

## **ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**

### **Conference Title: A Code for Geoscientific Fieldwork in Africa: Guidelines on Health and Safety Issues in Mapping, Mineral Exploration and Geocological Research**

SHERATON HOTEL AND TOWERS, ABUJA, NIGERIA, 24 - 29 JUNE, 2018

The need to reinforce health and safety management issues in geoscientific and geocological fieldwork in Africa is urgent. This is exemplified from the recurrent reports of missing participants, unsavory accounts of encounters with village heads, municipal authorities or section chiefs, motor vehicle accidents, hunting accidents, kidnappings, armed robberies, attacks by herdsmen, ‘vigilante groups’ or wild animals, unethical field procedures, common law duty of care, litigation, insurance considerations, and so on. It is surely not good publicity for any university if a student undertaking fieldwork is attacked, killed by wild animals, hijacked, injured by landmine, catches malaria, or, worst, shot by a hunter and dies in the field.

The theme of the Conference: ‘A Code for geoscientific fieldwork in Africa’ could never have been more apposite at this time, as we continue to record more and more of these tragic incidents. The aim is to demonstrate unequivocally that most of the risk encountered during geoscientific and geocological fieldwork in Africa can be reduced, or, in some instances, be obviated altogether, by knowledge, experience, adequate preparation and observance of appropriate health and safety precautions.

The Conference will bring to light the virtual absence of regulatory guidelines in conducting geological fieldwork by many geoscience departments in Africa and some mineral exploration and mining establishments, and would highlight the importance of mitigating health and safety challenges identified from the ethical, legal, economic and other dimensions.

Invited veterans in African field geology would incorporate in their keynote addresses, a rich and diverse set of fieldwork experiences, insights and reflections on conducting geoscientific fieldwork in Africa, the problems that emerge, the solutions that were developed, and the realities of being ‘in the field’. The focus will be on provision of hands-on approaches to conducting geoscientific fieldwork safely in a range of African settings, exploring the methodological considerations that engender risks and safety aspects, and offering strategies to mitigate these, and provide guidelines for maintaining geodiversity and geoheritage.

The Conference is a “must attend”, for it will provide an essential guide to health and safety for geology undergraduates and postgraduate students in tertiary geoscience institutions, academics, mineral explorationists, geocological researchers, nature conservationists and geotourists in Africa and from abroad. The Project can be considered from a more generic perspective as well, as many African fieldwork experiences in the geosciences can be compared with those encountered in other scientific fieldwork endeavours, such as in the life sciences and in ecology.

Supporting roles on articulating health and safety policy guidelines and ergonomics would be provided by invited professionals in the medical, legal, insurance and geological hardware and equipment supply fields.

A number of short training courses will be organised on topics related to the Conference theme, such as: “Medical Geology Curriculum and Appropriate Field Project Selection”, ‘Safety Requirements in Well Logging’ and “Administering First Aid and Emergency Care in the Field”.

### **CONFERENCE SUB-THEMES**

- The Uniqueness of African Geoscientific Fieldwork

- Roles and Responsibilities of Fieldwork Participants
- Geoethics in the Geosciences Including Gender and Fieldwork Relations
- Fieldwork Planning, Emergency Preparedness and Response
- The Risk Management Process
- Hazardous, Mountainous, and Remote Areas (Including Landmines, Nuclear Sites, Landfill Sites, Deserts)
- Fitness and Medical Considerations
- Malaria: Endemic Areas of Africa and New Approaches to Control and Elimination
- Diarrhoeal Diseases: Sanitation Facilities and Hygiene Behaviour
- Students With Special Educational Needs and Disability
- First Aid Training and Emergency Response Capacity
- Cliffs, Slopes and Quarries
- Working in Coastal Locations
- Surface and Underground Mines, Adits and Caves
- Attacks by Wild Animals
- Poisonous Plants
- Insurgencies in Africa
- Safe Use of Field Equipment
- Geoconservation, Geodiversity and Geoheritage: Threats to our Geological and Geomorphological Heritage by Uncontrolled Geological Fieldwork
- Geotourism: Health and Safety Guidelines for Visiting Geosites
- Legal Considerations: Legislations, Duty of Care, Indemnity
- Insurance Portfolios
- Fieldwork Monitoring and Review
- Case Studies

Approximate Total Number of Expected Delegates/Participants/Students/Guests = 250

**THE VENUE**

The Sheraton Abuja Hotel is a 5-Star Hotel in an integral part of Nigeria’s Federal Capital of Abuja. It is located 40 km from the newly refurbished Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport which receives flights from most parts of the world. Abuja also hosts the International Conference Center and the Federal Secretariat. Nigeria is arguably Africa’s most dynamic economy and boasts of the fastest growing technological sector.

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