

ASSAf reaches out for National Science Week

The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) pulled out all the stops for this year's National Science Week, celebrated from 29 July to 3 August 2019. It received a grant from the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) to implement a programme in three provinces – the Eastern Cape, the Northern Cape and the North West.

Although the main theme for 2019 was 'Facing the harsh realities of climate change', grant-holders were asked to incorporate material and activities addressing the United Nations International Year of the Periodic Table and International Year of Indigenous Languages too.

Two lectures on climate change, aimed at students and academics, were presented at Sol Plaatjie University in the Northern Cape and the North-West University's Mafikeng Campus. But the main focus was on the Eastern Cape component of the programme, which took place in Humansdorp and Jeffreys Bay. From Monday to Friday the ASSAf team presented a full morning programme at five different schools. This included a lecture on climate change relevant to the science curriculum, a webinar with the South African Weather Service (SAWS) on the country's weather and climate, an information session on career development, a virtual engagement using technology with learners across the globe, and the launch of the *Quest* website.

During the virtual engagement, learners in South Africa exchanged ideas with other learners and young environmental activists in several parts of the world on issues such as signs of climate change they'd seen in their area, what they were doing to combat climate change and create awareness around it, how they could get involved in supporting international initiatives around climate change, and measures they could implement in their schools to offset the effects of climate change.

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