

Johannesburg

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Did the Durban weather scare SA companies away from WCS 2011?

Having just returned from the World Climate Summit 2011 held in Durban between 03-04 December 2011 -- where CGF Research Institute (Pty) Ltd was selected as one of the Summit's industry partners -- it was clearly evident that many of South Africa's top businesses and their leaders were not in attendance. One wonders if this was due to the erratic weather during the Summit and COP17, which would be rather ironic.

At the Summit, *The Carbon War Room* announced the 2011 Best-In-Class *Gigaton Award Winners*, again noticeably devoid of South African companies. The categories of the Gigaton Award Winners were recognised and applauded for their outstanding business leadership in carbon emissions reduction, high standards of disclosure and the inspiration they have set in the hope that others will follow their example.

There were five Gigaton Award categories, namely; *Consumer Discretionary*, *Consumer Staples*, *Industrials*, *Telecommunications* and *Utilities*. Out of the 25 companies from across the world who were nominated for the Gigaton Awards, the following companies won the respective categories: **Tesco plc** (United Kingdom) won the Consumer Discretionary award, **Philips** (Netherlands) the Consumer Staples award, **Schneider Electric** (France) the Industrials award, **Swisscom** (Switzerland) the Telecommunications award and **Centrica** (United Kingdom) the Utilities award. The Gigaton Prize was awarded to **Suntech**, a Chinese solar energy giant and also represented in South Africa, whilst a special Gigaton prize was given to Germany, having been cited as a country that has been the most inspiring example for renewable energy and energy efficiency investments and deployments.

Whilst there were no South African Gigaton winners, what was most encouraging was the announcement of the *Durban Climate Change Adaptation Charter* for Local Government, which was adopted on 04 December 2011, and provided a positive spin on COP17 (Conference of Parties) and the World Climate Summit 2011. Margareta Wahlstrom, the chief-in-charge at the UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) described the signing of this charter as "the best possible start to a critical week in the life of this planet when we so urgently need real leadership on mitigation and adaptation." The Charter is very significant not only for South Africa, but indeed many other countries across the globe, as this was signed by 93 Mayors and Local Government

leaders representing 560 cities, towns and municipalities representative of Durban, New Dehli, Lagos, Dar Es Salaam, Dakar, Vancouver and many others.

The winners of the Gigaton awards, as well as the speakers of the main closing plenary sessions were each presented, by CGF, a complimentary bottle of wine which was sponsored by the well known Zevenwacht Wine Estate in Stellenbosch as a parting gift from the World Climate Summit 2011. One of CGF's Corporate Patrons, iS Partners was instrumental in making this sponsored gift possible.

For more information about the Carbon War Room, please visit www.carbonwarroom.com

For more information about the Gigaton Awards, please visit www.gigaton-awards.com

For more information about Zevenwacht Wine Estate, please visit www.zevenwacht.co.za

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