

MAYOR'S SPEECH FOR LAUNCH OF CLIMATE SMART CAPE TOWN

Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the media, Cape Town Climate Change Coalition partners

Since I took office as Executive Mayor of Cape Town, I have been conscious of the high energy which exists in the City around the sustainability agenda in general and climate change in particular. In just a few short weeks I have personally been involved in launching the Green Goal Legacy Report (which incidentally includes a number of high profile Climate Change projects), assisted with the campaign to vote for Table Mountain as one of the seven new natural wonders of the world and have been involved with the new edition of Cape Town's Green Map, promoting cycling to work as means to reduce our carbon footprint. And now we are here today to launch a climate change campaign which will bring the message of climate change strongly to the people of Cape Town and which could influence the future development of the City.

I am proud that the City is part of the Cape Town Climate Change Coalition of key partners and stakeholders, from the public sector, business, academia and civil society, demonstrating the inclusiveness of the City. The coalition partners have worked together for some months around climate change issues, aiming to enhance our understanding about climate change and positioning Cape Town as a leading city and global player in the field. Since the launch of this coalition in March this year, the work of the coalition has gone from strength to strength, demonstrating a degree of collaboration around climate change at local level unprecedented in Africa and perhaps in the world. And it is good to see so many of our coalition partners here today.

The Coalition has identified the importance of taking full advantage of South Africa hosting the world's biggest climate change meeting – and one of the most significant world meetings of all time – the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP 17 as we know it more commonly, which will be held in Durban in early December. And they have developed the Climate Smart Cape Town campaign, which we are launching today, as the primary vehicle to enable us to do just that, ensuring that Cape Town is a key beneficiary from COP 17.

The campaign is action-oriented with our slogan calling us all to “Take Action”. The campaign aims to help residents of Cape Town learn about climate change and how they can take action, as well as to learn about the actions already being taken by the City of Cape Town, the Province and other leading public and private sector organisations to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The campaign consists of three primary areas:

1 A communications campaign aimed at enhancing levels of climate change literacy among all Capetonians. We have evaluated the level of understanding by Capetonians of Climate Change issues and found it to be low. Climate Change issues are not typically taken into account by decision-makers who play a role in determining the future shape of Cape Town. We will be re-evaluating in January, AFTER the campaign has run its course and will be looking for a measurable improvement in this consciousness of climate change issues.

2 An Inspiring Change event at the Cape Town International Convention Centre two weeks prior to COP 17, and linked to a major Green Exposition, where people from Cape Town can join in three days of dynamic challenging debate integrated with a number of educational and entertaining activities in and around Cape Town, focusing on Climate Change issues.

3 COP 17 in Durban, where Cape Town will have a significant presence, demonstrating the seriousness of our intentions, our support for a positive and constructive outcome of the high level processes and our willingness to partner with global agencies and other players to invest in significant local action in Cape Town and the Western Cape around climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Climate Smart Cape Town is a short-term campaign, focussed on taking action and built around COP 17 in Durban, but it is envisaged that the campaign legacy will have longer-term benefits and may give rise to a second phase of the project. To that end, we are in dialogue with selected private-sector companies, to associate themselves and their brand with the aims and objectives of the campaign in the short term and the Coalition Charter in the longer term.

One of the objectives of the campaign is to bring an understanding of Climate Change to determine the future development of the City. If we carry on in “business as usual” mode in the knowledge that climate change impacts, including increased droughts, storm surges and sea-level rise and increased floods, will be a reality in future decades, we will be rightfully accused of negligence by our grandchildren. And so we will be looking to build a more compact and efficient City, increasing mobility but limiting the need for long commutes. In so doing, we will be increasing our resilience to climate change and creating a more equitable city.

And talking of building, we have developed a visionary “five pillars” which are key to our future growth as a city – an opportunity city, a safe city, an inclusive city, a caring city and an efficient city. And I am pleased to note that Climate Smart Cape Town embraces all of these pillars, in particular we are taking this **opportunity** at COP 17 to position Cape Town as a leading global climate change city, moving towards greater **efficiency** to lower our carbon footprint in combatting climate change, becoming a **safe** city through building resilience and adapting to natural disasters associated with climate change and finally demonstrating that we are a **caring** city through acting primarily in disadvantaged communities to build resilience, recognising that climate change impacts most severely on vulnerable and marginalised communities.

I thank you