

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE ANNUAL DIRECTORS' FORUM AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Annual Centres of Excellence Director's Forum held in Port Elizabeth from 31 August to 2 September gave South African scientists a platform to discuss "Triumvirate Transformation" (people, knowledge enterprise and engagement with society) in the DST-NRF Centres of Excellences CoEs". Presentations by the Minister of Science and Technology, the Honourable Naledi Pandor, Dr Mamphela Ramphele and Prof. Barney Pitso Rabele shaped discussions on the future of scientific research in South Africa. A future goal for science in South Africa should be the graduation of up to 5,000 PhD students per year who will be creators of knowledge in academia.



Core team members from the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology (CTHB) engaged young learners from Port Elizabeth at a science outreach forum. CTHB Deputy Director and Programme Manager, Prof. Emma Steenkamp, Prof. Ednah Kunjeku (CTHB Board member and University of Venda academic), Dr Martin Coetzee (co-ordinator of the Outreach Programme in the CTHB), postdoctoral fellow Dr Alistair McTaggart and PhD candidate Benedicta Swalarsk-Parry discussed the

benefits of a career in science and of postgraduate education with high school students. They shared some of their important knowledge in genomes, evolution and biotechnology, which are applied to tree health. Benedicta had an opportunity to meet with Minister Pandor and explain her decision to pursue a career in science and some of the achievements in the CTHB.