

## **WATERNET-WRC WEBINAR**

**Title: Implications of COVID-19 pandemic on the SADC Research Agenda for the water sector**

**Date: 8 July 2020**

**Time: 10.30HRS -11.30HRS (CAT)**

**Webinar Registration link: [HERE](#)**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), through the SADC Water Division, continues to search for ways to realise its vision of a water secure region as enunciated in the various policy and strategy frameworks. Research has been identified as an important pillar in efficient and effective implementation of water programmes and driving sustainable socio-economic development. It is also through demand driven research that knowledge generators can contribute to finding solutions to the national, regional and continental water challenges and influence policy and decision making through evidence-based research. The strategic objective of the [SADC Water Research Agenda](#) is to promote evidence-based implementation of SADC water programmes and projects through multi- and inter-disciplinary research, and synthesis of existing and new information, which will lead to a realisation of SADC's developmental goals. In order to fulfil the objectives of the SADC Research Agenda a number of academic and research institutions across the region are undertaking different water related research projects. Over the years, a significant number of publications and new knowledge has been generated from the research undertaken by researchers in the SADC region and with other key leading institutions in the rest of the continent and internationally. Some of the research projects had an influence on policy among the Member States and improved the management of transboundary basins in the region and overall water resources management throughout the water value chain.

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic since late 2019 has had some impacts on social, economic and political activities worldwide. Research has been impacted as many researchers could not access their working environments due to national lockdowns, could not go into the field to collect data and had to find new ways to exchange information and discuss findings with their peers. There is therefore a need to have an in-depth discussion on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected research in the water sector which contributes to the fulfilment of the SADC Research Agenda. Such an analysis will help in highlighting both the positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 on research in the water sector in the region. The analysis will further assist in finding mitigation measures on the negative impacts of the pandemic. In this Webinar, the speakers will provide different perspectives on the impacts of COVID-19 on the SADC Research Agenda for the water sector.

The presenters will specifically address the following issues:

- Extent of the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on general research in the SADC region;
- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the SADC Research Agenda;
- The importance of mainstreaming of pandemics in water related research in the SADC region;
- The role of the SADC Secretariat, Member States, River Basin Organisations and Research Institutions in generating knowledge even under situations of pandemics; and

- Way forward post-COVID-19 regarding updating the SADC Research agenda (with new and relevant themes and topics) and funding mechanisms.

<b>Introductory Remarks</b>	
	<p>Dr Nico Elema Programme Manager for the AUDA-NEPAD Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence, and Manager of the Centre for Collaboration in Africa at Stellenbosch University.</p>
<b>Presenters</b>	
	<p>Prof. Emmanuel Manzungu Department of Soil Science and Agricultural Engineering, University of Zimbabwe</p>
	<p>Dr. Harrison Pienaar Head of the Research, Development and Innovation Work Streams in the Hydrosciences Domain. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa (CSIR)</p>
	<p>Prof Stanley Liphadzi, Group Executive for Research and Development, Water Research Commission</p>
<b>Moderator</b>	
	<p>Dr Mamohloding Tlhagale, Head of International and Stakeholder Engagement, Water Research Commission</p>

