



Statement by the CSIR on the suspension of researcher, Dr Anthony Turton

22 November 2008

Pretoria - The CSIR acknowledges that South Africa is facing huge challenges regarding water quality and management. In this regard, the CSIR has invested significant amounts of resources in an attempt to ensure that these challenges are addressed. The view of the CSIR is that there is a need for rigorous analyses of data in order to understand the root causes of problems in water provision, water quality and water infrastructure.

The presentation by CSIR researcher, Dr Anthony Turton, which was supposed to have been delivered during the CSIR: Real and Relevant conference on Tuesday 18 November 2008, was withdrawn due to certain statements that were made in the presentation, which could not be sufficiently substantiated, as well as the depiction of burning victims, which could have offended sensitive members of the audience. The full paper on the topic is freely available and was distributed as part of conference proceedings. It resides in the CSIR's repository of published research, Research Space, on www.csir.co.za. (see <http://researchspace.csir.co.za/dspace/handle/10204/2620>)

The CSIR encourages its researchers to publish their findings. In this regard, the recent CSIR Conference provided a platform for exactly this reason, and more than 260 CSIR posters and papers were presented.

Dr Turton elected to engage with the media on the matter of the withdrawal of his presentation, despite internal avenues that are available, and in contravention of organisational policy. An internal investigation has been started and Dr Turton was suspended on Friday 21 November 2008.

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