

Biography

Michael Claeys

Professor

Catalysis Institute & DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in
Catalysis (c*change), University of Cape Town



Professor Claeys obtained his PhD (with distinction) in Fischer-Tropsch catalysis at the University of Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1997 and then joined the Catalysis Institute at the University of Cape Town (UCT) as a post-doctoral fellow, then Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and now full Professor (since 2010). Here he was instrumental in establishing a large research activity with focus on Fischer-Tropsch catalysis, a technology, which lies at the heart of South Africa's synthetic fuels and chemicals industry. Other research interests include the preparation and characterisation of nano materials and their use in catalytic applications, as well as the development of novel instrumentation for characterisation of catalysts at working conditions. Professor Claeys has published extensively on these topics and holds a number of patents.

A large portion of his research is conducted in conjunction with industrial partners, in particular a longstanding industrial collaboration with Sasol R&D. Professor Claeys is the Director of the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Catalysis, c*change, a large virtual and multidisciplinary Centre, where he also acts as the Manager of the Scientific Synthesis Gas Programme, which includes processes of catalytic valorization of CO₂. This national Centre, which is hosted by UCT, involves 11 higher education institutions in South Africa and supports more than 60 postgraduate students, 15 post-doctoral fellows and some 25 academics and professional researchers.

Professor Claeys serves/has served on numerous Boards and Committees, including the IACS and EFCATS Councils, the of the Catalysis Society of South Africa (former Chairperson), the Advisory Board of the State Key Laboratory of Catalysts in Dalian, the State Key Laboratory of Cola Conversion, the Natural Gas Conversion Board and the Technical Steering Committee of Hydrogen South Africa (HySA) Catalysis. Moreover, he is an Honorary Visiting Professor of Cardiff University and he is the founding Chairperson of the Syngas Convention, a triennial international meeting on synthesis gas technologies held in Cape Town.