

PRESS RELEASE:

People power: South Africans can help mitigate a water crisis

- This edition of IFAT Africa will bring together the best ideas, experts and technologies for water, sewage, refuse and recycling.
- This Africa edition is part of the IFAT worldwide network of environment trade shows in Germany, China, India, Turkey.
- IFAT Africa 2023 will be co-located with analytica Lab Africa on 5-7 July 2023 at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Johannesburg.

Bringing together government, academia, scientists, business, and citizen activists to collaborate on solutions could go a long way towards alleviating a water and wastewater crisis in South Africa.

This is according to water and wastewater treatment experts on the Advisory Board of the upcoming IFAT Africa trade fair and conference for water, sewage, refuse and recycling in South Africa.

Benoît Le Roy, Environmental, Technology & Project Alchemist, says, "What we see is a disconnect between national and local government, leading to a systemic collapse of our water security. Active citizenry has become more important in pushing for solutions. Citizens can help drive the pace of change, and we do see the emergence of well-funded NGOs with expert resources who can contribute a great deal to the water dialogue."

For example, he highlights [WaterCAN](#), an OUTA initiative, which is a growing network of citizen science activists advocating for clean, safe, and sustainable water.

Hennie Pretorius, Industry Manager Water and Wastewater at Endress+Hauser South Africa, says private sector stakeholders such as manufacturers, mines and food and beverage companies are making a difference by turning to decentralised water treatment. "Even the smaller companies can make a difference by using decentralised water treatment for grey water – there are quite a few products on the market allowing them to reduce their water consumption and pollution. We're even seeing domestic water reuse becoming more important now – people are installing rainwater tanks at homes, and capturing and treating grey water for irrigation and flushing of toilets," he says.

Pretorius notes that upskilling people working in the sector will go a long way towards addressing problems in water and wastewater management. "There are significant skills shortages in wastewater treatment facilities, which is contributing to the critical state many of them are in," he says.

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The Green Drop report found a 61% shortfall in qualified technical staff and a 41% shortfall in scientific staff, with bigger shortfalls – particularly among superintendents and process controllers – corresponding with poorer performance. However, most operational staff have not undergone training in the past two years.

Pretorius says "Fortunately, there is a drive from the Water Institute of Southern Africa (WISA) towards deliver training and CPD upskilling for process controllers. Endress+Hauser also has a very good, accredited training facility offering water and wastewater training."

IFAT Africa 2023 will be co-located with analytica Lab Africa, bringing together stakeholders across the overlapping fields of water, waste, recycling and refuse, and analytics and laboratory technology. The event's supporting programme includes panel discussions, dialogue and debate on trends and topical issues. The co-located events bring together over 6,000 visitors to network and discuss solutions.

Bhupinder Singh, CEO, Messe Muenchen India, organiser of IFAT Africa 2023, says "IFAT Africa is a unique platform and an opportunity for public and private sector stakeholders, industry and academia to engage and seek solutions. In addition to wide range of technologies on display, our supporting programmes will focus on topical issues such as climate financing, integration at local and national level, EPR, circular economy, and many others. We look forward to dynamic participation from the African and international community at this exciting platform."

Mpendulo Ginindza, President of the Institute of Water Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) and member of the IFAT Africa Advisory Board, notes: "The waste and resource management sector is a material provider for the circular economy, which offers opportunities for new businesses and improved environmental protection. However, realising these opportunities and making a change requires the sector to embrace circular economy principles and collaborate with other actors along the value chain to promote waste prevention, reduction, and reuse."

With the Circular Economy a particular focus of the conference agenda, speakers will tackle issues such as opportunities in the Circular Economy Sector in South Africa, Extended Producer Responsibilities, Circular Financing and Green Investment, and Reimagining the Production, Consumption and Disposal of Plastics. Water and wastewater treatment sessions will address areas such as Innovative Practices and New Technologies for Managing Urban Wastewater, and Women in the Water Sector. Speakers will also focus on burning issues in

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talks such as Water as a Tool to Alleviate Poverty, Resource Efficiency in Industry, and developments in Waste to Energy.

IFAT Africa 2023 will present the programme in collaboration with leading industry associations including SABIA (Southern Africa Biogas Association), SACCEEC (The Southern Africa Capital Equipment Export Council) and IWMSA (The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa).

IFAT Africa and analytica Lab Africa 2023 will be held from 5-7 July 2023 at the Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Visit <https://ifat-africa.com> for further information.

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