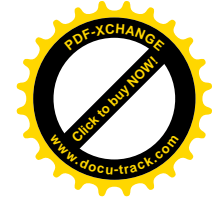
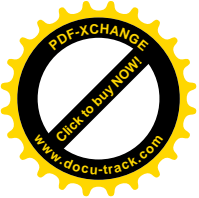


Dear colleagues in the Coal, Carbon and Energy World

This letter comes to wish you all a happy, relaxing family-orientated Festive Season with all the blessings that you and your Loved Ones could wish for. Times like this are so very precious in the general passage of time especially with the hectic lifestyle one and all lead, and this is especially so following the worrying activities and events that have occurred throughout the world this past year.

Against this background, it is my pleasure to summarise some of the positive and happy events that have taken place under the umbrella of the Fossil Fuel Foundation during 2008 and to inform you of what to expect in the New Year.

- 1. 2008 has been an exceptionally busy year, with eight conferences of various descriptions including the first event, a half day colloquium at which three visiting specialists from Finland gave most impressive presentations on the Operation and Applications of Fluidised Bed Combustion in Finland. The issues revolved around the use of peat, lignite, biomass and a wide array of waste materials including the nation's disused clothes and shoes! Of particular interest were the problems related to alkali corrosion from biomass and waste materials which, it was claimed, could be ameliorated by the addition of minerals of various types – some of which occur in abundance in South Africa!*
- 2. This was followed by two conferences/workshops on Carbon Capture and Storage under the Chairmanship of Tony Surridge, one of which lead to the production of a working plan for South Africa's future development in this important field. Other conferences included one on Energy – Alternatives to Fossil Fuels III chaired by Brian Purchase and Brian Tait at which a number of interesting South African-based innovations and developments were presented (never let it be said we are not innovators of note in this country).*
- 3. The Junior Coal Mining Ventures Conference IV chaired by Bill Lamont highlighted a number of key areas of interest to Juniors including two plenary addresses on international marketing of coal given by Gerard McCloskey of McCloskey Conference fame. This was followed by another successful event this time held in Richards Bay, Kwa-Zulu Natal, the KZN Coal II - Indaba 2009 chaired by Ken Tuckey. Here papers were presented on the latest developments in the resurgence of KZN coal mines and in the latest coal preparation developments, followed by marketing of high value coals and carbon products. KZN Coal Indaba III is planned for 2009 in the Natal Midlands.*
- 4. The first conference on Spontaneous Combustion of Coal in Opencast Mines was held in the Witbank-Middleburg area during the mid year, and was chaired by Henk Lodewijks. This was an outstanding event in that both current and international experts highlighted the dangers of this phenomenon and explored the current options for the management of spontaneous combustion in mines. A further conference is planned for the near future.*
- 5. The sixth Conference on the Optimisation of Industrial Boilers VI was held in Pretoria, chaired by Brian North and Mike Andrews. Once again, key issues relative to increased efficiency and plant operation were explored against the background of reducing coal qualities on the inland market and impending increases in environmental emissions.*



6. *The 14th FFF Coal Science and Technology Conference was postponed from November to March 2009 due to the unavailability of several keynote speakers. This will now take place on 11 March 2009 under the theme Clean Coal technologies – Opportunities arising from Research and Development in Southern Africa.*
7. *Apart from Conferences, this year has also co-hosted seven University of the Witwatersrand Masters/Industrial courses in the Programme “Leadership in Fuel and Energy Technology”. These have ranged from Coal Sampling and Quality Assessment, Coal Geology and Exploration through to Coal Preparation, Coal Mining and Exploitation, Coal Combustion and Power Generation, Coal and the Environment and Coal Management and Marketing. Just on 300 people attended the courses, 170 for academic qualifications.*
8. *The social side of events included the Annual Awards Banquet which has held at the Johannesburg Country Club in August at which Mr Xavier Prevost received the Prestige Award for 2008. The attendees were entertained by Dr Adam Yates of the Bernard Rice Institute for Palaeontological Research speaking on “South Africa’s own Jurassic Park – One of the Ancient World’s Wonders”*
9. *Of great significance this year has been the progress in the development of the South African Coal Roadmap initiative, the brainchild of Dr Steve Lennon of Eskom, Mr Roger Wicks of Anglo American Global Energy, and Mr Siphon Nkosi of Exxaro. Having been two years in the making, the SA Coal Roadmap was launched last November 2007. During 2008, a Task Team mandated by the original three innovators under the convenorship and coordination of the Fossil Fuel Foundation worked with the South African Government (the Department of Minerals and Energy) and together they drew up a draft legal Charter, Protocol and Mandate with which to initiate the endeavour. These documents were then widely circulated to all stakeholders in the country and discussed at a meeting held on 28 November at which time the Roadmap was officially implemented. Those elected onto the new national SA Coal Roadmap organic structure will meet early in 2009 to take the matter forward at that time.*
10. *A number of other new initiatives are currently underway in the FFF and these will be announced in due course. This is likely to include an information centre, a new students’ chapter, newsletters of various forms, a shopping basket with a selection of items which may be bought through the new website that is currently underway, and the production of a number of booklets on various aspects of coal for the information of those in the industry.*

Based on the above, it is obvious that a busy year lies ahead for all. Towards this end, please see attached the provisional programme of events in 2009 for your diary. It now merely remains for me – on behalf of the Fossil Fuel Foundation Board of Trustees, President and Council and my colleagues on the Management Team - to wish one and all a peaceful and relaxing time over the forthcoming Festive Season. We look forward to seeing you all in 2009.

Best wishes

*Dick Kruger
President
Fossil Fuel Foundation of Africa*