



# ZAMBIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



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## ZaAS

### INSIGHTS AND UPDATES

The Zambia Academy of Sciences (ZaAS) recently held its Annual General Assembly Meeting and Science Conference on 18 – 19 April 2024, focusing on addressing the complex challenges of cholera outbreaks and renewing leadership to guide the Academy. Elections took place for eligible Governing Council positions with a new **President, Professor Godfrey Biemba** elected to lead the Academy.

The Academy also elected four new fellows: **Professor Peter Mwaba, Professor Roma Chilengi, Professor Kelvin Wong and Professor Evans Mpabalwani.**

Additionally, a joint webinar with the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) on 24 April 2024 examined the status of STEM in education, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts to encourage youth to pursue careers in STEM fields and drive sustainable development in both countries.

Under the opportunities section, the ISC announced a Global Call on Science Missions for Sustainability, an exciting opportunity for innovative, collaborative, and diverse consortia to co-design and pioneer groundbreaking Science Missions to tackle complex sustainability challenges head-on

# ZaAS NEWS

## 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY & SCIENCE CONFERENCE

The Zambia Academy of Science recently convened its Annual General Assembly Meeting and Science Conference, held on 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024, at the Taj Pamodzi Hotel in Lusaka. Under the theme "Addressing the Intersection of Environmental Factors and Public Health: The Path to Zero Cholera in Zambia," the event aimed to tackle the multifaceted challenges posed by cholera outbreaks. The conference featured presentations from both Academy members and external partners with expertise in this field.

### General Assembly Science Conference

*To raise awareness on the Path to Zero Cholera in Zambia, Professor Yambayamba (President, ZaAS) and Professor James Mwansa (Fellow, ZaAS) sat down with Power FM Radio for an interview on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024. To listen to the interview [click here](#).*



The Science Conference, expertly moderated by Dr. Angela Gono-Bwalya and Professor Esther Munalula – Nkandu commenced on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 with an opening address by the Minister, Hon Feliz C. Mutati read by the Permanent Secretary, Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu. In his speech, the Minister emphasized the crucial role of scientists in driving socio-economic development through their pursuit of knowledge, innovation, and problem-solving. He stressed the importance of collaboration across sectors to address pressing issues like cholera, advocating for evidence-based interventions and technological advancements. Hon. Mutati also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to supporting science, technology, and innovation initiatives.



In his welcoming remarks, the President of the Zambia Academy of Sciences (ZaAS), Professor Kawwanga Yambayamba highlighted the crucial role of science and technology in understanding and mitigating cholera outbreaks, called for collaborative partnerships between government, academia, industry, and civil society, and encouraged open-minded discussions and shared commitment to finding sustainable solutions.



Professor James Mwansa (Fellow, ZaAS) provided a historical overview of the cholera virus, tracing its origins and highlighting its global burden and impact on Zambia since 1977. Dr. Kalijaran Arunachalam (Fellow, ZaAS) delved into the epidemiology and medical aspects of cholera, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive approaches involving prevention, treatment, and public health education.





## ZaAS NEWS cont.

Dr. Chileshe Lukwesa - Musyani (Lusaka District Health Office) shed light on the varying severity of cholera infections and the importance of community engagement in case management and prevention efforts. Additionally, Mr. Moses Mwale (World Health Organisation) provided insights into recent cholera trends, highlighting both progress and remaining challenges. Prof. Thankaian Kusanthan (Life Transformation Institute) introduced the concept of growth mindset principles in addressing Cholera. He underscored the importance of adopting a forward-thinking approach to confront the socio-economic barriers to cholera prevention and control. The conference also featured panel discussions including the main speakers and Dr. Mavis Chishala (Chawama First Level Hospital and a representative from the Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection).

In closing, the conference emphasized that cholera is not merely a health issue but a complex socio-economic challenge requiring a holistic and collaborative approach. By prioritizing prevention, leveraging scientific research, and engaging communities, Zambia can move closer to achieving the goal of zero cholera cases.

### General Assembly Meeting

On day two (2) of the General Assembly, the President of ZaAS welcomed members to the Business Meeting, marking not only a moment to review the Academy's progress but also a transition as new leadership prepares to take charge. The meeting proceeded with the regular business of the Academy, including the election of new Governing Council Members.

During the General Assembly, the Electoral Commission of Zambia oversaw the elections, resulting in the election of new leadership to guide the Academy signalling a moment of transition and renewal for the organization. Professor Godfrey Biemba was elected President, Professor Cyprian Katongo as Vice President, Dr. Phenny Mwanga as Secretary General, Dr. Kutemba Kapanji – Kakoma as Treasurer, Professor Kenneth Mwenda as Chairperson of the Social Sciences Committee, while Dr. Angela Gono-Bwalya and Dr. Sheila Shawa Musonda retained their positions as Chairperson of the Medicine and Health Sciences Committee and Chairperson of the Life Sciences Committee respectively. Furthermore, new fellows were elected to the Academy: Professor Peter Mwaba, Professor Roma Chilengi, Professor Kelvin Wong and Professor Evans Mpabalwani.

In his closing remarks, the outgoing President, Professor Yambayamba, expressed gratitude to the outgoing Council members for their dedication and commitment. He welcomed the new Governing Council and extended his best wishes for their tenure.

With the transition to new leadership and a renewed focus on addressing complex challenges like cholera, the Zambia Academy of Sciences looks forward to continuing its mission of advancing scientific knowledge and fostering socio-economic development in the nation.



## Webinar - Status of Pedagogy in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education in South Africa and Zambia

The Zambia Academy of Sciences (ZaAS) and the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) with support from the Department of Science and Innovation, South Africa (DSI), co-hosted an innovative webinar on the 24th of April 2024. This transformative event centred on critically examining the Status of Pedagogy in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education in South Africa and Zambia. Inaugurated by the esteemed Presidents of ASSAf and ZaAS, Prof. Pat Naidoo and Prof. Kavwanga Yambayamba respectively, the webinar commenced with insightful opening remarks that not only provided an illuminating overview of their organizations but also underscored the paramount importance of STEM pedagogy in nurturing the next generation of scientists. Under the expert moderation of Prof. Marissa Rollnick from ASSAf, the webinar brought together a distinguished panel of experts from both Zambia and South Africa, including Prof. Imasiku Nyambe, Prof. Frackson Mumba, Prof. Elizabeth Mavhunga, and Prof. Umesh Ramnarain. Their collective expertise and diverse perspectives enriched the discussions, shedding light on the current STEM education landscape in both countries.

One of the most notable conclusions from the webinar was the trend of a sustained decline in students opting for the STEM pathway. Despite evident political will, the consensus among participants was that concerted efforts are required to encourage and empower children to pursue careers in STEM fields. This imperative underscores the urgent need for innovative approaches and comprehensive interventions to ignite and sustain interest in STEM education among youth.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Lighthouse Funding Programmes for Sustainability Research and Innovation

The Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences outline best practices for designing and implementing sustainability research programmes drawing lessons from best practices worldwide, including the ISC's LIRA 2030 Africa programme. [Read More](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Global Call on Science Missions for Sustainability

The ISC has launched its Global Call on Science Missions for Sustainability! This is an exciting opportunity for innovative, collaborative, and diverse consortia to co-design and pioneer groundbreaking Science Missions to tackle complex sustainability challenges head-on. [Read More](#).

### Call for Applications

- Call for expressions of interest by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for potential Decade Programme proposals aimed at addressing any of the 10 Decade Challenges and contributing to the priorities identified in the Barcelona Statement. [Read More](#)
- Calls for applications for the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO) and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) Fellowship programme [Read More](#)

### Prizes

- Apply for the Michelson Prizes - Next Generation Grants of \$150,000 supporting early-career investigators who are working to significantly advance human immunology and vaccine and immunotherapy research for major global diseases. [Read More](#)
- Call for nominations for the 2024 Grand Chemistry Prize "Le Grand Prix de la Fondation de la Maison de la Chimie" to reward original work in chemistry that is of benefit to mankind, society or nature [Read More](#)

### Events within the ISC Community

- 29 May - 3 June 2024: Arctic Congress Bodø 2024. [Read More](#)
- 11 - 15 August 2024: IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition [Read More](#)