

TO MARK THIS YEAR'S WORLD CITIES DAY,  
YOUNG SCHOLARS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PRESENT THEIR RESEARCH AND PROJECTS AS  
IT RELATES TO CLIMATE CHANGE.



# WORLD CITIES DAY 2024

## CLIMATE ACTION AND ACTIVISM: YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

The urgency of addressing climate change and disaster risks in our cities cannot be overstated, particularly considering that nearly 84% of the fastest-growing cities are facing extreme climate and disaster risks, predominantly in Asia and Africa. The impact of climate change anomalies is becoming increasingly apparent, and it is crucial that we empower the younger generation to take proactive steps towards building climate-resilient cities for the future.

The United Nations has emphasized the importance of engaging young people in scientific and sociological approaches to tackle the climate crisis at the local level. As part of our commitment to this cause, the SARChI Chair for Inclusive Cities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is actively driving discussions on climate change by highlighting research efforts and projects that embody innovative ideas and ambitious goals for creating sustainable urban environments.



THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2024



10H00 (SAST)



PLATFORM  
ZOOM

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**Professor Hangwelani Hope Magidimisha-Chipungu** holds the distinction of being the first black South African woman to achieve the prestigious rank of full professor in Town and Regional Planning. Her expertise in the intersection of climate change and the built environment is truly remarkable, making her a leading figure in this critical area of study. Among her many accomplishments, Professor Magidimisha-Chipungu's research excellence is exemplified by her significant achievements, such as being recognised as the youngest South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chair for Inclusive Cities at UKZN. Additionally, she has served as a National Planning Commissioner, is a member of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) Scientific Committee, Alternate Chair for the South African Council for Planners, and is a member of the KZN Planning Tribunal, among other notable roles. Professor Magidimisha-Chipungu's dedication to advancing knowledge in her field is evidenced by her position as a senior editor for the prestigious journal on Climate Interaction, published by Tylor and Francis.



**Dr Ayobami Popoola** is a trained planner with an interest in how planning shape human wellbeing, and livelihood. He is fascinated by the social aspect of planning and its associated outcomes for communities and resident. Dr Popoola led the VREF funded project on "A Comparative Analysis of Police harassment and informal transport operators in Two African Cities (Durban and Ibadan)". Dr Popoola has over a decade teaching, community engagement, and corporate supports experience. These, experiences thus supports my inter-disciplinary teaching and research experience in business, management, and geo-spatial modules across various tertiary institutions where he applies real life case studies and scenarios in providing teaching. Many of his publications are focused on inclusivity, rural, city, land-use planning, human livelihood, and wellbeing.



**Mr Ockert Pretorius** is a lecturer in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Johannesburg, a registered professional planner with SACPLAN, and a member of ISOCARP. He is currently pursuing a PhD at North-West University. Ockert has taught various courses on human settlements, urban renewal, and regional planning, while supervising numerous Honours and Masters students. His research interests include transit-oriented development, regional economic resilience, and land use management. He has actively engaged in academic programme development, including SACPLAN accreditation exercises and curriculum alignment and renewal. Ockert also participates in community and industry initiatives and fosters collaborations through coordinating Memoranda of Understanding with various local and international institutions.



**Dr Prince Dacosta Aboagye** is a Postdoc Research Fellow at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Nagoya University, Japan. He is currently working on the social implications of urban flood early warning systems (FEWS) towards designing human-centered flood management approaches. He has his PhD at Hiroshima University with a focus on urban environmental science. Prince's research interests relate to cities and climate change, climate and environmental governance, climate adaptation and mitigation policy and planning, impact evaluation of adaptation and mitigation plans, slum upgrading, and sustainable urban futures. Prince is a Japanese Government MEXT scholar, a Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Fellow, and a member of the International Platform on Adaptation Metrics (IPAM).



**Dr Betty Adegebo** is a climate scientist who graduated from the Department of Geography, University of Ibadan, Nigeria with a doctorate degree. Her research interest is rooted in the context of climate dynamics and urban health, climate change vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation. Betty was a visiting graduate scholar at the University of Western Ontario, Canada as an award recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship and an active member of the Student and New Professionals group of the International Society of Biometeorology. She is also affiliated with the Climate System Analysis Group in the University of Cape Town, South Africa and a Fellow of 2013 MyCOE/SERVIR West-African Program. As a young scholar, Betty draws climate-related knowledge from a network of advanced scholars and mentors from different disciplines and from both the global north and global south. She is actively involved in transforming climate knowledge into action and policy and the Lead environmental educator for Alliance for Positive Environmental Impacts and Reforestation (APEARE) and has a passion for helping vulnerable people.



**Dr Sarah Knight** is a Research Fellow in Greenspace & Health at the University of Salford. She is an interdisciplinary researcher specialising in nature-society relationships and geospatial approaches. She is interested in employing quantitative, qualitative and participatory methods to study GIS, green and blue spaces, health & well-being inequalities & ecology. She is currently working on the EU-funded Horizon 2020 project GreenME - advancing Greencare in Europe: an integrated multi-scalar approach for the expansion of nature-based therapies to improve Mental health Equity.

Prior to joining Salford, she was an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of York, investigating the links between socioeconomic and environmental inequalities and nature connectedness. Through this, she led the ESRC-funded Green & Gender-just Cities project, which worked to build resilience and shape policy on the design and decision-making for healthy, green and just cities. She also worked on a number of other collaborative projects, including a Green Social Prescribing evaluation across West Yorkshire, and the EU-funded Horizon 2020 PERICLES project, managing the online mapping platform to crowd-source coastal and maritime cultural heritage data. She completed an ESRC White Rose funded PhD in 2020 on measuring the relationship between the natural environment and subjective well-being. This involved using regression methods to explore the determinants of human well-being from green/bluespace, air pollution, and biodiversity datasets at small-scale UK geographies. She is also a Data Impact Fellow with the UK Data Service. Prior to her PhD, she worked in the environmental conservation sector for nearly 10 years in organisations such as UNEP-WCMC, FERA and ZSL.