

## **Laser science for Africa's upliftment - new year, new projects**

The African Laser Centre (ALC), of which its South African participation is managed by the CSIR National Laser Centre, held its annual peer-review meeting on 8 December 2008 where research projects for 2009 were rigorously evaluated. The ALC is a body established in 2003 aimed at enabling African nations to collaborate towards the advancement of laser science and ultimately uplift the continent. The research proposals included, among others, laser-based research into solid state physics, material science, photobiology and atmospheric remote sensing. The peer-review panel, comprising top international specialists including Professor Alfred Msezane of Clark Atlanta University in the US and Professor Mohamed Henini of the University of Nottingham in the UK, recommended that ten projects be supported.



Dr Paul Motalane

"The proposals up for evaluation were of a very high standard. The main objective of our atmospheric research is to build human capital required to study and deepen our understanding of global climate change and global warming," says Dr Paul Motalane of the CSIR National Laser Centre. "The aim of the research programme is to build strong research partnerships involving South African researchers and their counterparts elsewhere on the African continent."

The ALC is an official NEPAD flagship programme. It comprises more than 25 members from South Africa, Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. "Through the ALC we want to create nodes of excellence in laser technology throughout Africa to develop research capacity, infrastructure, technology transfer and application aimed at contributing to the continent's prosperity," Motalane says.

The ALC is supported by the Department of Science and Technology.

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