



First ICCSSA convention held in Milnerton Cape Town, 28 - 30 March 2012

The first ICCSSA conference was held at the Lagoon Beach Hotel in Milnerton, Cape Town from 28 - 30 March 2012. It was attended by 50 delegates from a variety of fields of specialisation.

The opening keynote address was presented by Dr Sven Godorr, Executive director of Sasol Technology. Dr Godorr explained that Sasol has become the research and development leader in South Africa for clean technologies to sustainably convert coal, gas and renewable energy resources into energy and chemical products. Sasol's operations include coal and gas processing, synthetic fuels and chemicals production, refinery technologies, chemical technologies, environmental sciences and engineering and alternative energy. Where some 40 000 measurements of operating processes are generated per minute on the various production lines, statisticians and engineers need thorough and efficient models to correlate causes and effects of the engineering processes appropriately. Experiments must be designed as effectively as possible to maintain good procedures, reduce costing and improve desired output results. To ensure that data yielded meaningful observations, statisticians need clear communication about such processes and the resulting data. Dr Godorr said, "We need to understand each other's worlds".

The programme was divided into 8 specialist sections.

In the **energy session**, the invited speaker Dr Roger Harris, from Sasol, presented on "GTL the Sasol slurry phase distillate way". This was proceeded by five Energy related talks. The **forecasting session** after lunch began with presentations by two invited speakers, namely Dr Senzo Miyeni, from Eskom who spoke on "Forecastability, stability and the cost of forecast error" and visiting economics scholar from the Ukraine to NMMU, Dr Oksana Ryabchenko, who spoke on "Energy derivatives in predicting and managing price risks in the liberalised electricity market of Ukraine". The session was then concluded by three presentations on forecasting. The first day ended with the **medical statistics session**, with two presentations on this topic.

The second day commenced with the **official statistics session**. There were four speakers from Statistics SA in this session. The **research session** was lead by Prof Christien Thiart from UCT, as invited speaker. Prof Thiart presented a jointly authored paper (with Linda Haines and Mzabalazo Ngwenya) on "Kriging variance estimators". This was followed by five presentations in the research session. After lunch there were two sessions on

finance and Statistics and Media. Together, there were seven presentations for these two sessions.

Barry MacColl, General Manager of Research, Training and Development at Eskom, presented the keynote address at the gala dinner. He emphasised that energy needs and potential future energy generation possibilities present a broad and diverse field for research, development and diversification both for Eskom and for all scientists involved in the various processes.

The **Electrical Energy workshop** on the final day of the convention was conducted by Dr Vince Micali from Eskom. Dr Micali demonstrated several statistical models for energy planning at Eskom.

Compliments goes to Dineo Rathagana and Valentina Litvine for organising such an impressive and successful first ICCSSA convention and to the sponsors, namely, the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP), Statistics South Africa, Enerweb, Proofed, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Montsamasia Bosigo Consulting, SAS, Eskom and Sasol.