

# EAPASA NEWSLETTER

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## 2026 EAPASA Newsletter

NEWS UPDATE

### ***BREAKING!***

The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in South Africa, Mr. Willie Aucamp appoints EAPASA until an Environmental Council is established. Read more <https://eapasa.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/EAPASA-Extension-2026.pdf>

### **Inside this issue :**

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### ***Editorial Message***

EAPASA remains committed to strengthening professional practice, upholding ethical standards, and supporting the continued development of environmental assessment practitioners in South Africa. This edition highlights key initiatives, capacity-building activities, and upcoming engagements aimed at advancing the quality and credibility of our profession.

We thank our members and stakeholders for their ongoing support and encourage continued participation as we work together to build a skilled, ethical, and resilient environmental assessment community.



# WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2026

## Registration, CPD, Mentorship & Malpractice workshops

Registration workshops are designed to help environmental practitioners understand and navigate the EAPASA registration process through explaining how to make use of the online registration system, dealing with the core competencies, guiding participants on compiling and presenting a strong Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) for registration, and responding to queries from applicants.



**CPD Workshops** assist EAPs to have a better understanding of fulfilling the EAPASA CPD requirements. EAPs are guided on how to upload their CPD activities via the online CPD system, how to prepare and submit the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). EAPASA is already embarking on a mission to educate EAPs on the usage of the new CPD online system which allows users to record, manage, and save CPD submissions.



**The Mentorship Workshop** provides attendees with a clear understanding of the EAPASA Mentorship Programme. It also facilitates knowledge sharing on mentorship requirements within the environmental assessment sector, as well as the Mentorship Programme's reporting tools.



**Malpractice / Misconduct Workshops** assist in outlining the professional code of conduct that all EAPs must uphold. Clarity is provided on the Malpractice Policy and what constitutes unprofessional or unethical behaviour. Attendees also learn how complaints or alleged breaches are handled, including professional conduct hearings and possible sanctions.



### **EAPASA General Meeting**

The Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) convenes its General Meeting (GM) in accordance with its Constitution to reflect on organisational performance, ensure accountability, and guide the strategic direction of the Association.



### **5<sup>th</sup> EAPASA SADC Regional Conference**

EAPASA annually hosts a Regional Conference to address region-specific environmental challenges, regulatory updates, and professional practice issues. This year, the conference is set to take place from 21 – 23 October 2026 in Eastern Cape, South Africa. More details on the conference will be shared as time progresses.

# The Role of EAPs in Society



## Guardians of Environmental Integrity

Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAPs) are responsible for conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). Before a bridge, mine, shopping mall, or other major development is built, an EAP evaluates how the project will affect the environment and surrounding communities.

- **Identifying Risks:** EAPs identify potential hazards such as chemical runoff, habitat destruction, or groundwater contamination before they occur.
- **Maintaining Neutrality:** Although appointed and paid by developers, EAPs are bound by a professional code of conduct and Section (12) of the NEMA EIA Regulations that requires objectivity and independence. They provide unbiased, evidence-based information to the Competent Authorities to support informed decision-making.

## Social Justice Advocate

Environmental issues are not only about ecosystems, they are also about people. EAPs facilitate inclusive Public Participation Processes to ensure fair representation by communities where the projects are being developed.

- **Giving a Voice:** EAPs ensure that all stakeholders, particularly vulnerable and affected communities, have an opportunity to participate in decisions that may impact their health, livelihoods, and environment.
- **Conflict Resolution:** EAPs often mediate between concerned residents and profit-driven developers, helping to find balanced, practical solutions.

## **Designer of Mitigation Strategies**

When a project is necessary but may have environmental impacts, EAPs develop practical solutions to reduce environmental impacts.

- The Mitigation Hierarchy - EAPs apply a structured approach, avoid impacts, minimize them, restore affected areas, or offset residual damage.
- Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr) - EAPs prepare detailed management plans that guide construction teams on controlling dust, conserving water, protecting biodiversity, and managing waste.

## **Advisor to Policymakers**

Competent Authorities rely on the technical expertise of EAPs to make informed, lawful, and sustainable decisions. EAPs ensure that development aligns with national legislation and international frameworks, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## **The Legal Compliance Architect**

Environmental legislation is intricate and multi-layered. EAPs interpret regulatory requirements and ensure that all necessary permits ranging from water use to waste management are obtained. Their work helps ensure that projects are legally compliant and “future-proof.”

## **Environmental Compliance Monitoring and Auditing Specialist**

During construction, EAPs may serve as Environmental Control Officers (ECOs), conducting site inspections to ensure compliance with environmental authorisations and management plans.

## **Site Rehabilitation Planner**

When projects conclude such as the closure of a mine, EAPs develop rehabilitation and closure plans aimed at restoring land as close as possible to its original or agreed post-closure condition.

## **Resource Efficiency Specialist**

EAPs promote the efficient use of natural resources by identifying opportunities to reduce raw material consumption, minimise waste, and support the transition toward a circular economy.

## **Heritage and Cultural Conservator**

Environmental assessments often include heritage and archaeological investigations. EAPs ensure that development does not destroy culturally or historically significant sites, preserving community identity and heritage.

## **Educator and Trainer**

EAPs train construction workers, contractors, and managers on environmentally responsible practices, fostering a culture of environmental awareness and compliance.

## **Human Ecology Analyst**

Beyond flora and fauna, EAPs assess social and economic impacts, including demographic shifts, housing pressures, and strain on schools and healthcare services.

## **Water Security Manager**

EAPs evaluate water demand and availability, ensuring that developments do not compromise aquifers, rivers, or downstream users such as farmers and local residents.

## **Disaster Resilience Planner**

They assess whether developments are located in high-risk areas such as floodplains or landslide zones and recommend design adaptations to improve resilience against natural disasters.

## **Green Building Advisor**

EAPs may lead or support applications for international sustainability certifications such as LEED or BREEAM, demonstrating compliance with global environmental performance standards.



# IMPORTANCE OF MENTORSHIP IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR



In the environmental sector, mentorship serves as a vital bridge between academic theory and the complex realities of field-based decision-making. While a formal qualification provides the scientific foundation, the environmental landscape is governed by intricate legal frameworks such as National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) and various Specific Environmental Management Acts that require careful interpretation and practical insight. A mentor offers essential guidance in navigating these grey areas, helping junior practitioners apply structured regulations to dynamic, real-world ecosystems. This transfer of institutional knowledge ensures that the high standards expected by regulatory authorities are upheld and that critical expertise is not lost as senior professionals retire.

Beyond technical knowledge, mentorship is the primary vehicle for instilling professional ethics and the principle of independence that lies at the heart of the EAPASA Code of Conduct. Environmental Assessment Practitioners frequently operate at the intersection of competing interests, balancing developers' economic objectives with biodiversity protection and the rights of affected communities. In this context, a mentor serves as a moral compass, demonstrating how to maintain objectivity, transparency, and professional integrity under pressure. Through observation and guidance, mentees learn the art of clear communication and the delicate management of public participation processes, which are often emotionally charged and legally sensitive.

Mentorship also deepens understanding of the multidisciplinary nature of environmental practice. No single practitioner can be an expert in every field. From hydrology and botany to heritage and socio-economic impact assessment. A mentor introduces the mentee to the collaborative culture of the sector, teaching them how to critically review specialist reports and integrate diverse scientific inputs into a coherent and defensible Environmental Impact Report. This relationship cultivates a strong professional identity and sense of belonging, ensuring that the next generation of practitioners is not only technically competent but also committed to the sustainable stewardship of South Africa's natural resources.

Furthermore, mentorship plays a fundamental role in developing site-specific diagnostic skills that cannot be fully acquired in a classroom. Environmental practice relies heavily on the ability to “read” a landscape. Under the guidance of an experienced mentor, a mentee learns to identify subtle ecological indicators such as pioneer species, soil variations, or hydrological cues that may signal the presence of a hidden wetland. This hands-on learning sharpens a practitioner’s ability to identify potential environmental risks before they escalate into project failures. It also builds the confidence required to defend findings during site inspections and audits, ensuring that professional recommendations are grounded in both scientific rigour and practical experience.

In addition to technical growth, mentorship is essential for navigating the administrative and procedural complexities of South Africa’s environmental governance framework. Securing Environmental Authorisation demands meticulous attention to statutory timeframes, public notification requirements, and departmental protocols that may vary across provinces. A mentor provides practical insight into these processes, sharing both formal procedures and the unwritten principles of effective engagement with government officials and state departments. This guidance ensures that a practitioner’s work is not only scientifically robust but also procedurally sound safeguarding the credibility of EAPASA and strengthening the integrity of the broader environmental regulatory system. EAPASA mentoring streams largely fall under two categories:

- Goal-orientated mentoring
- General mentoring.



# Recent Participation in Key Engagements



## Meetings Africa 2026

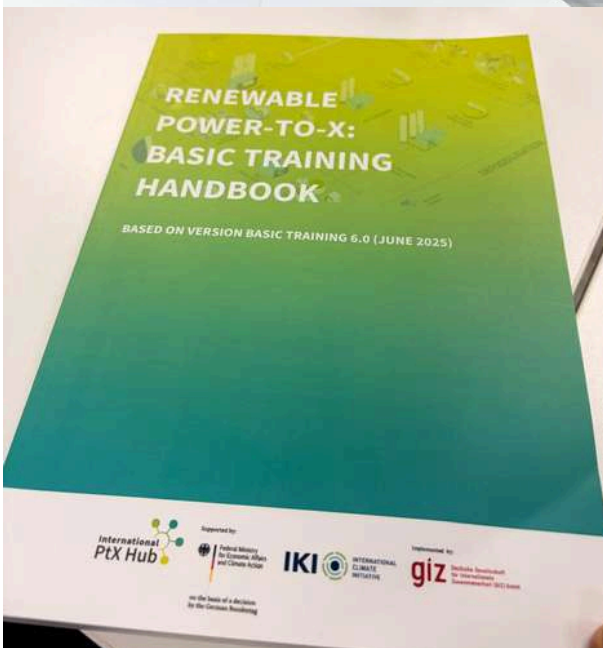
EAPASA CEO/Registrar, Dr Patrick Sithole, and Registration Manager, Ms Hlengiwe Modiba, are attending Meetings Africa 2026, hosted by South African Tourism at the Sandton Convention Centre. The event is taking place from 23–25 February 2026.

Meetings Africa provides an immersive environment that is conducive to networking with buyers and industry colleagues from around the world. EAPASA will showcase its services to delegates in attendance, alongside more than 300 exhibitors from over 20 African countries.

## Background on GIZ Green Hydrogen PtX Training: 23 - 25 February 2026



EAPASA is attending the Green Hydrogen and Power-to-X Training taking place at the CSIR campus, Pretoria. Green hydrogen is a clean fuel produced using renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power. Instead of burning coal or gas, renewable electricity is used to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, resulting in a low-carbon energy source. Countries such as South Africa are investing in green hydrogen to stimulate job creation, strengthen energy security, and support the transition away from coal-based power.



### Purpose of the Training:

Training and skills development are essential to enable a just energy transition. By equipping workers and communities with the knowledge and capabilities required for emerging clean-energy industries, the transition can protect existing jobs, create new economic opportunities, reduce poverty risks, and enhance global competitiveness. Decarbonisation is critical for the planet, and preparing people for this shift helps ensure that the move from coal to clean energy is fair, sustainable, and inclusive rather than disruptive.

# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) REMINDER



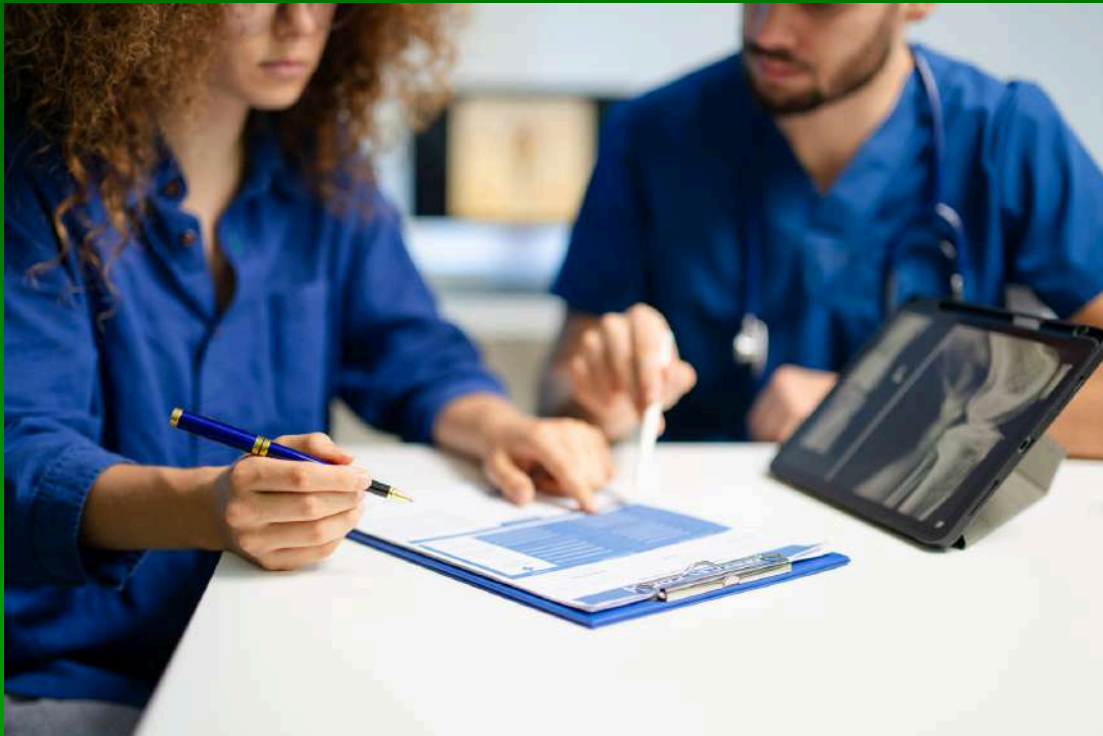
All EAPs are required to submit their CPD applications with complete supporting documentation and sufficient evidence.

Please take note of the CPD submission timelines. The new submission deadline is **27 March 2026**.

To submit online, visit the EAPASA website, click on the green "REGISTER" tab, log in to your profile, select CPD, and complete your submission. Alternatively, you may use the link provided in the caption.

Important: EAPs who are behind on their CPD submissions are strongly encouraged to catch up. It remains the responsibility of each practitioner to ensure that a minimum of 25 CPD credits is obtained within the 5-year cycle.

# EAPASA REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN



- All EAPs are required to submit complete finalised projects.
- When responding to core competency questions, Registered EAPs should avert from responding in a theoretical point of view and the response should be practical work.
- Only Final Basic Assessment Reports and Final Environmental Impact Assessment Reports are accepted. No other reports are permitted. Environmental Audit Reports, WULAs, and Specialist Reports do not qualify
- Under core competency questions EAPs are required to reference their own work and not work of others.
- Registration portal - <https://registration.eapasa.org/>

# FINANCE DESK



Registered EAPs and Candidate EAPs are reminded to settle their outstanding annual fees. Please note that no valid EAPASA membership certificate will be issued to members who are not in good standing.

Payments:

- When making payments, please use your registration number as a reference e.g., 2021/001
- Kindly email the proof of payment to [finance1@eapasa.org](mailto:finance1@eapasa.org)

For all financial-related enquiries, please send an email to [finance1@eapasa.org](mailto:finance1@eapasa.org)



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