Volume 6|
Issue 2

February 2025

Southern African Institute of Forestry

Delivering a professional service to forestry

Southern African Institute of Forestry, Postnet Suite 329, Private Bag X4, Menlopark, 0102
www.saif.org.za, saif@mweb.co.za

Contents:

Cover photograph taken from FSA Website

website@forestrysouthafrica.co.za

Editorial

A cruel, crazy, beautiful world …

We are only at the end of the second month of 2025 and such a lot has happened since the 1st of January!

I was reminded of the lyrics of part of a well-known song by one of South Africa's greatest artists, the late Johnny Clegg : "It's a cruel, crazy, beautiful world
Every day you wake up I hope it's under a blue sky
It's a cruel, crazy, beautiful world
One day when you wake up I will have to say goodbye
Say goodbye, it's your world so live in it
Goodbye, it's your world so live in it"

The United States has a new (or not so new) president. Load-shedding made an unwelcome return, there are several wars and conflicts taking place all over the world and one can rightfully say, we live in a crazy but yet, still a beautiful world! I heard from various sources that the forest and forest products industry in South Africa is going through a very tough time.

Foresters and other people working in our beloved industry, are some of the most resilient people on the planet. I frequently come across foresters who have 're-invented' themselves and changed course and even changed their career or made a new beginning.

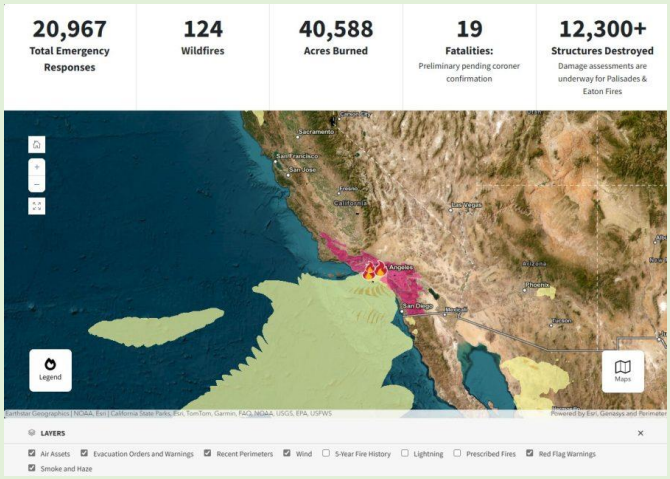
The song quoted above ends with the following phrase: "It's your world so live in it (it's your world so live in it)" which is repeated seven times !
So let us continue to live in our world and do our best to make a difference to those around us.

Fires, fires and yet more fires !!!

The author was tempted to respond to the massive fires experienced in Los Angeles, California during January and February 2025.

The Western Cape Province in South Africa also had its fair share of veld fires in January and February during the latter part of a hot dry summer.

During primarily two fires in Los Angeles named the ***Pallisades*** and ***Eaton*** fires respectively, at a certain stage the number the statistics showed the following numbers: The area affected stood at 40,588 acres (±16,425 ha) burnt with 19 fatalities and more than 12,300 structures destroyed as can be seen below.



Most critics immediately ascribed these huge and tragic events to Climate change. Some authors (experts) were however more cautious. One of them was Dr. Marty Alexander. Dr Alexander, long time Canadian wildland fire researcher, has reminded *Wildfire Today* of the 1974 publication by Clive M. Countryman, "Can Southern California Wildland Conflagrations be Stopped?".

Countryman was at the time of writing a wildland fire behaviour scientist with the USDA Forest Service in southern California. His paper was a reflection of the 1970 fire season in California where 16 people died and more than 200 000 hectares of land burned, and around 700 homes lost.
His statement on The Fire Problem barely differs from today:

- Climate, fuels, topography and people create fire problems
- Relatively few fires become conflagrations
- Conflagrations are most frequent during Santa Ana winds (the equivalent of SA Bergwinds)
- Suppression of Santa Ana fires is difficult

His other conclusions include:

- Fire prevention has limited value
- Firefighting techniques and equipment and not adequate

His solutions then rely on a range of fuel modification measures.

Suppression
As Carpenter noted in 1971 we need to all understand that once a fire gets to this size under these conditions all attempts to simply put it out are futile. The focus is on protecting people and strategic assets. The fire fighters on the ground and in the air understand this. Does the wider community understand this?? Does this explain all the anger that "someone should have done something", and the thinking that if it wasn't for a few empty hydrants and grounded aircraft (due to high winds) the fire would have been suppressed?

Fuel management
Many, many others since Carpenter have said you have got to better manage the fuels if you want to have any chance of managing the fire. What does good fuel management look like in southern California and when do we know that we have done enough? Would have it made a difference for these fires when it looks more like an urban conflagration with house to house burning?

Built environment
Are we living in the wrong places? If we know that wildfires are inevitable, why do we build homes in the middle of the highest wildfire risk areas? Any other day, it is clearly a wonderful place to live. But on days like 7 January 2025, this place was hell on earth. Do we place faith in the development of "fireproof" structures, or do we just accept that homes will burn?

Recovery
Once the emergency response phase settles and the debris is cleared, what does long term recovery look like? How do we build back better without just repeating the same mistakes? How does a community put aside the blame and divisions to work together on building long term resilience, and be ready for the next, inevitable, big fire?

There have been many articulate voices in the last few days with this Los Angeles Times article one of the better ones. It draws on wildfire researcher Dr.Jack Cohen, who encourages us to abandon our thoughts that this was a wildland fire and see it more as an urban fire that leapt from house to house, and fire historian Stephen Pyne who places today's fire within a century of fires across a whole continent.

Another author Hunter Bassler wrote as follows: “Historic Los Angeles (L.A.) wildfires are anything but unprecedented.” He points out that The Palisades Fire, and at least four other fires that ignited on the same day, were often called "unprecedented" by officials and the media, but they were anything but. These fires may well be the most destructive for L.A. but they are only unprecedented to those who have forgotten the past history of fire in the area - or forgotten the precedents of the Camp Fire of 2018 or the Australian Black Summer Fires of 2019-20 or Greece of 2023, and many others.

Whatever the cause of ignition, a combination of hurricane-force winds, drought, and an abundance of newly-grown vegetation that had quickly dried, created the perfect storm for rapid and destructive wildfire spread.

The wildfire risks for these parts of L.A. have been well documented over many years, and a similar conflagration happened in the city less than two decades earlier. One of the most read articles on Wildfire Today this week - possibly mistakenly due to their similarities - is a round-up of the 2019 fires around L.A.

Another huge fire in L.A. namely the Sayre Fire's destruction was largely driven by 50 to 80 mile-per-hour (80-130km/hr) gusts from the Santa Ana Winds, a phenomenon the National Weather Service (NWS) said happens yearly from September through May. The extreme winds occur when a region of high pressure over the desert Southwest flows toward low pressure near the Californian coast, which drastically increases wildfire risk due to their speed and dryness.

Drought and an abundance of dry vegetation also fuelled both the Palisades Fire and the Sayre Fire, and many other not-so-record breaking wildfires of recent times.

Similarly, Los Angeles has now experienced its second-driest period in almost 150 years of record keeping.

Ample vegetation, which grew and thrived during record-breaking rain seasons in the city during 2023 and 2022, dried up and was ready to burn.

Apart from the "perfect storm" scenarios of the Palisades and Sayre, experts have known for decades that much of California's land is dependent on fire. Nearly 10 years ago, researchers concluded that weather (mostly the Santa Ana winds) and the spatial distribution of built property were the key determinants of risk in the southern California landscape: "adequate planning of the changes in the built environment...is going to be vital for managing risk from fire under future climates

Almost 20 years ago, experts drew on studies from the early 1970s on ways to specifically stop conflagrations from burning in Southern California, saying "Through strategic fuel management planning, we could influence the total number and size of the (conflagration) occurrences as well as their geographic distribution and thereby mitigate the impacts of too much of the 'wrong kind of fire'".

Longer and more intense periods of wildfire weather are expected across the nation in the near future, especially, but not solely, in Southern California. Let's take this "opportunity" to work out what we know, what we can learn, and what we need to do to make meaningful change.

Here in our own country, I noticed when passing through greater Knysna area recently, that memories fade amazingly fast and we become complacent once again judging on the ever increasing fuel loads following the devastating 2017 and 2018 fires.

The key seems to be that everybody involved with veld- and forest fires (wildfires) should know the history, study long-term weather patterns, read the signs, and respond accordingly. The emphasis should also be to more pro-active and better prepared for the so-called fire storms. We should also be reminded that the only part of the Fire Triangle which we can control or effect, would be the Fuel which fires need to burn.

Resources :
Lessons from LA-what do we know ?
Wildfire Today - News and opinion about wildland fire (https://wildfiretoday.com)

An epic Ride !

By Rob Thompson

Older readers of this newsletter may remember the days when you could go to the office, or the plantation, and work the whole day productively and totally without laptops, cell phones, data loggers, the internet, APP's, et al. In fact, had you been asked at the time, you would have thought that a laptop was simply that space upon which you balanced your TV dinner in the evenings, a cell phone was the courtesy call given to prisoners to call their lawyer, data loggers were obviously lumberjacks working for a company called DATA, every tennis player knew how high the internet had to be, and APP was something you snuck off to do behind a bush whilst doing an enumeration.

Connectivity back in the day was a measure of one's ability to spend an evening out and about without buying any drinks for yourself. Electricity was a thing and was always available not that we needed it much. Handwritten letters and file notes required zero electron flow and land line telephones seemed to work just fine without even a single reference to towers and networks. Wonder on wonder the Post Office even worked!

We knew how to park vehicles back in the day. Yes, manual vehicles with that funny stick thing on the consol which you used to change gears. Some cars had cameras. An instamatic film camera left on the passenger seat in case something interesting appeared. Vehicle tracking was a thing. You told your wife you were headed to the office or elsewhere and you called before leaving once again to say you were on your way.

Foresters knew some stuff about forestry. They were able to speak Latin or at least disgorge reams of Latin names for trees both commercial and natural. They knew the basics of how to build a road, plant a commercial stand, care for the stand using something called Silviculture and even had insight into methods to harvest said stand once it had reached rotation, which every forester at the time knew was not only the movement of a wheel.

Who remembers paper maps? Yes, those ones that you could never get to fold up like it was before you unfolded it.

Those same maps that you could draw on using a Bic pen and share those map updates by means of simply lending the pen annotated map to a colleague.

Certification was something that those of us who went looney faced when being institutionalized for observation and an empathetic shock treatment course. Audits were conducted by the Regional Manager via the windscreen of your (manual) bakkie as you took him on a field visit. Audit reports were conveyed immediately. "This road needs grading", "My donner, Look at the state of that compartment!", "What's the time? 15:00? Vat my huistoe. I've seen enough".

Global warming had not been invented yet, but we did occasionally speak of a hole in the ozone layer wherever that may have been. No-one ever found the guy who made the hole as far as I know. Planning foresters were literally any foresters thinking about lunch. Had you asked us what a clone or hybrid was you would have certainly received a blank stare. We did however know that cuttings were what was required when preparing sandwiches. As for any reference to drones, the word had us immediately reflect back to those long and terrifying biometry lectures at Varsity.

Office work was something that one did on a Friday. Hand in some hand-written reports, give the general office secretary some letters to type, copy, post and file, use the landline to make a call or two (heaven help you if it was private call!), and attend the 10:00 and 15:00 official tea breaks in the tea-room. Oh, and if the receptionist tracked you down as the person responsible for the muddy boot prints on the pristine polished wooden floor…well suffice it to say there were some mysterious personnel disappearances back then just around the time when giant moles were leaving huge fresh mounds on the back-office lawn.

Meetings? Well meetings were hardly a thing at all. When they did occasionally happen, they were rather formal and large given that everyone had to travel to and from the venue in their (manual) vehicles. Teams meeting were just that. Teams in one room, in person. Flip charts were a thing as were khoki pens that never worked. Meeting venues were selected for bare wall space rather than window area for display of the (many) flip paper scribbles we created.

Many, many, foresters to this day, still bear the mental scars of enduring ridicule and disciplinary procedures for forgetting the Prestik.

Management was scary. A few select psychos chosen to lead the masses. Housed in that imposing and ethereal location called “Head Office” and pouncing on forester simpletons to come and present thinning plans and budgets. If your thinning plan was too fat or your budget unbalanced, then best you call in desperately sick or opt for the certification option. Working plans were just that. They meant work and lots of it. Lots of walking in compartments and planning and calculating and presenting and apologizing and doing it all over again. I understand that some foresters are still in that loop, forgotten and unable to escape, destined to go round and round forever.

We did not know the first thing about accountants, lawyers, HR specialists, IT specialists, FICA, RICA, GIS, CoC, remote sensing, satellites, or air fryers. None of us at the time though felt any the worse for this ignorance. Things carried on fast, furious, and regardless. Trees grew, we harvested them, we sawed them into planks or mushed them into pulp and the industry flourished…and we ate slap chips.

Foresters wore their faded Teesav shirts with pride and strode around purposefully in their well-worn and polished ankle boots. A Leatherman Wave permanently holstered on their belt and their right arm bearing a Hilux tan differentiating them from lessor mortals who chose less textured career paths. Theirs was the concept of broad scale natural resource management, facing the vacillating whims of Mother Nature head on and growling from between clenched teeth “Let’s plant some trees!”.

Fast forward into the future.

Gone are the right-arm tans and the manual vehicles. In are the self-park automatics, corporate office wear and pointy shoes. Out is the ability to work without electricity and an internet connection. In is a reliance on APP’s to tell us what the weather is doing, provide tick box guidelines for field inspections and to watch online movies. Out are landlines. In are cell phones and instant, global connectivity.

In are a host of non-forestry related disciplines working in forestry. Out are generalist foresters and in are siloed specialists.

This is a totally new world and yet the forest industry continues to flourish!

Its been an interesting journey witnessing the recent evolution of our industry.

If that experience is anything to go by then newcomers taking over from those outgoing, are in for an epic journey into the unknown! Enjoy the ride, it’s going to get interesting! Who knows, maybe automatic self-fly vehicles will become a thing…so fly carefully.

FORESTRY SOUTH AFRICA™

Forestry South Africa(FSA) announced dates for its Annual Regional Meetings

FSA will hold their Annual Regional Meeting in the Southern Cape at the following venue

- **Tuesday 1 April** (originally 24/04)| at 13:30 – S Cape at MTO Conference Room, George.
  NOTE: This will be a General Meeting of Members
- **Annual General Meeting**

  Thursday 22 May at 14:00 – *at Fern Hill Hotel & Conference Centre, Tweedie*

Fore more details , please contact Judy at the following address:

JB DOWSETT :PMB Office Manager

Tel: 033 346 0344; Cell: 084 556 9234

www.forestrysouthafrica.co.za

****

Role of Local Communities in the Management of Forest Resources

By Christopher Komakech

Indigenous knowledge provides sustainable practices essential for effective environmental conservation. Globally, traditional systems have proven their ability to manage resources, conserve biodiversity, and boost community resilience. Indigenous knowledge has been passed down through generations and remains integral to the daily lives of many communities in the world. Indigenous knowledge systems offer valuable insights into sustainable environmental management and conservation practices, which are increasingly recognized for their potential to address contemporary ecological challenges. Too many environmental efforts and initiatives in the world have failed because of a lack of appreciation for indigenous knowledge. You can't just impose a new way of doing things on people without considering why they have stuck with the old ways. In this article, two communities (Yakama and Kikuyu) are separated by thousands of kilometers apart yet share similar traditional value systems in sustainable management of natural resources.

The Yakama Nation suffers from high poverty and unemployment; a 2005 report indicated that 42.8% of Yakama Nation families lived in poverty. As of 2017, there was a wait list of 1,800 families for tribal housing, and high rates of homelessness. In 2016, an encampment at the reservation was set up by about 130 people evicted from tribal housing. Members of the tribe responded by building tiny houses, but the structures do not have plumbing and are not viewed as a permanent solution.

The tribe undertakes sustainable forest management activities seriously, including a lumber mill that supports several hundred jobs in the region. The tribe owns one of the largest commercial forests in the country, which makes up a sizable percent of the tribe's income. Yakama Indian Reservation covers roughly 1.3 million acres (about 2,000 square miles) of south-central Washington including the eastern portion of Mount Adams. Most of the reservation is closed to non-tribal members and the Yakima are rightfully protective of their land, rarely granting access to visitors.

These sacred mountains lie on the western end of the Yakama Indian Reservation in Washington State with the day humdrum of contemporary life in the lowlands and agricultural areas, they find solace in the high country, timber, and trees. They listen to the trees. Therefore, there is a need to realise the Indigenous people's concerns when they learn more about what is happening not only to their reservations but also what is happening around the world.

In their culture, they are constantly reminding their children that much food and medicine grows in the timber. With access to different foods that come out of the ground; even the black moss that hangs from the pine trees in the high countries is food to them. It has a particular way of being prepared, as do all other foods. The forest also provides them with the greatest pharmaceutical drugstore that we know of. Communities are engaged in activities that maintain all of the foods and medicines that they depend on a sustainable basis.

In their forest management practices, they try to dissuade clear-cutting. They try to maintain the protection, first of all, of the resource itself; next, the protection of the environment; and next, the protection of animal habitats. The animals are part of the cultural lifeline and a web of life that they all weave. The next is aesthetics, which they wish to see as the old way of looking at the forest. And the bottom line is the natural foods and medicines. They believe that when you continue to manage a forest for economic reasons only, trees are grown a certain distance apart to allow more of the sun, to allow that trees perhaps expand faster, then you are forgetting about the numerous foods and medicines that are necessary to preserve and protect culture. Interventions which assist in a manner to dissuade putting a continuing burden upon Mother Earth, which disallows any destruction of the great environment that our ancestors witnessed are encouraged.

In Africa, the Kikuyu (Bantu-speaking) people who live in the highland area of south-central Kenya, near Mount Kenya share similar beliefs to the Yakamas. According to Kikuyu culture, every member of the family must take care of the earth, cultivate it,

A : Mount Adams (USA), towering over Yakama lands (A)

B: Mount Kenya is Africa's second-highest mountain (B)

and also make sure that the whole environment is taken care of. It was known from the beginning that God gave the Kikuyu people a very good earth near Mount Kenya, the second-highest mountain in Africa. The Kikuyu name for Mount Kenya is Kĩrĩ Nyaga (Kirinyaga) which translates as "God's Resting Place," and the people believe God gave them the earth to care for on behalf of their children.

The Kikuyu people believe that God (Ngai or Mwene Nyaga) lived on Mount Kenya when he came down from the sky and that he gave a guarantee that the Kikuyu people would take care of the earth for the generations to come after their death. The Kikuyu knew very well that the earth was given to them by God for their children. The earth is more important to the Kikuyu than many other things. It is considered a shame for children to be lazy and not take care of the earth. This is well elaborated in a Kikuyu proverb; "*You must treat the earth well. It was not given to you by your parents. It is loaned to you by your children*."

Research shows that this is an ancient proverb referred to in different parts of the world. In North America among the Native American Indians, the Oglala Sioux people say: *"Treat the earth well. We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children."*.

Translations in other languages of interest**:**

Rigita thi wega; ndwaheiruio ni aciari; ni ngombo uhetwo ni ciana ciaku. (**Kikuyu**)
Itunze arthi vyema; hukupewa na wazazi; bali umekopeshwa na wazao wako. (**Swahili**)
Il faut bien traiter la terre. Ce n'est pas vos parents qui vous l'ont donnée. Mais, elle vous est prêtée par vos enfants. (**French**)

Kufanele uwuphathe kahle umhlaba. Awunikezwanga abazali bakho. Ubolekwe izingane zakho. (IsiZulu)

This article aims to take a fresh and creative look at the critical environmental and development partners' issues our planet is facing and to propose ways to improve cooperation when dealing with these issues.

Kikuyu and Native American proverbs acknowledge that our globe has a fragile envelope and conservationists need to take care when manipulating the forests: In Tropical Africa as we all know, forestry needs to focus primarily on fuel and wood policies. What we need is to support forestry research organizations when enlarging agro-forestry with all its benefits. As a consequence, forestry research should act with political support only. New institutions equipped with up-to-date resources need to be created, while old institutions have to be trans-

formed to better tackle current problems and propagate viable solutions when found. Forestry must herefore be taken out of the woods and into the political arena where policy decisions are discussed.

A central fact of our time is the collapse of the long-term view as a buffer against harsh reality. Everything has doubled within a short period: the population, forest depletion, energy demand and so on. The time, once comfortably measured in generations, has now collapsed to a matter of relatively few years. For policymakers, the difference between long-term and short-term decision-making is disappearing fast when it comes to issues of environment and development. Many severe changes in our environment will, therefore, appear immediately, already in our children's lifetime. Policymakers must consequently not ignore the work of environmental scientists. The explosion of the human population; tremendous rising pressure on tropical forests; disastrous results in the soil; expanded desertification, climate change, etc., are facts already immediately in front of us. Alarming information is needed, but constructive recommendations must also be given. The aim is to shake the consciousness of people and governments.

We expect new information from scientists and new ideas for alternatives to prevent destructive practices. Natural resource management has to take offence to champion sustainable developments. Further on we must realize the word “security” has different meanings. Security for billions of people around the globe means food, shelter, and a job. We need an arsenal for providing this kind of security. This arsenal needs protection is the trees, forests, soils and water bodies. The need for food is directly related to the fate of the forests. We need development without the destruction of natural assets. It should respect three main principles.

- Sustainable livelihood security
- Accelerated economic growth without harming life-support systems; and
- People's participation in the implementation of development plans.

In the ecological and agricultural rehabilitation plans, agroforestry, Sylvi-horticulture and Sylvi-pastoral systems are the promising ones.

Celebrating World Wetlands Day: The Role of Private Landowners in Conserving South Africa’s Wetlands

By Hlengiwe Ndlovu, Chair of Forestry South Africa’s Environmental Management Committee

World Wetlands Day, celebrated annually on February 2nd, highlights the critical ecological services provided by wetlands and their threatened conservation status. The day also serves as a reminder of the significant role South African landowners can play in protecting these vital habitats through active and sustained environmental stewardship.

South Africa’s wetlands are biodiversity-rich ecosystems that support a diverse array of plant and animal life, including endemic and threatened species. By acting as natural water filters, wetlands improve water quality while regulating hydrological cycles, thus helping to prevent incidents of flash flooding and playing a crucial role in water security.

A 2021 survey of South Africa's forestry landholdings found that more than 300 000 hectares (ha) of natural and semi-natural habitats that are actively managed and maintained within the forestry landscape. This includes more than 171 000 ha of grasslands and their connected wetland systems. Through active environmental stewardship of these habitats, forestry companies can play a significant and positive role conserving key ecosystems like wetlands, along with threatened, endangered, and endemic species they support.

CASE STUDY: Protecting the Long-Toed Tree Frog

Sappi's Pinewoods plantation in KwaZulu-Natal is home to a diverse range of species, including the recently discovered Long-toed Tree Frog (Leptopelis xenodactylus), which is classified as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).The presence of the Long-toed Tree Frog – distinguished by uniquely long toes and reduced webbing – allows it to navigate grasslands and perch on blades of grass. This signals that the wetlands and grasslands in this forestry area are healthy and support biodiversity. These factors demonstrate that production landscapes and indigenous areas can coexist, highlighting the potential conservation value of these multifunctional landholdings.

In a forestry context, environmental stewardship is a multifaceted commitment that integrates sustainable management practices with collaborative efforts to restore and reconnect natural habitats and the ecological services they provide. Such stewardship cannot be done in isolation, as ecological services and natural habitats extend beyond boundaries of the forestry landscape. It demands collaboration between various public and private stakeholders, both individuals and organisations, coupled with active investment in research and innovation to guide and enhance conservation efforts.

Setting international benchmarks :
Over 85% of forestry-owned land in South Africa is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®), with 40% holding dual certification through the Sustainable African Forestry Assurance Scheme (SAFAS), which is endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).

International certification requires adherence to a suite of sustainable management practices that often surpass national legislative requirements. In a wetland context, these include measures designed to prevent forestry operations from encroaching on wetlands, the implementation of buffer zones to filter out pollutants and sediment, and, where necessary, restorative processes. Responsible management practices aligned with international certification standards have seen South Africa's forestry sector setting a benchmark for other landowners to proactively manage environmentally sensitive areas both within and beyond their boundary lines.

Restoring balance – Repairing Historical Impacts
Over the past three decades, the forestry industry has undergone a significant transformation driven by advancements in technology, research, and innovation. The evolution has reshaped how the sector thinks, operates and conducts business, with a strong focus on sustainable practices that emphasise environmental and social stewardship. As part of this shift, hundreds of hectares of trees planted near wetlands before 1972 have been removed. In areas where wetlands have been damaged or lost due to historical forestry practices, restoration projects – often undertaken in collaboration with conservation organisations – have been initiated to revive these ecosystems.

CASE STUDY: Reviving the Karkloof Catchment
The Karkloof catchment is a network of rich wetlands that form part of the water catchment for the greater Durban and Pietermaritzburg area. It is also highly productive agricultural land, intensively used to produce food and wood fibre.

Approximately 170 ha of a larger floodplain wetland at the confluence of the Karkloof, Kusane, and Mnalweni Rivers are owned and managed by Sappi. Over the past century, this area has seen a dramatic transformation from ploughed floodplains in the 1930s to plantation forestry in the 1970s. However, since more than 70 ha of planted trees, and since 1998, the implementation of an active management plan for controlled burning, grazing and weeds, like St Joseph Lily and brambles. Wetland assessments in 2023 indicated that the Shafton/Kusane wetlands are in good health, but also highlighted some opportunities for further improvement, particularly continued weed control along the wetland margins. Sappi remains committed to this positive trajectory, once again giving due recognition for wetlands as a species-rich habitat for aquatic and terrestrial life. It is just another reason by Karkloof Valley is a nature rich and beautiful asset.

Stewardship with a Bird's Eye View
For meaningful and widespread impact, environmental stewardship and conservation initiatives must be viewed at a landscape level, with the buy-in of a wide range of stakeholders. While this inevitably adds a layer of complexity, this unlocks far greater potential for delivering sustained positive impact.

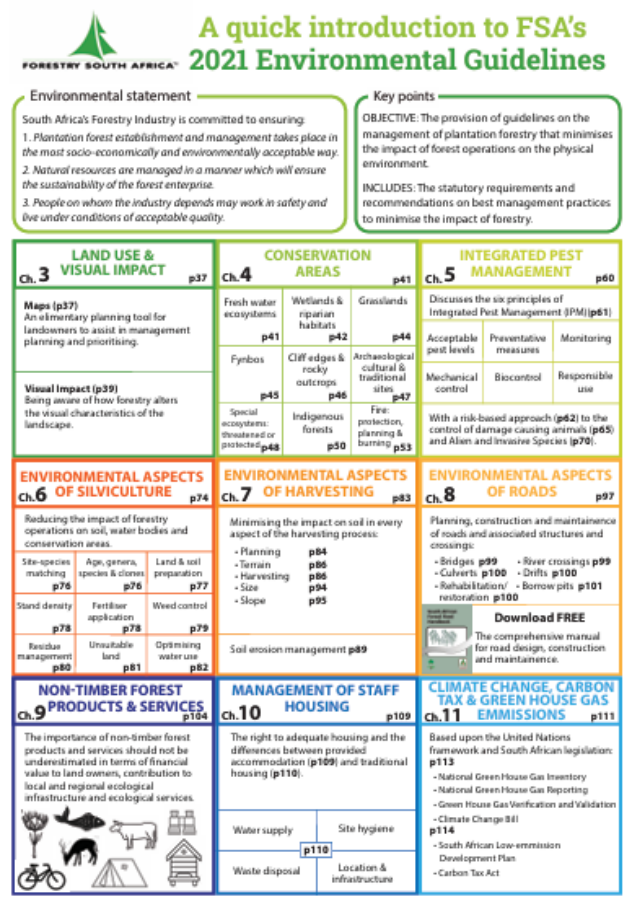
Water stewardship exemplifies this approach, shifting the focus to catchment level and requiring the forestry sector to engage and collaborate with a collective of interested and affected stakeholders to achieve tangible outcomes.

Continuous Improvement for Conservation
Research helps us understand the interaction between forestry practices and wetland health and drive innovative solutions that enhance conservation by linking with academic and research partners, government departments and environmental organisations, the forestry sector constantly develops and refines best practices that balance conservation with sustainable timber production. As a sector, we firmly believe this has become the way we do business, and recognise that in an evolving world, there will always be space to improve.

As we celebrate World Wetlands Day, we are reminded of the critical role these ecosystems play in ensuring water security, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience. Wetlands are the lifeblood of our planet, supporting all living creatures—including humans—and creating opportunities for sustainable development in rural communities. The forestry sector has the tools, partnerships, and commitment to make a lasting difference. By investing in restoration, adopting sustainable practices, and collaborating with stakeholders, we can safeguard wetlands for future generations. Together, we can ensure that these vibrant ecosystems remain a source of life, inspiration, and prosperity for years to come.

Source:
https://www.forestrysouthafrica.co.za/world-wetlands-day-the-role-of-private-landowners-in-conserving-south-africas-wetlands/

Environmental Guidelines for Commercial Forestry Plantations in South Africa



As an extension of the publication of the latest version of the Environmental Guidelines for Commercial Forestry Plantations in South Africa (Revision 5 - 2024) in December 2024, the very useful Forester Guidelines will be updated and published shortly. Please note that several other useful guidelines are available on https://www.forestrysouthafrica.co.za/

Environmental Guidelines Forester's Versions

- Grassland Management - p44
- Indigenous Forest Management - p50
- Residue Management - p80
- Weed Control in the Compartments - p79
- AIS in Natural Areas - p79
- Soil Conservation on Unpaved Roads - p42
- SAGERS - p111
- Land and Soil Prep - p77

14th Fire Management Symposium link

It has been a while since the Fire Symposium at Halliwell in KZN.

As promised, please refer to the link attached that will take you to all the presentations of the different sessions : livenmmuac-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hannesvz_mandela_ac_za/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fhannesvz_mandela_ac_za%2FDocuments%2F2024%2F14th NMU Fire Symposium&ga=1

For more information, contact Tiaan Pool
Designation: Head of Department (Forestry and Wood Technology) at NMU George Campus
Cell: 072 3742347
E-mail: tiaanp@mandela.ac.za
Or Hannes van Zyl : hannesvz@mandela.ac.za

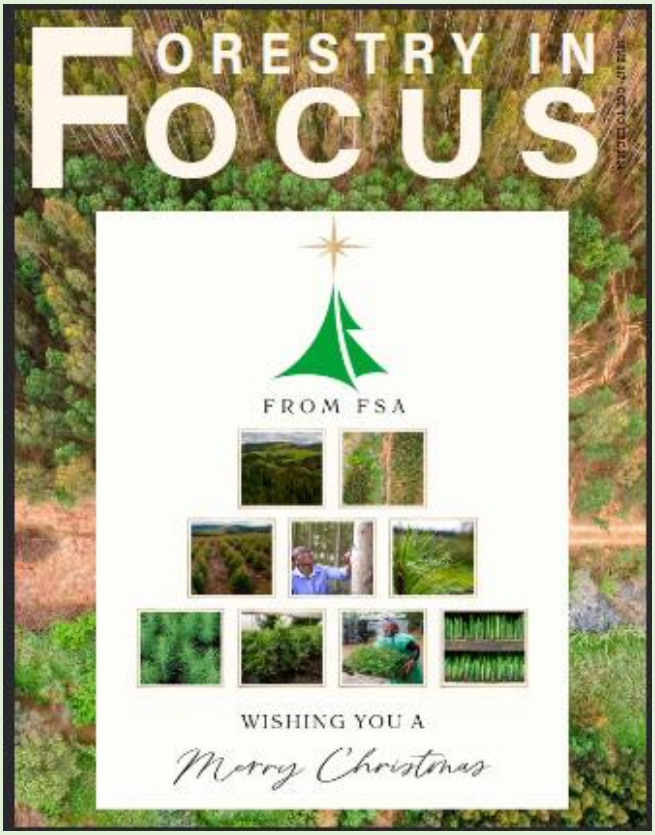
Forestry Science SYMPOSIUM

Showcasing the Scientific advances that are keeping the Forestry Sector internationally competitive

Over two days, 51 speakers presented their research in one of 11 chaired sessions to an industry audience comprising of over 200 individuals from across the forestry value chain. A further 27 researchers presented their findings in the form of posters, which audience members could view during the session breaks, lunches and cocktail event. The Symposium also produced five Award Winners, voted for by the organising committee.
Congratulations to:
Dr Jacob Crous – Best Full Presentation (open category)
Ms Michelle Pretorious – Best Full Presentation (student)
Dr Danvir Ramesar – Best Speed Talk (open category)
Mr Nigel Kombora – Best Speed Talk (student)
Mr Lihan Esterhuizen – Best Poster

All the presentations can be accessed in Forestry in Focus Issue No. 16 , Final of 2024.

FSA Forestry in Focus Issue No. 17



We are committed to delivering the best content for and about our sector.

Visit saforestryonline.co.za **and** woodbizafrica.co.za

https://www.forestrysouthafrica.co.za/tip-mag/
www.forestryexplained.co.za
https://forestry.co.za/

https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/tsfs16

References and Links to Relevant Websites for further reading

https://www.loggingon.net/

Why Subscribe?

Forest Engineering (logging) includes timber harvesting, tree processing, extraction and transport of forest logs and biomass. It also includes all forest road activities.
Human aspects are very important as the work conditions need to be optimised to create a safe and productive working environment. The forest engineering part of the value chain normally has the highest cost.

https://www.fabinet.up.ac.za/

https://cmogroup.io/

SAIF Contact Details

	Name	Email
President	Prof. Bruce Talbot	president@saif.org.za
Vice-president	Dr. Christopher Komakech	christopher.komakech@gmail.com>
Past-president	Braam du Preez	past-president@saif.org,za
National secretary	Ms. Intsia Kriel	admin@saif.org.za/ saif@mweb.co.za
SF Journal Editor	Dr. David Everard	drdavideverard@gmail.com
KwaZulu-Natal	Lelethu Sinuka (Acting)	kzn@saif.org.za
Gauteng	Vacant	gauteng@saif.org.za
Mpumalanga	Vacant	admin@saif.org.za
Southern Cape	Dr. Tatenda Mapeto	southern-cape@saif.org.za
Western Cape	Vacant	western-cape@saif.org.za
DFFE representative	Vacant	

The following members have celebrated their birthdays in February

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS			
02 Feb	FRANCIS ZHANGAZHA	13 Feb	STEPHAN CRAFFORD
02 Feb	AZWIANEWI MAKATU	14 Feb	JOLANDA ROUX
03 Feb	ARTHUR DAUGHERTY	16 Feb	WAYNE JONES
03 Feb	WILLEM HOLLESTEIN	17 Feb	AVELILE CISHE
04 Feb	NICKY JONES	17 Feb	GAVIN SCHAFER
05 Feb	ROBIN HULL	21 Feb	NIGEL PAYNE
05 Feb	GRAEME HARRISON	21 Feb	COLIN SMITH
06 Feb	JACOB KOTZè	21 Feb	TIM ROSS
08 Feb	JOHAN NEL	22 Feb	PHILIP DAY
09 Feb	TATENDA MAPETO	22 Feb	OWEN PETERSEN
12 Feb	PETER KEYWORTH	23 Feb	PETA HARDY
12 Feb	ABONGILE PAMA	24 Feb	KYLA VAN ZYL
13 Feb	ANDREW McEWAN	25 Feb	JEREMY CARR

The following members will be celebrating their birthdays in March

MARCH BIRTHDAYS			
02 Mar	KAREN KIRKMAN	20 Mar	ANDRE NEL
08 Mar	ALMUTH HAMMERBACHER	20 Mar	LOUIS DE KOCK
04 Mar	BRUCE BREEDT	20 Mar	IZETTE GREYLING
10 Mar	SIPHELELE MASONDO	21 Mar	STUART CHRISTIE
11 Mar	DEREK MTOLO	21 Mar	KWANELE MAPHALALA
12 Mar	KEITH LITTLE	22 Mar	NAVESH NAIDOO
12 Mar	BARRY MULLER	23 Mar	ROGER POOLE
13 Mar	TEMBA VILANE	24 Mar	ARNULF KANZLER
17 Mar	IVAN MUIR	25 Mar	FARAI BEPETE
18 Mar	SPHIWE MFEKA	26 Mar	ANTON DE BEER
18 Mar	COERT GELDENHUYS	30 Mar	JOEL CELE
19 Mar	VOLLEY KEYSER	31 Mar	SCHALK JACOBS

The SAIF would like to wish every member who has celebrated their birthday in February as well as those who will celebrate their birthday in the month of March , a very Happy Birthday and congratulations with reaching another milestone. God bless.

The Southern African Institute of Forestry

Handbook order form

The Southern African Institute of Forestry publishes three industry specific handbooks.

I would like to order:

☐ **South African Forestry Handbook**
Price: SAIF members: R400
Non members: R500

☐ **Fire Manager's Handbook on Veld and Forest Fires**
Price: SAIF members: R300
Non members: R400

☐ **There's Honey in the Forest**
Price: SAIF members: R100
Non members: R150

International orders must contact the Secretariat for a quote due to currency and postage fluctuations.

A bulk discount of 10% applies on orders of 10 or more copies.
Price includes VAT.

An extra R50 per book will be charged if we need to courier the book to you.

I am ☐ a member ☐ non-member of the SAIF.

Name	
Company	
Postal address	
Contact number	
Email address	

Bank details: Nedbank Branch code: 169745 Account: 1697009913 Account name: SAIF
Email proof of payment to: saif@mweb.co.za.