

# PROGRAMME

## JOINT MIDTERM WORKSHOP

### ‘Integrating health approaches and the Water-Energy-Food Nexus’



Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2026  
Pretoria and Johannesburg, South Africa



science, technology  
& innovation

Department:  
Science, Technology and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National Research  
Foundation

RISA

Research and Innovation  
Support and Advancement



**Involved projects:**

**Spatial inequality in water-energy-food security in South Africa; implications for public health and the consequences of climate change**

Project leaders: Prof Imke de Kock (Stellenbosch University) & Prof Floor van der Hilst (Utrecht University)

**Water hyacinths: use them or lose them? Improving human and ecosystem health by bringing the science to the people of Lake Chivero, Zimbabwe**

Project leaders: Prof Timothy Dube (University of the Western Cape) & Dr Ing Marloes Penning de Vries (University of Twente)

**Pathways to activate the WSEFH nexus in marginalised communities through renewable energy solutions**

Project leaders: Prof Erika Kraemer-Mbula (University of Johannesburg) & Dr Ralph Lindeboom (Delft University of Technology)

**Critical connections between agricultural water management and human health, using a water-energy-food (WEF) nexus approach in South Africa (CONNEXION)**

Project leaders: Dr Aidan Senzanje (University of KwaZulu-Natal) & Dr Eline Boelee (Deltares)



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## Practical information

### Meeting venues

#### Day 1

NRF Building, South Gate  
CSIR Complex, Meiring Naudé Road  
Brummeria, Pretoria  
South Africa

#### Dinner for consortium members and invited guests:

*Stephnie's*  
Shop 7, Lynnwood Bridge, 4 Daventry St, Lynnwood Manor, Pretoria, 0081

#### Day 2

**Walking tour:** *Victoria Yards* – 16 Viljoen Street, Lorentzville, Johannesburg

**Afternoon programme:** *The Troyeville Hotel* – 1403 Albertina Sisulu Rd, Troyeville, Johannesburg

### Points of contact

- Mr Matthijs Kallenberg ([m.kallenberg@nwo.nl](mailto:m.kallenberg@nwo.nl)), Programme Officer, Dutch Research Council (NWO)
- Mr Tim Vroegindeweij ([t.vroegindeweij@nwo.nl](mailto:t.vroegindeweij@nwo.nl)), Programme Officer, Dutch Research Council (NWO)
- Mr Teuns Phahlamohlaka ([T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za)), Professional Officer, National Research Foundation (NRF)
- Dr. Nokuthula Mchunu ([NP.Mchunu@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:NP.Mchunu@risa.nrf.ac.za)), National Research Foundation (NRF)

### Hotel

*City Lodge Hotel Lynnwood*

Corner of Lynnwood Road and Daventry Street, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria  
Suite 214, P/Bag X025, Lynnwood Ridge

#### Reservation contact details

Tel: +27 12 471 0300

Email: [cllynnwood.resv@citylodgehotels.com](mailto:cllynnwood.resv@citylodgehotels.com)

Contact Person: Ms Moshidi

## Day 1 – 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2026

**Venue:** NRF Building, South Gate  
CSIR Complex, Meiring Naudé Road  
Brummeria, Pretoria

### Morning peer-review session with project teams

- 8.45      **Walk-in, registration, coffee & tea**
- 9.00      **Welcome and introduction**  
Dr Nokuthula Mchunu (NRF)
- 9.15      **Group photo**
- 9.25      **Getting (re)acquainted and speed date bingo**
- 9.40      **Peer review based on self-assessment – Presentation 1**  
*Spatial inequality in water-energy-food security in South Africa; implications for public health and the consequences of climate change*  
Project leaders: Prof Imke de Kock (Stellenbosch University) & Prof Floor van der Hilst (Utrecht University)
- Self-assessment presentation (20 min):
  - Remarks and questions by IAC reviewers (20 min)
  - Discussion / questions other participants (10 min)
- 10.30     **Coffee/tea break**
- 10.45     **Peer review based on self-assessment – Presentation 2**  
*Water hyacinths: use them or lose them? Improving human and ecosystem health by bringing the science to the people of Lake Chivero, Zimbabwe*  
Project leaders: Prof Timothy Dube (University of the Western Cape) & Dr Ing Marloes Penning de Vries (University of Twente)
- Self-assessment presentation (20 min):
  - Remarks and questions by IAC reviewers (20 min)
  - Discussion / questions other participants (10 min)
- 11.35     **Peer review based on self-assessment – Presentation 3**  
*Pathways to activate the WSEFH nexus in marginalised communities through renewable energy solutions*  
Project leaders: Prof Erika Kraemer-Mbula (University of Johannesburg) & Dr Ralph Lindeboom (Delft University of Technology)
- Self-assessment presentation (20 min):
  - Remarks and questions by IAC reviewers (20 min)
  - Discussion / questions other participants (10 min)
- 12.25     **Peer review based on self-assessment – Presentation 4**  
*Critical connections between agricultural water management and human health, using a water-energy-food (WEF) nexus approach in South Africa (CONNEXION)*

*Project leaders: Dr Aidan Senzanje (University of KwaZulu-Natal) & Dr Eline Boelee (Deltares)*

- Self-assessment presentation (20 min):
- Remarks and questions by IAC reviewers (20 min)
- Discussion / questions other participants (10 min)

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## **Afternoon Midterm Symposium for stakeholders and external participants**

13.15 **Walk-in lunch and registration**

14.00 **Welcome and opening**

Dr Makobetsa Khati – Executive Manager Strategic Investments, Innovation and Impact (NRF)

14.05 **Keynote**

Prof Monika Dos Santos, University of South Africa

14.35 **PhD and postdoc seminar – part 1**

PhD students and postdocs involved in the four projects will share their research and preliminary insights, with an emphasis on stakeholder engagement and broader societal implications.

- Inge Ossentjuk (Utrecht University)
- Eli Dearden (Utrecht University)
- A’ishah Ebrahim (Utrecht University)
- Dr Andrew Earl (Utrecht University)

15.15 **Coffee/tea break**

15:30 **PhD and postdoc seminar – part 2**

- Yuxiao He (Deltares)
- Hluphi Mpangane (Mpumalanga Department of Health)
- Mgcini Ncube (University of Twente)
- Finn Münch (University of Twente) - *online*

16:10 **Intermediate take-aways**

Brief interactive plenary reflection

16:20 **Panel discussion: Integrating WEF and H for meaningful societal impact**

Drawing on insights and shared themes from the four projects, this stakeholder panel will reflect on the integration of (public) health issues and the Water-Energy-Food nexus and its implications for stakeholders across sectors, and explore opportunities and recommendations to ensure that WEF-Health approaches deliver meaningful societal impact.

Moderator: Dr Palesa Skhejane

Panel members:

- Dr Maneshree Jugmohan-Naidu, Director Biotechnology (Department of Science, Technology and Innovation)
- Dr Nwabisa Masekwana, senior researcher (Agricultural Research Council)

- Mr Berto Bosscha, Education & Science Counsellor (Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to South Africa)
- Ms Nicole du Plessis, Science Officer, South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)
- Inkomati-Usuthu CMA – IUCMA (TBC)

17:15 **Wrap-up and closing**

Dr Nana Boaduo – Manager SARChI: Strategic Investments, Innovation and Impact (NRF)

17.30 **Informal networking and drinks**

18.30 **Dinner for consortium members and invited guests**

Location: *Stephnie's* – Shop 7, Lynnwood Bridge, 4 Daventry St, Lynnwood Manor, Pretoria, 0081

21.30 **End of Day 1 & travel back to hotel**

## Day 2 – 6<sup>h</sup> of March 2026

**Pick-up location shared transfer to Johannesburg:** *City Lodge Hotel Lynnwood*, Hilden Rd, Lynnwood Manor, Pretoria

**Location morning:** *Victoria Yards* – 16 Viljoen St, Lorentzville, Johannesburg

**Location afternoon:** *The Troyeville Hotel* – 1403 Albertina Sisulu Rd, Troyeville, Johannesburg

8.00 **Bus transfer from Pretoria to Johannesburg**

9.35 **Walking tour in Lorentzville, Johannesburg**

Guided by Water for the Future

12.00 **Lunch**

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13.00 **Welcome and introduction afternoon programme**

13.25 **Water-Energy-Food-Health Nexus exchange session**

Three World Café style sessions:

1. **WEFH Nexus thinking: lessons learned**

Chair and notetaking:

Dr Zilungile Mkhize-Kwitshana (University of South Africa)

Dr Herbert Ntuli (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research)

Dr Janez Susnik (IHE Delft)

2. **Cross-cutting issues and cross-project collaboration**

Chair and notetaking:

Prof Rebecca Hanlin (University of Johannesburg)

Dr Ralph Lindeboom (TU Delft)

3. **NRF-NWO joint programme**

Chair and notetaking: Dr Nokuthula Mchunu (NRF) and NWO

**Parallel roundtable session for PhD students and early career researchers –  
‘Doing transdisciplinarity: reflections on positionality & practice’**

Chair: Dr Lucy Khofi (African Centre for Migration & Society)

14.25 **Plenary wrap-up by table chairs**

14.45 **Jointly exploring outreach and impact**

Exchange about joint outreach activities and potential ways to join forces to multiply the projects’ collective impact.

Chaired by Prof Imke de Kock (Stellenbosch University) and Prof Floor van der Hilst (Utrecht University)

16.30 **Reflections and key take-aways**

Dr Marloes Penning de Vries (University of Twente) and South African PI (TBC)

17.00 **End of midterm meeting**

Bus transfer back to Pretoria

## Annex 1 – Instructions

### Project self-assessment presentations

The four project teams' self-assessment presentations reflect on the progress made so far, and will form the basis for a discussion and exchange with members of the International Advisory Committee, and the other project teams.

Below is a brief indication of what is expected from the teams in regard to this:

- Self-assessment presentation (20 min):
  - brief introduction of the project;
  - governance of the project? How is the collaboration between the various partners in the consortium?
  - progress towards outputs/outcomes/impact;
  - elaboration on the project's conceptualisation and processes of co-creation/inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration;
  - most promising results so far/most challenging bottlenecks/main lessons learned;
  - foreseen project adaptations;
  - other important matters;
- Remarks and questions by IAC reviewers (20 min);
- Discussion / questions other participants (10 min).

Please share your slides with us **no later than Monday 2 March**, so we can incorporate them into our slide deck.

#### Presentation order

<i>Spatial inequality in water-energy-food security in South Africa; implications for public health and the consequences of climate change</i> Project leaders: Prof Imke de Kock (Stellenbosch University) & Prof Floor van der Hilst (Utrecht University)
Coffee/tea break around 10.30
<i>Water hyacinths: use them or lose them? Improving human and ecosystem health by bringing the science to the people of Lake Chivero, Zimbabwe</i> Project leaders: Prof Timothy Dube (University of the Western Cape) & Dr Ing Marloes Penning de Vries (University of Twente)
<i>Pathways to activate the WSEFH nexus in marginalised communities through renewable energy solutions</i> Project leaders: Prof Erika Kraemer-Mbula (University of Johannesburg) & Dr Ralph Lindeboom (Delft University of Technology)
<i>Critical connections between agricultural water management and human health, using a water-energy-food (WEF) nexus approach in South Africa (CONNEXION)</i> Project leaders: Dr Aidan Senzanje (University of KwaZulu-Natal) & Dr Eline Boelee (Deltares)

## PhD and postdoc seminar

PhD students and postdocs participating in this session are invited to share their ongoing research with both internal and external audiences. The focus of this session is on communicating early insights and potential impact rather than detailed methodology or theory.

**Duration:** 7 minutes per presentation (10 min including Q&A)

**Audience:** mixed group of researchers and external stakeholders from the WEF and health sectors, including non-academics. Keep this broad composition in mind when preparing your presentation.

**Preliminary insights:** emphasise how your early findings link back to the foreseen impact, reflect on your collaboration with stakeholders and consider the broader implications for the academic field, your direct stakeholders and society at large.

**Presentation slides:** when preparing your slides, please consider the maximum duration of 7 minutes per presentation. Please share your slides with us **no later than Monday 2**

**March**, so we can incorporate them into our slide deck.

### Presentation order

Inge Ossentjuk (Utrecht University)
Eli Dearden (Utrecht University)
A'ishah Ebrahim (Utrecht University)
Dr. Andrew Earl (Utrecht University)
Coffee/tea break at 15.15
Yuxiao He (Deltares)
Hluphi Mpangane (Mpumalanga Dept of Health)
Mgcini Ncube (University of Twente)
Finn Münch ( <i>online</i> ) (University of Twente)

## World café questions

The world café discussions are structured in three rounds. After the first round – which focuses primarily on the first question – the table chair summarises the discussion for the next group and, building on the issues raised, introduces the next round of discussion. The same procedure is followed for the third and final round. Below are guiding questions that the table chair may adapt or supplement at their own discretion.

### Table 1. WEFH Nexus thinking: lessons learned– 3 discussion rounds

**Chair and notetaking:** Dr Zilungile Mkhize-Kwitshana (University of South Africa), Dr Herbert Ntuli (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research), and Dr Janez Susnik (IHE Delft)

Q1: What have been the most important contributions (e.g. new insights/obstacles) to the general debate so far in terms of findings and lessons learnt?

Q2: Anything to add in terms of important achievements? And looking at these contributions, what opportunities do you see to strengthen or broaden the research?

Q3: Taking into account the previous discussion, what priority gaps in research / integrating research into practice do you see that merit to be considered in next calls for proposals? Preference for a topic for the next call?

### Table 2. Cross-cutting issues and cross-project collaboration – 3 discussion rounds

**Chair and notetaking:** Prof Rebecca Hanlin (University of Johannesburg) and Dr Ralph Lindeboom (TU Delft)

Q1: Did you identify shared challenges, cross-cutting issues or linkages between the four projects? These could relate to stakeholder engagement, methodological questions, or interdisciplinary collaboration, for example.

Q2: Where do you see opportunities for cross-project collaboration to jointly address challenges or make the most of synergies? And are there any enabling or hampering factors that enhance or restrict such collaborative efforts?

Q3: Taking into account the previous discussion, should more be done to enhance these collaborations? If so, what concrete mechanisms or activities could facilitate this?

### Table 3. NRF-NWO joint programme – 3 discussion rounds

**Chair and notetaking:** Dr Nokuthula Mchunu (NRF) and NWO

Q1: What features<sup>1</sup> that relate to call and project set-up merit to be cherished in future calls? And what features hamper the effective execution of co-funded WEF nexus projects?

Q2. How can NRF and NWO improve the call design, project set-up and conditions for carrying out the research?

Q3. What should deserve priority in view of improvement to the call set-up, finance and the regulatory frameworks?

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<sup>1</sup> Please include also the features that were introduced in later stages: two stage application process, introducing opportunities for a wider collaboration (SGCI) in Africa