



# Introduction & Background to the Environmental Health Research Network & Workshop

17 August 2009

10h10-11h30



# Introduction

- Today, we are here to talk about environmental health research
- Besides researchers, several sectors of society with an interest in environmental health research are represented
- This strengthens the ultimate goal of this network & workshop, to:

*identify the gaps in environmental health research in South Africa through a collaborative network of sharing ideas*



# Background - Network

- January 2009, tasked to answer the question: ‘what are the important environmental health research questions in South Africa, & what research should we, as a part of the research community, be doing to help answer these questions?’
- Realised the need to bring together environmental health researchers to create a network to answer this question & better direct environmental health research in South Africa for meaningful impact



# Background - Network

- Set about creating a database of institutions, organisations etc fulfilling an environmental health research objective
- Invited individuals representing these institutions to meet at a workshop using an email network structure
- The email network has the potential for continuing as an on-going virtual network for researchers to connect, collaborate, debate, share ideas etc



# Background - Network

As of 11 August 2009, the Network comprises approximately:

- 85 individuals, from
- 55 institutions, organisations etc, from
- at least 5 countries including Australia, Mauritius, Botswana, USA & Canada

Where researchers' environmental health research objectives are diverse



# Background - Workshop

- An exciting time for environmental health, in general, in South Africa
- Much work is being done by the National Department of Health & the South African Institute of Environmental Health
- Concurrently, South Africa is faced with an environmental health conundrum: alleviating poor environmental health conditions & associated diseases, while planning for the potential adverse impacts of climate change



# Why are we here today?

- Meet
- Identify gaps
- Plan for action
- Strengthen relationships for the future
- And ultimately, to do impactful environmental health research for South Africa