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Professional foresters

By Hannel Ham

This month we were again stunned by allegations of state capture and corruption in South Africa. While the Zondo commission continues its important work and President Ramaphosa has to explain to world leaders at Davos that South Africa will address corruption, it is perhaps a good time for all of us to review our own ethics and principals. The SAIF pride itself in being a professional association. But what does that mean?

Merriam-Webster defines professional as:

- characterised by or conforming to the technical or ethical standards of a profession
- exhibiting a courteous, conscientious, and generally business-like manner in the workplace

While, Merriam-Webster defines amateur as:

- one who engages in a pursuit, study, science, or sport as a pastime rather than as a profession

According to the SAIF constitution, professional ethics is defined as: Every member shall be required to uphold the dignity of the profession, to act in an honourable and responsible manner and to regulate his/her conduct in a manner consistent with the highest principles of the profession as set out in the Code of Ethics.

The Code of Ethics clearly states what is expected of a SAIF member:

- Have a public interest at heart in all matters relevant



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- to the forest and forest product industry
- Order my conduct in such a manner as to uphold the dignity and reputation of the profession
- Strive to disseminate a true understanding of the forest and forest product industry
- Only issue statements on forestry policy and on technical matters when clearly indicating on whose authority I am acting
- I will, when serving as an expert witness on forestry matters, base my testimony on adequate knowledge of the subject matter
- Only undertake work for which my education and experience does render me competent
- Clearly set out the possible consequences should my professional judgement be overruled by a non-technical authority
- Only canvass professional employment or advertise my consulting in an ethical manner
- Respect the professional reputation of any other practitioner in the industry
- Report convincing evidence of unprofessional conduct to the appropriate authority

There is a slight difference between being professional and being a professional, but the overlap is sometimes the grey area that we fall into. Being professional suggests that you are qualified to do the job, practice in the definable field, have expertise based on a deep level of knowledge, are committed to the area of practice and being a member of a relevant professional body. In essence all about occupational identity and status. However, being professional indicates how you chooses to practise and is all about judgement,

SAIF 2018 photo competition photos!

As indicated in the January newsletter, the 2019 calendar has been mailed to all paid up members, so hopefully you have received yours by now. The winners, with their prizes sponsored by Stihl, were announced in the December 2018 newsletter. The SAIF is already planning for the 2019 photo competition. These photos will be used for the 2020 calendar. So, get those cameras out so long, or hone your cellphone camera skills, so that you stand a chance of winning one of the awesome prizes that will be on offer. Below and to the left are a selection of some of the photos used in the calendar. To see who took the photograph, consult your SAIF 2019 calendar!

The prize handover for the 2nd and 3rd place winners recently took place. In the photo below, 2nd place winner, Dr Nicky Jones of Sappi received the STIHL HSA 25 Cordless Shrub Shears, while 3rd place winner, Dr Steven Dovey of Sappi, receives the STIHL SE 62 Wet/Dry Vacuum.



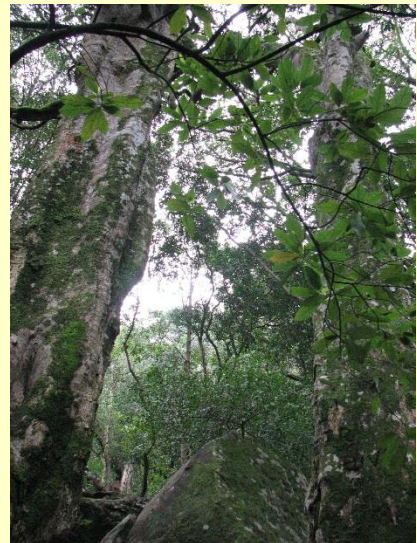
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Specials on SAIF handbooks!

The SAIF is currently running specials on the three handbooks described below. Please contact Corine (details on front page of newsletter) to take advantage of the specials.

1. Fire Manager's Handbook on veld and Forest Fires:
 - a. Members – R300
 - b. Non-Members – R400
2. SA Forestry Handbook:
 - a. Members – R400
 - b. Non-members – R500
3. There is Honey in the Forest (History book):
 - a. Members – R100
 - b. Non-Members – R150



SAIF Distinguished Forestry Award: Prof Mike Wingfield

Prof Michael John Wingfield was responsible for establishing the Tree Protection Co-operative Programme (TPCP), Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), the Forest Molecular Genetics (FMG) programme, and the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology (CTHB). Together, these programmes have placed South Africa at the forefront of international efforts to deal with plantation health problems.

Prof Wingfield was awarded a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from University of Minnesota (1983) following an MSc from Stellenbosch University in plant pathology in 1979, a BSc Honours and BSc from University of Natal in 1976 and 1977 respectively. In 2008 he completed the Advanced Management Programme at Harvard Business School. For more than thirty years, Prof Wingfield has conducted high-quality, internationally respected research on tree pests and pathogens; including their taxonomy, population genetic, impacts and management. Amongst his most important contributions to forestry has been his role as advisor to more than 80 Ph.D., 80 MSc., in excess of 900 publications in internationally recognised, peer review journals, 12 books and monographs, contributed to 90 book chapters and conference proceedings, and been included in over 400 published abstracts from international presentations, many of which were invited plenary addresses.

He has served/serves in many distinguished positions around the world, including on the boards of numerous institutions: the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) (South Africa), the Advisory Committee of the Centraal bureau voor Schimmelcultures (Netherlands) from 2003 to 2012; the International Union for Forestry Research Organisations (IUFRO) as Full Board Member (2001 to 2010), Member of the Management Committee 2006 to 2010, and Vice President from 2010 to 2014, currently the President of IUFRO. Prof Wingfield also received numerous awards and honours for contributions to education and research in South Africa and internationally: elected as a fellow of scientific societies including the Royal Society of South Africa, Academy of Sciences of South Africa, the Southern African Society for Plant Pathology and the American Phytopathological Society, honorary member of the Mycological Society of America; received the President's award; Foundation for Research Development (1989-1992); Certificate of Merit, South African Association for the Advancement of Science (1990) and the Havenga Prize of the South African Academy for Arts and Science (1998). In 1998, he received the National Science and Technology Forum's award for the most outstanding contribution by an individual in the field of science, engineering and technology. He was also the recipient of the Christiaan Hendrik Persoon medal, highest award of the Southern African Society for Plant Pathology in 1999. In the same year, he was recipient of the University of Minnesota's Plant Pathology Distinguished Alumnus Award. In 2001, the University of Pretoria awarded him the Chancellor's Medal for Research, and he was the recipient of the Southern African Association for the Advancement of Science, 2005. In 2012, he received the Johanna van Westerdijk



award from the Centraal bureau voor Schimmelcultures (Netherlands Academy of Sciences). As testament to his profound contribution to African science, he received the highest scientific award from the African Union in 2013, the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Award.

In 2016 Prof Wingfield was honoured with the distinguished Leadership Award for Internationals by the University of Minnesota. This award is given by the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance (GPS) to those who have distinguished themselves in their post-university work as leaders in their professional careers. In 2017 Prof Wingfield was awarded one of only 50 "Friendship awards" from the Chinese government. This is the highest award conferred on foreign experts who have made an outstanding contribution to the country's social and economic progress. His academic contribution has been recognised through the bestowing of two honorary doctorates; one from the University of British Columbia (Canada) in November 2012 and one from North Carolina State University (USA) in May 2013.

Prof Mike Wingfield, born and bred in Durban, is married to Prof Brenda Wingfield, an accomplished geneticist, and with whom he has collaborated and who has contributed to his research over many years. Prof Wingfield is deeply committed to Science and Education in South Africa as well as in Africa. His research on tree diseases has allowed him to work with and provide mentorship to students from many parts of the world. He passionately believes that the "chain of mentorship" holds the key to resolving problems in the developing world. He strongly believes in teamwork, collaboration and long-standing relationships; which has typified his approximately 30 years of active research. His contribution to the body of science in general and in the field of tree pests and pathogens in particular has been profound, extensive and international in significance. He is an extraordinary scholar, but also an extraordinary leader, mentor, and friend to many scientists around the world.

Resisting Kryptonite

By Rob Thompson

Even people with limited exposure to the Marvel Comics' legion of superheroes will be able to imagine the following scene:-

A massive earthquake in the middle of the city. A displaced double-decker bus about to topple onto a young child desperately clinging to a puppy on a leash. Enter Superman, focussed on rescue, who takes the weight of the bus and starts to heave it singlehandedly out of harm's way. Without warning, and just as he has the full weight of the bus on his shoulders, he feels his strength waning. A green glow enters his peripheral vision and he realises with horror that his arch nemesis Lex Luther, has rolled a ball of Kryptonite, sourced from the Planet Krypton, his absolute Achilles heel, close to him. The bus descends at pace as his strength leaves him and there is nothing that he can do.....

Now enter the average South African forestry practitioner. The earthquake like chaos on the desk is the result of hours of annual budget planning and calculations. The cursed thing still doesn't balance but our hero persists and vows to overcome. After all, there can be no room for error. A misguided attempt at including any superfluous expenditure in the final edition will be ruthlessly cut back by those cold blooded accountants in the carpeted top office and the practitioners' name mercilessly slated in the Board room and higher corridors of power. Recovery from that is unlikely. He takes another sip of his tenth cup of coffee for the day and resolutely refocuses on becoming one with the budget, knowing full well, that, despite the level of pain he is in right now, he will overcome.

In another wing of the forestry office complex, another practitioner sweats nervously as he awaits a routine appointment with that most dreaded of adversary...the internal auditor. Did I do enough to control the Department expenditure? Do my monthly reports show any anomalies? Could I have been more cost efficient? I knew I shouldn't have appointed that contractor! Despite all of the illogical and negative thoughts racing through our practitioners mind, he finds peace in the fact that his conscience persistently whispers to him that he has been diligent throughout and has performed beyond expectation.

Out on one of the forestry estates, the environmental team executes an infield inspection of a valley bottom cut-off road. Has the established road been laid out as per plan? Has environmental impact been kept to the minimum? Will this operation meet FSC muster? How will we do in the next external audit? Have natural habitats and biodiversity been preserved as per our ethic and mission? The team members ultimately concur that all that could have been done, has been done. Disturbance in this managed area has been minimal and the company is open and willing for scrutiny.

All three cases allude to practitioners doing what is expected, often under difficult circumstances and in most

cases going beyond the call of duty in their daily activities. Such level of performance not dictated by any pro-forma, chance of reward, or recognition, but merely because "that's what they do!"In effect, they feel called to move the bus to safety and do so without question.

The challenge does not end there, however. Each practitioner carries with them, either in a pocket or hand bag, a small black box containing dreaded and lethal doses of South African sourced Kryptonite. The small black box is otherwise referred to as a smart phone and the Kryptonite is usually contained in an app called News 24.

Opening up this app at an inopportune moment is very likely to destroy the most hardy of practitioner, particularly one attempting, at the time, to responsibly ensure that judicious cost savings and expenditure are presented in the annual budget. A quick glance at the Zondo Commission findings, the extent of bribe monies allegedly paid monthly by Bosasa et al to amenable State employees and politicians and he is likely to throw his hands in the air and wonder just why he has to be so thorough and above board. His resolve may well weaken and doubts flood his mind. Damn Kryptonite!

Our colleague awaiting the internal auditor might sneak a peek at his app with the Eskom debacle hitting him straight between the eyes. Do they not get audited? How on earth was the expenditure ratified? And here I am having to explain each and every cost centre I deal with...how unfair is that? Damn Kryptonite!

In the vehicle on the way home from the road inspection, the environmental team head glances at the report of the tragic migration of flamingo adults away from the drought ravaged Kamfer Dam in Kimberley leaving thousands of fledglings to their fate. Here we are doing all we can for our environment but the powers that be ignore global warning signs and environmental indicators...why do we even bother? Damn Kryptonite!

The bus feels light in his hands again. Superman finds himself looking determinedly away from the glowing green orb of Kryptonite. He stares at the young child and his dog. They are worth saving and worth every sacrifice he can make to save them. He draws strength from that resolution and the bus falls away harmlessly. The child, more focussed on the dog than the events that have just unfolded, walks quietly away without even a backward glance. The Kryptonite orb dissipates in a cloud of dust.

As practitioners we so often have to draw energy from persons or things that we deem as worthy. That energy provides the fuel for us to do that which is required correctly, despite the negative influences of the Kryptonite that haunts us all.

We are all still here. We are contributing to our sector productively. The South African forestry industry thrives. We certainly must be finding something worthwhile in the daily turmoil that is South African life. Long may this continue.

W Cape SAIF member visit the University of Padua in Italy

In December 2018, Anton Kunneke (W Cape SAIF member) had the opportunity to visit the University of Padua (UP) in Italy. The trip was made possible by funding of the Marie Skłodowska–Curie Actions, Carbon smart forestry under climate change (CARE4C) project in which the University of Stellenbosch Department of Forest and Wood Science is partnered with a number of European Institutions, of which UP is one.

The purpose of the visit was to meet with researchers at UP and share knowledge in the analysis of data logged on onboard computers of forestry machines. In the bigger scope of the project data about utilization, production and fuel consumption will be used to estimate carbon emissions in forest operations as in contrast to carbon sequestered in forest ecosystems which is quantified in a different work package of the same project.

Just after arriving in Italy at the end of November 2018 Anton had an opportunity to visit part of the area affected in a disastrous wind throw of mainly Spruce trees at the end of October 2018. In the photograph on the Asiago plateau in northern Italy the size and devastation of trees can be seen where Anton and Gai Petit a colleague at UP pose next to an uprooted tree.



Harvesting contractors working on these wind thrown areas in northern Italy were visited to extract data from onboard computers and to learn about the operational challenges facing contractors in these areas. One of the challenges are that although there is high unemployment under young people in Italy it is very

difficult for contractors to attract people to the industry. In the picture below the harvesting team (two machine operators and chainsaw operator) is on their lunch break and also refilling machines.

Anton will present a slide show of his visit at the next Western Cape Branch meeting.



Equipping young forest leaders for a changing work environment

The forest sector has been facing significant changes in recent years due to various challenges including globalization, international trade, and climate change.

Naturally, this has also changed the nature of forest sector employment. Forestry careers have expanded beyond traditional forest administration and industry jobs. New 'green jobs' match a broader societal awareness for forest ecosystem services, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental education, recreation, tourism, and nature protection, for example.

These shifts in labour market trends call for a new generation of graduates with a strong foundation of knowledge in the context of current global issues. A new project run by European Forest Institute (EFI) in close collaboration with IFSA and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) has now been started to tackle this question. The project seeks to provide insight into the future labour market including changing professional skills. This will be done through systematic analysis of the development of employment in the forest sector globally. The project will start in December 2018 and last for three years. It will combine innovative student-based global empirical social research with networking and capacity building activities for forestry students.

Upcoming events

- 10–12 April 2019. Focus on Forestry Conference 2019. White River. CMO and Nelson Mandela University. See <http://www.cmogroup.net/cmoc-conferencing/>

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February 2019 birthdays



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|--------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 02-Feb | ZHANGAZHA F.P. | 14-Feb | ROUX J. |
| 02-Feb | MAKATU A. I. | 14-Feb | FERREIRA R.J. |
| 03-Feb | DAUGHERTY A.E. | 14-Feb | TJEKETSU T. |
| 03-Feb | DYER C. | 16-Feb | JONES W.R. |
| 03-Feb | ACKERMAN P. | 16-Feb | EGGERS E.E. |
| 04-Feb | JONES N.B. | 17-Feb | SCHAFFER G.N. |
| 04-Feb | REEVES D.C. | 20-Feb | RANCE W.B. |
| 04-Feb | MACGREGOR S. | 21-Feb | PAYNE N.A. |
| 05-Feb | HULL R.J. | 21-Feb | SMITH C.W. |
| 05-Feb | HARRISON G. | 21-Feb | ROSS T.I. |
| 06-Feb | KOTZÈ J. | 22-Feb | CHARLTON S.K. |
| 08-Feb | NEL J. | 22-Feb | DAY P.B.B. |
| 09-Feb | MAPETO T. | 23-Feb | HARDY P.H. |
| 12-Feb | KEYWORTH P.J. | 24-Feb | SCHUTZ C.J. |
| 12-Feb | CUARANHUA C.J. | 25-Feb | CARR J.C.M. |
| 13-Feb | McEWAN A.M. | 28-Feb | NIXON P.R.H. |
| 13-Feb | CRAFFORD S. | | |