustainable Oceans and Coasts – Let's do it together", was held at uShakaMarine World in Kwazulu-Natal.

### New lessons at Environmental Education Centre

Khonzani's presentation was based on one of the new lessons that the Environmental Education Centre is offering to school groups which visit the Two Oceans Aquarium. The lesson is called Fish Mathematics and deals with dwindling fish stocks and the legislation that applies to the harvesting of fish. The lesson also incorporates numeracy and literacy skills and therefore fulfils the Department of Education's mandate of improving learners' skills in these subjects.

"At first I was nervous when my boss selected me from the Aquarium's Education team to present at the national conference. I am very proud to receive this award and as I said on the day "this award is for my TOA education team", said Khonzani.

Khonzani's enthusiasm for teaching is palpable, whether he is presenting a lesson, or speaking to others about the work that the Two Oceans Aquarium Environmental Education Centre does. "The award shows how much the Two Oceans Aquarium Environmental Education Centre is appreciated by other provinces and environmental education centres. The work we do is amazing - changing lives every day," says Khonzani.

### Affirmation from peers

"I am exceptionally proud of Khonzani's achievement. This award – best MCEN presenter - is a wonderful recognition of his confidence as a presenter but also affirmation from our peers in the marine educational field with regard to how effective and relevant our new lesson activity is", says Bianca Engel (Assistant Head of Education, Two Oceans Aquarium).

Our congratulations go out to Khonzani on winning this award as well as the Environmental Education Centre on their hard work and their continued commitment to educating South Africa about our marine heritage.

To learn more about the Two Oceans Aquarium Environmental Education Centre, the various lessons available to visiting school groups, visit <http://www.aquarium.co.za>.



Ron Klämbt

## Indigenous promenade project founded by Southern Sun

**M**anagement at Southern Sun's Cabana Beach Resort in Durban have taken on an interest in their wider environment with a community greening project.

The Umhlanga Promenade UIP (Urban Improvement Precinct) was formed in March of 2003 with the founding members consisting of the Southern Sun properties which bordered the Promenade. Since then the majority of properties along the Promenade have joined and contribute to the UIP. The contributions are used for new projects and upkeep of the area.

Ron Klämbt, General Manager of Cabana Beach has been Chairman of the UIP Committee since 2007, and is the master-mind behind the project.

The UIP champions various causes, one of which is the dune preservation and, where necessary, reclamation. Indigenous planting has always been a standard that has been upheld all along the Promenade and Cabana Beach carries a full-sized poster of Promenade flora in the Foyer area so that guests who walk along the Promenade are able to identify the plantings as they enjoy the clean, well-maintained Promenade. *Portulacaria afra* has been extensively planted as it produces more oxygen than any other plant in the country.



**T**hat the Table Mountain Cableway Company is passionate about the environment goes without saying, and Management is always on the lookout for novel ideas to help minimise the company's environmental footprint.

One such idea sees the reuse of the PVC banners made to promote Table Mountain as one of the "7 Wonders of Nature".

Management approached Recycled in Africa who decided to give the PVC banners a second chance - and the recycled bag was born! Besides the PVC banners, other recycled materials were used to make up sections of the bags "egg safety belts" make for good slings while inner bicycle tubing makes perfect seams.

The outcome is a three-way win-win situation - a beautiful (and sellable) recycled bag, job opportunities for unemployed people and the chance for visitors to buy a piece of history!

