Dear Students,

The Southern African community of arid zone researchers, practitioners and students will meet again from 16th to 19th October 2012 in Worcester to hold the annual Arid Zone Ecology Forum meeting (AZEF). With this email, we would like to encourage and invite students and young researchers to attend.

This year’s conference theme is “Emerging threats in the arid zone: building knowledge and developing solutions”, which will deal with key issues like climate change, bush encroachment, fire in arid systems, rehabilitation, landuse and development (e.g. fracking) and other related topics.

Why should students attend AZEF?

AZEF is still one of the smaller conferences with up to 100 participants, from students to leading scientists and experienced practitioners. It not only provides a great opportunity to listen to inspiring and insightful talks by emerging and leading scientists but also an opportunity for students to network and discuss project ideas or questions at tea breaks or during the informative mid-conference field trips.

AZEF thus provides opportunities to

- receive up-to-date information about current research topics and activities in Southern African arid zones;
- present posters or give oral presentations on their own research results;
- receive feedback from a broad range of arid zone specialists;
- meet other students that are interested in arid zone topics;
- make contact with practitioners and scientists that work in the arid zones;
- meet your potential future supervisors;
- make friends with people that share your interest in arid zones.

For further details on the conference (cut-off dates, registration forms) please see attached announcement and the AZEF website (www.azef.co.za).

We are hoping to have some sponsorship for students, please check the AZEF website for respective updates. For further questions please contact the AZEF Secretariat (azef.sa@gmail.com).

Best regards,

Clement Cupido
AZEF CHAIRMAN
Venue & Date:
1. The “Meet & Greet” will be held at the restaurant at the Karoo Desert Botanical Gardens on the eve of 16th October.
2. The conference will be held at the NG Moedergemeente Church Hall, Church Street, Worcester, W Cape, from the 17th to the 19th October 2012.

Who should attend?
Scientists, students, planners & educators working in arid areas.
Managers particularly those in conservation, agriculture & local government
Policy makers
NGOs and the private sector
Landowners

AZEF 2012 Theme:
Emerging threats in the arid zone: building knowledge and developing solutions
Sessions: climate change, bush encroachment, fire in arid systems, rehabilitation, landuse and development (e.g. fracking) and other related topics.
Special Keynote Speaker: Dr Joe McAuliffe, Director of Research at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Arizona. His research in arid areas is multidisciplinary – plant community ecology, population ecology of desert plants, ecophysiology, geology, soil science, hydrology, paleoecology, paleoclimatology and conservation of semi-arid grasslands. Of special interest to us is his work on “heuweltjies”.
Interactive session: Climate Change, promises to be a highlight, with several prominent speakers.
Emphasis: presentations should be on suggested action/solutions.

Programme Outline:
Tuesday 16th October:
Delegates arrive & register from 17h30.
Welcome & Finger Supper

Wednesday 17th October:
Late registration
Papers and posters all day
AGM
Special Student Session
Dinner

Thursday 18th October:
Late registration
Papers & posters
Climate Change Debate
Field trips
Drinks around the posters & braai

Friday 19th October:
Late registration
Papers & posters
Lunch
Prize giving for best presentations by young scientist

Field trips:
Field trips on Thursday 18th October. We plan to have expert guided field trips to:
- Karoo Desert Botanical Gardens
- Worcester Veld Reserve
- Graham Beck Estate conservation Areas
- CREW- critical sites for plant conservation
- Wetlands restoration
- Restoration of a controlled burned site at Brandvlei Dam

Call for Papers & Posters:
Contributions in the form of platform papers (of 12 minutes and 3 minutes for discussion) are invited.

Posters will be presented as 5 minutes speed presentation (3 Power Point slides) with time for questions at the end of the session, as well as during the drinks social at the posters before the braai.

All titles should reach the secretariat via email no later than 30th July 2012.

All abstracts must reach the secretariat no later than 27th August 2012.
Registration

Registration Forms and Fees:
Early Bird Registration forms and fees should reach the secretariat before 27th August 2012 to enjoy Early Bird rates! Thereafter the Late Registration fee will be applicable. The cut-off date for all Registrations is before 28th September 2012. Please return completed registration forms either by email: to azef.sa@gmail.com OR:
The Secretariat, AZEF, P O Box 21705, KLOOF STREET, 8008. South Africa
Cell: 072 625 0274, Fax: 086 759 2859, Email: azef.sa@gmail.com

Registration Fees and Cut-Off Dates

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Fees*</th>
<th>Cut-off dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Abstract</td>
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<td>27th August 2012</td>
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<td>Early Bird Registration</td>
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<td>Late Registration</td>
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<td>28th September 2012</td>
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<td>Cancellation</td>
<td>75% reimbursement</td>
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<td>Cancellation</td>
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* See also registration form for Daily fees

Payments:
- PLEASE NOTE: All Registration payments must be made before 28 September 2012
- Kindly request an invoice for payment from the secretariat.
- Cheques, cash, and electronic payment are accepted.
- Unfortunately, we do not have Credit Card facilities.
- Bank Details: These will be supplied on an invoice to you once registration forms are received. Proof of payment should be sent to the Secretariat please.

Cancellation Policy:
Cancellations made after 28th September 2012 and before 1st October 2012 will only be refunded 75% of the fee.
- Please note that no refunds will be made if there is cancellation or change of dates after 1st October 2012.
- Refunds will only be made AFTER the conference once banking details have been sent to the secretariat

NB: A person shall only be considered as registered on receipt of both registration form and fee.

Meals
The full registration fee includes teas, lunches and dinners as from dinner on 16th October 2012 and for the duration of the Forum only. Any other meals are for your own cost.

Accommodation
Please book your own accommodation. Phone the official Worcester Tourism office on 023 342 6244, or see their web: www.worcestertourism.co.za, Email: info@worcestertourism.com

Awards
Awards will be made to the best paper and posters by young scientists with special priority to postgraduate students.

Sponsorship
We are hoping to have some sponsorship for students, but will keep you posted once we know the outcome of our application.
## Registration Form

Please complete or indicate with 'X' where applicable

Return to Wendy Paisley, AZEF, P O BOX 21705, KLOOF STREET, 8008, Fax: 086 759 2859, Email azef.sa@gmail.com

At latest 28 September 2012.

REGISTRATION WILL ONLY BE COMPLETE ON RECEIPT OF REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT FOR ATTENDANCE

### PERSONAL

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### ATTENDANCE

I confirm that I will attend for the full duration of the conference

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If NO, give details

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### REGISTRATION FEE

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**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FEE:** R1950 - Full Duration - Includes lunch, teas and dinner, excluding Friday – no pm tea or dinner. Until 27th August.

**LATE REGISTRATION FEE:** R2500 – Full Duration – Late registration until 28th September.

**DAILY FEE:** Tuesday & Wednesday 16 & 17 October 2012: R680 = Early Bird; R730 = Late.
Includes Tuesday evening cocktail & Wednesday lunch, teas & dinner.

**DAILY FEE:** Wednesday 17 October 2012: R600 = Early Bird; R650 = Late.
Includes lunch, teas & dinner.

**DAILY FEE:** Thursday 18 October 2012: R600 = Early Bird; R650 = Late.
Includes lunch, tea & dinner.

**DAILY FEE:** Friday 19 October 2012: R500 = Early Bird; R550 = Late.
Includes lunch, am tea.

**STUDENT REGISTRATION FEE:** Full duration: R1170 = Early Bird; R1500 = Late.
Includes lunch, teas & dinner, excluding Friday - no pm tea or dinner.

**PARTNER EVENING MEALS** Please indicate if needed. Please ask about costs for the different evening meals. We need to know for catering purposes.

### TOTAL:

I am a vegetarian – If yes, please specify preference.

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- Halaal
- Kosher
- Other
## ACCOMMODATION

*DELEGATES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BOOKING AND PAYING THEIR OWN ACCOMMODATION.*

For accommodation options, delegates can refer to the website [www.worcestertourism.co.za](http://www.worcestertourism.co.za) or phone the Information Office on (023) 342 6244. Email: info@worcestertourism.com

## PAPER / POSTER PRESENTATION (please delete or strike through where necessary)

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<td>I will make my presentation available for inclusion in the proceedings of AZEF 2012</td>
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**TITLES** should reach the secretariat no later than Friday 30 July 2012.

**ABSTRACTS** should reach the secretariat no later than Friday 27 August 2012

## STUDENTS SPONSORSHIP: Limited student sponsorship is available. Contact Secretariat for more information

## PAPER / POSTER PARTICULARS (for format of abstract see separate guidelines)

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**SIGNATURE** *(If not submitting electronically)*

**DATE**
Arid Zone Ecology Forum

16th to 19th October 2012
NG Moedergemeente Church Hall, Worcester
WORCESTER

GUIDELINES

Posters: (Abstracts also required. See below.)
1. Maximum size: PORTRAIT AO = Width 841mm – Height 1189 mm.
2. Include your name, address
3. The poster must remain on the poster boards for the entire duration of the conference and should be erected and removed by yourself, or a person delegated by you.
4. Posters should be placed on suitable paper for posters.
5. Only thumb tacks, prestik, double sided tape or pins may be used to attach posters.
6. A viewer should be able to read and understand the poster in less than two minutes and typeface should be large enough that it can be read from 2m away
7. Posters will be presented as 5 minutes speed presentation (3 PowerPoint slides) with time for questions at the end of the session, as well as during the drinks social at the posters before the braai.
8. There will also be a special poster session, and you will stand at your poster and share your information with the audience.

Paper presentations:
A data projector and laptop will be provided. Please advise (with abstract submission) should you need a slide projector and/or overhead projector or any other type of audio-visual aid.

1. Paper presentations will take the form of platform papers.
2. You have 12 minutes to present your paper and a 3 minute discussion period.
3. Digital presentations should be submitted as a PowerPoint® show presentation (pps). Double clicking a PowerPoint show file automatically opens as a running presentation.
4. Presentations must be no larger than 25 MB.
5. Presentations can be saved either onto a flash disk or onto a CD. Please let us know well in advance so that we can try and accommodate you if the above does not suit you, and what your other requirements are.

Abstracts: (Papers and Posters)
1. The abstract should contain the title, three key words, names of authors, and co-authors where relevant, and their addresses (please follow format given in the example below).
2. The text of the abstract should be no more than 300 words.
3. Please prepare the abstract in Arial Narrow 11, and 1.5 line spacing.
4. See example at end of this document.
5. Title should reach the secretariat **30th July 2012**
5. Abstracts should be submitted by email to azef.sa@gmail.com by **27th August 2012**

**AN EXAMPLE OF AN ABSTRACT**

**PAPER FULL/SHORT PAPER/POSTER:**

(With permission from its author)

**Cape Town: a Biodiversity Megadisaster**

Key words: threatened ecosystems, conservation, development pressures

Surname, P.M. ¹, Surname, A.G.² and Surname J.¹

¹ Biodiversity Management Branch, Environmental Resource Management Department, City of Cape Town
² Threatened Biodiversity Programme, South African National Biodiversity Institute

* patricia.holmes@capetown.gov.za

The City of Cape Town sits at the heart of the Cape Floral Kingdom. Although covering an area of only 2200km², it contains 9 of the 24 Critically Endangered ecosystems (as defined by the National Environmental Management, Biodiversity Act of 2004) in South Africa. In this area some 13 plant species are globally extinct (at least in the wild), out of a total of 47 in South Africa: Thus 3.4% of the world's 380 extinct plant species occur within Cape Town; only a few countries exceed Cape Town's figure. A further 152 threatened species (Red Data List: Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable) occur in the area. Although there are many initiatives to conserve and manage the biodiversity, critical areas are being lost at a faster rate than conservation measures can counter. Land transformation and invasive alien plant species pose the biggest threats. Severe pressure to provide land for upmarket suburban and coastal developments and low-cost housing for Cape Town's rapidly growing low-income sector, to obtain building materials (primarily sand), and to provided shaded landscapes for walking dogs are in direct conflict with national objectives to conserve representative ecosystems. Even within the Table Mountain National Park - established in 1997 as the largest conservation area in the city - it is evident that alien control is slipping behind and ecosystem conservation is being compromised by social pressures, for recreation. Without further international pressure and funding, efforts by local conservation officials will fail to slow the rate of degradation.

Good Luck and we look forward to your presentations and posters.