

## **SA cleantech entrepreneurs honoured on world stage**

Two South African cleantech innovators were honoured at the Global Forum during the 2017 Cleantech Week in San Francisco earlier this month.

Yolandi Schoeman of Baoberry, the winner of the 2016 South African Global Cleantech Innovation Programme for SMEs (GCIP-SA), was named one of two overall runner-up teams, while 2016 GCIP-SA runner-up Martin Ackermann of Thevia was the winner in the Green Buildings category.

Schoeman and Ackermann competed with clean technology innovators and entrepreneurs from India, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan and Turkey for top honours at the Forum.

Schoeman's aWetbox - a wetland in a box - is a nature-based ecologically engineered water-purifying solution suitable for use in rural communities facing water security challenges, as well as for residential, holiday and corporate developments. It is also available as a do-it-yourself package. "Being part of the GCIP-SA programme has been an important learning experience in my entrepreneurial career. Besides the honour of being selected a global runner-up, this acknowledgement also confirms that ecological engineering has been placed on the global map," Schoeman says.

Ackermann is delighted with the recognition. "This award is our first step in convincing the world that this is the way all roof tiles should be made. We are extremely excited about the future of our product," he says. Thevia received the award for its roof tiles, which are manufactured from 99% waste materials (crusher discard and recycled HDPE). The tiles are 75% lighter than conventional concrete roof tiles but double the strength with less than 0.1% breakage, translating into cost savings of 8%–15% on total roof installation.

This year's Cleantech Open Global Forum winner was Green India Building Systems and Services Private Limited (GIBBS). The company developed a geothermal heat-exchange air-conditioning system that achieves up to 60% energy savings and 100% water savings compared to conventional building cooling systems.

"The achievements of the GCIP-SA participants at the Global Forum illustrates the level and quality of cleantech innovation and entrepreneurship in the country," says Gerswynn McKuur, National Project Manager of the GCIP in South Africa. "We are grateful to the United

Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the Global Environment Facility for their vision and support of this programme.”