

PRESS RELEASE

FIDIC GEARING UP TO MEET GOBAL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

A South African delegation representing Consulting Engineers South Africa (CESA) recently attended the world conference of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) held in Seoul, Korea during September with the theme "Beyond Green: A New Paradigm". 800 of the world's leading engineers from 75 countries met to discuss pressing issues with a major focus on sustainability and its practical implementation. At the conference FIDIC outlined its priorities that are to focus on the concept of sustainability, integrity and quality

Graham Pirie, CESA CEO, states, "The conference was really good in that we were able to take home very tangible and usable tools, Korea as a nation is "walking the talk" and making some incredible progress in regard to sustainability and the practical implementation thereof". Through the enactment of their Smart Green Act (2007) they are making good progress towards building what they call 'A Green Homeland'. The debate concerning sustainability goes way beyond carbon footprint, global warming and focuses on the holistic concept of people, profit and planet (society, environment and economy). In many instances, the introduction of sustainability concepts across the full project life cycle are being driven top down as part of client requirements and it is therefore essential that the industry embrace these concepts and see them as a business opportunity. In addition the Public Works Agency in the Netherlands, through the introduction of their Best Value Procurement, has included sustainability criteria in their proposal documents where the Consulting Engineer scores points in the procurement evaluation process, much as our construction scorecard measures BBBEE preferencing. Also included is a measure of the Service Provider's sustainability performance as a company. In other words, both the project and the Service Provider undertaking the work are evaluated in terms of their approach to the concept of sustainability.

Pirie states that attention was also drawn to the fact that the concept of sustainability is interpreted differently in different countries and there are divergent approaches between the needs of developing and developed nations. Developing countries must be allowed to develop in a different way as they have different priorities. The need to focus on sustainability concepts is not just about climate change and carbon footprint, it is more about the usage of scarce resources. Whether one believes in global warming or not, it is the right thing to do, as we do not have a sufficient number of earths to carry on as we are. The rich minority in the developed nations have to learn to share as they present a bigger problem to the planet through their extensive use of resources with accompanying pollution, i.e. this is not just about population growth.

The next FIDIC Conference will take place in Barcelona, Spain from the 15 – 18 September 2012 when FIDIC will be celebrating its Centenary. FIDIC's State of the World Report 2012 entitled "Sustainable Infrastructure" embodies all the concepts presented at the conference including reference to sustainability rating and certification tools. It can be obtained by visiting www.fidic.org



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Pic Caption:

Working Greener and Smarter Seminar – Naren Bhojaram, Consulting Engineers South Africa; Kerry Rudd, Associated Engineering, Canada; Young-Geun Lee, Incheon International Airport Corporation, Korea; Alain Bentejac, Artelia, France

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