

The **HABITAT COUNCIL** takes great pleasure in presenting its **2009 Habitat Conservation Award (Individual Category)** to

**Dr. Anthony Richard Turton**

in recognition of the courage which he displayed in publishing the state of our regions water resources, thereby refusing to compromise his scientific integrity, and of his principled stance in defence of the right of the public to be informed of the truth.

Dr. Turton has had an illustrious career, serving for 25 years in the public sector in all three spheres of government, including highly competent service for five years at senior management level.

He is an eminent academic. He started his tertiary studies in 1977 with courses in Horticulture, followed by Business Management, but he has since 1988 devoted himself to Political Science, International Politics and African Politics. He obtained a BA (with distinction), and thereafter an Honours degree, both in International Politics, then an MA in Political Science on the subject of the hydropolitics of the Zambezi River Basin, and finally a doctorate in International Politics, his thesis focussing on the political dynamics of institutional development in the South African water sector.

He is an Internationally Acclaimed Researcher as accredited in terms of the NRF rating system and is a specialist in transboundary water resource management, with extensive experience in strategic planning in situations of high conflict, specifically with a view to mitigating that conflict. Dr Turton has published widely on the subject of transboundary river basin management, with no fewer than 143 papers and articles, CSIR reports and contributions to publications on water issues to his credit. He has also served on numerous editorial boards of water-related publications.

The regard in which he is held in scientific circles is reflected in the fact that he has, in 2009 alone, been invited to more than a dozen important conferences, as invited specialist or as keynote speaker, and that he serves on the scientific committee of the International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO.

His work for the CSIR between 2006 and 2008 involved the linkage of key research projects and their elevation to strategic programme level within the Water Resource Competency area. During this time, he received two CSIR awards in recognition of his work.

In 2008, for preparing a paper setting out the true situation with respect to water security in our region, his connection with the CSIR was severed. It is a sad irony that he, an erstwhile Fellow of the CSIR, should have been dismissed by this institution for daring to tell the truth about the looming water scarcity our country is faced with.

He is currently focussing on water and the mining industry as a sub-national transboundary issue of strategic significance in a water-constrained region with a strong mining economy.

Dr Turton has, at great personal cost, stood up for the public's right to know basic and crucial truths about the issue of water security that so directly affects the daily lives of our citizens. For his courage and unwavering integrity in doing so, we salute him.

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D W van der Zel

Hon. President: Habitat Council

10 October 2009

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Note: Your acceptance speech is so excellent, but I particularly admire the way you ended it:

I believe that our young democracy deserves to be deepened, and I believe that a sense of nationhood needs to be inculcated at every available opportunity, but I also believe that the common threat of water scarcity and the implications arising from this one simple fact can be the vehicle that binds us together. We need to support government as they grapple for solutions and we need to understand that in a fledgling democracy we will sometimes make mistakes, so we, as a nation, need to become forgiving when these mistakes harm us as individuals, as happened to me. Forgiveness is a powerful thing, for it allows us to heal and move on, but more importantly, mistakes allow us to learn, so we must not be afraid of making them.