

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFRISAM - KEEPING AN EYE ON SUSTAINABILITY

As global pressures for finding more environmentally friendly methods of conducting business increase, AfriSam continues to build on its long standing drive to remain at the forefront of local 'green' cement production.

"Most of the current trends in the market are towards lower energy usage as well as the use of alternative fuels and lowering of environmental impact," Charles Naude, CEO of AfriSam, says. "We are a leader in this respect with our range of extended cements which have a low CO₂ footprint."

The company's environmentally-gearred responsibilities entail the reduction of emissions and pollution; the reduction of energy consumption; research into the use of alternative energy/fuel sources; reduction of its mining footprint and rehabilitation of mined areas; ensuring the safety of both its own employees and other people on site; and reinvesting in the communities affected by its operations.

One such initiative is the development of an 'environmentally friendly' mark which indicates the relative carbon footprint status for AfriSam's cements.

“Currently, the world average emission of CO₂ per kg of cement is 890 g as per Cembureau,” Naude says. “The model developed by AfriSam not only takes specific types of direct and indirect emissions into account, but also weighs up the effects of inter-plant transportation. Emission calculations and summations are based on a ‘cradle to gate’ approach, where the ‘gate’ is the factory gate at which the cement is finally sold.”

Naude confirms that all AfriSam cement bags will carry a CO₂ barometer insignia indicating emissions in comparison to the world average of 890 g/kg.

AfriSam has made major investments in its manufacturing processes over the last few years to reduce its environmental impact. “We have spent hundreds of millions of Rands and, through this investment, have maintained our role as a leader in environmental stewardship,” Naude adds.

“South Africa’s cement consumption per capita is 275 kg per person which is relatively low when compared to other markets with similar GDPs. This means that an increase in the standard of living and the building of more houses and infrastructure would bring the necessary growth, and capitalise on the under-utilised per capita usage,” Naude says.

“Sustainable construction remains a priority for AfriSam and hence we are involved in a number of CSI initiatives such as sponsorship of Construction World’s Best Projects and the AfriSam-SAIA (South African Institute of Architects) Award for Sustainable Architecture which was launched at the Green Building Council of South Africa’s convention held in Cape Town in October 2009,” he says.

Naude is optimistic about the future of the construction materials industry in South Africa. “In line with the rest of the economy we have seen a slowdown since 2008. We do, however, expect things to return to positive growth sometime in 2010 and we are gearing up for a resurgence in product demand.”

In spite of the current lowered demand for product, the company has been involved in the supply of cement, readymix and aggregate to a number of major contracts recently. These include the GFIP projects; the Gautrain project; widening of the Durban Harbour; the upgrade of the N11 in Newcastle; the King Shaka Airport; the Koeberg interchange linking the M5 and the N1; the international airport in Swaziland and the Braamhoek hydro electric scheme to name but a few.

AfriSam is the only vertically integrated supplier in Gauteng supplying cement, readymix, aggregates and Slagment. In the southern African region, the

company is the second largest cement producer, the largest aggregate producer and the second largest readymix supplier, with the capacity to supply over 4.5 million tons of cement, 10 million tons of aggregate and 1.8 million cubic metres of readymix per annum.

Commenting on challenges facing the industry, Naude says, "Apart from the shortage of skills in this country, another ongoing challenge is the rail service delivery which impacts on our service and costs. This is a national problem and unfortunately will be with us for the foreseeable future. We are constantly conscious of the impact that it has on our customers and this is a particularly problematic issue for our customers in Namibia."

CAPTION: Charles Naude, CEO of AfriSam.

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