

IAIASa
International Association
for Impact Assessment
South Africa



**CONFERENCE THEME
& CALL FOR
ABSTRACTS**

**INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT IN THE EVER-CHANGING
SUSTAINABILITY SPHERE
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
19 to 22 August 2025 - Drakensberg
Alpine Heath Resort**



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Introduction

The IAIA Sa National Conference attracts up to 350 attendees every year and serves as the primary networking event for members. The conference has been held annually for the past 30+ years (virtually during the Covid 19 period). IAIA Sa has hosted two international conferences, as well as the International Climate Change Symposium in 2022 in Cape Town. Click [here](#) to read about previous IAIA Sa conferences.

The Annual IAIA Sa National Conference is highly anticipated by sustainability professionals, environmental practitioners, scientists, health and social impact assessors, developers, government officials, policy makers, and many more.

1000+
Members

300+
Conference Attendees

031
Successful Conferences



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Conference Theme

Integrated Environmental Management in the Ever-Changing Sustainability Sphere

The pressing need for sustainable environmental management has never been more urgent. As the world grapples with climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequality, traditional approaches to environmental management are no longer sufficient.

The theme of the IAIAasa 2025 Conference addresses this challenge, emphasizing the need for adaptive and holistic strategies that integrate environmental, social, and governance criteria with cutting-edge sustainability practices and technologies.

The conference aims to promote interdisciplinary solutions, break down silos, and foster collaboration to address complex environmental challenges. While Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has proven effective, it is time to develop and expand additional Integrated Environmental Management (IEM) tools to bridge gaps and prepare the next generation of environmental stewards.

In a rapidly changing world driven by data and technology, the conference will explore innovations transforming the IEM field. These advancements are crucial for keeping environmental management relevant, resilient, and adaptable to current and future challenges.

Conference Subthemes

- Integrated Environmental Management, sustainability, AI, climate change, and adaptation in the 5th revolution
- Empowering communities for a sustainable future
- Biodiversity in a changing world
- Carbon and renewable energy transitions
- Sustainable urban development
- Agriculture, air quality and mining, meeting the needs of diverse environmental challenges
- Redefining waste management in a waste and climate crisis
- Adaptation of Environmental Impact Assessment for current and future needs
- Green finance and investment

By promoting a solution-focused mindset, we can drive positive change and ensure a more sustainable future.



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Subthemes Explored

We invite you to submit abstracts that address the challenges and opportunities within the subthemes outlined on the previous page. To guide your submissions, we have identified the following key areas that may be of interest:

Sustainability in the 5th Revolution

- ESG principles and Integrated Environmental Management practices.
- Nature-based solutions for no net loss and net positive impacts: Applying the mitigation hierarchy through the GBF lens.
- Financial strategies for a green economy, including green bonds and sustainable investments.
- Legal and regulatory frameworks for sustainable environmental management: Waste initiatives, water management, agriculture, oceans, air quality, and mining.
- Adaptive legal frameworks for emerging environmental risks.
- Circular economy approaches: From waste to energy - innovations for adapting to change in a climate crisis.
- Green finance: Investment opportunities and challenges in financing sustainable projects.
- Sustainable Urban Development: Designing and building sustainable cities for the future.

Empowering Communities for a Sustainable Future

- Youth and women as leaders in sustainability: Improving social equity and inclusivity in environmental decision-making.
- Empowering Participation: Enhancing meaningful public participation and community engagement through accessibility and inclusivity.
- Integrating indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage in IEM: The critical role of indigenous communities and socio-ecological approaches in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem health.
- Preparing and empowering a new generation of environmental stewards for a changing world.

Biodiversity in a Changing World

- Climate-resilient conservation: Strategies for achieving 30x30 Targets and climate-resilient conservation management.
- Integrating AI and IOT to monitor and protect biodiversity.
- A delicate balancing act: Finding harmony between development, conservation, and rehabilitation.

Carbon and Renewable Energy Transitions

- Transforming business for a low-Carbon future: SBTi-aligned carbon neutrality and net-zero strategies for effective climate action
- Renewable energy innovations for a sustainable future: Management of impacts from cradle to grave.
- Thinking out of the box: Managing cumulative impacts in energy projects.

Adaptation of Environmental Impact Assessment

- EIAs, EMIs, and Environmental Auditing: Coping with adaptation in a dynamic environment.
- Innovative climate solutions: Exploring cutting edge technologies and strategies to mitigate climate change.
- Digital Transformation in ESIA's: Harnessing AI, Big Data, and Large Language Models (LLMs) to advance Environmental and Social Impact Assessments
- Evolving practices to integrate cumulative impact assessments.
- Performance-orientated versus compliance-based environmental systems.
- Integrating EIA insights into ESG reporting frameworks to optimise synergies, enhance transparency, and provide actionable value for stakeholders.



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Panel Discussions Topics

- Breaking down silos: Interdisciplinary approaches to IEM - Integrating, legal, financial, and technical perspectives.
- Empowering tomorrow's leaders: Building capacity among youth and women for impactful environmental advocacy.
- Leading Environmental Impact Assessment into the future: Moving from conventional assessment to meet new world needs and challenges.
- Nature-based solutions for climate resilience: Case studies from successful implementations.
- The Howling winds of change: Wind energy development within the Mpumalanga Province - Counting the cost to biodiversity and the environment
- The Carbon Roadmap: Insights on managing Scope 3 emissions and achieving neutrality



Please refer to Page 8 for additional information on the purpose, format, and criteria of the Panel Discussions.



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Presentation Formats

The 2025 IAIAasa Conference offers a variety of involvement options to cater to different presentation styles and preferences. Whether you are a researcher, practitioner, or student, there is an involvement option to suit your needs and contribute to the rich and diverse conversations at the conference. Presenters should carefully review the guidelines for each presentation format in preparation for the 2025 IAIAasa Conference.

Presentation Format	Allotted Schedule Time
Oral Presentation	20 mins, 5 mins for questions (25 minutes in total)
Lightning Talk	10 mins, 5 mins for questions (15 minutes in total)
Panel / Workshop / Debate	90 minutes
Posters	Posters and photographs will be set up for the duration of the conference, however presenters must be present at their posters or photographs for an hour during the Meet and Greet Cocktail Evening.
Photography Exhibition	
Sponsorship Exhibition	Available and manned throughout the conference to allow conference attendees at all times to engage with exhibition and ask questions
Bonfire Chit-Chat	Relaxed discussion on environmental topics in an informal setting.



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Oral Presentation

1

Purpose

Oral Presentations focus on innovative or new applications or processes.

2

Format

- The presenter must deliver a PowerPoint oral presentation no longer than 20 minutes.
- Depending on the volume of abstracts submitted and potential overlap in topics, it may be necessary to direct some submissions to alternative options in the conference programme such as a Lightning Talk or Poster.

3

Criteria

- An abstract of 300 words must be submitted via the conference portal.
- Innovative or new concepts, applications or processes.
- Clear and distinct advancement of theory and practice.
- Oral Presentation must align with the conference theme and sub-themes.





Photo: Zesipho Makhosayafana

Lightning Talks

1

Purpose

Lightning Talks articulate a topic in a quick, clear, and insightful manner. This allows for presentation on an interesting project.

2

Format

The presenter must deliver a key message in no more than six PowerPoint slides.

3

Criteria

- An abstract of 300 words must be submitted via the conference portal.
- Lightning Talk must align with the conference theme and sub-themes.
- Knowledge or expertise in the field or topic of discussion is required.



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Panel Discussions

1

Purpose

Panel Discussions involve a maximum of five panelists on a panel with active audience interaction. It is a public exchange of ideas, giving experts and audience members the chance to discuss a particular topic.

2

Format

- Learning through Questions and Answers.
- Presentations can be used if deemed necessary.

3

Criteria

- The panel chair must submit an abstract of 300 words (based on one of the topics below) via the conference portal.
- Panel chair is an excellent facilitator.
- Panelists are experts in the topic field and there is a balance in perspectives.
- Connect subject matter experts with audience.

4

Topics

- Breaking down silos: Interdisciplinary approaches to IEM - Integrating, legal, financial, and technical perspectives.
- Empowering tomorrow's leaders: Building capacity among youth and women for impactful environmental advocacy.
- Leading Environmental Impact Assessment into the future: Moving from conventional assessment to meet new world needs and challenges.
- Nature-based solutions for climate resilience: Case studies from successful implementations.
- The Howling winds of change: Wind energy development within the Mpumalanga Province - Counting the cost to biodiversity and the environment
- The Carbon Roadmap: Insights on managing Scope 3 emissions and achieving neutrality

Please note that all panelists must agree to register, pay, and attend the conference.



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Poster Presentation

1

Purpose

Presenters are invited to set up their posters during the Meet and Greet Cocktail Evening, where they will be displayed for delegates to view and discuss. Presenters should accompany their posters for at least an hour and should be able to talk freely on their topic and answer questions from viewers. Ideal for student projects (Masters/ PhD) and more creative projects. The conference organising committee will provide mounting boards; however, researchers will be responsible for any additional material or visual aids necessary for their presentation.

2

Format

Physical poster (other props and visual aids as necessary). An electronic copy of the poster must be submitted prior to the conference.

3

Criteria

- The poster dimensions should be A0 - A1.
- Posters must be logical, clear, and legible.
- Illustrations (if pertinent) should be clear and visible.
- Posters must align with the conference theme and sub-themes.
- An abstract of 300 words must be submitted via the conference portal.



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Photography Exhibition

1

Purpose

Photography creates an opportunity for visual story telling, raising awareness, and showcasing diverse perspectives. The exhibition will contribute to a more immersive and engaging conference experience by encouraging attendees to explore, discuss, and share their thoughts on the displayed works. Photographs will be exhibited during the Meet and Greet Cocktail Evening and photographers are required to accompany their photo for at least an hour. The conference organising committee will provide mounting boards. Kindly note that presenter rates do not apply to this presentation format.

2

Format

Physical photographs and supporting material, such as a brief description of the photo. An electronic copy of the photograph and brief description must be submitted prior to the conference.

3

Criteria

- Images must align with the conference theme and subthemes and should convey a message, raise awareness, or inspire action related to environmental issues.
- Dimensions of the photos must be 25 x 20 cm to 40 x 30 cm.
- Include title, photographer's name, and a brief description (max. 50-100 words).
- Open to professionals, amateurs, and students.
- Ensure necessary model releases for images featuring people.



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Bonfire Chit-Chat

Speaker invitation only

1

Purpose

An opportunity for delegates to meet in a relaxed setting (e.g., around a fire at the conference venue) and to chat about interesting topics or projects.

2

Format

- The facilitator could show a video, slides or tell a story to prompt the discussion.
- The facilitator initiates and guides a chat amongst a small group.

3

Criteria

- Abstract or outline of 250 words from the facilitator.
- Topics must be creative, interesting and lead to interactive discussions and sharing of stories amongst the participants.



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Sponsorship Exhibition

1

Purpose

Specialist scientists or organisations interested in demonstrating or exhibiting the following:

- Professional bodies
- Projects
- Specialist technical expertise
- Products (e.g., book launch or book catalogues)
- Services (e.g., consulting, spatial analyses etc.)
- Software (e.g., modelling)

2

Format

All visual materials as needed by exhibitor i.e., televisions, computers, laptops, banners, posters, pamphlets etc.

3

Criteria

- Submission of request to exhibition outlining a description of what will be on display must be submitted to the conference organisers.
- There is a cost involved in exhibiting at the conference.
- For additional information, kindly review the **Sponsorship Prospectus.**



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Key Dates

Action	Deadline
Abstract submission via portal <i>Oral Presentations, Lightning Talks, Panel Discussions, Posters, and Photographs</i>	31 March 2025
Feedback to all presenters / photographers	31 May 2025
Presentation submission <i>Oral Presentations, Lightning Talks, and Panel Discussions</i>	04 August 2025
Electronic poster and photograph submission	11 August 2025

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to submit your abstract.

Please take note of the following:

- All submissions must be uploaded to the IAIAasa 2025 abstract portal by 31 March 2025 - no exceptions.
- If accepted, presenters will receive an allocated slot on the programme.
- Depending on the volume of abstracts submitted and potential overlap in topics, it may be necessary to direct some submissions to alternative options in the conference programme.
- All PowerPoint presentations must be uploaded to the abstract portal by 04 August 2025 - no exceptions.
- Electronic versions of posters and photographs must be uploaded to the abstract portal by 11 August 2025 - no exceptions.
- Abstracts of the draft oral, lightning talk, and poster presentations will be included in the conference programme booklet.



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Preliminary Programme

Tuesday 19 August 2025

14h00 - 17h30	Registration
18h00 - late	Meet and Greet Cocktail Evening: Poster presentations, photography exhibitions, and networking

Wednesday 20 August 2025

06h00 - 07h00	Morning Activities
08h00 - 17h00	Plenary Session, Breakaway Sessions, Tea Breaks, Lunch, Panel Discussions, Stewardship Initiative
17h00 - 18h00	Free Time and Bonfire Chit-Chats
18h00 - late	Shebeen Braai
08h00 - 17h00	Exhibitions

Thursday 21 August 2025

06h00 - 07h00	Morning Activities
08h00 - 17h00	Plenary Session, Breakaway Sessions, Tea Breaks, Lunch, Panel Discussions, Stewardship Initiative
17h00 - 18h00	Free Time and Bonfire Chit-Chats
18h00 - late	Gala Dinner
08h00 - 17h00	Exhibitions

Friday 22 August 2025

08h00 - 14h00	Exhibitions, Plenary Session, Tea Break, Panel Discussion, Prize Giving, Lunch
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Kindly note that the Preliminary Conference Programme is subject to change.



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Venue and Accommodation

The 2025 IAIAasa Conference will be held at the picturesque Alpine Heath Resort, nestled in the heart of the Drakensberg Mountains. This stunning venue offers breathtaking views, state-of-the-art conference facilities, and ample accommodation. With 100 units, each of the 6-sleeper chalets offers private braai facilities, a comfortable lounge, kitchen and dining area. Your chalet also includes a fireplace and patio, plus the convenience of satellite TV and good cellular reception.

Please book your accommodation with Lihle Biyela using Reference No. # 18287:

 +27 (0)36 438 8500

 reservationsalpineheath@ahalodges.co.za


 <https://www.aha.co.za/alpine-heath-resort>




Photo: Alpine Heath Resort and Conference Centre

Note that accommodation bookings must be confirmed and paid in full by 1 July 2025, after which unsecured block bookings will be released.

Contact Information

For preliminary conference programme queries, please contact:

 Operations Manager

 +27 (0)82 961 5750

 operations@iaiasa.co.za

 <https://iaiasa.co.za/contact/>



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THANK YOU

**We look forward to your
engagement and seeing you in the**

Drakensberg

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Alpine Heath Resort

