



ICIME 2009



International Conference on Information Management and Evaluation University of Cape Town, South Africa 25-26 March 2010

- Conference Chair:** Dr. Kosheek Sewchurran, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- Programme Co-Chairs:** Dr. Irwin Brown and Mrs Elsje Scott, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- Keynote Speaker:** Mardia van der Walt-Korsten, CEO, T-Systems South Africa (Pty) Ltd

Round table discussion on estimating the conceptual and institutional implications for organisational information systems to enable tracking and reporting on product or service carbon footprints.

Facilitated by: Dr Collins Ngwakwe, University of Cape Town, South Africa

There are certain problems at societal level that require researchers to take on an advocacy role. Karl Marx is often quoted as saying that mankind always takes up such problems as it can solve; consequently we find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solutions already exist or are at least in the process of formation (Powell & Lee, 2007). In the case of “global warming” we have had Al Gore make the point that humanity cannot continue along the same trajectory of burning fossil fuels while we know what consequences this holds for the planet (Gore, 2006). Michael Porter the well known business strategist published an article in the Harvard Business Review which calls for a strategic approach to the climate change and gives similar reasons to those provided by Al Gore to show why businesses cannot continue treating environmental issues as a secondary concern (Porter & Reinhardt, 2007). While the realisation abounds there appears to be a lack of will probably because there is not enough consumer attention, management attention and government attention.

Perhaps this lack of focus results from a lack of information. There are opportunities for corporate information systems to store, track and make carbon accounts available to management to evaluate and assess. Without such information a number of initiatives can emerge to get companies to differentiate themselves like they do with cost, quality etc. There are many reasons to believe we are entering a new paradigm and the role of IS/IT can again provide revolutionary opportunities.