

Tshwane reveals details to reduce carbon footprint

The City of Tshwane recently hosted a Green Business Breakfast aimed at attaining support from the business sector in Tshwane to reach the city's vision of being a low-carbon, resource-efficient and climate-resilient city by 2055.



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The city's carbon footprint, climate vulnerability and its sustainability financing views were explained by councillor Subesh Pillay, member of the Mayoral Committee for Economic Development and Planning.

The city's total carbon footprint for the financial year 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 includes the emissions within the Tshwane municipal area and the emissions by the local government. As this is the first time that the city engaged in the process of developing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, the scope is limited to identifying carbon dioxide, methane and nitrox-oxide emissions within the energy, transport and waste sectors only.

Bulk of emissions

Industrial and transport activities make up the bulk of the total Tshwane community emissions while the largest contributor to corporate emissions is the solid waste sector. The second largest source is electricity consumption by buildings and other facilities owned or controlled by Tshwane's local government.

"In an effort to reduce the city's emission over time, we plan to roll out certain mitigation measures within the next 18 months," said Pillay. These measures include energy efficiency by-laws to ensure that a more sustainable build environment is developed, landmark densification projects aimed at providing green jobs as well as household food programmes and sustainable agricultural practices.

Other steps that will be taken include the renovation of current waste buy-back centres and the building of two new ones in

order to encourage waste separation at the source, minimising the waste that is buried at landfill sites and implementing new green infrastructure including water recycling and re-use.

Long-term strategies

"These will also be supported by long-term strategies, such as the replacement of petroleum with compressed natural gas (CNG) as fuel for the city's fleet of almost 5,500 engines and waste-to-energy efforts such as the extraction of landfill methane gas, which will be further refined to produce CNG or to generate electricity," continued Pillay.

An integrated policy and careful planning will be essential to ensure resource-efficient, low-carbon, inclusive economic growth. This will require new skills and research into innovative green technologies, as well as a new mind-set for doing business that relies on broad participation and good governance to stimulate investor confidence.

The City of Tshwane's total carbon footprint will be calculated and updated annually in order to keep goal setting realistic and help to keep track of the city's progress.

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