

Celebrating 10 years of green building in SA

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

11 Oct 2017

Founded in 2007 by [Bruce Kerswill](#), the [Green Building Council of South Africa](#) (GBCSA) turns 10 this year. It is celebrating the occasion at its [annual Green Building Convention](#), currently under way at the Century City Conference Centre in Cape Town.

The organisation, as of 1 October 2017, has certified 300 buildings to date, and is gaining further momentum each year. [Dorah Modise](#), addressing delegates at the convention, highlighted the impact of GBCSA's work to date. Its 300 certifications equate to 43.3-million square metres of land certified, 400-million litres of water saved, 500-million kilogrammes of carbon emissions reduced, and 430-million kilowatt hours of energy saved each year.



Dorah Modise at the 10th annual Green Building Convention

Milestones this year include the launch of its Green Star Sustainable Precincts tool - there are 30 pilot projects, one of which is the mixed-use development [Sandton Gate](#). Another is its net zero certification projects - Old Mutual Wealth The Estuaries in Cape Town which has achieved a net zero water rating, and the Vodacom Innovation Centre in Midrand which has achieved net zero energy and net zero ecology ratings. GBCSA has also recently rebranded its Green Star SA rating system to Green Star Africa to reflect its reach throughout the continent.



GBCSA announces rebrand of Green Star SA rating system

9 Oct 2017



"I feel very privileged to be at the helm of this organisation, especially at this very great 10-year mark. I feel like every day of my life since 1 February this year has been really filled with activity - it's just been so vibrant, especially knowing that what we are doing is really meaningfully contributing to the planet," said Modise.

Green building in Africa

Rudolph Pienaar, chairman of the GBCSA, highlighted how green building is being embraced more and more across Africa, with the local organisation being instrumental in establishing eight other green building councils in Africa to date. He

noted that the only two new Green Building Councils established this year were in Africa, in Kenya and Rwanda.

"Green building is about people," Pienaar said. "The built environment touches the life of every single person in the world, each African and South African.

"Building better is needed urgently to enable thriving communities, successful businesses, leading cities, a sustainable environment and a strong economy."

“ This is our 10th Green Building Convention, our 10th year of showcasing leadership in SA & 10 years of inspiring better buildings [#GBCSA2017 pic.twitter.com/pEmgeB1buE](https://pic.twitter.com/pEmgeB1buE)— GBCSA (@GBCSA) [October 9, 2017](https://www.gbcসাconvention.org.za) ”

He urged existing property owners to make use of the GBCSA tools in certifying their properties, emphasising that "this form of benchmarking is becoming a requirement for investors in terms of their corporate sustainability reporting".

Pienaar also appealed to government to prioritise green building and to put in place steps to ensure that developments greater than 1000m² be GBCSA-rated before being let or sold, within the next three years. He also challenged property investors owning portfolios in excess of R1m to certify 75% of their portfolios with the GBCSA by 2022.

For more info on GBCSA's 10th annual Green Building Convention, go to www.gbcsaconvention.org.za.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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