

Synergising Indigenous Knowledge Systems into Business Innovation through Knowledge Management

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National Botanical Gardens, Pretoria



Prof Yonah Seleti

The role of IKS in the innovation chain of the Farmer to Pharma grand challenge



Prof. Yonah Seleti is currently serving the Department of Science and Technology in South Africa as Acting Deputy Director General for Human Capital and Knowledge systems. He is also responsible for the National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office (NIKSO). The National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office is responsible for implementation of the IKS Policy adopted by the South African Cabinet in 2004. One of the pillars of the policy is the interfacing of IKS with other knowledge systems.

Prof. Seleti has been at the core of the integration of African traditional Medicines into one of the five Grand challenges of the "Ten Year Innovation Plan for South Africa". The "Farmer to Pharma" Grand challenge aims to bring together indigenous knowledge, the biodiversity and the biotechnology in building South Africa's bio-economy.

Before joining the Department of Science and Technology in 2006, Prof. Yonah Seleti had worked for the Freedom Park Trust in Pretoria and the University of KwaZulu-Natal as Director of the Campbell Collections. He has also taught as visiting professor at Tulane University in New Orleans and Roskilde University in Denmark. He has been a member of several ministerial committees i.e. on the national curriculum statement and history committee. He is chairperson of the digital Innovation of South Africa, a digital library of liberation heritage. Yonah Seleti has published widely on historical themes covering the following countries: Zambia, Angola, Mozambique and South Africa.