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The Young Geomorphologist Training Program at the SAAG 2023 Biennial Conference

Hogsback, Eastern Cape of South Africa, 28–30 September 2023

Report on the young geomorphologist conference

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I am Mthobisi Masilela, a participant from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, and I attended the Young Geomorphologist Training Program held during the Southern African Association of Geomorphologists (SAAG) 2023 Biennial Conference in Hogsback, Eastern Cape of South Africa from 28th to 30th September 2023. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG) for providing grants that made it possible for me to attend the conference. The pre-conference excursion, which served as the official field trip of the conference, took place in Hogsback, South Africa. During the excursion, we had the opportunity to delve into the topics of wetland degradation, rehabilitation, and wetland types in the Amathole Mountains. The training program focused significantly on peatlands, including their identification and the sampling of cores from wetlands for subsequent laboratory analyses. We visited the Sweetgrass cattle farm, where we observed various impacts on the wetlands. We had insightful discussions and shared information about the different types of degradation and rehabilitation measures.

One of the significant contributions I made during the conference was convening a session on Geomorphology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). This session aimed to explore the application of GIS and remote sensing in assessing geomorphic and environmental processes, with the ultimate goal of better understanding and managing our landscapes and ecosystems. It was inspiring to witness the active participation and engagement of fellow delegates in this session, which showcased the importance of



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integrating technology in the field of geomorphology. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to present my research paper titled "Understanding the Geomorphology of the Gobholo Granite Cave System in Eswatini." The presentation focused on shedding light on the unique features and processes within the Gobholo Granite Cave System, emphasizing its significance in comprehending landscape dynamics. The audience showed keen interest in my research, and I received valuable feedback and suggestions for further exploration.

I am again thankful to the IAG for their generous grants and support, which enabled me to attend this conference. The knowledge gained and the connections established during this conference will undoubtedly contribute to my growth as a young geomorphologist. I look forward to applying the insights and lessons learned to my future research and professional endeavors in the field of geomorphology.



Figure 1: Group photo of workshop participants on field excursion



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Figure 2: Following demonstrations on setting up hydrological instruments in peatlands



Figure 3: Following demonstrations on peatland sampling



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Figure 4: Some views from the Sweetgrass Cattle Farm



Figure 5: Paper presentations at the conference