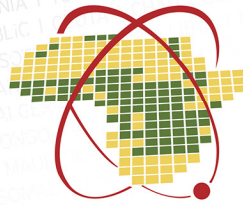


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## European Space Agency Awards for Best Papers

The European Space Agency (ESA) has sponsored a cash prize for the Best Paper and the Best Poster presented to the biennial conferences of AARSE. At the 10<sup>th</sup> International AARSE Conference, held in Johannesburg, October 2014, oral conference presentations were assessed on criteria of originality of scientific content; clarity of oral presentation and logical development of argument; quality of the visual presentation. Consensus among the delegates was that the overall quality of presentations to the conference was high. Five contributions were evaluated as worthy of consideration for an award. The overall winner of *the 2014 ESA Best Paper* award emerged as Dr Solomon Tesfamichael, for his contribution *“Estimating structural attributes of savannah woody vegetation using small footprint, discrete return LIDAR data”*, which comes with a certificate and a cash prize of €1000. As the gap in scores score between the winner and the next two equally rated papers was small, the Evaluation Committee agreed to award two *ESA Best Paper Runner Up* certificates, with prizes to the value €500 to: Laven Naidoo, CSIR NRE, for his contribution *“Assessment of the performance of global forest products in South Africa: establishing the benchmark”*; and Dr Scott Hersey, North West University, for his contribution *“An overview of regional and local characteristics of aerosols in South Africa using satellite, ground, and modelling data”*. Two further papers were of such a high standard that the Committee decided to issue certificates of *ESA Highly Commended Paper* to: Sabelo Madonsela, for his contribution *“Evaluating the utility of obia for tree species mapping in*



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*savannah environment using wv-2 imag*"; and Dr Stefania Merlo, University of the Witwatersrand, for her contribution *"Archaeology in areas at risk: the remote documentation of the Sahara landscape"*.

No award was made in 2014 in the Best Poster category.

The ESA makes these awards as an incentive to raise the standard of conference presentations at the AARSE series conferences. These and 52 other fully refereed papers presented at AARSE 2014 will appear in an electronic refereed conference proceedings, to be published before the end of 2014.

**Harold Annegarn,**

**Secretary General and Chair of ESE – AARSE 2014 Awards Committee**