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25 Degrees in Africa - CDM

CDM Conference

The recent Clean Development Mechanism and Carbon Trading 2008 conference incited in-depth discussions around policy initiatives to boost African participation.

“The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), one of the Kyoto protocol's three market-based mechanisms, was conceived as a way to allow industrial countries greater flexibility in meeting their emissions targets, while at the same time transferring cleaner technologies to developing countries so they can build cleaner technologies into their own economic development programmes. Thus, investors can identify projects in the developing world that will reduce emissions, and negotiate an agreement with the project developers to purchase the CERs generated by the project”. www.saiia.org.za

Boosting carbon mitigation in African business

In answer to the most pressing questions that surround CDM mechanisms and their viability in an African context, the recent Clean Development Mechanism and Carbon Trading 2008 conference incited in-depth discussions around policy initiatives to boost African participation in implementing CDM projects. As a case-study-driven seminar, the line-up of delegates directly involved in CDM themselves ensured the sharing of valuable experience with those considering entering into the process.

Andrew Gilder of Imbewu, sustainability legal specialists, commented on the 'expiration' of Kyoto, noting that the term is in fact a misnomer, and examined the future of CDM – post 2012 and beyond. What transpired was a prediction of CDM's definite future and continuation as an investment opportunity.



The conference was facilitated on day one by Dean Cooper, managing director of PACE, who posed pertinent questions to some of South Africa's pioneering companies who have already implemented Clean Development Mechanism projects. Explorations of reasons for the slow process and delays between the various stages of approval were brought to light, and a resolve to pressure the relevant designated national authorities formed. CDM as a way of assisting sustainable economic and social development in South Africa was a concept attested to frequently, as well as opportunities for it in the context of environmental industries.

Zakhele Mdlalose, environmental assurance manager for BP Sub-Saharan Africa, highlighted the importance of knowing one's organisational carbon footprint – and subsequently highlighting possible opportunities for reduction.

Johan van den Berg, CEO of CDM Africa Climate Solutions led day three's workshop, focused around identifying and tackling major barriers to effective carbon trading in Southern Africa. The workshop also dealt with practical aspects of the CDM process, including approvals and licences, capacity shortages and grid emissions.