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# Southern African Institute of Forestry



#### Delivering a professional service to forestry

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

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SAIF Calendar May 2021 : Photographer : Philip Fischer : Mpumalanga Branch : "View over Inkwezi"

#### From the President's desk

#### **Collaborations and Networks**

The approach to knowledge production has become a combination of collaborations within networks, indicating that professional contacts and interactions are important in the production of scientific knowledge. Scientific networks are able to expand the horizons of knowledge sources and stimulate the exchange of ideas that lead to the creation of more new knowledge. Scientists tend to increase their knowledge and capacity as they increase their interaction with other scientists.

These interactions lead to new research alliances, coproduction of knowledge, dissemination of information and collaborative research enterprises. Collaboration consists of a combination of research units, such as scientists and institutions within and across countries sharing resources and ideas with the aim of generating collective outputs. Considering the network as a form of social capital, scientists employ a variety of networks configured in a way to enable their and knowledge research generation. These professional linkages and network ties are instrumental in harnessing resources, which lead to productive outputs. For the South African forest industry to thrive, measures to encourage professional activities, networking and collaboration can lead to a further increase in productivity of academics and scientists in the country.



In a time when funding is limited and scientific knowledge generation and capacity building is under threat, it takes leaders and scientists of a particular calibre to push on and find suitable network links and resources to support both academic and applied scientific outputs. The recent 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Tree Protection Co-operative Programme (TPCP) and the Department of Science and Innovation's (DSI) National Research Foundation (NRF) Centre of Excellence in Plant Biotechnology (CPHB) meeting within the University of Pretoria's Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) clearly demonstrates the power of networks and collaborations. These groups continue to produce world class scientific research, peer reviewed papers and applied solutions for the forest industry. This has all been made possible through forging new links and collaborations with the forest industry, parallel industries in agriculture, engineering, data science and partners worldwide. Similarly, various universities and institutions across the country participating in forestry programmes face challenge of managing networks the and collaborations to sustain and grow academic and applied scientific outputs.

During this Covid19 lock down period, methods of electronic communication changed significantly, with the use of various new approaches. One example of keeping the lines open and increasing the interaction between scientists has been through webinars run by a number institutions. A particular example has been the efforts of the Tree Breeding Co-operative, Camcore, based at North Carolina State University (NCSU), which has been instrumental in linking all their worldwide partners, collaborators and scientists through regular training sessions and talks across all aspects of tree breeding and data analysis.

Finally, some key points. The value of collaboration is necessary for researchers to address complex research issues that otherwise cannot be addressed by individual researchers.

Due to the increased specialization in science, there is a need for individual researchers to keep their own activities focused and specialized. Thus, when addressing complex problems, researchers, need to pool expertise together to exchange ideas through interdisciplinary collaborations. Secondly, collaboration is important for researchers' sustainable development in knowledge creation. Thus. continuous learning and knowledge transfer are critical for researchers to remain relevant in their respective fields in an ongoing knowledge creation process. Additionally, by working together in collaboration, research costs can be shared, and research facilities can be better optimised and utilised. Furthermore, as researchers focus and specialise, their advancement at the frontier of each research field can be lonely. An individual may partially overcome this intellectual isolation by collaborating with others and forming working relationships with them.

Research collaboration networks are best developed organically from the bottom-up, rather than superimposed from top-down. However, the practice of building research collaboration networks to improve research productivity can be challenging. It is valuable to note that more collaboration connections do not always lead to higher research productivity. Being able to develop and maintain collaboration networks at a certain sweet spot, or a sustainable network of interactions with clearly defined goals, is critical and challenging.

**Huang JS. 2014**. Building Research Collaboration Networks - An Interpersonal Perspective for Research Capacity Building. The Journal of Research Administration 45: 89-112.

**Sooryamoorthy R. 2016**. Scientific networks in the production of knowledge in South Africa. South African Journal of Science: 112 #a0155, 3 pages

http://dx.doi. org/10.17159/sajs.2016/a0155



#### 



The South African Forest and Forest Products Industry lost a major ally and friend on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2021 when Louis Heyl passed away 11 days short of his 77<sup>th</sup> birthday. Although he was not a forester by training but an Indistrial Engineer, he became and expert and top advisor on the techno-economic aspects of the South African Timber and Paper Industry for companies like Mondi, Sappi and York Timbers as well as the Forestry Department.

He does not only leave a wonderful legacy at his Alma Mater the University of Pretoria where he established the "Louis Heyl Prize" for the best Final Year Project in Industrial Engineering in 2021, but also to other people who came into contact with him and who benefitted from his mentoring.

The members of the SAIF would like to offer their condolences to the family and net of kin of Louis Heyl.

#### Women in Forestry (Part 3) : Katy Johnson



#### Forestry South Africa consultant Website, social media and promotions portfolio Qualifications:

- BSc (hons) Biology
- PhD Biology

Over a decade of experience in the television and digital media industry.

#### WHY I LOVE WORKING IN THE FORESTRY SECTOR

I have fallen in love with the forestry sector and how it impacts our lives without most of us realising. The fact that it is a sustainably managed, natural resource, which can be recycled excites me. I love the patchwork nature of forestry, with its hidden conservation spaces, recreational opportunities and breath-taking vistas. I love the people involved in forestry; their jobs may be diverse but their passion for the industry brings them together. I love spending time understanding the jobs of others in the industry, visiting upliftment programmes in rural communities, or spending time with the scientists and researchers changing the face of forestry. I'm often overwhelmed by the diversity of forest-based products that go far beyond those we take for granted such as toilet paper, pencils and roofing trusses, and includes low-fat yoghurt, washing powder, creams, glues, paints, flavourings, sweeteners, green fuels and clothing. The thing I love most is that like the trees, this is an industry which is constantly growing and evolving, and I believe will help us solve many of the global challenges we currently face.



#### The Rob Thompson Column The pebble in the pathway

The pulpwood trading sector of the forestry industry, in which I am involved, requires diligent monitoring of the Rand / US Dollar exchange rate. Given export trade in dollar terms, our palms become all sweaty and our stomachs do a few turns, when our own currency increases in value and deflects dollars earned.

Whilst monetary currency is important to all of us, forestry is however inherently reliant on another form of currency which is arguably far more important than money. Let's explore the concept...

#### That currency is time.

Most readers of this article are likely to have completed some form of tertiary training and have been involved with their careers for anything from 1 to 30 plus years. Within the span of the average foresters career, just over three rotations of hardwood can be grown, or one (and a bit) rotation of softwood. The mind boggles at the time currency expended in producing the product that provides us with our livelihoods. People outside of the industry often battle to understand the strange concept of long-term forestry rotations given that their time currency expenditure experience is likely to be considerably less. After all, machine produced widgets or service delivery are more immediate product offerings.

Even outside of our careers, time currency remains the focus of us all.

- "Wow, where has all the time gone? It's already May?"
- "Man, that lockdown period was long...l thought it would never end!"
- "Phew, that was a trauma...three months without being able to buy a beer!"
- "So...How many days until the next long weekend? I can do with a four day break".

I don't think that we actually realise just how much we measure what we do, and our experiences, in terms of time. Arguably however, we are more worried about the passing of time than we are of monetary currency.

Browsing through a shop selling bric-a-brac the other day, we recognized articles that had been in vogue years ago and memories came flooding back:-"Hey, we had a radio like that in our house...look at the valves!".

"That looks like the suit you got married in...check out the rolled up cuffs!"

Generally we view time through the filters of our immediate environment, our own memories, and experiences as we grow older. We give no real thought to times outside of those filters except perhaps when looking at a family heirloom or a history book. We see ourselves at the center of time and more often than not, perceive that the manner in which we are spending the time allotted to us, as being all encompassing and significantly important.

It only took a recent geological-themed excursion to a local nature reserve, to shatter my concept of time, and in particular, any illusions of grandeur I may have previously had as to my contributions towards the greater scheme of things. It also provided a greater perspective of the time concept and what actually constitutes "a long time".

Our very knowledgeable guide informed us that he was going to give us some perspective as to the landscape panning out before us. He instructed us to line up in single file and then to turn shoulder to shoulder and take one step forward. Putting aside doubts as to the wisdom of having paid hard money currency to an individual who was clearly slightly unbalanced, we complied.

Our guide explained that that a single step represented around 1.8 million years in time, and that this one step had taken us symbolically slightly into the current Cenozoic era, placing us amongst the early mammals and before the occurrence of humans.

He then asked us to take 65 steps further. Have you ever seen the chaos that ensues when you ask adults to try and walk in a uniform single line? Sergeant Majors over many decades have grappled with this challenge. Semi-order was restored around 65 to 70 steps later (adults seemingly battle to walk and count at the same time) and we were told to imagine ourselves now in the Mesozoic period just as a



wayward meteor has put paid to dinosaur life and the first flowering plants were showing off. Rather than attempting another uniform advance, which clearly would have been a hiding to disaster, our guide pointed out a tall tree on the horizon, some 200 meters further on. This he said was the beginning of the Paleozoic era.

He warned us to be careful given that this era culminated in an extinction event possibly again meteoric by cause. He indicated that if we looked carefully we would see signs of early reptiles and that we would be standing on a rather rickety super continent known as Gondwanaland. Rickety given that it was in the process of breaking up into separate individual continents with sifting tectonics leading to the formation of the Drakensberg.

Another 500 steps would take us into the Precambrian eon where the anglers amongst us would have been able to tackle the first forms of life in the sea. Another 2500 steps (whilst we would all have been well out of the boundaries of the reserve), we would have been just in time to see the first rock formations on the earths new crust. As we retraced our 65 faltering steps, there were many comments made at just how well this exercise had illustrated the concept of "deep time". It also burnt a few calories which was a bonus!

We set off on the excursion and around a kilometer in, stopped at an inconspicuous spread of small pebbles in the path. Expecting a more impressive geological feature, we looked at our guide in anticipation. He bent down and picked up a small pebble and encouraged us all to do the same. He explained that the pebble that we held had been on an incredible journey. Most likely eons ago, it was part of the earth's crust and perhaps transformed in composition to become part of a mountain range. An inland sea may have caused it to erode away from its parent material and land up on the sandstone deposit on which we now stood today. Imagine all the recent historic events that have occurred whilst that pebble lay there...World wars, the Anglo Boer war, technological advances...amazing!

Going back to our symbolic walk back into deep time, just how many steps would we have needed to walk back to find our pebble at the time of its origin? Considering that there is a school of scientific thought that places the earth as being circa 5 billion years old, the thought process to conceptualize the time currency of our small pebble is well beyond most of us. A silence enveloped the group as we considered the words of our guide and an aura of humility became tangible.

Further on into the walk, we came across a pile of rocks in a field. By this time, we are all armed with some basic geological knowledge, and we identified basalt, dolerite, tillite and sandstone all deposited on the pile. When asked to come up with a theory as to how the rocks came to be in the pile, we realized just how dangerous a little knowledge can be. Elaborate theories of tectonic plates and volcanic activity were proffered, but to our disappointment, it turned out that human intervention had been the cause. Apparently the field had been cleared for agricultural purposes. Of course there were a lot of indignant remarks as to just how a nature reserve could allow such desecration within its boundaries. Indignation rapidly turned once again to humility when we learned that the rock pile had actually been created some 200 years ago and was perhaps an iron age settlement at the time. Time currency spent yet again and on a scale well beyond our contemporary and rather blinkered comprehension!

Back at home we looked around for the oldest items in the house. Some furniture dating back to the early century was all that we could come up with. The pebble in my pocket became all that more significant and special.

The planet which we inhabit is likely to continue well beyond our own existence. Now bringing in a little "Hitchhikers guide to the Universe" vibe...what will the tour guide in a million years' time be saying to his group?

"OK, I want you all to take a step forward" "This move represents the last million years. The period in which a robust and technically proficient mankind wiped itself out systematically via pollution and species annihilation"

"It's taken thousands of years for mankind and plant and animal species to recover from the plastic induced extinction event that scientists



believe gave rise to you all now having five legs, antenna and feeding tubes. We are about to start our walk so please be on the lookout for the glow cockroaches that can do great harm to you if disturbed. As you walk try and imagine that the sand on which you are walking was once covered in grass and trees which were a type of vegetation".

"If you look at that cliff face you can see the thick intrusive fossil plastic layer which still reveals almost pristine single use cups and receptacles".

"Over here is a pile of rocks? What do you think caused it?"

Time is a currency that we must all use wisely. We don't have the luxury of "deep time". Perhaps we should describe that which we have as "short time" with a really poor exchange rate?

We need to spend our time currency wisely given that our experience is NOW. Time waits for no-one. We are able to use it for as long as we have it. Perhaps we ought to reflect a little on time remaining rather than on time expended? As foresters we should be able to do that with aplomb given that we generally plan our operations well ahead.

Focus on spending out time wisely may just provide more relevance to our daily experience and hopefully an ultimately better narrative for that future tour guide to share!

#### Tree of the Month Liquidamber styraciflua

This tree is well known for its colourful autumn foliage (gold, amber, and scarlet red), *Liquidambar styraciflua* and is a deciduous tree native to North America. This beautiful tree has been cultivated all over the world for its stunning foliage and neat, upright growth habit.

It was given its genus name 'Liquidambar' by Linnaeus from the Latin liquidus and the 'amber', in allusion to the fragrant gum which exudes from the tree. This medium sized to large tree can grow up to 20 m in height, with a trunk up to 2m diameter. The Sweetgum is characterized with palmately lobed leaves with toothed marged margins that mature into a star shape. Another distinctive feature of the tree is the peculiar appearance of its small branches and twigs. They are attached to the bark in plates edgewise instead of laterally. The bark is a light brown tinged with red and sometimes gray with dark streaks. It is also deeply fissured with scaly ridges.

During spring and summer, the foliage is a glossy, rich dark green. When autumn approaches, the leaves turn brilliant orange, red and purple colours, which is most attractive. The Sweetgum is a fast grower which is frost hardy and it has moderate water requirements. Flowering takes place from September to October, with small, pale green flowers that develop into spherical, spiky seed pods. These seed pods can be messy and the spikes are fairly sharp.

Sweetgum is able to fix Nitrogen in the soil. This tree is grown for shade, as a specimen tree or for background planting on avenues or wide streets. The root system is aggressive hence this tree should not be planted in small gardens or close to buildings and underground utilities.

**Pronunciation:** lick-wid-AM-bar sty-rass-ih-FLOO-uh



A common & beautiful sight throughout many towns in South Africa during Autumn

Compiled by Barry Gush : Email: <u>sungardens.trees@gmail.com</u> Website: <u>www.suntrees.co.za</u>



#### **NEWS FROM FABI**

#### Brett Hurley Appointed As ICFR Research Associate

Professor Brett Hurley (SAIF Branch Chair for Gauteng) has been appointed as a Research Associate of the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research (ICFR) strengthening the long and close association between the Institute, especially with the ICFR's Dr. Ilaria Germishuizen, and the Tree Protection Co-Programme in FABI. operative This honorary appointment is a further step to increase the engagement with the ICFR on collaborative projects. The Institutes currently collaborate on several projects, including Gonipterus remote sensing, monitoring of Leptocybe invasa and its biological control agents and the Sirex biocontrol programme. Prof Hurley's research focuses on the study of insect pests of forest trees to develop knowledge-based management strategies.



Congratulations to Brett from all of us !



The Annual Tree Protection Co-operative Program (TPCP) Meeting hosted by the Forest and Agriculture Biodiversity Institute (FABI) based at the University of Pretoria took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 and was attended by many either in person or joining on-line. The meeting was followed by the TPCP Board Meeting

#### **Farewell to Darryl Herron**



Prof Slippers, Darryl & Prof M.Wingfield

On Thursday 29 April, a small group of "FABlans" gathered to say an emotional farewell FABI stalwart and PhD candidate Darryl Herron who leaves the Institute after 14 years to take up a research position at Scion in New Zealand. FABI Director Prof. Bernard Slippers thanked Darryl for his significant contribution to FABI especially as a mentor and in promoting science communication. He made the point that Darryl has left a lasting impact on the institute and one that will have great value for many years to come. He wished Darryl well for this new chapter in his life and said made the point that this was a farewell and not goodbye. Attendees were reminded that Darryl had in the past won the coveted FABIan of the Year Award and that he had scooped many SPOOF Presentation Awards, to name but a few of his accolades. Professor Mike Wingfield also praised Darryl for his hard work and active participation in making FABI a success during his term as FABI Director. He commented that Darryl now joins the many FABI graduates who are scattered around the globe. Adding that while FABI has a huge impact on research in the interests of the forestry and agricultural industries of South Africa (and beyond), the primary function of the Institute lies in human capacity development, the education of students and mentorship. In this respect, it is inevitable that most young people entering FABI will eventually leave the institute. Darryl shared with the group a beautiful speech capturing his experiences in FABI and thanked everyone for their friendship and support, but especially his supervisors Prof. Emma Steenkamp, Prof. Brenda Wingfield and Prof. Mike Wingfield for believing in his potential as a young scientist.



# Forestry and forest products sector releases global Sustainability Progress Report

The International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA) has released its biennial **Sustainability Progress Report** which demonstrates progress in seven key areas of sustainability: sustainable forest management, renewable energy, greenhouse gas and suplhur dioxide emissions, water use, health and safety, and recycling. The 2021 report also highlights the forest products sector's global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ICFPA serves as a forum of global dialogue, coordination and co-operation. Currently, the ICFPA represents 18 pulp, paper, wood and fibre-based associations that encompass 28 countries, including many of the top pulp, paper and wood producers around the world. The 2021 ICFPA Sustainability Progress Report shows progress on nearly all of the sector's performance indicators, using the most recent data available (2018-2019).

"In the face of the biggest health and economic crisis of our lifetimes, we are reminded that the global forestry sector has the potential to address some of our most urgent social, environmental, and economic challenges," noted ICFPA President Derek Nighbor. Nighbor is President and CEO of the Forest Products Association of Canada. "Forestry workers and forest products are in the unique position to drive our move to a lower-carbon world through sustainable forest management, advancing the forest bioeconomy, and recovering more paper and paper-based packaging for recycling."

Key progress on ICFPA's sustainability performance indicators include:

- In 2019, 52.6% of procured wood fibre came from third-party certified sustainably-managed forests, a 41 percentage point increase from the 2000 baseline year.
- Greenhouse gas emission intensity decreased 21% from the 2004/2005 baseline year.

- The energy share of biomass and other renewable fuels increased to 64.9%, a 12 percentage point increase since 2004/2005.
- Sulphur dioxide emission intensity from on-site combustion sources decreased 77% from the 2004/2005 baseline year and 38% from the previous report.
- Water use intensity decreased 12.5% from the baseline year.
- Investment in **health and safety interventions** yielded a 30% reduction in the global recordable incident rate from the 2006/2007 baseline with the number of recordable incidents falling to 2.88 per 100 employees annually.
- In 2019, 59.1% of paper and paperboard consumed globally was used by mills to make new products, marking a 12.6 percentage point increase in the global recycling rate since the year 2000.

"As a sector, both globally and locally, we continue to make a positive impact and meaningful progress in areas of sustainability, society and the economy, providing citizens with a renewable resource in the form of sustainably produced wood, cellulose and paper products," said Jane Molony, executive director of the Paper Manufacturers Association of South Africa (PAMSA) and member of the ICFPA Steering Committee. "Wood in its various forms not only meets essential daily needs, it also provides a raw material for conventional and innovative alternatives for sustainable packaging."

The 2021 ICFPA Sustainability Progress Report also includes the 2021 International Finalists for the prestigious **ICFPA Blue Sky Young Researchers and Innovation Award**. The theme for the 2020-2021 Blue Sky Awards was "Boosting the Forest Bioeconomy: Nature-Based Solutions Toward a Lower Carbon Economy."

To view or download the 2021 ICFPA Sustainability Progress Report, please visit: ICFPA 2020-2021 Sustainability Progress Report.

#### https://icfpa.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/04/ICFPA-2021\_Final-Draft\_19-04-2021.pdf















## Reopening the call for abstracts for papers, posters, and videos

In light of the new Congress dates, the submission platform for abstracts for papers, posters, and videos will be reopened from 28 April to 30 June 2021. We look forward to receiving more inspiring work from all around the world.

#### Submit a proposal for a side event

The submission platform for side event proposals will be reopened from 28 April to 30 July 2021. Side events are a platform to engage with Congress participants, for knowledge sharing, capacity building, networking and exploring actionable solutions for meeting the challenges in the forest sector. We encourage all stakeholders to submit their proposals by the deadline.

#### www.wcf2021korea.org



SAIF Newsletter May 2021

#### Special / Honourable Mention

The Southern African Institute of Forestry (SAIF) would like to extend its congratulations and best wishes to one of our prominent and long-serving members known to many forestry students who passed under his watchful eyes at Stellenbosch University namely Prof. Klaus von Gadow . He will be celebrating his eightieth birthday on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2021. Congratulations to a man who his made his mark as a renowned and respected forestry academic internationally in several countries. He is currently in Gõttingen in Germany where he will celebrate this major milestone.



Prof von Gadow hardly recognisable against the backdrop of snow covered landscape.



### **SAIF Contact Details**

Position	Name	Email	Phone
President	Wayne Jones	president@saif.org.za	033 330 2455
Vice-president	Braam du Preez	southern-cape@saif.org.za	044 874 0682
Past-president	Dr Hannél Ham	past-president@saif.org,za	076 452 5567
National secretary	Ms Corine Viljoen	admin@saif.org.za saif@mweb.co.za/	082 523 8733
SF Journal Editor	Dr Hannél Ham	journal@saif.org.za	076 452 5567
KwaZulu-Natal	Mmoledi Mphahlele	kzn@saif.org.za	033 329 5415
Gauteng	Prof. Brett Hurley	gauteng@saif.org.za	082 909 3211
Mpumalanga	Vacant	admin@saif.org.za	082 523 8733
Southern Cape	Braam du Preez	southern-cape@saif.org.za	082 887 2592
Western Cape	Dr Philip Crafford	western-cape@saif.org.za	021 808 3303
DAFF representative	Tendani Mariba	tendanim@daff.gov.za	012 309 5753



DU PLESSIS L.J.B	May-02	SLIPPERS B.	May-20
PRIEST D.T.	May-04	SCHOOMBEE R.	May-21
BIJL A.B.	May-05	SEOKE P.	May-22
OLIVIER A.S.	May-05	DU TOIT B.	May-24
SUMMERSGILL C.	May-05	ESLER W.K.	May-24
CAZALET K.R.	May-06	BEZUIDENHOUT M.	May-25
EVERARD D.A.	May-06	HINZE W.H.F.	May-27
PRETORIUS H.M.	May-07	KIME P.L.	May-27
MAHADEO L.	May-07	NAIDOO T.	May-27
FERREIRA R.C.	May-12	PIENAAR H.	May-28
OBERHOLZER F.	May-13	BUCHAN R.	May-28
DREW D.	May-14	VAN HEERDEN B.	May-28
LE MAITRE D.C.	May-15	BOLD A.J.L.	May-29
GERISCHER G.F.R.	May-16	STEMELE A.	May-29
WESSELS C.B.	May-17	HATTINGH N.L.	May-30
WALTON C.A.	May-18	SIMPSON G.M.	May-31
VON GADOW K.	May-19		

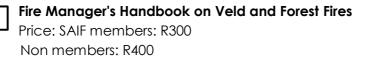


### Handbook order form

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









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 and postage (within SA)

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