

## **Green Building Council announced for South Africa**

SAPOA CEO Neil Gopal announced at the 39th SAPOA (South African Property Owners Association) International Convention, the establishment of a Green Building Council for SA, a move that will bring the commercial and industrial property industry in line with global environmental practice

The mission of a Green Building Council is to promote and encourage environmentally sustainable practices in the property industry through, as Gopal points out, market-driven solutions. Green Councils in Australia, New Zealand, the US and Canada also manage a certification system for new and existing buildings.

“The Board fully supports the establishment of a Green Council in SA,” says SAPOA CEO Neil Gopal, who attended the Green Building Council of Australia’s annual conference in February for preliminary talks on the way forward.

“As an industry, we need to start thinking seriously about the environmental impact of developments – and we need to think green concepts within development plans in advance of government regulations,” says Gopal. “We must ensure that government alone does not set the regulations.”

The Council’s aim is to support and educate the commercial and industrial property sector in thinking green. Gopal notes that SAPOA will work closely with the World Green Buildings Council in the USA as well as with its counterparts in New Zealand and Australia

The green property movement in Australia has gathered momentum rapidly. Over the past 12 months, the Council has experienced a massive 220% growth in certification registrations, a 225% growth in certifications and a 60% growth in membership.

“More and more tenants world-wide are demanding green buildings, so it will be interesting to see how property owners respond to this need. This is the first step,” concludes Gopal.