

EAPASA, SACNASP sign MoU to promote synergy, cooperation

As statutory professional bodies, recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) and the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) have signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The purpose of the MoU is to ensure synergies as there are areas of overlap between EAPASA and SACNASP. The parties have committed to working together and sharing experiences as well as best practices guided by principles of cooperation and goodwill.



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Their joint statement aims to clarify the areas of work of environmental assessment practitioners (EAPs) and registered scientists through a common understanding of where the boundaries lie in terms of EAPs and registered scientists to ensure there is no uncertainty in the marketplace.

EAPASA is the registration authority for EAPs appointed by the minister of environmental affairs in 2018 in terms of the Section 24H Registration Authority Regulations of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 as amended. SACNASP is established in terms of the Natural Scientific Professions Act 27 of 2003 as amended, which states that a natural scientist, whose field of practice is one of those gazetted by the minister of science and technology, may not practice unless registered with SACNASP.

Numerous specialists

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) processes typically involve numerous specialists, including scientists, economists, engineers, inter alia, who provide reports that are submitted as part of a standard EIA. The specialists submitting these reports need to be registered with their professional councils to do so, if applicable. Registration with EAPASA is not required if a person is only submitting a specialist report. The EAPs who are responsible for compiling the EIA are regulated by EAPASA. Where a professional submits both a specialist scientific report and acts as an EAP for an EIA, then registration with both EAPASA and SACNASP is required if the person is a practicing natural scientist in one of the SACNASP gazetted fields of practice relating to the specialist report prepared.

The parties have agreed to share best practices solely in an advisory capacity. SACNASP has agreed to assist EAPASA on lessons learnt in the following areas:

- Continuing professional development (CPD) implementation and overlap with SACNASP's CPD requirements;
- Professional conduct policy and regulation; and
- Mentorship guidelines and programme roll-out.

The ground rules for implementation of the MOU are established at the level of the EAPASA Board and the SACNASP Council.

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