



## ESTUARIES AND THE BLUE ECONOMY

**Tuesday, 21 September 2021 | 14:00:15:30**

Estuaries, in much the same way as wetlands, are highly polluted and threatened, way beyond 65%. These systems are critical to tourism and revenue attraction, fishing communities and business. Globally the coasts and marine environment have been earmarked for massive development, hence the Blue Economy concept (referred to as Operation Phakisa in South Africa). Any unsustainable development will spell the extinction of many fish species that depend on estuaries as habitats for their lifespan. The UN launched the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration on 3 June 2021, calling for all nations of the world to re-think, re-connect and restore degraded landscapes for a greener economic recovery. In May, the WRC and partners led the launch of the SER-Chapter on ecological restoration, again sounding a call for a united African Unity against degradation of the ecosystems upon which the impoverished citizens of the continent depend. Research on estuaries contributes to SDG 14 and Africa Agenda 2063. This session will consider restoration of estuary health and resilience to future climate change impacts, as well as the effects of water quality improvement on estuary health.

Chair: Bonani Madikizela

14:00 - 14:05	Welcome and introduction	Bonani Madikizela
14:05 – 14:30	The state of our treasure: estuarine overview and protections.	Dr Jane Turpie and Ms Gwyn Letley
14:30 – 15:00	<i>The State of South African Estuaries - Key Pressures, Condition and Government responses</i>	Dr Lara van Niekerk, CSIR
15:00 – 15:30	Imperatives of the Blue economy: UN decade of ecosystem restoration: inputs from Swartkops Estuary	Mr Vusumzi Tsipa, Nelson Mandela University
15:30 – 16:00	Climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions from Blue Carbon Ecosystems	Dr Jackie Raw