

THE


speed
space
[SELL RENT BUY]
EXTEND YOUR OPTIONS FAST



Creamer Media's
ENGINEERING NEWS Online

Energy efficiency an opportunity, not burden in tough economic times – Minister

By: Chanel Pringle

Published: 03 Mar 09



The world no longer despaired about the cost of implementing energy efficiency technology, but understood that it was an investment in the future, said South Africa's Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister, **Marthinus van Schalkwyk**.

Speaking at the 2009 Climate Change summit on Tuesday, he emphasised that the development of clean technology had become an economic imperative.

The implementation of such technologies should not be seen as a burden during the current economic crisis, but rather an opportunity for investment and job creation.

South Africa's carbon-dioxide emissions were expected to quadruple by 2050, and if the country did not put in place strategies to implement clean technologies now, it could eventually face trade sanctions or border trade adjustments.

This could also lead to the country's economy becoming vulnerable and uncompetitive, stated Van Schalkwyk.

Further, he said that the business community in the country had to prepare for a new era, where it would be mandatory to monitor and report on their carbon emissions and reductions.

"Not only does proper tracking, reporting, and managing of emission make business sense, but it is also an indicator of good corporate governance and of taking co-ownership of the future."

Also speaking at the summit was Business Unity South Africa CEO **Jerry Vilakazi**, who said that business, with the support from government, had to aggressively pursue the implementation of energy efficiency activities.

"Business recognises the need for the development of strategies to address both [climate change] adaptation and mitigation and believes that any climate change response should be coordinated across the whole of government."

Vilakazi noted that it was essential for a climate change strategy to be integrated into other relevant policies and strategies.

The input of the private sector in the climate change response strategy could also not be ignored, he added.

Constraints with regards to obtaining financing for public infrastructure projects and protectionism in the developed world would complicate the climate change challenge even further. This would necessitate greater collaboration, which would require greater participation from the private sector in the global climate change debate.

Meanwhile, Van Schalkwyk stated that all countries, whether developed or developing, had to do their fair share in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

"I am encouraged by what I believe is a common understanding, namely that no nation has a plausible excuse for not doing its fair share," Van Schalkwyk said.

Copyright Creamer Media (Pty) Ltd. All rights reserved.

Tel: +27(0)11 622 3744 | Fax +27(0)11 622 9350 |
newsdesk@engineeringnews.co.za
<http://www.engineeringnews.co.za>