



*South African Association of Botanists (SAAB)  
38<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
15 – 18 January 2012  
University of Pretoria*

## **Second announcement**

The Department of Plant Science of the University of Pretoria would like to invite you to the 2012 SAAB conference that will be held in Pretoria. The main theme of the conference will be “**Plants and Society**”.

### **Registration and Abstracts:**

Registration and submission of Abstracts are now open on our conference webpage at <http://www.up.ac.za/plantscience>. Click on the ‘SAAB 2012’ link for access to the website. Registration and submission of Abstracts will close on **15 October**. Guidelines for the format of Abstracts are available on our website.

### **Scientific programme:**

The main theme is quite broad and covers all aspects of Plant Science. Depending on the amount of interest and abstracts received the following sessions will be held (please inform us if you want to add another):

- Plant diversity and taxonomy
- Biodiversity informatics
- Plant physiology and biotechnology
- Plant genomics
- Plant invasions
- Ecosystem services
- Vegetation science
- Grassland ecology and conservation
- Global change in terrestrial ecosystems
- Conservation, cultivation and sustainable use
- Ethnobotany
- Phytochemistry and biological activity
- Biopesticides

Oral presentations will be 20 minutes (questions included) and poster sessions (no formal presentations) will be scheduled. A special session organised by the Land Cover Change Consortium (LCCC) will focus on global change in terrestrial ecosystems; exploring drivers and projections of changes in vegetation, ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as management options for dealing with these changes. A **workshop** on Global Change in Terrestrial Ecosystems will be held on 19 January. Contact Sally Archibald at [sarchibald@csir.co.za](mailto:sarchibald@csir.co.za) for more details.

### **Plenary speakers:**

The following eminent scientists will present plenary talks:

**Petr Pysek** is the Deputy Director of the Institute of Botany of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the Head of the Department of Invasion Ecology. He has published extensively on the flora of Europe and the ecology of invasive plants, and he is a leading expert in invasion biology. He has received several awards, including the creativity award from the Charles University in 2010.

**Richard Cowling** is a professor in the Botany Department at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in the Eastern Cape. He has published extensively on the ecology and conservation of the fynbos, succulent Karoo and subtropical thicket biomes, and is widely acclaimed for his contribution to the theory and application of conservation science. He has published over 250 peer-reviewed items. Several awards have been conferred on him, including the National Research Foundation's President's Award (1987) and A-rating (1998 & 2003), Pew Fellows Program Award (1994), and the Society for Conservation Biology's Distinguished Service Award (2004).

**William Bond** is a Professor in Botany at the University of Cape Town and holder of UCT's Harry Bolus Chair of Botany. He is an international expert on landcover change in Southern Africa and the ecology of sub-tropical grasslands, savannas and winter rainfall shrublands. His current research involves processes most strongly influencing vegetation change in the past and present, including fire, vertebrate herbivory, climate extremes, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration and habitat fragmentation. He currently serves on the Editorial Boards of many scientific journals, including *Global Change Biology*, and *Global Ecology and Biogeography*.

**Robert Verpoorte** is the Head of Pharmacognosy, section Metabolomics at Leiden University in the Netherlands. He is author/co-author of 650+ scientific papers, 4 books and 4 patent applications and is Editor-in-chief of *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* and *Phytochemical Reviews*, Executive Editor of *Biotechnology Letters* and he serves on the editorial boards of 22 journals. His current research interests are mainly plant cell biotechnology, in particular the production of fine chemicals (including drugs) by means of plant cell cultures. He also works on the biosynthesis of secondary metabolites in plants and NMR-based metabolomics. He received an Honorary Doctorate from University of Amiens, France (2004) and the Phytochemical Society of Europe Medal in 2007.

**Joseph Hirschberg** is professor of the Department of Genetics at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. Prof. Hirschberg's group pioneered the molecular analysis of the carotenoid biosynthesis pathway in plants, being the first to clone genes for carotenoid biosynthetic enzymes in cyanobacteria, algae and plants. Further studies elucidated the regulation of carotenoid accumulation in fruits and flowers and were imperative for genetically engineering plants to have altered carotenoid synthesis, such as in Golden Rice. Currently his laboratory uses a range of approaches including "classical" and molecular genetics, genomics and metabolomics. His research provides a paradigm of how natural diversity can be used to decipher complex biochemical pathways in plants. His research has been published in the top journals, including *PNAS*, *Plant Journal*, *Plant Physiology*, *Plant Cell* etc. Prof Hirschberg is a lifetime honorary member of the American Society of Plant Biologists, and the most recent of his many awards was the The Trevor Goodwin Award for a Lifetime of Achievement in Research on Carotenoid Biochemistry and Biology from the International Carotenoid Society.

### **Accommodation and transport:**

Accommodation will be available in a University residence (Asterhof) near the conference venue but delegates are also welcome to stay in guest houses/lodges close to the University of Pretoria (booking details on web page at <http://www.up.ac.za/plantscience>). The Hatfield station of the Gautrain is a 10-15 minute walk from the Asterhof Residence and Conference venue (more details are provided on our website).

All accommodation and transport arrangements can be made through Ms Hestie Crous-Beckett.

### **Evening functions:**

- 15 January: Meet-and-Greet function
- 16 January: Student rumble @ Outspan and Rooftop Social for the rest of the delegates
- 17 January: Free evening
- 18 January: Gala dinner

### **Enquiries:**

Scientific programme: Ms René Swart at 012-420 3770 or [rene.swart@up.ac.za](mailto:rene.swart@up.ac.za)

Accommodation and transport: Ms Hestie Crous-Beckett at 082-447 7718 or

[hestiecb@mweb.co.za](mailto:hestiecb@mweb.co.za)



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