



Southern African Institute of Forestry, Postnet Suite 329, Private Bag X4, Menlopark, 0102  
[www.saif.org.za](http://www.saif.org.za), [saif@mweb.co.za](mailto:saif@mweb.co.za)

## #Treesmustfall

By Andrew McEwan

A tongue-in-cheek posting on the “Foresters of Southern Africa” LinkedIn page a few weeks back got me thinking! In the last few months, the call has been made for many things to fall! University fees, exams, outsourcing and even school children’s homework have been targeted. What amazed me was the speed in which a cause could become mainstream – all through the use of social media. Social media also allowed the protests to be coordinated and organised across different institutions located in different parts of the country. Regardless of whether one supports the cause or not, one has to acknowledge that communication nowadays is immediate.

The SAIF fully supports the cause of #Treesmustfall. Luckily we are in an industry which is increasingly being considered as a supplier of renewable products, being able to produce renewable energy, supporting communities in rural locations and playing an important role in ecosystem services and non-timber forest products. If we keep the trees falling we

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contribute to the upliftment of the entire region.

Every year, we hear statements indicating that how tough the year has been. However, with the current global economic situation and many other challenges facing our industry (e.g. climatic, pests, political and legislative aspects), I really do think that we can claim that this really was a challenging year. However, the fact that our industry remains organised and well-led through the efforts of FSA, we can remain confident that we will show resilience.

May all members have a peaceful and blessed Christmas, and return renewed to tackle our many challenges with renewed professionalism and vigour!

## NSTF calls for nominations for innovation awards

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) is calling all SMMEs and business organisations to be recognised for commercialising inventions and innovations in South Africa. Nominations must be registered by 9 December 2015.

These prestigious Awards bring publicity for the winners to millions of South Africans through partnerships with the media, such as Business Report (carried by Pretoria News, The Star, Cape Times and The Mercury) and Mail & Guardian, as well as radio interviews and talks to the public and youth as part of the NSTF Awards Share ‘n Dare Programme.

NSTF is a non-profit company promoting science,

engineering and technology (SET) and innovation since 1995, and a stakeholder forum for all organisations, both public and private, who are involved in science and technology. The various fields considered are:

- scientific research
- technological innovation
- environmental sustainability/green economy
- technology transfer and education and training by NGOs
- capacity building both in science and engineering
- management
- communication and outreach

Visit [www.nstfawards.org.za](http://www.nstfawards.org.za) for information on how to register nominations

## Is one tree worth a forest? Weighing the cost of the trade in live plants

By Casper Crous, Jolanda Roux and Brett Hurley

Biological invasions of pests and pathogens are increasing, resulting in negative impacts on the economy, society and the environment. Research has clearly shown that a major pathway for the introduction of non-native pests and pathogens of trees is by means of the trade in live plants (eg. ornamentals, seed, bonsai). For example, 70% of forest pest invasions in the last four decades into Europe were due to the unregulated trade in live plants. This pattern is staggering when we consider European countries to have more developed trade regulation infrastructure, and therefore quite alarming given economic sustainability goals for developing nations.

Concerns around the trade in live plants were the topic of discussion at the World Café session 'Is one tree worth a forest? Weighing the cost of the trade in live plants', at the recent World Forestry Congress (WFC) held in Durban this year. As with many interdisciplinary and wide-encompassing congresses like the WFC, there were many break-away sessions to hone in on subject-specific forestry crises. These sessions dubbed 'World Café' sessions are essentially dialogue based, or roundtable discussions, in which invited panelists shared their experiences and opinions on how to promote forest resilience in challenging environments. This particular session was organized by FABI researchers Professor Jolanda Roux, Dr Brett Hurley and Dr Casper Crous on request from the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations) to present such a World Café session on forest health.

The session was moderated by Casper Crous and the panelists were: Jolanda Roux (Forest Pathologist, FABI); Brett Hurley (Forest Entomologist, FABI); Roger Coppock (Head of Analysts, Forestry Commission, UK); Rory Mack (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry: KwaZulu Natal Division); Philip Ivey (South African National Biodiversity Institute, Cape

Town); Dr Clement Chilima (Director of Forestry, Government of Malawi); and Joey Hulbert (PhD candidate, Forest Pathology, FABI).

One of the issues discussed was the Montesclaros Declaration. The Montesclaros Declaration was drawn up by concerned tree health scientists and states, "As scientists studying diseases of forest trees, we recognize that the international trade of plant material is increasing the risks to forest health worldwide. The evidence for this view is based on the recent, unprecedented rise in numbers of alien pathogens and pests emerging in natural and planted forest ecosystems in all parts of the globe. We thus propose a phasing out of all trade in plants and plant products determined to be of high risk to forested ecosystems but low overall economic benefit" <http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-7/70000/publications/montesclaros-declaration/>

Essentially the key issue is to be better at risk management. In other words, if you have to import, have clear evidence of no risk. Otherwise a licensing fee (the polluter pays) is another option to mitigate the socio-economic losses of invasive forest pests and pathogens.

Other key discussion points raised were that there needs to be more investment in human infrastructure (forest researchers) and physical infrastructure (quarantine) to ensure that developing nations can also more rapidly and accurately detect new invasions. Small-scale farmers also need more help as they are left vulnerable to pest and pathogen attacks (lack of knowledge updates, no proper breeding programmes, as examples).

The dialogue session was a success, with the only drawback being the allotted time we were given to have this session – many things were left unsaid. This shows the high importance of the topic and the need for further dialogue on the future of curbing biological invasions into our valuable native forests and forestry plantations.

## Of benefits and mill visits!

By Rob Thompson

People involved in the SAIF, often encounter debates pertaining to the value and benefits of membership. "What do I get out of being a member?" is often the question asked. Over the years of being involved, I have come to realize, that, whilst there is no definitive answer to that question given that members generally have differing views regarding what is important to them, one specific benefit arguably rises above all. The SAIF provides a unique platform to share, on a professional basis, and providing members are willing to contribute in this arena, the rewards are both plentiful and reciprocal.

This was once again illustrated to me late November 2015 when I hosted an SAIF delegation to NCT Durban Wood Chips Mill in...yes you guessed it....Durban!

Visits to the mill are generally associated with a very short notice period given factors such as vessel arrival and prevailing critical mill operations. Having been given a mere two day notice period for this particular visit, I alerted the KZN branch and they sent out a notice of the impending visit to branch members together with an indication of the ceiling of 10 members, based on 'first come-first served' basis. Within half an hour of the notice going out, I had a full contingent!

The day arrived and the SAIF members comprising forestry practitioners representing NCT, UCL, Sappi, private consultancy and NMMU converged on the mill. Derek Rall, Mill Engineer, by means of a well-crafted presentation, provided an insightful history of the mill, prior to leading the physical site walkthrough. Sadly, on the day, high winds had prevented the incoming wood chip vessel from entering Port meaning that the process of leading chips to vessel could not be displayed. The rest of the operations however, from logs arriving at log decks, to chipping, to quality sampling, through to chip storage and management were all observed by the visitors.

The highlight of the day, with particular reference to my opening comments above, was the post tour discussions around a cool drink and a spicy KZN samoosa. Here forestry colleagues discussed, across corporate lines, and in informal relaxed mode, the merits of various species choices, timber quality specifications, moisture contents, forestry challenges et al. Interestingly, in this setting, it was apparent that there was far more common



OK People. Listen up. Chips are not always chips!!



And so these guys can make a mountain out of a chip pile!

ground and interest between the personnel present than one would normally anticipate within a highly competitive forestry industry.

The day ended with new friends having been made, networks extended and knowledge enhanced.

These therefore are the intangible, but ever present, invaluable benefits of the Institute. They are all there for the taking. It just needs you to make the first move! Initiate an event. Invite practitioners. Get involved. You are, after all is said and done.....the Institute.



Wayne Jones KZN Branch Chair seen in the middle contemplating using one of the mill blades to shave!

## Appreciation and passing the baton at the 2015 southern Cape and Eastern Cape Branch AGM

By Tatenda Mapeto

To be inspired is great, to inspire is incredible; that was the ambience at the annual general meeting of the southern Cape branch held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2015. The meeting, chaired by the then acting branch chairperson, Mr Hannes van Zyl was hosted at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Saasveld Campus. On the agenda was the selection of a new committee for the branch, an awards ceremony for appreciating people in the branch who have been SAIF members for 25 years or more, and of course sundowners to celebrate the events. The meeting was also preceded by a guest lecture on fire fuel load management in South Africa given by CMO's Louis van Dyk. Being a small branch, the meeting was well attended with attendees ranging from student members, field foresters and the wise fellas, most of whom were getting awards.

A total of 11 awards were presented, 5 in *praesentia* ( RW Taylor; JC Steenkamp; JH Louw; WJA Louw and CH Loubser) 6 in *absentia* (G von dem Bussche; MP Brink; WJ Vermeulen; DL Staal; DP Meterlerkamp and JH Scriba). With regards to the new committee for the branch, Hannes van Zyl (lecturer at NMMU Saasveld), Tatenda Mapeto (PhD post graduate student at NMMU Saasveld) and Cleopas Chingwaru (forester at PG Bison in the Eastern Cape) were selected as branch chairperson, vice chairperson and committee member respectively. The sundowners at Pampoenkraal were a great finale to the meeting as foresters of young and old chatted away in the spectacular old Pampoenkraal farmhouse, a centre-piece building of forestry training at NMMU Saasveld. The branch chairperson is grateful to the NMMU's School of Natural Resources Management for sponsoring the catering for the meeting. The photos adjoining the article show Hannes van Zyl handing over the certificates.



Willie Louw



Jos Louw



Jaap Steenkamp



Radie Loubser



Richard Taylor

## A new term to adopt!

By Rob Thompson

At a recent Zululand field day held by the ICFR, I was introduced to a fascinating new term (certainly one that I had not encountered before), which struck me as being totally relevant and applicable to the required approach to the challenges typically faced by current South African forestry practitioners.

Without revealing what that term is right now (and please...no fast forwarding to the end of the article) let's explore some of those core challenges.

Firstly, the extensive drought that has gripped many parts of our country, has placed our growing stock under severe pressure, which manifests in slower growth (if at all), emergence of opportunistic pests and diseases, increased fire danger and ultimately poor yields. The organizations that we serve however, still require production performance and throughput to processing plants in order to maintain markets and the competitive edge.

The second major challenge that we face, is undoubtedly, the ever changing socio-political landscape unfolding before us. Both within organizations and in communities bordering our operations, the expectation of (and indeed need for) enhanced participation, decent work, access to essential forest products, facility upliftment and a decent wage, all converge together towards a new way of working, thinking, and a changed definition of forestry as we once knew it, say a decade or more ago.

Both of the above challenges affect our daily lives as foresters. We are necessitated to be more nimble of thought and quicker to react. We have to do the right things right first time and be ever cost conscious. People are integral to our operations and we each have to develop solid skill sets appropriate to the unfolding interactive requirements.

It's a new and exciting environment for forestry practitioners, which does require us to adopt "environmental plasticity" or tolerance to change. Our professional approach to the task must encompass the ability to tolerate the changes coming at us, enable us to bend around obstacles and continue to grow professionally under ever more extreme conditions.

Perhaps by really believing in our own "plasticity", the journey forwards will be less onerous and unfold more into an adventure than a task?

## Sappi concludes sale of Cape Kraft Mill

Sappi press release

Further to the announcements of March and July 2015 regarding the sale of Sappi's Cape Kraft Mill in Milnerton, Cape Town, Sappi wishes to confirm that all conditions have been met and that the mill has been transferred today, 23 November 2015, to the new owners, the Golden Era Group. The sale is not categorisable in terms of section 9.5 of the JSE Listings Requirements.

The sale of Cape Kraft Mill, along with the sale of Enstra Mill which was completed earlier this month, signals Sappi's exit from the recycled paper packaging market, a market where Sappi did not enjoy any competitive advantage. Sappi Southern Africa in future will focus on: its commercial timber operations; enhancing its already world-leading dissolving wood pulp capacity at Ngodwana and Saiccor Mills; investing in its containerboard capacity at its Tugela and Ngodwana Mills; its tissue and office (copy) paper capacity at Stanger Mill; its newsprint capacity at Ngodwana Mill; providing the South African market with a world-class range of coated, uncoated and speciality papers made at Sappi's European mills, as well as, increasing its by-products offering including Lignosulphonate from Tugela Mill.

During the course of 2016, Sappi will invest in projects to increase the company's energy self-sufficiency through the installation of new turbines at the Tugela and Saiccor Mills. The turbines will produce approximately 23MW of power and contribute to increasing Sappi Southern Africa's self-sufficiency from 56% to 72% by the end of 2016. This will help mitigate against any future power shortages but more importantly will lower Sappi's energy costs.

As mentioned previously the combined proceeds from the sales of Enstra and Cape Kraft Mills amounts to just under R600m.

### SAIF contact details

President:	Andrew McEwan	andrew.mcewan@nmmu.ac.za	044 801 5022
Vice-president:	Hannel Ham	hamh@sun.ac.za	021 808 3301
Past-president:	Rob Thompson	rob@nctforest.com	033 897 8500
National secretary:	Corine Viljoen	saif@mweb.co.za	082 523 8733
SF Journal Editor:	Andrew Morris	andrew.morris@icfr.ukzn.ac.za	033 386 2314
WFC and SF	Sally Upfold	sally.upfold@icfr.ukzn.ac.za	033 386 2314
KwaZulu-Natal:	Wayne Jones	wayne.jones@sappi.com	033 330 2455
Gauteng:	Steve Verryyn	sverryyn@creationbreeding.co.za	083 652 5719
Mpumalanga:	Nico Monnig	nicomonnig@york.co.za	013 764 9200
Southern Cape:	Hannes van Zyl	hannes.vanzyl@nmmu.ac.za	044 801 5022
Western Cape:	Luvuyo Tyhoda	ltyhoda@sun.ac.za	021 808 3301
DAFF representative:	Vacant		

### December 2015 birthdays

MORLEY T.	Dec-01	FISCHER P.M.	Dec-15
VON KROSIGK F.K.	Dec-02	TAYLOR R.W.	Dec-16
HEATH R.N.	Dec-02	LOUW J.H.	Dec-18
CHAPMAN C.	Dec-02	MALLOCH-BROWN D.	Dec-19
MONNIG N.H.	Dec-03	DAVIDSON W.N.	Dec-20
CHAUKE V.M.	Dec-04	MOLLER F.A.	Dec-20
LYLE G.R.	Dec-05	HOCKLY D.	Dec-20
VERMEULEN W.J.	Dec-05	ACKERMAN S.A.	Dec-20
JARVEL L.C.	Dec-05	LE BRASSEUR J.	Dec-20
JORDAN J.L.	Dec-06	ALGERA M.	Dec-20
JAKAVULA M.G.	Dec-06	STRYDOM H.L.	Dec-25
ODENDAAL P.B.	Dec-10	SEYDACK A.H.W.	Dec-27
VIERO P.	Dec-10	MAKE F.	Dec-29
MASON M.J.	Dec-11	PANNIFER W.P.	Dec-30
SCHOOMBEE P.W.	Dec-11	RIETZ D.N.	Dec-30
HERRON D.	Dec-12	HURLEY B.P.	Dec-30
THEART G.F.	Dec-15	MWIHOULEKE S.T.	Dec-30