

# Volkswagen scoops SJM Flex Environmental Award

For the second year running Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) has been awarded the SJM Flex Environmental Award - the Exporters Club Eastern Cape top annual environmental accolade - for its efforts to reduce its carbon footprint.



L-R Quintin Levey (chairman of the Exporters Club), Bernd Schaberg (VWSA: head of Body Shop) and Deon Joubert (SJM Flex SA: MD)

VWSA scooped the coveted award at the recently held annual banquet of the Exporters Club of South Africa: Eastern Cape, held at the Port Elizabeth Boardwalk Convention Centre.

According to the judges, VWSA was a worthy winner because it "not only has reduced the carbon footprint of its factory, but has also reduced the carbon footprint of its products".

The judges for the SJM Flex Environmental award included Dr Anton de Wit (NMMU), Johnny Pitorino (SJM Flex), Phinda Xipula (SJM Flex), Andrew Philips (Green Leaf) and Quintin Levey (Exporters Club chairman).

"Over the last year they have reduced their electricity usage by 21%, reduced waste disposal by 33%, reduced water usage by 33%, reduced CO2 emissions by 14% and reduced VOC emissions by 17%," the judges said in a statement.

VWSA also received a merit award for its "major accomplishments and capital investment" in the category of Best Exporter: Original Equipment Manufacturer.

## Long list of awards

The judges said VWSA had achieved number one position in the passenger car market for the fourth year in a row, had won SA Car of the Year in 2010 and 2011, and achieved first and second positions for Audi and VW on the customer satisfaction index.

"Over the last six years they have invested R5.4-billion to ensure a sustainable future for the company and job security for their employees, which included the R500-million spent last year on the new Press Shop," the judges said.

Contributing to the company's increasingly lower carbon emissions is its new R500-million Press Shop, which is equipped with state-of-the-art energy saving technology. It is touted as the most environmentally responsible and energy-efficient plant in both Africa and in the over 100 Volkswagen Group plants globally.

Volkswagen's implementation of the Volkswagen Group strategy called "Think Blue. Factory." is another reason for its lower carbon emissions. The strategy focuses on reducing waste, water, energy and emissions by 25% by 2018 and is currently being implemented in Volkswagen plants around the world. It has seen, among other interventions, employees at the Uitenhage plant preferring bicycles to get them to meetings at far corners of the plant, rather than hopping into company cars.

"VWSA not only maintained the high standard they set to win the 2012 SJM Flex environmental award, but showed continuous improvement to raise the bar to the next level," said Levey.

"They displayed a clear commitment to the environment, employees and communities."

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