

10 JULY 2017

Activists make sustainability seminar alive and relevant

by Sandra Dunn

More than a hundred guests from private, public and civil society sectors packed REGENT Business School's new state of art lecture theatre for a seminar, "Raising Awareness and Engaging the Public through Activism for Policy Change," on Wednesday 17 May 2017.

The seminar was the fourth in an eight part series titled "Critical Conversations in Sustainability". Mr Bobby Peek, the Director from Groundwork and Mr Desmond D'Sa, Director of Durban South Environmental Activism, comprised the main panellists. Mr James Sturdee, a student counsellor at the business school, was the moderator for the event.

The passionate environmental activists spoke about their commitment to fight the excesses of climate change, especially in terms of violations both against people and the environment in the Durban south region where they hail from. However, they linked their struggle for 'environmental justice' to the national and international arenas.

After a lively and robust question and answer session, the seminar was brought to a closure with a vote of thanks by Mr Sayed Rehman, a senior academic at REGENT Business School. He referred to the panellists as 'living heroes' of the fight against climate change and thanked them for their sterling work on behalf of the city of Durban, and particularly the community of Merewent, where he lived.

When asked to comment on the presentations, Professor Anthony Rippon avered that it was one of the best sessions he attended on the issue of global sustainability. He qualified his statement by suggesting that it was because of the commitment and passion of the two panellists that the seminar "came alive". "It was real and one could empathise with the health problems that prevailed", he said.

Another guest Ms Hyacinthia Naidoo, a manager Imagine Durban, the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection unit within eThekweni municipality was of the view that the panellist gave 'practical expression' through advocacy for the policy work that her department was involved in.

The seminar was live-streamed through Facebook and LinkedIn and will be available on YouTube, shortly. The fifth seminar in the Critical Conversations in Sustainability series is scheduled for July 2017. The organisers promise that interested parties will be timeously reminded about the event through the popular press, REGENT Business School's website and other social media platforms.

<http://www.mba.co.za/article.aspx?s=51&a=6724>