



COP 17-CMP 7

Durban

144 DAYS TO GO!

190 NATIONS, 30 000 PEOPLE, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUE IN THE WORLD, ONE GREAT CITY - DURBAN!

Twice a month, we'll be bringing you news, interviews, tips and a whole lot more about climate change, COP 17-CMP 7 and Durban's role in all of this. We will keep you informed of the progress in the build-up to the event, in the hope that the significance of COP 17-CMP 7 will leave its mark on you and all the other residents of our city.

Durban's COP 17-CMP 7 team has been working intensely to ensure that the conference is a success. COP 17-CMP 7 is a watershed moment in environmental history and each of us will have the chance to witness the preparations, the excitement, and the arrival of delegates on our shores later in the year.

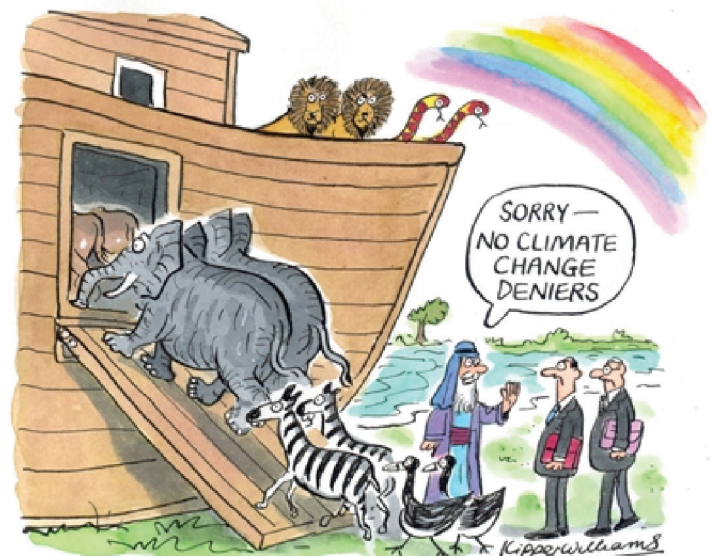
It's the largest event that a South African city has ever hosted, and definitely the most important!

From 28th November to 9th December 2011, an estimated 20-30 000 people will arrive in Durban for the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the seventh conference of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol, more commonly known as 'COP 17-CMP 7'. Over this period, more than 190 nations will negotiate the future of our planet as they seek to reach agreement on reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, the key contributors to man-made climate change. For Durban, hosting this conference is both a great honour and a huge responsibility.

Over the period of COP 17-CMP 7, the world will be watching to see whether Durban can once again deliver a coordinated and world-class mega-event; and to see if Durban will be the city where concrete outcomes are reached in the ongoing climate change negotiations. This is only the second time that the COP has been held on African soil, and so the event also provides Durban with the opportunity to profile its own climate work, and to demonstrate African responses to the specific impacts that climate change is likely to have on African cities.

An African COP

The COP 17-CMP7 will mark a critical moment in the ongoing international climate change negotiations. Africa, which is the continent most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, must play a prominent role in these deliberations. Durban will ensure that African cities and delegates are afforded the opportunity to network and share ideas and experiences through side events and various expos and workshops that will be organised by various parties.



What is our city doing?

Preparation

The city is working with the provincial and national authorities in preparation for hosting COP17/CMP7. Hosting such a huge event is no mean feat as it will include the main conference as well as a variety of side events. As the host city, Durban will need to provide accommodation for up to 30 000 guests and ensure that there is sufficient transport to the city and between selected accommodation establishments and key conference venues. Securing top quality ICT and broadcasting equipment and arranging security for delegates and heads of state while minimising security risks for citizens are just some of the aspects that are involved in preparing for the COP. In all this, the city must also ensure that the conference is run in a low carbon and environmentally sustainable manner.

DID YOU KNOW?

That the first African COP (COP 12/CMP 2) took place in 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya?

At the meeting, BBC reporter Richard Black coined the phrase “climate tourists” to describe some delegates who attended “to see Africa, take snaps of the wildlife, the poor, dying African children and women”. Despite such criticism, positive strides were made at COP12 in areas such as support for developing countries and the clean development mechanism. The parties adopted a five-year plan of work to support climate change adaptation in developing countries, and agreed on the procedures and modalities for the Adaptation Fund. They also agreed to improve Clean Development Mechanism projects.

USEFUL LINKS

Durban COP 17 - CMP 7

www.cop17durban.com

Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department, eThekweni Municipality

www.durban.gov.za/durban/services/epcpd

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability

www.iclei.org

United Nations Environment Programme

www.unep.org

South African Department of Environmental Affairs

www.unep.org

DUMMIES' GUIDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

What is climate change?

It is a change in the average weather conditions occurring in a region over an extended period of time, usually at least thirty years. This region can be as small as a town or as large as our planet.

What causes climate change?

Climate does vary naturally, but as humans we are having an increased effect because we burn fossil fuels, which contain Greenhouse Gases (GHGs). Examples of these GHGs include carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄). GHGs have an insulating effect in our atmosphere, and are warmed by the sun's rays, once these rays reflect outwards from the earth's surface, in a similar manner to that of a glass greenhouse.

What can you do?

Manage your own climate:
In winter, make sure you are wearing warm clothes before turning up the heater. This helps to save electricity and gas.



What will the effects of climate change be?

Globally, we are likely to experience an increase in average temperatures, which would mean more intense heat waves for longer periods, possible increases in infestations of pests and diseases in temperate regions and the loss of glaciers and ice-caps, due to melting. This latter effect, alongside thermal expansion from the warming sea, will lead to sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Here in Durban, we are likely to see an increase in the severity of local storm events, with increased run-off leading to a higher risk of flooding events.

What do we need to do?

We need to produce less GHGs by reducing our dependency upon fossil fuels and by making our lifestyles energy efficient for example by installing energy efficient technologies in our homes, using public transport and practicing recycling and the reusing of materials. For more details see the eThekweni website: <http://www.durban.gov.za/durban/services/epcpd>