

Plans make VW turn blue

From blue factory to ocean blue - Volkswagen Group South Africa is forging ahead with plans to turn its "brown" factory site into a "green" one and to play an important role in saving the environment.

Last week, VWSA unveiled plans for upgrading the Uitenhage factory into one where energy conservation plays an important role, and looking after the environment generally is a top priority.

Think Blue Factory is the extension of the *Think Blue* philosophy into Volkswagen production plants worldwide.

VWSA is using a three-pronged approach to introduce the Think Blue initiative to South African consumers: namely BlueFactory, BlueMotion and BlueEnvironment.

Think Blue Factory covers a wide-range of resource efficiency and emission reduction measures in the Volkswagen plants.

The aim is to achieve efficient use of energy, materials and water as well as to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and pollutants during manufacturing.

The company has set a target of reducing environmental impact at all its plants by 25% by 2018.

Blue Motion refers to the technology used in their vehicles and the fuel and carbondioxide savings that are achieved.

To demonstrate this, the company gave a group of journalists the chance to drive a number of VW products from Uitenhage to Gansbaai in the Western Cape.

There, another part of their blue plan, BlueEnvironment, with Dyer Island Conservation Trust, became evident.

Along the way, the group was able to return an average fuel consumption figure of 7.3l/100km in the five cars which included a Touareg, Tiguan, CC Coupe, Golf TDI and Polo TDI. Dyer Island is a 20ha nature reserve in Gansbaai that is managed by CapeNature.

It is a rich breeding ground for birds, most significantly the endangered African penguin and, accordingly, it is classified as an important bird area by Birdlife International. Dyer Island's surrounding waters are home to African penguins, great white sharks, seals, dolphins and whales - the "marine big five".

The trust plays a pivotal role in the research and conservation of the animals in the area and has partnered with leading

universities (local and international), the department of environmental affairs and other NGOs.

Last year Volkswagen sponsored two vehicles, a Touareg with BlueMotion Technology, and a Polo BlueMotion, for the trust. These vehicles assist the trust with beach rescues, the transport of researchers and volunteers, and the general running of the organisation.

Volkswagen is also supporting the research vessel, Ulwazi, which is painted in the colours of Think Blue.

Source: *Herald* via I-Net Bridge

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