

## INFORMATION NOTE

### About South Africa



A democratic republic, South Africa is considered an Emerging and Developing economy and ranks 109th on the Human Development Index. In 2023, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) estimated the population at 62 million. Gauteng still comprises the largest share of the South African population, with approximately 15,5 million people (26,0%) living in this province. South Africa is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world, after Indonesia and Brazil.

The country is surrounded by two oceans, occupies only about 2% of the world's land area, but is home to nearly: 10% of the world's plants; 7% of the reptiles, birds and mammals and 15% of known coastal marine species. The country comprises nine biomes (unique vegetation landscapes), three of which have been declared global biodiversity hotspots. Biodiversity richness is one of South Africa's greatest assets, in terms of landscapes, ecosystems and species – the web of natural life – provides goods and services vital for human well-being and the survival of the planet.

Modern humans have lived at the southern tip of Africa for more than 100 000 years and their ancestors for some 3,3 million years. Some 2 000 years ago, the Khoekhoen (the Hottentots of early European terminology) were pastoralists who had settled mostly along the coast, while the San (the Bushmen) were hunter-gatherers spread across the region. At this time, Bantu-speaking agropastoralists began arriving in southern Africa, spreading from the eastern lowlands to the Highveld. At several archaeological sites there is evidence of sophisticated political and material cultures.

South Africa has been a democratic republic since holding its first truly open election on April 27, 1994. The country is a member of the United Nations, the G20 and BRICS.

#### **Pretoria**

Pretoria, the administrative capital of South Africa. Pretoria, located in Gauteng's Province, is an attractive small city with a sunny temperate climate, leafy suburbs, numerous green open spaces,



historical buildings, museums, galleries, theatres, entertainment venues, and the strikingly beautiful Union Buildings designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

Founded in 1855 by Marthinus, son of Andries Pretorius, the Boer statesman for whom the city was named, it became the capital of the Transvaal in 1860, administrative capital of South Africa in 1910, and a city in 1931. The city of Pretoria occupies 687.54 kilometers squared (265.46 square miles) and its estimated population is now at 2,818,100.

## Arriving in South Africa and Visas

### Airport

For international participants arriving in the city, it is recommended to book a flight to the [O.R. Tambo International Airport](#) (commonly abbreviated to by passengers by the acronym "ORTIA"). It is the busiest airport on the continent of Africa and is situated in the Kempton Park district of Johannesburg, 23 km north-west of the city centre and 46 km south of Pretoria city centre.

### Visa (South Africa Department of Home Affairs: Visas)

All travelers must possess valid identification and travel documents before entering South Africa. All participants should check, as soon as possible, the rules for entering South Africa that apply to them. Visa exempt countries are listed below: <https://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/exempt-countries>

### Accommodation

All delegates will be accommodated at **The Capital Hotel Menlyn Maine**, where breakfast and dinner will be provided for the duration of their stay.

194 Bancor Ave, Menlyn, Pretoria, 0010

### Shuttle service

→ **Shuttle transfers to the hotel** will be available for delegates. Please look out for a representative holding a name plate with your name on it.

→ **Shuttle services to and from the conference center (CSIR)** have been arranged for your convenience.

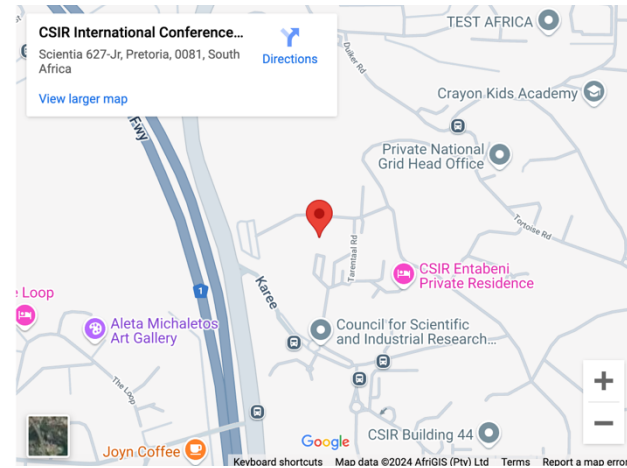
- 8:30 AM: Hotel to Conference Center

- 6:00 PM (18:00): Departure from the conference center back to the hotel

## Conference Venue & Room

All conference sessions will be held at the [CSIR International Convention Centre \(CSIR ICC\)](#), located at Scientia 627-Jr, Pretoria, 0081, South Africa (a Google Maps location is provided below).

The CSIR ICC is located in a natural setting in South Africa's capital city. The building, which encompasses outdoor areas, is surrounded by abundant natural fauna and flora. Ideally situated close to all the central amenities in Pretoria, it is easily accessible from all major routes in Gauteng. Besides conference, function and exhibition venues, the CSIR ICC also offers a one-stop business centre with related support services, facilities for the physically disabled, glass-fronted soundproof translation and press booths, on-site medical assistance and security and free secure parking. Banking facilities, travel desks and bureau de change can be arranged on request.



→ CSIR Conference room - **Amber Room**

## Important: Mandatory Onboarding Sessions for SEADGov Forum

To ensure a smooth experience, we require all participants to attend one of the two mandatory onboarding sessions:

### →September 19th at 14:00 UTC

[Join the meeting now \( https://shorturl.at/FrTpo\)](https://shorturl.at/FrTpo)

Meeting ID: 323 849 576 655

Passcode: cz3U7u

### →September 20th at 14:00 UTC

[Join the meeting now \( https://shorturl.at/kGNfv\)](https://shorturl.at/kGNfv)

Meeting ID: 350 018 843 674

Passcode: 5FJLie

## WhatsApp Group

For quick interactions and updates, we've set up a WhatsApp group. Feel free to join and connect with us!

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/IEYZ3qo6NhCL6OahbE4GZE>

## Registration.

To participate in the Forum, all attendees must register for ICEGOV using this link: <https://icegov2024.witsevents.co.za/register?code=icegov2024comp>

Please refer to the **attached guideline for ICEGOV Registration**. This will ensure proper registration for both the ICEGOV conference and the SEADGov Forum.

## Useful Information

**LANGUAGES** | English is generally spoken in Gauteng, but there are many other official languages in South Africa: isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Afrikaans, Siswati, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda and Xitsonga.

**TIMEZONE** | The conference takes place in Pretoria, thus being in SAST (South Africa Standard Time), which is ahead UTC by 2 hours (UTC/GMT+2).

**WEATHER** | Being such a large country by area, South Africa features different climates, even if it is a dry country, classified as semi-arid. The average annual rainfall for the whole of South Africa is about 464 mm. The climate of Pretoria is subtropical, with mild, dry winters (during which it can get cold at night) and hot, sunny summers (during which thunderstorms can break out). The average temperature of the coldest month (July) is of 12.8 °C (55.1 °F), that of the warmest month (January) is of 24.0 °C (75.1 °F). During the conference (October), the season is Spring, and the daily mean temperature should be around 22°C / 71°F.

**SAFETY** | Pretoria is considered a relatively safe city for tourists because local crimes are not aimed at them. But even though violent crimes against tourists are rare, you should be very careful and use common sense. Avoid walking after dark, even with a group of people.

**HEALTH** | The national emergency number is 112. Top-quality public and private healthcare is available throughout the country. Malaria precautions are necessary in some areas, but not in Pretoria. Other emergency numbers are 10177 (Ambulance and Fire Brigade), and 10111 (Police). Water from taps is safe to drink, but bottled water is recommended if you are visiting underdeveloped areas.

**INSURANCE** | The conference organisers will not be held responsible for any medical expenses, loss or accidents incurred during the conference and/or travel. All participants are strongly advised to arrange personal insurance for their travel and stay in South Africa.

**CURRENCY** | The currency is the Rand (ZAR) – 100 cents equal one rand. Most retail outlets will accept credit cards, but some smaller shops and restaurants may only accept cash. Travelers are advised to not rely exclusively on obtaining money or paying via digital means. Banks and Bureau de Changes are the most common and safest exchange methods. Banks are open Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Some hotels will also exchange currencies for their guests. Passport or other form of ID is required when exchanging currencies.

**ELECTRICITY** | The standard electrical power supply in South Africa is 230V / 50Hz and the power sockets are Type C (two round pins) and Type N (two round pins and a grounding pin). In older buildings, however, Type D sockets can still be found. You can find more information [here](#).

**MEASUREMENTS** | All measurements in South Africa are metric, as are weights; the temperature scale is Celsius.

**DRIVING** | Although an international driver's license is advisable, it is not essential, as long as the home country driver's license is valid and in English, and a photograph is part of the document. Your driver's license must be always carried with you. South Africa drives on the left-hand side of the road in right-hand drive vehicles.

**SMOKING** | Smoking in South Africa is forbidden in all enclosed public spaces except for specifically designated smoking areas.

**TIPPING** | South Africa does have a tipping culture, although tipping is always at your discretion.

 **SEADGov**

*South and East Africa  
Digital Governance Forum*