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In a world where disease carrying pathogens and pests continuously evolve, Tsebo Hygiene and Pest Control, as part of the Tsebo Solutions Group, is employing technology and innovation to stay one step ahead through more efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable solutions.



When it comes to problem pests (and even disease-causing pathogens) the instinct for life is not dissimilar to that of humans. Their drive is primarily to survive and at an optimal level, to procreate and thrive. To achieve this, they need a safe place to live and a readily available source of food and water – often conveniently found in homes, office blocks, warehouses, and factories where humans provide the perfect environments for pests to flourish. Once they are comfortable in their new homes they are relentless and highly competent at hanging on to their digs, constantly evolving and building resilience to poisons and other preventative or eradication methods.

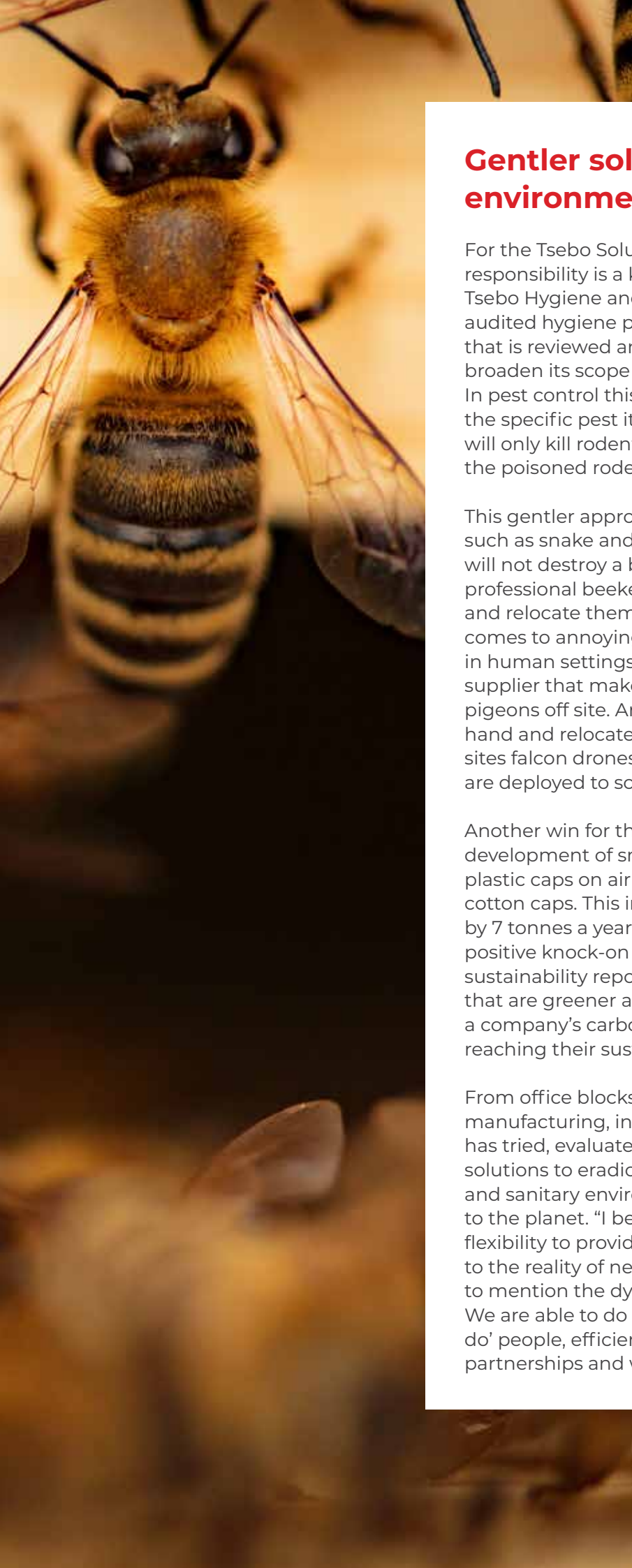
For Tsebo Hygiene and Pest Control, the challenge lies in remaining one step ahead in the fight against pests and pathogens, while remaining cognizant of a mandate to provide sustainable solutions that do not harm the environment. As the new managing director of Tsebo Hygiene and Pest Control, Marliza Snyman has made it her strategic imperative to look to science and technology to provide innovative means of service excellence and environmental sustainability across all aspects of hygiene and pest control. “It’s our goal to continually improve, keep up with market trends and offer our clients new and innovative solutions in the cleaning, hygiene and pest control space,” says Snyman.

Solutions start with the ability to customize commodities such as soap and towel dispensers, and hygiene bins to fit a client’s brand. “Where the sector once only provided white or silver stainless-steel dispensers, we can now offer a variety of solutions in any colour, branded with a client’s logo. For an industry that is traditionally uniform we can now offer something fresh and exciting,” she says.

Added to this is the use of technology to improve efficiencies and enhance the client experience. This includes Tsebo’s tailored technology and apps, which are used in a variety of ways, from monitoring consumption and stock levels of restroom consumables to tracking the activity of rodents, to determine the best positioning of bait boxes. Hygiene dispensers and sensor technology can be coupled with IoT (Internet of Things) capability to create an alert when a dispenser is due for a refill. Hygiene and Pest Control employees scan a QR code to confirm that their duties have been conducted at specific sites or to report issues or faulty equipment. All activity is reported on a live dashboard and this data can be used to finetune budgets and services going forward.

“Technology is playing an important role and we are developing and keeping ahead of the curve in terms of industry trends and what our clients are asking for, which is essentially more productive workplaces that are safe and enhance the wellbeing of their employees, in a way that is cost effective and sustainable,” says Snyman. Rochelle Gouws, national sales manager for Tsebo Hygiene and Pest Control adds, “The days are long gone where in the hygiene space it was a simple equation of one foam-soap dispenser equals one foam-soap refill. We cannot do that anymore because we live in a hybrid working environment where our clients have fluctuating occupancy levels. We understand this and can adapt our model to fit clients’ needs, allowing them more control over their monthly spend and how that relates to their yearly budget.”

This level of flexibility is possible due to Tsebo’s robust and reliable back-end support system, which ensures attention to details and quick turnaround times. It is not left up to the client to have to contact a helpdesk when something is broken or consumables need replenishing, instead, a delegated administrator manages stock control and site managers visit frequently to ensure that stock levels and equipment are in good order. “Everybody at Tsebo plays a role, it does not matter if you are the managing director or a pest control agent, everybody is a key stakeholder in client satisfaction and has a responsibility irrespective of the size of the client site. Any issues are actioned immediately, and an operational team is deployed to get it resolved within 48 hours,” says Gouws.



## Gentler solutions to protect the environment

For the Tsebo Solutions Group, environmental responsibility is a key component of the company ethos. Tsebo Hygiene and Pest Control adheres to an externally audited hygiene programme improvement campaign that is reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to broaden its scope of environmentally friendly practices. In pest control this means using bait that is only toxic to the specific pest it is targeting. For example, rodent bait will only kill rodents, if a cat or an owl eats the poison or the poisoned rodent it will not be adversely affected.

This gentler approach is followed through in other areas, such as snake and bee-removal and bird control. Tsebo will not destroy a beehive or kill a snake but employs professional beekeepers and snake handlers to remove and relocate them to a safe environment. And when it comes to annoying pigeons that like to roost and mess in human settings, Tsebo has recently partnered with a supplier that makes use of trained falcons to chase the pigeons off site. Any remaining pigeons are caught by hand and relocated 100 kilometres away. For industrial sites falcon drones (which look and sound like live falcons) are deployed to scare off pigeons without harming them.

Another win for the environment is the recent development of smarter packaging that replaces the plastic caps on air freshener aerosols with recyclable cotton caps. This invention reduces plastic consumption by 7 tonnes a year. These kinds of innovations have a positive knock-on effect for clients in terms of their sustainability reporting. By offering sustainable solutions that are greener and can be actively measured against a company's carbon footprint, Tsebo assists clients in reaching their sustainability goals.

From office blocks to educational environments, retail, manufacturing, industrial and shipping containers, Tsebo has tried, evaluated, accredited and continually evolving solutions to eradicate problem pests and provide safe and sanitary environments without causing undue harm to the planet. "I believe that what sets us apart is our flexibility to provide client-specific solutions and adapt to the reality of new and rapidly changing diseases, not to mention the dynamic macroeconomic environment. We are able to do this thanks to Tsebo's positive, 'can-do' people, efficient processes, excellent supplier partnerships and willingness to innovate," says Snyman.