

## NITheCS panel discussion: The importance and impact of the 'International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development' for South Africa

Monday, 4 July 2022, 16h00 – 17h00 SAST



### BACKGROUND

“Basic sciences are the *sine qua non* for sustainable development.

Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is the ambitious program that the Member States of the United Nations have agreed on to ensure a balanced, sustainable and inclusive development of the planet.

Basic sciences have an important contribution to make to the implementation of this program. They provide the essential means to meet crucial challenges such as universal access to food, energy, health coverage and communication technologies. They enable us to understand the impact of the currently nearly 8 billion people on the planet and to act to limit, and sometimes even to reduce it: depletion of the ozone layer, climate change, depletion of natural resources, extinction of living species.

Applications of technology are easy to recognize. On the other hand, contributions of basic, curiosity-based, sciences are not well appreciated. They are nonetheless at the basis of major technological advances that stimulate innovation, as well as essential for training future professionals and for developing capacity of populations who can take part in decisions that affect their future. UNESCO is well aware of this: its Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers, revised in 2017, recalls the importance of bringing together politicians, scientists, diplomats, international organizations, entrepreneurs and every goodwill person.

The International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, that we organize in 2022, focuses on these links between basic sciences and the Sustainable Development Goals. This is a unique opportunity to convince all stakeholders that through a basic understanding of nature, actions taken will be more effective, for the common good.”

**Michel Spiro, President of IUPAP** (published on <https://www.iybssd2022.org/en/about-us/>)

### PANELLISTS

Our panellists, drawn from the various fields of science represented by NITheCS, are:

- Zurab Janelidze (SU)
- Mark Nasila (FNB)
- Francesco Petruccione (NITheCS)
- Happy Sithole (CHPC)
- Anwar Vahed (NICIS/UWC)

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