

INTERDESIGN 2005: SUSTAINABLE RURAL TRANSPORT

Opening: 3 APRIL 2005 16:00 for 16:30

Orion Safari Lodge, Rustenburg, North West Province, South Africa

Welcome to the opening of Interdesign 2005 on Sustainable Rural Transport and to our visitors from abroad, a warm welcome to South Africa.

I really feel at home here in the North West, as this was my home province as MEC for Finance for a considerable time before joining the SABS last year. So it gives me great pleasure to be part of this initiative that started here and involves the resources of the SABS, my current home, in such an innovative way.

But let me give you a bit of background:

During 2002 Standards South Africa (Stansa) received a request from the North-West Provincial government to develop specifications to be used in a tender document for the building of a donkey cart for specific local uses. The Design Institute was consulted. This request created the awareness of the problems involved with the structure and use of local animal-drawn carts on a national level and the need for national standards and regulations. It also became clear that in order to develop a project of this nature in a sustainable way, some lateral thinking would be needed.

This topic was taken further and discussed in depth at the 2003 ICSID Africa regional event in Cape Town. It was decided that an Interdesign would be proposed to address the modes of non-motorised rural transport in southern Africa in a comprehensive manner that would expand the topic beyond the design of specific animal-drawn carts.

The issue of sustainable rural transport will be considered against the background of

- social aspects (individual and community problems, needs, desires and more),
- transport management aspects (standards, regulatory issues, licensing),
- sustainability (possibilities for business opportunities and job creation), and
- environmental aspects (animal care, recycling and so forth).

This Interdesign forms part of the DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT initiative of the Design Institute. It was started in 1989 with an event that was chaired by Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu the current chairman of NEPAD. It has really gained momentum since 1997. The main objective is to use focused design projects to provide solutions to various problems facing developing communities. It combines advanced technology with rural technologies, indigenous knowledge and the inherent creativity of our people to create sustainable solutions.

We have high expectations that feasible concepts will come out of the workshops over the next two weeks that will have the potential to be developed into real products, real businesses and real job opportunities.

On behalf of the Design Institute of the SABS and the project team, we would like to thank the National Department of Transport for their valuable cooperation and support. To the designers we would like to say: Thank you for coming all this way to join in this exciting venture. Not only will you make new friends and open yourself up to a host of new experiences, you will also be part of a valuable project to provide developing communities in rural areas with sustainable transport options. The outcomes of this Interdesign will be proof to the world at large that dedicated design projects can improve day-to-day living in developing communities.

We value your enthusiasm and participation. Enjoy yourself, we wish you a great experience with bursts of creativity and inspiration.