



THE L'OREAL FOUNDATION AND THE WOMEN'S FORUM FOR THE ECONOMY & SOCIETY BRING TOGETHER IN AFRICA WOMEN IN SCIENCE TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHALLENGE

Paris, June 16, 2016 – Six months after the COP21 meetings in Paris, the L'Oréal Foundation, through its *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* program, participates in the Women's Forum held in Mauritius from 20 – 21 June. During this event that focuses on the need for rapid innovation to protect the planet's biodiversity and advance climate action, The L'Oréal Foundation will be present with four eminent women scientists who have the power to change the world.

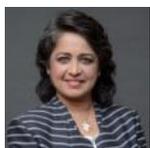
WOMEN IN SCIENCE TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

The COP21 conference highlights that we are facing increasing global threats due to climate change. Although science provides various solutions to these problems, without the commitment of 100% of the world's researchers, which currently only 30%* of which are women, the challenges will be harder to overcome. That is why the L'Oréal Foundation is convinced that **the world needs science, science needs women, because women in science have the power to change the world.**

The Women's Forum Mauritius will feature for the first time ever in Africa, scientists, policymakers, and business leaders who are at the forefront of the climate and biodiversity movements, in **a unique meeting which aims at discussing and advancing innovation in agriculture, health and land use, as well as improving the participation of women and youth in scientific and technological training.**

FOUR EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN SCIENTISTS ADVANCING CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

For 18 years, the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* programme has recognized and rewarded women scientists who have already proven how transformative their science can be in addressing global challenges. On the occasion of the Women's Forum Mauritius, L'Oréal Foundation is honoured to present four outstanding women scientists, each of whom is a laureate or fellow of its international awards programmes. With their unparalleled strides in the areas of health, agriculture and sustainable energy, these women have made significant contributions to addressing climate change.



Ameenah Gurib Fakim: the discovery of phytomedicines

President of the Republic of Mauritius and 2007 laureate of the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* Award for her exploration and analysis of plants from Mauritius and their bio-medical applications. Professor Gurib Fakim created the first-ever full inventory of the medicinal and aromatic plants on Mauritius and neighbouring island Rodriguez.

Her analysis of the antibacterial and antifungal properties of plants from Mauritius is paving the way for their use as safe and effective alternatives to commercial medicines.



Segenet Kelemu: the research of new crop production solutions

Director General of the International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology and 2014 laureate of the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* Award. She was the first woman from her region to attend what was then Ethiopia's only university. In 2014, Dr. Segenet Kelemu received the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* Award for her research on how microorganisms living in symbiosis with forage grasses can improve their capacity to resist disease and adapt to environmental and climate change.

Her work is providing new solutions for ecologically responsible food crop production, especially by local, small-scale farmers.



Jill Farrant: the investigation of resurrection plants

Professor of molecular and cell biology at the University of Cape Town and 2012 laureate of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Award for discovering how plants survive under dry conditions. **The ultimate goal is to find applications that will lead to the development of drought-tolerant crops to nourish populations in arid, drought-prone climates, notably in Africa.** She is currently investigating the potential of turning eragrostis tef, a high-protein staple food in Ethiopia for centuries into a drought-resistant resurrection grass.



Adriana Marais: the study of photosynthesis

Postdoctoral researcher, quantum research group, University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa and 2015 International L'Oréal-UNESCO Rising Talent for her project on the quantum origins of life: a description of the emergence of life from the inanimate matter. It has been theorized that light must have played a part in the genesis of life, so **Ms. Marais is employing quantum physics to investigate photosynthesis-the process through which plants transform light from the sun into energy to "feed" themselves.** In other words, how they utilize light to create and sustain life.

In addition, the L'Oréal Foundation and UNESCO are proud to launch the **For Women in Science Manifesto**, aiming at engaging the scientific community, the institutional and the general public to step up the pace of change for women in the sciences.

To sign the Manifesto, visit www.forwomeninscience.com

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About the L'Oréal Foundation

Accompany. Value. Communicate. Support. Move boundaries. The convictions, the core values which drive the L'Oréal Foundation's commitment to women everyday. A commitment divided into two main areas - science and beauty.

Through its' For Women in Science program, a worldwide partnership with UNESCO, the L'Oréal Foundation motivates girls in High School to pursue scientific careers, supports women researchers and rewards excellence in a field where women remain underrepresented.

Through its beauty programs, the Foundation assists women affected by illness, who are economically disadvantaged or isolated, to recover their sense of self-esteem and femininity in order to feel better and to fare better. Its' actions also include providing training programs for beauty industry professions.

About UNESCO

Since its creation in 1945, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization supports international scientific cooperation as a catalyst for sustainable development and for peace between people. UNESCO assists countries in the development of their public policies and in building their capabilities in the fields of science, technology, innovation and scientific education. In addition, UNESCO leads several intergovernmental programs for the sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources, for biodiversity protection and to promote science's role in combating climate change and natural disasters. To meet these goals, UNESCO is committed to ending discrimination of all kinds and to promoting equality between women and men.

**Source: Boston Consulting Group in 2013, based on an average of the results obtained in France, Germany, Spain, UK, USA, Japan, and urban China.*