



# MEDECOS

2020  
XV

CLUB MYKONOS, LANGEBAAN  
07 - 11 SEPTEMBER



## MEDECOS 2020 Hosted by The Fynbos Forum NPC

**Monday 7 September–Friday 11 September 2020**  
Club Mykonos, Langebaan, Western Cape, South Africa

### Abstract Guidelines for Papers and Posters

#### Papers (Long and short papers)

##### Target your audience

You will have limited space or time to get your message across so make sure that you focus on the most important points. Many place too much emphasis on a very general introduction and then run out of time for the all-important conclusions. As this is a cross disciplinary meeting it is important to keep your language accessible - explain jargon specific to your field of interest and avoid acronyms.

##### What is a Long Paper?

A long paper presentation is a more in-depth way of sharing a particular event, project, piece of research or idea to delegates. Relevant slides or photographs can be shown during your presentation to communicate a particular message.

Long paper presentations are 12 minutes in total – 10 minutes talk and 2 minutes questions. Presenters must stick to the time allocated to them to allow equal presentation time for all presenters.

Presenters will be required to submit their presentation materials to the IT technicians and check their presentation ahead of their session. Failure to do so will result in cancellation. A data projector and laptop will be provided. Please advise (with abstract submission) should your paper be in the form of a video presentation. Please note that video presentations will not be assessed for prizes at the end of the conference.

- Digital presentations should preferably be submitted as a Microsoft PowerPoint® slideshow/presentation. Double clicking a PowerPoint show file automatically opens as a running presentation.
- Should you prefer to use another presentation software, please save your slide show/presentation in .pdf format. We will be able to accommodate .pdf formats.
- Presentations can be saved onto a USB flash disk or external hard drive. Please let us know well in advance so that we can try and accommodate you if the above does not suit you.

##### What is a Short Paper?

A short paper presentation provides a speaker with 6 minutes of total presentation time – 5 minutes talk and 1 minute for questions. These presentations are usually used to provide short project status reports, interesting conservation outcomes, species updates or novel ideas. The same guidelines regarding presentation formats and sizes apply as for full length presentations.

## Hints and tips for Power Point presentations

Power point presentations can be a very useful tool for providing a visual back up to what the presenter is saying, with summary bullet points and images. However, they are by no means compulsory to use, and there are many other ways to hold an audience's interest. If you would like to use power point (or similar software), it might be useful to bear the following hints in mind.

### *Do:*

- Keep it simple
- Use short snappy bullet points to summarize your key messages
- Illustrate with clear, relevant images or diagrams
- Present results of original research
- Present clear explanations of why the work/results are important or interesting for MTE ecosystems and conservation
- Present implications for current practice/Lessons learnt
- Make sure text and images are large enough and clear enough to read from the back of a room
- For clarity, make sure your text is in a contrasting colour to the background, for example, white on dark blue or black on yellow
- Remember to use communication skills to get your message across
- Stick to the time allocated to your talk!
- Please make use of online guidelines and resources (there are many!)

### *Don't:*

- Present data; without interpretation of its implications for MTE conservation and sustainable use
- Use excessively long explanations of methods/statistics; rather focus on the interesting parts!
- Use large chunks of text
- Include auto sound effects for next slides etc. – this can be very distracting!

\*Additional resource: Avoiding "death by PowerPoint" from TEDex; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>

## Posters

### What is a poster?

Posters are a way of communicating outlines or overviews of a particular project, technique, research project or other achievement without having to give a full presentation.

- o Posters should generally adhere to "general academic conference standards"
- o The poster can be any size (Standard academic poster sizes are: A0 (841x1189mm), A1 (594x841mm) and A2 (420x594mm), either landscape or portrait as long as text and figures are readable
- o Maximum size: PORTRAIT A0 = Width 841mm – Height 1189 mm (printing costs should be kept in mind)
- o Print a A4 demo of your poster before taking it to the printers. That way you'll be able to get a 'feeling' for your poster and see what works/not.
- o Contact details: Name, address and affiliation (Organisation, university etc.) should appear on the poster
- o The poster must remain on the poster boards for the entire duration of the conference and should be erected and removed by yourself, or a person delegated by you.
- o Only thumb tacks, prestik, double sided tape or pins may be used to attach posters.
- o A viewer should be able to read and understand the poster in less than two minutes and typeface should be large enough that it can be read from 2m away
- o There will be a special poster session, during which you will need to make yourself available for interested delegates to engage with you about your project

## Hints and tips

When writing or designing a poster it may be worth thinking about some of the basic principles of interpretation.

### *Do*

- Decide on a clear theme or message to communicate
- Think about your audience – educators, managers, conservationists, scientists and other academic staff from universities etc.
- Use short, concise pieces of text (e.g. bullet points are a good idea) of a readable font type and size.
- Test your text on your colleagues or family to see if the message is clear.
- Make it colorful and attractive.

### *Don't*

- Feel you must spend lots of money on it – homemade posters are just as welcome as those that have been professionally designed and printed; clarity of the message is all that is important
- Include too much information, if you have two projects you would like to share, submit two posters!

\*Additional online resources (as examples):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwMFhyH7\\_5g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwMFhyH7_5g)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RwJbhkCA58>

<https://www.animateyour.science/post/how-to-design-an-award-winning-conference-poster>

## Abstracts: (Papers and Posters)

1. Abstracts should be submitted online at: <http://bit.ly/medecosabstracts>
2. The abstract should contain:
  - a. The title of paper/poster
  - b. At least three key words
  - c. Full names of authors, and co-authors where relevant, and their addresses
3. The text of the abstract should be no more than **300** words.
4. Additional online resource for writing an abstract: <https://www.exordo.com/blog/how-to-write-an-abstract-for-a-conference/>
5. See also example below (on the next page)

## ***AN EXAMPLE OF AN ABSTRACT***

### **PAPER LONG/SHORT PAPER/POSTER (Scientific or Informative):**

*(With permission from its author)*

#### **Challenges managing herbivores in the contractual Postberg section of West Coast National Park**

Key words: Risk-benefit, SANParks, Restoration

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A key concern for South African National Parks, within contractual park areas, is habitat degradation associated with large herbivore disturbances, especially when these include extralimital species. We used a mechanistic framework to bring contrasting views together for better interactions between West Coast National Park management and stakeholders. We modelled mammal population dynamics and used a risk–benefit analysis of contrasting management scenarios to identify the most suitable scenario given the complexity of objectives for West Coast National Park. Given the parks' dependence on annual flower displays to generate income and the ecological disturbance this requires, removing herbivore species that occurred outside their native range, removing fences, and reducing indigenous herbivore numbers was the most suitable scenario. We suggest that managers could use dynamic herbivore management models to guide them in achieving the suite of objectives they are tasked with. Our methods could be applied elsewhere to guide processes seeking to address complex challenges in modern environmental conservation.