

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My term of office as President of National Association for Clean Air is drawing to an end. During this period, one turn to look back and ponder whether during my term of office were there any significant challenges and failures the association was faced with.

Yes! The resignation of the administrator, Miss Flo Duncan during the first quarter of this year after serving the organisation with exceptional diligent, dedication and dignity, left us as doubtful 'starters' for the year ahead of us. The organisation will miss the enthusiasm, passion and efforts she put to get the organisation going. We wish her all the best in her endeavours. Thanks to Mr Roy Stephenson for this undying love and passion for NACA who offered and availed himself to take on the administration function of the organisation. Thank you Roy.

Lest we forget!

Rapid population growth coupled with massive urbanisation and technological development has influenced our inability to live in harmony with our natural environment.

People of the World are changing the climate of the planet 'earth' by increasing the global concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which results to environmental degradation that is faster than the processes to reverse, or the nature could handle.

South Africa is blessed with abundance of natural resources like gold, platinum, coal, asbestos, wood and other that has during manufacturing and processing further accelerated the degradation of the natural environment.

Short-sighted decisions taken in meeting the demand of the present generation like housing, energy infrastructure, transportation and even basic health sustenance facilities have accelerated the degradation of the environment, very little consideration is taken to look at its negative influences to the future generations of our country and of the world.

These developmental processes bare negative and detrimental impacts on the health and well being of the urban and rural poor. Acute respiratory illnesses associated with a living space and the burning of fossil fuels as part of our livelihood in our community circles, are a major cause of death to children and also elderly community already suffering from respiratory related illnesses.

A range of urban environmental problems presently challenges South Africa. Some of which includes indoor and outdoor air quality, pollution generated from vehicle emissions, anthropogenic pollution, inadequate solid waste management programmes and land invasion which results to

the loss of production, biodiversity and habitat destruction to mention a few, are the country's principal environmental problems.

Attempts to redress environmental degradation issues in isolation with the community, the industry, the affected and the interested parties have proved futile. Now that there is legislation that is backing and supporting 'The right to a Clean Environment' and to 'Breathe Clean Air', which is also entrenched in the Constitution of the country, we now have a platform which we can use to advocate this 'right' in our community and industrial circles.

'Clear Sky' with 'Clean Air' is a Reality and not a 'Dream'. I strongly believe that NACA together with other environmental NGO's are uniquely placed to bridge meaningfully the gaps that exists between the technical developmental side, the right to a clean environment and the human component aspect for the present and future generations of our country.

NACA has a moral obligation to represent those that have no voice on environmental issues. We have a responsibility to see to it that they inherit a productive and liveable space, which allows them the fulfilment of life that will enhance to economy and healthy standard of living.

I strongly believe that NACA was relevant thirty years ago and still is today to foster our right to breathe 'Clean Air'. Through active participation of NACA members at branch level and through workshops, awareness programmes, through aggressive education and action, through technical expertise and information sharing and through association with other environmental activists we can influence the right to a clean environment and make a difference.

NACA has initiated strides to influence new policy formulation from 'Command and Control' to 'Air Quality Management for South Africa' with policy makers. I hope with 'doors' opening up for consultation with DEAT, NACA will play a significant role to capacitate local authorities to effectively and efficiently manage this new approach to Air Quality Management in the country.

To all the branch members of NACA, you are the corner stone of the organisation, 'Let us Grow' the organisation.

The 'World Summit on Sustainable Development' is around the corner and we are the host country, let us actively participate on activities of the summit and place the organisation in its rightful place on air quality issues.

Jabu Sithole
NACA President