

Cape Town Routes *Unlimited*



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Cape Town bids to host UN Climate Change Conference

Cape Town has set its sights on hosting the 17th Conference of Parties (COP 17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change taking place next year. South Africa has already won the bid to host this major event with the top three cities, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, squaring up against each other for the privilege to host what is commonly known as the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

This prestigious conference, which attracts over 20 000 delegates at the formal event and a further 10 000 people at parallel events would be a major coup for Cape Town and the Western Cape. The last Climate Change Conference took place in Copenhagen in 2009. This conference was attended by 150 world leaders with dignitaries including President Barack Obama of the United States of America, and Gordon Brown, the then British Prime Minister. This year the conference will be hosted in Cancun, Mexico.

In addition to the economic spinoff of the COP 17 event, which is estimated to be in the region of R 800-million, hosting an event of this calibre and magnitude will leave a lasting legacy in terms of sustainability for the city.

The Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau in collaboration with industry partners is facilitating the bid on behalf of the City of Cape Town. As a member of the BestCities Global Alliance, Cape Town is in a position to learn from the experience of Copenhagen, also a member in the Alliance. The Copenhagen Convention Bureau has already committed to share all relevant information, contacts and advice related to organising the United Nations Climate Change Conference with the Convention Bureau should Cape Town be awarded the opportunity to host this event.

“Cape Town’s bid is by far the most technically sound, with the city and province already gearing toward an environmentally sustainable future. We believe the decision-makers will be swayed not only by our unsurpassed safety and security record, but by the beauty and cleanliness of the inner city, as well as the many world-class accommodation and tourism offerings within walking distance of the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC),” says Alan Winde, MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism.

“The CTICC’s proximity to the Cape Town Stadium should further enhance our bid as this could be used as a venue for parallel activities during the conference. This conference will most certainly provide the necessary impetus to reopen our legendary Fan Walk, which proved such a success in the 2010 FIFA World Cup™,” adds Calvyn Gilfellan, CEO of Cape Town Routes Unlimited (CTRU).

According to Rashid Toefy, CTICC’s Chief Executive Officer, a focus for the centre going forward is to attract more environmentally sustainable events, which can contribute to a green legacy for the centre and Cape Town.

“As an industry leader in sustainability, CTICC is well placed to host an event of this nature. It is

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the only convention centre in Africa that boasts the ISO 14001 standard for Environmental Management. And with over 56 000 square meters of usable space, the CTICC is one of the few venues in South Africa that is able to host an event of this magnitude,” says Rashid Toefy.

Green events previously hosted in Cape Town include the United Nations Environment Programme Finance (UNEP) Initiative Global Roundtable, the Green Building Council of South Africa, Local Government for Sustainability (ICLEI), Global Environment Facility Third Assembly and Africa Energy Week.

The City of Cape Town has implemented Africa’s first Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy, and with its implementation strategies for biodiversity, energy and climate change. The City has also launched the continent’s first gold standard Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project through the installation of solar water-heaters in Khayelitsha. Lastly the City has planned, developed and implemented the country’s most ambitious 2010 FIFA World Cup™ Green Goal programme.

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Media Enquiries:

Media Liaison Officer to Minister Alan Winde: Tammy Evans on cell: +27 82 378 2235 or email:

tevans@pgwc.gov.za

Convention Bureau: David Frandsen on cell: 083 271 2977 or email: david@tourismcapetown.co.za

CTICC: Zeenat Parker on cell: 071 888 2623 or email: zeenat@cticc.co.za

Editor’s note

- + The Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau is a certified member of the BestCities Global Alliance of Convention Bureaux, together with Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Dubai, Singapore, Melbourne, San Juan (Puerto Rico) and Vancouver. Certification requires strict adherence to the world’s best convention bureau practices.
- + The Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau is a strategic unit of CTRU and leads the city and province in soliciting bids to host international conferences in the destination.