



PROGRAMME

36th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TREE PROTECTION CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAMME (TPCP)

Venue: Future Africa Auditorium, University of Pretoria

Partnerships for sustainable and productive plantation forestry

TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2025

07:30-08:00 Registration, coffee and tea

08:00-08:15 Sign-in and systems check

Session 1: Partnerships for a competitive and productive forestry sector

08:15-08:30 Welcome from the University of Pretoria

Prof. Francis Petersen, Rector, University of Pretoria

08:30-08:45 Elements of success in business model innovation critical for industry-government-university success

Dr Osmond Mlonyeni, General Manager, Innovation Africa @UP

08:45-09:05 A current perspective on the state of Forestry in South Africa

Mr Graeme Wild, CEO of Sappi, South Africa

09:05-09:25 Looking back at the TPCP in 2024 and the road ahead

Prof. Bernard Slippers, Director of the TPCP and FABI

09:25-09:35 Annual TPCP photo

09:35-10:00 **COMFORT BREAK**

Session 2: Advancing Integrated Pest Management options

10:00-10:20 A global perspective on biological control in plantation forests

Prof. Brett Hurley, FABI, University of Pretoria

10:20-10:40 **Guest speaker:** Priority solutions for operational pest and disease management in Australian forestry plantations – an overview

Dr Sam van Holsbeeck, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

10:40-10:50 Exploring options for conservation and augmentative biological control of *Euproctis terminalis*

Dr Privilege Makunde, FABI, University of Pretoria

10:50-11:00 Progress towards the registration of chemicals needed for pest and disease management

Dr Mesfin Gossa, ICFR

11:00-11:15 **5 minute speed talks**

Ms Caitlin Gevers: Diversity of *Leptocybe invasa* in South Africa and its influence on management

Mr Innocent Rakubu: Persistence and enhancement of entomopathogenic nematodes to control white grubs

Mr Nigel Kombora: Using 3PG to estimate growth loss from defoliating insects

11:15-11:45 Tea

Session 3: Know your enemy: Characterising threats globally and locally

11:45-12:05 International collaborations with Royal Golden Eagle (RGE) in Indonesia

Prof. Irene Barnes and Prof. Mike Wingfield, FABI, University of Pretoria

12:05-12:25 **Guest Speaker:** From hand lens to high tech: Merging the old and the new in Tree Health Diagnostics

Prof. Romina Gazis, University of Florida, USA



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- 12:25-12:35 The Diagnostic Clinic as a key service for monitoring and discovery of pests and diseases.
Dr Wilma Nel, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 12:35-12:55 **5 minute speed talks**
Dr Lieschen de Vos: Precise and accessible real time PCR diagnostic protocols
Mr Christiaan Grobler: *Pinus* blue stain and dieback: More than just *Diplodia sapinea*
Mr Ngoye Zondo: Exploring causal agents of mortality of young pine in the Southern Cape
Ms Chulumanco Majavu: Species diversity and drivers of infestations of the soil insect pest complex associated with forest plantation trees
- 12:55-13:05 Closing of the morning session
- 13:05-14:00 **LUNCH** (Future Africa Hub)
- Session 4: Phenotyping and genotyping for tree resilience**
- 14:00-14:20 Plant phenotyping and disease resistance screening at FABI
Prof. Almuth Hammerbacher, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 14:20-14:40 The genetics and genomics of tree resilience
Prof. Sanushka Naidoo, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 14:40-15:00 Expanding the impact of Open Air Laboratory approach in forestry in South Africa
Prof. David Drew, Stellenbosch University
- 15:00-15:15 A potential future Pine OAL
Dr Jaco-Pierre van der Merwe, York Timbers
- 15:15-15:35 **5 minute speed talks**
Mr Lihan Esterhuizen: Hyperspectral sensing for pathogen screening and monitoring
Mr Christoff Joubert: Chemical resistance in *Eucalyptus* to *Gonipterus* sp. n. 2
Mr Phumlani Nzuza: Remote sensing of *Gonipterus* sp. n. 2
Ms Brittney-Aidan Jamieson: Developing screening tools for *Quambalaria eucalypti*
- 15:35-16:05 Comfort break
- Session 5: Future directions for the management of pests and diseases**
- 16:05-16:25 Spray-Induced Gene Silencing (SIGS) for managing *Fusarium circinatum* in the nursery environment
Prof. Emma Steenkamp, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 16:25-16:35 Progress with developing gene editing tools for pest management
Dr Gudrun Dittrich-Schröder, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 16:35-16:45 The importance of the soil microbiome for sustainable forest management
Dr. Tanay Bose, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 16:45-17:05 **5 minute speed talks**
Dr Tanweer Goolam Mahomed: Genetic influences on the *Eucalyptus* microbiome
Dr WenWen Li: Comparative genomics of *Ceratocystis* species uncovering factors influencing host specificity and pathogenicity
Ms Rosa Knoppersen: The potential of using insect gut microbiomes for sustainable pest management
Ms Luki-Mari Scheepers: Unravelling the secrets of Wattle Bagworm communication
- 17:05-17:25 **Panel discussion**: The importance of partnerships to advance forest resilience
Prof. Dave Drew: Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Prof. JJ Acosta: NCSU, Camcore, USA
Dr Jaco-Pierre van der Merwe, York Timbers
Prof. Romina Gazis, University of Florida, South Africa
Prof. Irene Barnes, FABI, University of Pretoria
- 17:25-17:35 Closing of the day
- 17:30-18:00 **Cocktails** (Future Africa gardens)
- 18:00-late **Quiz and Dinner** (Future Africa Hub)

WEDNESDAY 14 MAY 2025

07:30-08:15 Registration, coffee and tea

Session 6: Establishing and managing national resources to support sustainable forestry

08:15-08:35 Collaborations for forest health management, with a focus on a national remote sensing inventory
Dr Ilaria Germishuizen, ICFR

08:35-08:55 The importance of culture collections for diagnostics and a review of current developments in the FABI culture collection.

Prof. Cobus Visagie

08:55-09:10 Climate change resources for South African forestry

Dr Yolandi Ernst: University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

09:10-09:25 The Information Hub for biosecurity and open air labs

Prof. Martin Coetzee, FABI, University of Pretoria

09:25-09:35 **Ms Aviwe Simandla:** Using trade to identify the most likely future introductions of pine and eucalypt insect pests

09:35-09:45 TPCP extension services and its connection to national surveillance

Ms Sandisiwe Jali

09:45-10:10 **Panel discussion:** The complexity of establishing sustainable and effective government-industry-university partnerships for forest health

Dr Ronald Heath: Forestry South Africa, South Africa

Prof Brett Hurley, FABI, University of Pretoria

Dr Yolandi Ernst: University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Dr Ilaria Germishuizen, ICFR

Ms Aviwe Simandla, DALRDD

10:10-10:30 Final discussion and closing of the meeting

10:30-11:00 **TEA**

10:30-14:30 **TPCP Board meeting** (Future Africa Conference Room 2)

10:30-13:00 **FABI facilities tours**