

2025 Drones, AI and GIS for DRM Conference and Workshop

Programme

Theme: Turning Collective Ambition into Regional Resilience

Day 1 – Monday, November 3, 2025 – Radisson Blu Hotel, Umhlanga

08:30 – 09:00	Arrival, Registration & Badge collection
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome remarks by the Programme Directors: Mr Dechlan Pillay & Ms Michelle Nxumalo
09:15 – 09:30	Opening Remarks by the Host: Ms Queen Ndlovu <i>South Africa Flying Labs (NPO) & QP Drone Tech Pty (Ltd)</i>
09:30 – 09:45	Welcoming of the SADC, Conference Delegates, Partners and Sponsors <i>Mayor of eThekweni Municipality: Cllr Cyril Xaba</i>
09:45 – 10:00	Setting the Conference tone: <i>Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA): Rev Thulasizwe Buthelezi</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Official opening address by the Minister of Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) <i>Hon. Mr Velenkosini Hlabisa</i>
10:30 – 10:45	Linking the G20 Agenda to the DRM targets in the region by the G20 host in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) <i>Dr. Elias Sithole, NDMC Head in South Africa</i>
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee & Tea break
11:00 – 11:20	Keynote address: Why geospatial data matters for DRM in the SADC region <i>SHOC: Esri, Director of Humanitarian Solutions, Mr. Olivier Cottray and Pradeep Mahabeer, Esri South Africa</i>
11:20 – 11:40	Keynote address: Localization: Determining the value of geospatial data in DRM – <i>Sonja Betschart, Co-Founder & Co-Pilot, WeRobotics</i>

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11:40 – 12:00	Sponsor's address : Strengthening SADC Preparedness: Supporting SHOC for Effective Disaster Response <i>ECHO (iMMAP):Mr Bertrand Rukundo</i>
12:00-12:20	<i>The Role of Robotics and 3D data for complex engineering audits and disaster response CEO- Mr Darryl Epstein</i>
12:20 – 12:50	Panel: SADC SHOC The state of preparedness and response for the 2025/2026 season <i>Moderator: Ms Judith Nyamuten (Zimbabwe).</i> <i>Keynote address: Mr Antonio Jose Beleza</i> <i>Panelists:Mr Agnaldo Emmanuel (Mozambique), Mr Daniel Magombo(Malawi),Mr Mayala Bwembya (Zambia),</i>
12:50 – 13:35	Lunch
13:35 – 13:55	Fostering the role of Earth Observation Tools in DRM by South African National Space Agency (SANSA) <i>CEO – Mr Humbulani Mudau</i>
13:55 – 14:15	Sponsor's address: Bridging the Technology gap: geospatial tools and Applications in DRM by Mr Charl Ihlenfeldt : Rectron-DJI
14:15 – 14:45	Panel: Transforming emerging barriers into enablers: sustainable funding and insurance for DRM interventions <i>Moderator: Mr Michael Sudarkasa (UNDRR-Arise)</i> <i>Keynote Address (Sponsor): Mr. Kopano Tholo, ITOO Insurance</i> <i>Panelists: Dr. M Khangale (SANTAM), Wayne Dawson (Standard Bank), Mr. Philo Khosa (Merlin Gold)</i>
14:45 – 15:00	Coffee & Tea Break

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- 15:00 – 15:20 Sponsors' address: Bridging the technology gap
Wingtra
- 15:20 – 15:50 Panel: Public sector interventions for DRM: regional, national, provincial and local governments
- Moderator: Mr Thembinkosi Nxawe (Head of Disaster – Amathole District Municipality – Eastern Cape)*
- Keynote address by the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development: Acting Director General: Mr Clinton Heiman*
- Panelists: Durban Metropolitan Municipality – Mr Vincent Ngubane, Capricorn District Municipality – Ms Lebogang Mosotho, Kwa-Zulu Natal-Provincial Head – Mr Mzwandile Hadebe .*
- 15:50 – 16:10 *Sponsor's Address by Lenovo: Mr Mubeen Suleman*
- Keynote address by SALGA (National Office): Ms Sibusisiwe Goba, Senior Manager Support, Capability Building and Transformation of the Local Government by South African Local Government Association (SALGA)*
- 15:50 – 16:00 Day 1 recap: Tanzania Flying Labs: Mr Leka Tingitana

16:00 **End of Day 1**

Day 2 – Tuesday, November 4, 2025 – Radisson Blu Hotel, Umhlanga

- 08:30 – 09:00 Arrival, Exhibition and Networking
- 09:00 – 09:20 Keynote address: The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
Optronic Sensor Systems and Impact Manager: Mr. S Mkwelo.

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09:20 – 09:45

Panel: Sharing of best practices in alignment with the G20 and SADC SHOC initiatives

Moderator : Mr Hezron Andang'o

Keynote address :Ms Pumeza Tjali (South Africa).

NDMAs: Ms Rasoanaivo Nalinirina(Madagascar) ,Mr Sibusiso Ginindza(Eswatini), Mr Agnaldo Emanuel(Mozambique) .

09:45 – 10:00

Coffee & Tea break

10:00 – 10:30

Panel: Scaling regionally: harmonizing regulations, standards & certification

Moderator: Mr. Sam Ntsu Twala from Ntsu Aviation

Key Note address: Ms. Poppy Khoza (The CEO of South Africa Civil Aviation and the ex-Chairperson of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO's)

Panelists: Ms. Sonet Kock (AviComply), Ms. Sonja Betschart (WeRobotics), and Namibia Flying Labs (Charles Kamba)

10:30 – 11:20

Key Note Address: Deputy Director General (DDG) – Ms. Barbara Mgutshini
2022 KwaZulu-Natal floods: Reflections, lessons learned and the Future

11:20 – 12:50

Panel: Industry-specific DRM interventions

Moderator: Ms. Queen Ndlovu, South Africa Flying Labs & QP Drone Tech

Panelists: SASOL-Dr P Mohlala , Randwater, ARMSCO , NatCarbon- Ms Talitha Venter

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11:45 -12:05	<i>Sponsor: DroneLabs, Mr Leonard Balakisten</i>
12:05 – 12:25	Key Note Adress : Enhancing National Defense Through Geospatial Tools and Technologies: <i>Brigadier General A.R Barend(Defense)</i>
12.25 – 13:00	<i>Panel: User experience panel, Early anticipatory action in DRM</i> <i>Moderator : Ms Sibusisiwe Goba,(SALGA National office)</i> <i>Panelists: South African Red Cross Society: Mr Siyabonga Hlatshwayo, Ashraful AID: Mr Ahmad Namutamba and Alimdaad Foundation: Mr Irfaan Ahmed</i>
13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
13:45 – 13:05	Technical Presentation: Drones, data and AI solutions platform for climate and disaster resilience <i>WeRobotics, Flying Labs</i>
13:05 – 14:30	Breakout session, Option 1: Panel on inclusion, Diversity and Equity Moderator: Ms. Gcina Madonsela : SMME- SA and Business Runaway <i>Panelists: International Disability Advocate: Ms Esihle Mhluzi, Kgothatso Innovations, Ms Ndilisa Didiza (CEO and Founder - SMME-GIS), South Africa Flying Labs Drone Pilot (youth) – Ms Boipelo Moraka, QP Drone Tech Carl Spies (AI)</i> Option 2: Panel on building sustainable cities and communities through the Power of Local – SDG 11 <i>Moderator. Zimbabwe Flying Labs: Ms. Diana Banda</i> <i>Panelists: Flying Labs (Namibia, Zambia, Tanzania, eSwatini, and</i>

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Mozambique)

14:30 – 14:50

Technical and Sponsor presentation: GIS Solutions for DRM
Mr. Carl Beck, Business Development Manager, Esri

14:50 – 15:00

Coffee & Tea Break

15:00 – 15:40

The Strategic Role of Weather Service in DRM :
Mr Rudzani Malala (SAWS)

15:40– 16:05

Breakout session:

Option 1: Beyond natural disasters: a focus on geospatial interventions for man-made disasters

Moderator: Mr Warren Witte

Panelists: Gauteng Province–GOGTA: Ms Jamila Ndovela(sinkhole), UAV –Aerial Works: Ms Kim James(mines)and WOF(fires): Mr Trevor Abrahams : ,SALGA : Kwa-Zulu Natal– Ms Xolile Dube

Option 2: Technical partners' presentations

Moderator: Ms Kim James

Panelist: IAS: Mr Dexter Tangocci, Cloudline: Mr Spencer Horne, Wingtra: Karsten Robbins, and Ms Carel Engelbrecht DJI

16:05 – 16:15

Day 2 recap : Eswatini Flying Labs –Mr Sibusiso Ginindza

16:15–16:30

Closing remarks of the Conference
South Africa Flying Labs and QP Drone Tech : Mr. Jack Shilubana

16:30

End of Conference Proceedings by the Programme Directors

GALA DINNER SPONSORED BY DJI and ITOO Insurance

DATE: The 4th of Nov, 2025

VENUE: Capital- Zimbali Lodge

TIME: 6.30 for 7pm

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Programme Director : Mr Tawanda Chihambakwe (Zimbabwe Flying Labs)

18:30 – 19:00	Gala dinner arrivals, photo sessions and welcome drinks
19:00 – 19:30	<i>Starter Is Served</i>
19:30 – 19:45	<i>DJI (Sponsor)</i>
19:45 – 20:00.	<i>Entertainment</i>
20:00– 20:30	<i>Dinner is served.</i>
20:30– 20:45	<i>Guest Speaker: Mr Mbulelo Tshngana (DG: DcoG)</i>
21:00– 21:15	<i>I TOO (Sponsor)</i>
21:15 – 21:30	<i>Dessert Is Served</i>
21:30– 22:30	Entertainment and networking

Day 3 – Wednesday, November 5, 2025 – Radisson Blu Hotel, Umhlanga

Option 1: Hands-on GIS Workshop (Limited capacity - maximum 50 participants)

08:30 – 09:00	Arrival & Registration
09:00 – 10:00	ArcGIS Online Collaboration set up
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee & tea break
10:30 – 12:30	ArcGIS hands-on session
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 – 15:00	Co-creation session and next steps
15:00	End of workshop
15:00 – 16:30	Individual follow-up discussions

Option 2: Co-creation session and Drone Demonstrations

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08:30 – 09:00	Arrival & Registration: Moses Mabhida Stadium Programme Director for the Drone DEMOs: Mr Preneshen Moodley
09:00 – 10:00	Co-creation session by WeRobotics: The value of data
10:00 – 10:15	Entertainment: Traditional Dancers
10:15 – 10:30	Guest Speaker : Mr. Jotham Khumalo(eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality)
10.30 – 13:00	Drone Demonstrations
13:00 -14:00	Lunch
14:00	End of day 3