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Southern African Institute of Forestry



Delivering a professional service to forestry

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SAIF Calendar: May 2023: Silhouette Pine: Tweefontein

Plantation by Leo Long (SAIF Mpumalanga Branch)

From the President's Desk United Nations Agenda 2030: Dream or Reality?

One of the much talked about topics today, entails the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030. In the preamble on the United Nations website, it states as follows "This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan." (UN: A/RES/70/1)

It further states: "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve."

TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD:



THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT















This resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The target was set for 15 years to stimulate action to achieve the goals of creating a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and where life can thrive which will focus on People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. This follows on the heels of the Millennium Development Goals issued in 2000 and seeks to 'complete what they did not achieve'. Most of the goals have a direct socio-economic impact and large emphasis on Human Rights e.g. Goal no. 6: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all." Nobody should be able to argue with this goal as we all need clean potable water to live and survive. Goal no. 12 is worded as follows "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns". These objectives sound very noble and not in unfamiliar language for us as foresters.

It is further stated in these documents that the Goals are also "integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally acceptable." It is conceded though by the UN that many countries will face major challenges achieving these ambitious goals. As the 17 goals are very comprehensive and detailed, space and time does not allow to discuss each one of them individually but rather one which is very relevant to all of us.

Goal 7 is worded as follows "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all". This is broken down into 5 subgoals or objectives for 2030 namely 1)universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services, 2) substantial increase in share of renewable energy in global energy mix, 3) doubling global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, 4)enhance international co-operation to facilitate clean energy research and technology including renewable energy etc. 5) expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all developing countries. This would by implication entail a gradual move away from a fossil fuel dominated world to other forms / sources of energy.

Countries are also encouraged to set ambitious targets to achieve the 17 goals at National, Regional and global level through capacity building, co-operation and partnership agreements.

2023 marks the approximate halfway mark of the 15

Year period and it could be useful to assess where the world and also South Africa are with respect to these goals. Similar to other issues, the answer will largely depend on whom you talk/ listen to. According to informed sources natural gas and coal still provide 84% of all the world's energy, down by only 2% over the past 20 years despite the fact that in the order of \$5 trillion was spent on Green energy over this same period.

Few people however mention what the real cost in monetary terms as well as cost to the environment would be if we move over to so-called green energy. In the order of 17 minerals are required to manufacture most of these components one of which is Lithium. Most of these minerals are mined in China. Raw materials represent between 30 and 70% of the manufacturing of solar panels, wind turbines and batteries required to store the energy. We know from first-hand experience which huge challenges SA faces just to keep the lights on.

Let's move away from electricity to transport, vehicles and equipment which form such an important part of the forest and forest products industry. Oil still powers 97% of all global transportation. We would probably all agree that the internal combustion engine has been and still is a driving force in the South African and global economy.

In the State of California in the USA, the target has been set to reach zero emissions from passenger cars and trucks by 2035 to be replaced with battery electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles. The EU wants to have a total ban on sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030 i.e. 7 years from now.

The transition from Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) to Electric Vehicles (EV) is expected to be traumatic according to a recent article posted on "Start my Car". One can only speculate on all the practical implications if SA follows the USA and Europe in phasing out all ICE vehicles and equipment within the following 7-12 years.

Sources

- United Nations , General Assembly : 21/10/2015 70/1 Transforming our world :the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Mark Mills, Sr. Fellow at Manhattan Institute for Prager University



Don't always believe the voices in your head by Rob Thompson

On several occasions, I have heard people mention, in lighthearted fashion, that they hear voices in their head. We all experience these voices from time to time, and to my mind this leads to two particularly intriguing questions: - "Do we actually listen to what the voices are telling us?" and "Do we believe them?"

A few days ago, I heard a distinct voice in my head, but this turned out to be a Ted talk via my headphones, so I was not too concerned.

The talk I was listening to was focused on the stories that people tend believe in and which drive them to behave in a particular fashion. The speaker was most concerned about the common contention or story that humankind is above or separated from nature. Acceptance of this notion of separation leads people to believe that nature merely provides the resources for their own ends and inevitably leads people, industries and economies towards wasteful and unsustainable practices and ultimately environmental destruction. He urged his listeners to challenge the voice regaling this story and consider the alternative reality that we are intimately part of nature and its intricate systems and it behests us to tread lightly and sustainably.

Listening to this narrative, it endorsed to me the fact we all do have voices that impose on us daily.

These are voices borne of the rather contrary and arguably degrading social environment in which we live and operate and they are accordingly not necessarily transmitting the correct or most appropriate message. We really do need to take the time out to analyse all messages that these voices conduct and weigh up the validity thereof.

For instance, when you reach the traffic lights, and watch other cars run the red to avoid a two-minute delay, that inner voice will likely tell you to follow suit. You can heed the voice, or not. The choice is yours to make.

Taking the right choice is not always easy given that the inner voice is often very convincing. "You can run the red now whilst there is a gap. It's quite safe!". You listen and comply. You are so focused on justifying the action that you miss seeing the pedestrian,

and chaos, and tragedy ensures. What a pity that you did not engage that voice earlier and test all potential ramifications of the message it brought.

The voices we hear, particularly in this country at present, are most likely to be despondent ones. Illustrating this and keeping to the road traffic theme, would be the voice that we all hear daily..."Look at all the potholes, we are on a hiding to nowhere!". Hearing this on a daily basis leads us to a state of despair and downheartedness. Seldom do we interrogate that voice with alternative narratives along the lines of "Look at all those potholes. I ought to report them or assist in repairing them or take some appropriate action to prevent their spread".

These convincing inner voices, borne of a dubious environment, can certainly lead us astray but fortunately, we do have the means, specifically called "intelligence", to counter them. The trick is to be aware of the need to apply this intelligence appropriately.

The global fascination with, and rapid adoption of, artificial intelligence (as opposed to real intelligence), has been extremely interesting. As exciting as the advances are in Artificial Intelligence (AI), it does however have inherent weaknesses. One such weakness is its inability to filter and assess stimuli and information (or the voices that it hears) too deeply. A fascinating podcast I listened to on AI provided an example of this weakness. An AI app was apparently asked if a bicycle traveling over a suspension bridge suspended over a road full of broken nails would get a puncture, and the response was "most likely". AI had failed to factor in the concept of suspension above the puncture risk. Termed differently... it did not have the ability to question the voice that it had heard adequately.

Unlike AI, we do have the ability to assess and weigh up stimuli received. We tend to choose to not do this often enough. It is far easier to go with the flow, or the general narrative or the general voice over, rather than give what we hear some thought and consideration.

So why on earth have I chosen to write an article on this obtuse topic? Well, as a senior manager in a forestry organization, I have recently been sincerely disappointed by some staff in trust positions allowing themselves to be led by their inner voice, in turn fed by external and negative environmental influences, without question.

This has led them astray and all to their own detriment. This was entirely unnecessary and totally avoidable had they only applied reason and real intelligence (which they certainly have in buckets) to the options they were faced with. I despair when good people fail to think rationally, or to assess matters carefully or to call for guidance as necessary.

I see it my duty, as a senior and more experienced forestry practitioner, to call on, particularly my younger industry colleagues, to tread carefully and responsibly along the path of their careers. Apply responsible reason and logic and ethic to all stimuli, voices or temptations that come your way.

You do have the ability to interpret those voices correctly, and if you are ever unsure, for heaven's sake, ask someone to assist you! The alternative is simply too dire to risk.



April Calendar photo : A Forestry View : Old Kaapsche Hoop Fire Lookout : Photographer – Philip Fischer (SAIF Mpumalanga Branch)





TOUGH, ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR FORESTRY



Sponsor of the Month: April 2023



Who we are Supply Chain Integrity, Globally

CMO operates world-wide, with our staff having worked in over 70 countries. Our purpose is to make the global supply chain for forest products legal, transparent and safe for responsible participants. We provide market entry for small growers and companies to trade their responsibly produced forest products in the mainstream global market. CMO has an internationally renowned forestry team that provides solutions for the risks that forest owners face.

WHAT WE DO Our Services

CMO runs Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) forest management and chain of custody group schemes and we are scaling our model world-wide. We also offer technical training and consulting services in forestry and provide online trading in certified forest products.





Michal Brink and Andrew McEwan from CMO Website: https://cmogroup.io/

Charcoal team clears alien wattle invasion

During the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, a young entrepreneur from a remote village in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa launched an innovative business turning invasive black wattle into charcoal - a classic win-win for local people and the environment.



Black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) was introduced into South Africa from Australia around 1880 for livestock shelter and for firewood, and is still grown commercially today for pulp and the tannin extract industry. The problem is that black wattle produces prolific amounts of seed which has invaded many parts of the country not suitable for commercial timber, including the grasslands around Matatiele in the Eastern Cape, consuming groundwater and reducing grazing range for cattle.

Atang Justice Ramabele (29) was inspired to find a solution to the problem of invasive wattle that would also serve to alleviate some of the challenges faced by the local rural community, namely dwindling access to grazing range and widespread unemployment.

The idea for Morumotsho Charcoal Production came about during Ramabele's year-long internship with Fetola, an NGO that focuses on finding environmental and rural solutions. The business name translates to "a black forest" in Sesotho, referring to a hillside near eNkasele village where he lives which is overridden with invasive black wattle.

Atang employs seven local people to cut down the rapidly spreading wattle trees of all sizes with

It is left to air dry for six weeks before being loaded into the kilns where it is set alight under low oxygen conditions

After a six-hour burn the wood chunks turn into high quality charcoal. Once they have cut the trees down, the Morumotsho team treats the stumps with a chemical herbicide which ensures that they do not grow back. Thus they are gradually removing the alien wattle from the hillside, and the grass is coming back, much to the delight of the local livestock owners. This approach seems to be counter-intuitive: what happens to the business when all the alien wattle has been removed from the hillside?

There's no chance of that, says Atang. He reckons that there is enough wattle growing around the village to keep his kilns stocked for between seven to 10 years. Then he'll just move somewhere else – there is plenty of alien black wattle growing all over the Eastern Cape.

He has five metal kilns and produces 120 to 150 kgs of charcoal per kiln with each burn. The charcoal produced is sold in three grades: Gold, Silver and First Grade.



Kilns turning invasive alien black wattle into charcoal, Eastern Cape.

Atang and his team package the charcoal under their own brand name, Morumotsho Charcoal, which they sell locally to street vendors, caterers and shebeens. They also sell bulk charcoal to a neighbouring landowner who on-sells it, as well as to E&C Charcoal, a big, established business that manufactures and exports charcoal. Atang has also recently secured a market for Morumotsho Charcoal in nearby Lesotho.















The biggest challenge facing the business now is to increase production to meet the growing demand for the product. The poor state of the local roads makes logistics an on-going challenge, and deliveries are often made by donkey cart or tractor.

"Seeing the change and impact in our society because of my vision makes me proud," says Atang. "Now people can farm and feed themselves again because the land has been restored, and their animals have better grazing land."

He says that local cattle owners have been receiving better prices for their animals at the auction thanks to the improved access to good grazing land.

Atang is already thinking ahead to expand his product range with other charcoal-based products like briquettes and bio-char.

"I've had opportunities come my way, and I've been able to network, learn new things and have experiences that make this a joyful journey," he concluded.

About Fetola

Fetola is a provider of entrepreneurial support programmes that deliver lasting social, environmental and economic impact. Their goal is to grow the economy, create inclusive wealth and generate jobs by helping people build businesses that last. This is achieved by providing proven business strategy, systems and support, while unlocking the personal leadership power of entrepreneurs like Atang.

Fetola means "change" in Sesotho. The Fetola team is inspired by UN Global goal 17 to generate change at a global scale and foster partnerships that are a force for good. For more info visit https://fetola.co.za/.



Morumotsho Charcoal entrepreneur and founder Atang Justice Ramabele

Article placed with permission from and recognition to SA Forestryonline

https://saforestryonline.co.za/articles/charcoal-team-clears-alien-wattle-invasion/

Sponsor of the Month: May 2023: TWK AGRI



TWK strives to deliver value-adding products and services to the Agricultural and related industries and to the communities in which it operates. TWK is a diversified group of companies operating in the agriculture, forestry, grain, financial services and motor industries.

Today, it stands tall as TWK, an iconic institution, in the South African agricultural landscape and operates over a wide geographical area of Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Free State, Limpopo and Gauteng. From research to sustainable farming practices and agricultural innovation, TWK is not only a crucial component in the value chains of our customers but also a corporate citizen, dedicated to the future of our country through a never-ending commitment to sustainable development and resource consumption across several agri-related industries.

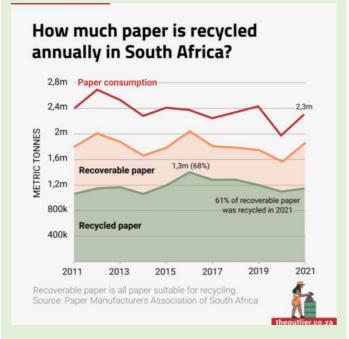
TWK is a diversified group of companies operating in the agriculture, forestry, grain, financial services and motor and tyre industries that deliver value-adding products and services to agricultural and related industries. The company operates over a wide geographic area across South Africa and forms a crucial component in the agricultural value chain which includes research, sustainable farming practices and agricultural innovation.

Key Values of the Company:

- ✓ Growth
- ✓ Strive
- ✓ Renew
- ✓ Sustain
- ✓ Conserve
- ✓ Develop

For more information on the company TWK Agri, visit their website at: https://www.twkagri.com/

Statistics on Paper Recycling in South Africa



FSA: Forestry Explained

Our Conservation Contribution

The Forestry Industry understands that all natural ecosystems found on forestry-owned land need conserving, including indigenous forests, riverine habitats, grassland, wetlands and fynbos elements. On average, 30% of forestry-owned land remains unplanted which, when well managed, allows for the conservation of natural ecosystems and important species. These natural ecosystems cover upwards of 300 000 hectares and form a critical network of natural vegetation and conservation areas between the planted areas. They are home to an array of plant, mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian and insect species, as well as a number of rare, endemic and endangered species.

We are proud of the conservation partnerships formed with individual researchers, NGOs, academic institutions and other research facilities. These increase our knowledge and understanding of natural ecosystems, their inhabitants and their management requirements. It is through this collaboration that we are able to better conserve these natural habitats and contribute to our collective South African conservation legacy.



Landbou maak gereed vir NAMPO!

Landbou is nie meer wat dit destyds was nie. Alles gebeur teen 'n vinniger pas. Self John Deere se leuse by NAMPO 2022 kan vandag nog gehoor word: By John Deere hardloop ons, sodat julle, ons boere, die sprong vorentoe kan neem. Boerdery is 'n geïntegreerde bestuur van jou grond, die omgewing, diere en plante, 'n plaas wat verskeie bedrywe bymekaar bring.

Boerdery is 'n enkele sny uit die koek wat landbou vir ons voorstel. Die geleenthede binne in die landbousektor is enorm. Die verskeidenheid rigtings wat betree kan word is oneindig. In 'n paar woorde kan ek landbou beskryf as hoopvol, stylvol, lewendig en vernuwend. Dit maak my so opgewonde om steeds te hoor dat jonk en oud so passievol is oor die bedryf.

Landbou is vir elkeen. Landbou is ons toekoms.

Afrika se grootste landbouskou vind van Dinsdag 16 tot Vrydag 19 Mei 2023 by NAMPO park, net buite Bothaville, plaas.

Vanjaar se tema, "Innoverende Landbou", bevestig die positiewe rol wat aan die Oesdag toegeskryf word en die bydrae daarvan tot die toekoms van landbou. NAMPO Oesdag se uitsluitlike doel is om vernuwende landbou ten toon te stel vir landbouvennote en geesdriftiges en om 'n platform daar te stel om landbou volhoubaar en meer doeltreffend te maak.

Vir meer besonderhede van NAMPO , en ander landbounuus, besoek die webtuiste :

https://www.proagri.co.za/



















Global breakthrough to combat major



Pinus radiata is Australia's most valuable softwood resource and extremely susceptible to mortality from pest Sirex – a wood wasp known to attack pine trees, and the most serious invasive softwood pest in the Southern Hemisphere.

In great news for pine growers in Australia, the discovery of a new type of nematode (often referred to as roundworm) could hold the key to overcoming the devastation that Sirex noctilio can inflict on pine plantations.

Australia pioneered the main Sirex management technique now used globally: vaccinating infested trees with the very small, slender worm-like nematodes. The nematodes feed on the Sirex fungus, infest its larvae and sterilise emerging females.

Research at the Forest and Biotechnology Institute (FABI) in South Africa, funded by the National Sirex Coordination Committee (NSCC), unexpectedly uncovered a previously unknown strain of nematode that is genetically distinct from the Kamona strain traditionally used to combat Sirex infestation. Recent research supported by FWPA, NSCC, FABI, the Queensland and New South Wales governments, and the University of the Sunshine Coast, found that this new strain, known as 'Lineage D', has a faster reproductive rate, proven field persistence and broader genetic diversity than the Kamona strain. Importantly, it can also sterilise Sirex eggs.

The new strain is expected to be introduced into Sirex biocontrol programs over the next few years, with the traditional Kamona strain phased out. Source: Forest & Wood Products Australia

threat to Aussie pine

Merensky celebrates 22 years of FSC® certification



Merensky Plantation in Limpopo Province

In 1929, long before the terms "sustainability," let alone "sustainable forest certification", were coined, a forward-thinking geologist purchased a farm called Westfalia in the Tzaneen area. He then pioneered the higher-value use of Eucalyptus species for furniture and construction, as well as a responsible approach of doing business, and simultaneously protecting the environment. His forward thinking was way ahead of its time.

Much later, we would come to know these approaches as sustainability management or a "triple bottom line" approach to business. This pioneer was none other than Dr Hans Merensky, who in 1949, founded of Hans Merensky Holdings (HMH) and Merensky Timber (Merensky). Born in Botshabelo in 1871, Merensky became a legend in his own time - a world-famous prospector and humanitarian, entrepreneur, geologist, philanthropist, devotee of nature, afforestation, agriculture, water and soil conservation, and a true visionary. Dr Merensky died in October 1952.

Twenty-one years later, the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®), in 1993 was established, as the first voluntary certification for sustainable forestry, promoting environmentally sound, beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. Formalizing many of the principles that Dr Merensky and many other forestry and environmental pioneers expounded.

FSC and Merensky are proud to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of Northern Timbers (FSC C010117) and 21st birthday of Singisi Forest Products (FSC C013164).

Dr Hans Merensky's Legacy

Merensky is a leading player in South African forestry and lumber processing. With over 65 000 hectares, Merensky's plantations are the largest privately-owned commercial forests being managed on a sawlog regeneration rotation in South Africa.

Merensky plantations include both Pine and Eucalyptus species and its own sawmills supply quality lumber, poles, and logs to southern African and offshore customers. All Merensky-grown lumber carries the prestigious FSC® Forest Management Chain-of-Custody claim to responsible forest management.

Doing Good

Merensky's purpose to "Do Good", has its origins with its founder, Dr Hans Merensky, and can be seen in action through the implementation of its core values of health, safety and well-being; integrity; inclusivity; innovation; and quality, throughout the organization.



A huge *Eucalyptus* tree growing on one of the Merensky Estates

The health, safety and wellbeing of its employees extends beyond its voluntary implementation of safety standards like NOSA, to fostering and nurturing an inherent safety culture in the lives of its employees. This culture is also supported amongst Merensky's contractors.

More than two-thirds of Merensky's employees are from the communities in the vicinity of the forest plantations and processing operations. The land claim processes, which are in progress by these communities are supported by Merensky as it implements another one of its core values, that of inclusivity. The Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment legislation and the industry benchmark score has been successfully exceeded through a program, which integrates all levels and all business functions. Enterprise development, supplier development and training are key components which receive focus.

Merensky Timber provides bursaries for the education and training of students in the fields of study required by the company. Training extends beyond just its employees, also includes community members and the employment of young people as interns.

The Future

Merensky is guided by its purpose to "Do Good," and to go beyond sustainability into the realm of restorative economics — giving more than it receives.

By living the purpose, the Merensky Timber Group aspires to build on its rich legacy to become global leaders in Eucalyptus solid-wood and related products over the long term, recognizing the importance of a values based approach to business, stakeholders and the environment.

From all at The Forest Stewardship Council, congratulations on your anniversary milestones and thank you that we share your journey.



Source: <u>FSC</u>; This article is tagged in:

 FSC, FSC Africa, FSC certification, Merensky, Northern Timbers, Singisi Forest Products

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Happy Birthday to all our members who celebrate(d) their birthdays in May



BIRTHDAYS May 2023			
DU PLESSIS LOUIS	GERISCHER GUNTER		
PRIEST DON	WESSELS BRAND		
BIJL ARIE	WALTON CLIFF		
OLIVIER STEPHAN	VON GADOW KLAUS		
SUMMERSGILL COLIN	SLIPPERS BERNARD		
CAZALET KEVIN	SCHOOMBEE PIET		
EVERARD DAVID	DU TOIT BEN		
PRETORIUS MEYER	ESLER BILL		
MAHADEO LEESHAN	BEZUIDENHOUT MARILYN		
FERREIRA RIAAN	BOTHA MIKE		
OBERHOLZER FRANCOIS	HINZE WALDO		
DREW DAVID	KIME PARTICK		



The Southern African Institute of Forestry

Handbook order form			
The Southern African Institute of Forestry publishes three industry specific handbooks.			
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A bulk discount of 10% ap Price includes VAT.	oplies on orders of 10 or more copies.		
An extra R50 per book will be charged if we need to courier the book to you.			
I am □ a member □ no	n-member of the SAIF.		
Name			
Company			
Postal address			
Contact number			
Email address			
Bank details: Nedbank Branch code: 169745 Account: 1697009913 Account name: SAIF			

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