

# NRF-SAIAB Seminar Series 2024

Thursday 22 February 2024, 10.30am (SAST)

## Zoom Registration link:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAocOCppzgiGtWOBM-FP4x8Ai5gyQ4o3yci>

Passcode: 077041

## Prof Julie Coetzee

DSI/NRF-SAIAB Research Chair in Biological Control and Freshwater Alien Invasive Species Management, NRF-SAIAB;

Deputy Director: Centre for Biological Control, Rhodes University

## *Aquatic invasive species research - where we've been, and where we're going*



Globally, the freshwater economy is under threat as a burgeoning human population puts an increasing demand on the quantity and quality of water. Aquatic invasions invariably reduce both the quantity and quality of freshwater, directly competing with this human and ecological demand. Given South Africa's precarious water security, maintaining functional aquatic ecosystems through invasive species control efforts, as well as rehabilitation and restoration, thereafter, need to be prioritised if South Africa is to increase its resilience to climate change.

In recent years, with the decline in populations of floating invasive plants, we have seen an increase in the establishment and spread of submerged and emergent invasive plant species, which pose significant threats to aquatic ecosystems. The threat from aquatic invasive animals is also significant, and more research, and management, is needed to mitigate their impacts.

We are therefore aiming for a more holistic approach to the control of invasive aquatic species to ensure long-term ecosystem recovery and sustainability. The new Chair in aquatic invasive species ecology and control will focus on these issues.