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A classic company in a modern era

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## **DGB now SA drinks industry leader in workplace and environment accreditation**

DGB, one of South Africa's leading independent drinks company, has seen its ethos of social, environmental and workplace responsibility validated by becoming one of the first local liquor firms to achieve the Big 5 accreditation certifications. This Big 5 status, which has only been achieved by a handful of international companies, incorporates accreditations for quality (ISO 9001), food safety (FSSC 22000), environment (ISO 14001), health and safety (ISO 45001) and ethical practices.

This full-set of accreditations was integrated this year when DGB became the first South African drinks company to gain ISO 45001 status for health and safety in the workplace. DGB has production, manufacturing, distribution and sales facilities throughout South Africa and is known as an industry pioneer on numerous fronts pertaining to work-place accreditations, sustainability projects and its work in conserving the environment.

According to DGB compliance manager Jacomien Truter, the acquisition of ISO 45001 status pertaining to workplace health and safety tops two decades of the company's commitment to holistic responsible business practices to ensure the well-being of workers, the natural environment, sustainability and the selling of rigorously quality-controlled products.

"What has been especially pleasing about these accreditations was seeing the respective certification bodies recognising the way our commitments to these disciplines have been integrated throughout DGB's business, which is spread throughout South Africa," says Truter. "Concerning official accreditation, the aspect of integration is extremely important as this shows that the company has a culture of responsibility in these respective fields that runs throughout all levels of production – from vineyards to wine-making, to packaging, transport and work-place safety.

"This means that DGB's culture of commitment to its people, the environment and the quality of its products is a part of our ethos, and not just window-dressing to tick the boxes and to obtain the necessary certificates."

According to Truter, accreditations such as these are no longer seen as special achievements for international drinks companies, such as DGB. “Companies like ours are world-players and compelled to conform to global standards,” she says. “Compliance at all levels is non-negotiable, and your status is determined by the organisation’s ability to achieve sustainable development in-line with the 17 sustainability development goals set out by the United Nations.”

These UN goals underpin the corporate social responsibility pillars of environment, social and economic sustainability deemed essential for driving progress.

“With the Big 5 accreditations now fully integrated, DGB has a strong foundation, underscoring the company’s position as a true global player in the drinks business,” she says.

With sustainability and the fight against climate change being an especially relevant topic, especially in the liquor industry where consumers have shown to be avidly conscientious, DGB has over past few years shown extraordinary innovations to conserve its environment as well as to lower carbon emissions. For the past two decades, DGB has proven itself to be an industry champion as a result of its sustainable, viable and practical responses faced by the environment. During this time, the company has shown itself to be a pioneer on numerous fronts pertaining to conserving the environment. These include comprehensive and far-reaching projects such as the recycling of glass and organic matter, waste-water management, water conservation, use of renewable energy and the conservation of Cape Floral Kingdom in the Cape Winelands.

DGB has received numerous accolades for its approach to sustainability, including the Drinks Business Ethical Award of the Year.

According to Tim Hutchinson, executive chairman of DGB, the commitment to work-place responsibility, quality of product and sustainability is driven by an overriding ethos prevalent within the company. “People and customers command top priority in everything DGB does,” he says. “And the battle against climate change and the destruction of the environment is the responsibility of each individual and every business, as the very future of our existence as persons and businesses depends on this,” he says.

Jacques Roux, marketing director for DGB’s wine division, says formal certification and accreditation is a requirement for trading in the global wine and spirits’ market. “Our latest accreditation allows DGB, who have now become one of the largest exporters of bottled wine in South Africa, to emphasise our preferred supplier status in the industry. Most important though, is that these accreditations underscore a mindset at DGB, one of doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do.”