How to promote clean air through your operations

“Around the world, nine out of every ten people breathe unclean air,” United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in his message for the first ever International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, which was marked on Monday this week. He added “the extent of this challenge requires decisive action on the part of governments, businesses and communities to end reliance on fossil fuels in favour of clean affordable energy”. These statements paint a grim picture and stress the importance of the need to raise public awareness at all levels in society, and to take action to improve the air quality.

In the recent years, perhaps most of us have witnessed phenomenon like extreme droughts, floods not to mention rise in sea levels caused by climate change. In addition, there has also been a rise in respiratory diseases such as asthma, chronic bronchitis and lung cancer among others. All these are associated with air pollution, which results from human activities such as energy production and transportation. Now more dire than ever is the need to reverse these trends and secure the future of our planet. Therefore, this week we will highlight some of the sustainable measures you can adopt in your operations by focusing on what most ecorated facilities have already implemented.

Use of solar energy

While there is global consensus that use of fossil fuels such as diesel and petrol is one of the major contributors to air pollution due to release of pollutants such as carbon, in the recent years solar energy has emerged as an alternative. Solar energy bears an endless string of benefits in terms of being more efficient, more available and more sustainable. While the initial cost of
installing solar might be high, it’s worth the price! This is because you will not only save your cash by not purchasing diesel or petrol, but leave a marked difference in reducing your carbon foot print. Eco-rated facilities are at the forefront in use of solar energy in their operations such as heating water, lighting and running electrical equipment. The illustration below is a picture of solar panels taken by the ecorating team at the Gold-rated Elsa’s Kopje, during the ecorating reassessment of the property in September 2019.

Use of briquettes

Did you know that you can use briquettes as an alternative to charcoal or fuel wood? Briquettes comprise of a compressed block of charcoal dust or other combustible biomass material including saw dust, woodchips or even paper. The use of briquettes has gained popularity in the recent years due to a number of reasons. Firstly, they are cheap, for instance considering that you can make paper briquettes from resources such as old newspapers, and secondly they are ecofriendly. The picture below is of charcoal briquettes at Satao Elerai Camp, taken during the ecorating reassessment of the property in July 2019.
Tree planting

Planting trees is a natural remedy to the air pollution problem. Trees act as the earth’s “purification system” by absorbing pollutants such as carbon and releasing oxygen. Therefore, by undertaking tree planting that match the ecosystem as part of your conservation initiatives, you will be making an important contribution towards reducing air pollution.

To make a real and long lasting difference in combating air pollution and leave our world a better place, we encourage you to implement some of these best practices in your operation. We hope that you have been inspired, and in the spirit of responsible tourism you will inspire others too to take action!