

South Africa Climate Innovation Center kicks off its national program and joins the World Bank's global network of innovation centers

Tshwane, South Africa, March 25, 2015 – The Climate Innovation Center (CIC) South Africa will kick off its national program with a world-class conference on *Green Technologies and Innovations for Inclusive Growth* on March 25 and 26. The scaled-up CIC South Africa is the newest member of the World Bank/infoDev's global network of Climate Innovation Centers, which includes hubs in Morocco, Vietnam, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana and the Caribbean.

The CIC South Africa is a strategic green economy initiative of The Innovation Hub. The center will scale up its operations by adding under the same umbrella four of the most important business incubators in the country - Invo Tech, The East London IDZ Science and Technology Park, SEREBI, and The Nelson Mandela Bay Science and Technology Centre. Furthermore, with a US\$1.5 million contribution from the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the center will link its activities to the DBSA's Green Fund, a key initiative in the country's transition to a low-carbon economy.

By serving as a national hub for clean-tech companies and institutions, the CIC South Africa will play a primary role in catalyzing regional efforts towards green growth, while leveraging infoDev's Climate Technology Program to establish international partnerships and linkages to emerging markets.

"The global transition to low-carbon growth holds tremendous economic opportunities for South Africa. Owing to its strong financial and technological infrastructure, the country is on the right track to become a clean-tech hub for the continent," said **Klaus Tilmes, Director of the Global Practice on Trade & Competitiveness of the World Bank Group**. *"To unlock this potential, the Climate Innovation Center in South Africa will leverage the expertise and market linkages provided by the World Bank/infoDev's network of Climate Innovation Centers."*

South Africa is a middle-income country, yet widespread poverty still represents a key development issue. According to the latest Statistics South Africa's report *'Poverty Trends in South Africa,'* in 2011 approximately 10 million people were living below the food poverty line. Living in the most challenging areas with the fewest resources to adapt, the poor are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. By gathering for the first time a diverse pool of clean technology experts, government representatives, and local entrepreneurs, the CIC inaugural conference aims to identify and promote innovative technologies that can address local climate challenges affecting the poor, while also creating jobs and improving livelihoods.

"The increase in urbanization coupled with high youth unemployment necessitates that we urgently explore the development of alternative solutions to the ever-increasing demands for housing, food, energy, water and sanitation, whilst consciously ensuring minimal environmental impact and efficient utilization of resources," said **Mr. McLean Sibanda, CEO of The Innovation Hub**. *"Our partnership with infoDev Climate Technology Program assists in the efforts of developing an inclusive green economy that addresses challenges of food security, climate change and unemployment."*

In line with the conference's themes of entrepreneurship and inclusive growth, the CIC South Africa will focus on the impact of innovative clean technologies on urban and rural poor, women, and youth. By providing financing, technical assistance and international market linkages, the center will accelerate the growth of innovative clean technology enterprises, which in turn will contribute to South Africa's goals of carbon mitigation, access to energy and water, and increased agricultural efficiency.

The Climate Innovation Center South Africa has been established through a collaboration between the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA), The Innovation Hub, and the World Bank/infoDev's Climate Technology Program.

For information visit www.theinnovationhub.com or www.infodev.org/climate

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About GGDA

The Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA), previously known as Blue IQ and GEDA, is a merged entity by the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED). GGDA is the implementation arm of the GDED and assists the department in leading, facilitating and managing sustainable job creation and inclusive economic growth and development in the Gauteng City Region.

About The Innovation Hub

The Innovation Hub, a subsidiary of the GGDA, is Africa's first internationally accredited Science Park and is a full member of the International Association of Science Parks. It is strategically located in Tshwane, South Africa's executive capital in the 'smart' province of Gauteng. As the leading knowledge-intensive business cluster in South Africa, The Innovation Hub implements initiatives identified in the Gauteng Innovation Strategy and Green Economy Strategy to advance the economic development and growth of the province through innovation.

About infoDev's Climate Technology Program

The Climate Technology Program (CTP) is housed at infoDev, a global technology and entrepreneurship program in the World Bank's Trade & Competitiveness (T&C) global practice. By catalyzing the entry and growth of high-potential entrepreneurs, infoDev embodies the T&C practice-wide modus operandi of engaging with governments, the private sector, and a diverse set of development partners to promote innovation and the growth of competitive sectors. Within infoDev, the CTP accelerates the development of clean technology sectors that address local climate challenges while also creating jobs and economic growth. The program works through a global network of Climate Innovation Center (CICs), which are currently being established in South Africa, Morocco, Vietnam, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana and the Caribbean. The CTP is made possible thanks to generous support by UKAid, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Danish International Development Agency, the Government of The Netherlands, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.