

Southern African Institute of Forestry



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Delivering a professional service to forestry

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Editorial

Plant a Tree, no Plant an Arboretum !

It is the month of September and we celebrate Arbour Month and National Tree Planting Day which basically coincides with Heritage Day or as some would say "National Braai Day" on the 24th of September.

Government announced that as we celebrate Arbour month, we should also highlight our Champion trees at the same time. The Deputy minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment Bernice Swarts earlier also launched the *One Employee, One Tree* initiative as part of the Presidential *Ten Million Trees Programme*.

Although very ambitious, this seems achievable as similar initiatives albeit it of a much smaller scale, also started with a vision. One such vision was birthed in Port Elizabeth (now known as Gqeberha) where in September 1975 (exactly 50 years ago) a gentleman by the name of Etienne Weidemann, the then chairperson of the Eastern Province Wildflower Association and the members of the adjacent Kragga Kamma DR Church Gardening Commission, had a vision of converting a degraded site next to the church building into an arboretum consisting of indigenous trees and shrubs.

Today 50 years later, the arboretum stands as a memorial to be seen reminding of people who had a vision and converted that into action. As a former superior once pointed out to us as a group of managers: "A vision without action, is but a dream" !

Time will tell whether this ambitious vision will become reality or just remain a dream. In the meantime, enjoy planting a tree and celebrating our rich heritage as South Africans including having the well-known good old South African "Braai" 😊



Sign erected at the Arboretum showing the history and names of trees & shrubs which occur in the Kragga Kamma



A new code for Foresters?

By Rob Thompson

It was really interesting to read 1980 era snippets of the Southern African Institute of Forestry (SAIF) Code of Conduct for forest practitioners, as shared by Bruce Talbot in the most recent newsletter.

From my perspective, it was quite scary as well, given that I can distinctly recall receiving a copy of that exact same code back when the Earth was still cooling!

The excerpts brought back memories of an era rife with argument, debate and conflict such as Saasveld vs. Stellenbosch, degree vs. diploma, professional registered consultant vs. free range advisor, state employ vs. corporate employ, forestry vs. environment, and of course the overarching black vs. white politics of the day.

Fast forward to 2025 and see just how markedly times and attitudes have changed!

Reflecting on this passage of time and circumstance, I considered what a modern-day Forester Code of Conduct might comprise of. With contemporary forestry roles and taskings being so fluid, often indeterminate, and functional within a very dynamic operational environment, such a code would likely now emphasize necessary “attributes” rather than specific “conducts”.

Here’s my take on what might be listed therein:-

As a forestry practitioner I acknowledge:-

1. The need to equip myself to be able to communicate clearly to all levels. I must also understand that good communication includes the learned ability to listen to others carefully and take into account their perspectives as well.
2. That constant curiosity about my life-niche is critical. Don’t take that which I encounter at face value. Rather question, research, and investigate before acceptance.
3. To be “responsible” is to “own” all that which I influence. Displaying true ownership displays true character.

4. The importance of empathy for literally everything that I encounter. (People, the environment and all that lives therein).

5. That a professional bearing is entirely necessary in this world of mediocrity. I need to set a high bar, show necessary respect for myself, others, and to all that in which I become involved.

6. A commitment to share that for which I stand. I have thoughts and views and influences from which others may benefit.

7. That a sound sense of humour is a powerful attribute and worthy of adoption and application in all walks of life. Humour over anger. Humour over conflict. Humour over despair. Humour is an integral part of my pathway towards success.

8. That being principled is non-negotiable. Standing by my identified principles and values defines my identity.

9. The need to understand that which I encounter. Just as I need to “read for understanding”, I need to “live for understanding”. I can only action something effectively if I understand that which I am actioning.

10. My position. I am not equipped to deal with all that I encounter. I must know when to back off and leave over to someone more qualified and experienced. I must know my limits and when and how to transition appropriately.

11. My intelligence. The need to embrace “real intelligence” above “artificial intelligence” is vital. I am entitled to celebrate my uniqueness, abilities and contributions. They have soul and life.

12. That I have to be a critical thinker. I need to constantly position myself to adapt and adjust in order to survive and thrive in a dynamic world.

Forget for a while the likes of Mandela, Judeich, Einstein and other world greats.

Let us celebrate ourselves and the contributions that we make. We are able to make a difference and make



unique choices.

We can choose not to crush that beetle crossing our path.

We can choose to take the correct decision.

We can choose to support a colleague in need.

We can choose to do the exact opposite of all aforementioned examples.

The choice remains ours.

Those who choose the correct path or trajectory are those who are likely to have adopted inherent attributes along the lines of those listed herein.

May those people (practitioners) stand out above the crowd and set a really good example to others. There can be little argument that our world is currently in need of ethical direction.

Choose to contribute towards this needed direction.

Rob Thompson
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FSC publication highlights certification value in impact investing



FSC has launched a new publication, [*Integrating FSC Certification into Impact Investing*](#), offering investment analysts data-driven insights into how FSC certification contributes to financial, environmental, and social outcomes.

Drawing on research findings, case studies, and global sustainability frameworks, the publication provides an illustrative resource for investors seeking to incorporate certified assets into their strategies.

Growing relevance of FSC in sustainable finance

The recognition of forests' critical roles in climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and socio-economic development is fuelling demand for sustainable forest management. According to the [Global Impact Investing Network](#)'s survey of 293 impact investing organizations, investors increased their allocations towards forestry from 2023 to 2024, reflecting a 53% increase in assets under management.

Key insights from the publication

Data shows that FSC-certified forestry funds have consistently delivered competitive internal rates of return, making them suitable for long-term strategies. Companies with FSC certification have also reported enhanced market positioning, supplier preference, and customer retention.

Sustainability and risk mitigation

FSC certification supports investors in managing key sustainability risks, including deforestation, biodiversity loss, pest outbreaks, and irresponsible land use. Certified operations are linked to stronger biodiversity outcomes and improved ecosystem integrity.

Investor adoption and practical use cases

Several asset managers have integrated FSC-certified assets into their portfolios. These investors employ diverse strategies to balance certification costs with financial feasibility. Some conduct pre-feasibility assessments to evaluate the certification's potential before capital investment.

Alignment with global sustainability frameworks

FSC certification is referenced in various sustainability reporting frameworks and forestry-related benchmarks, aiding investors in aligning with global standards such as the Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures.

Source: [FSC](#)



Breaking Barriers For Young Women: Forestry Sector Launches Mentor Me Initiative

<https://forestry.co.za/>

She Is Forestry South Africa and Forestry South Africa (FSA) have launched the *Mentor Me Initiative*, a five-year programme designed to breaking down barriers that hold women back from leadership in the forestry sector.



Building on five years of elevating women’s voices in a male-dominated industry, *Mentor Me* creates around-the-clock access to female mentors and personal growth resources. “It is designed for women, by women,” says **Khosi Mavimbela**, executive director of the Forest Sector Charter Council and director of She Is Forestry.

“The women we have spoken to cite lack of confidence, limited experience and inflexibility due to family responsibilities as the biggest barriers to advancing their careers,” explains Mavimbela. “The *Mentor Me Initiative* offers women the mentorship, growth tools and inspirational role models they need.” She adds that these tools would be accessible anytime, anywhere to help women step into leadership roles with courage and conviction.”

At the heart of the programme are powerful, on-demand *Mentor Me* talks from leading female

voices in forestry and beyond. The first of these were filmed during the annual She Is Forestry webinar, with the line-up including:

- **Nelly Ndlovu**, CEO of Mondi Zimele – *Resilience and Grit: Stories and Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles and Maintaining Motivation*
- **Itumeleng Langeni**, MTO Group chief stakeholder relations officer – *Navigating Gender Bias*
- **Hlengiwe Msibi**, divisional environmental manager at Sappi – *Mentorship and Sponsorship: The Distinction Between the Two and How to Seek Out Both in the Workplace*
- **Amy Djamaluddin**, founder of jamjama marketing – *Lessons Learnt: Moving from a Blue-Chip Corporate to a Small Business*
- **Jacqui Meyer**, life coach – *Mentor Me Through Burnout*
- **Crystal Daniels**, counselling psychologist – *Communication: Why it Really Matters*

Available on the She Is Forestry website, these talks are part of a growing collection that will evolve into a one-stop mentoring hub. It will feature personal development toolkits, book reviews tailored for busy women, and practical strategies for career growth. “We also have 10 videos featuring women who have overcome common barriers to find the place in the forestry sector,” noted Mavimbela. “The original purpose for these videos was to open the eyes of rural school children, using testimonies by women they can relate to.”

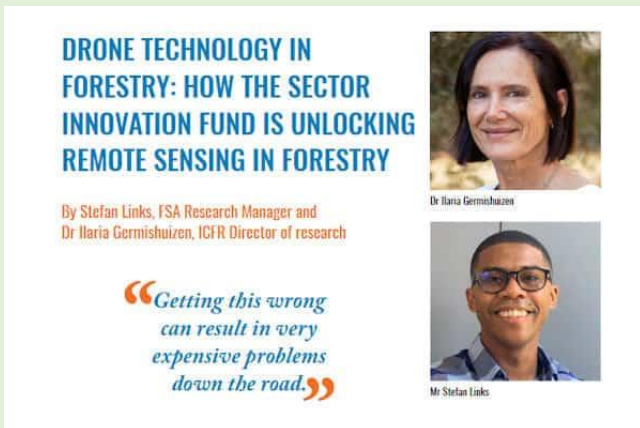
The programme is already making an impact for the likes Eutricia Nkuna, a research assistant at the FSCC. “Being at the start of my career, I would never have had access to these women and the wisdom they shared. It has been inspiring, practical and transformational.”

Pamela Naidoo, executive director of the Forestry and Agricultural Training Organisation, added, “She Is Forestry has always championed women in forestry. Now, with Mentor Me, they are not just acknowledging women — they are actively shaping the future of the sector.”

Source: Forestry South Africa



Drone Technology in Forestry: How the Sector Innovation Fund is Unlocking Remote Sensing in Forestry



DRONE regulation has proved to be a major challenge in harnessing the potential of this technology for use in the sector. Through the Sector Innovation Fund (SIF), which FSA is driving in partnership with the DSTI, the Institute of Commercial Forestry Research (ICFR), as a key research institution, is playing a central role in developing a platform to bridge the gap for the Forestry Sector. Following approval of the Remote Sensing programme within the SIF portfolio, the programme leaders quickly realised that the road to regulatory compliance was gravely underestimated. Two years on and the programme is fully compliant through the ICFR, and flights have commenced in commercial stands. This programme has therefore laid the groundwork and is working to provide this service to the Sector.

TYPE OF OPERATION

The use of drones in South Africa is primarily regulated under the Civil Aviation Act (CAA) Part 101 – Getting this wrong can result in very expensive problems down the road. Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS). While it might seem straightforward on face value, regulatory challenges start with knowing how to identify the type of operation you are conducting. Getting this wrong can result in very expensive problems down the road. The CAA categorises four distinct types of operations: commercial, corporate

, non-profit, and private (Table 1).

Commercial operations are for activities that are conducted directly for compensation or hired out. Key to this is that there are two organisations where there is a profit-driven exchange of money for services provided by the drone. All the licences and approvals are required to conduct commercial drone operations.

Corporate operations are when drones are used in the context of a business or company for its internal purposes. This type of operation provides benefits to the organisation (managing your own assets) as opposed to providing services to an external client for profit. This type of operation crucially does not require the user to have an Air Service Licence (ASL).

Non-profit operations, similar to corporate operations, does not require an ASL. These are conducted by non-profit organisations and importantly, it can be internal or external operations, provided there is no profit-driven agenda. This category includes activities such as research and training.

Private operations have highly restrictive limitations and is only for an individual's personal use.

ROC AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

The next key point of consideration is the RPAS Operators Certificate (ROC) and its associated operations manual. The operations manual drafts the entire size, scope, and type of activities to be conducted under an ROC. This includes guidelines on documentation and record keeping, safety management systems, security, and insurance based on the Civil Aviation Technical Standards (CATS). It is important that when registering a drone to an ROC (whether internally or externally) that you ensure that all the operations planned are included and approved, that way it limits the need for any amendments to the operations manual. To get amendments approved, you would need to pay an additional per-page fee according to CAA regulations.



Table 1: Licences and approvals required for various drone operations (private operations not included here)

Licences and approvals required	Commercial	Corporate	Non-profit	Validity period
*Air Service License (ASL)	X	-	-	N/A**
*RPAS Operator certificate (ROC)	X	X	X	12 months
RPAS Letter of approval (RLA)	X	X	X	12 months
*Remote Pilot's License (RPL)	X	X	X	24 months
Certificate of Registration	X	X	X	N/A

Private use not included in the table but does not require any of the approvals listed here

*Licences required

**while an ASL does not have a validity period, it needs to be in operation within 12 months from the date of issuance

“The SIF has enabled the ICFR to achieve full compliance, setting a model for other organisations to follow.”



Figure 1. Orthomosaic of a *Eucalyptus dunnii* compartment, generated from UAV imagery

REMOTE SENSING FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The SIF has enabled the ICFR to achieve full compliance, setting a model for other organisations to follow. The ICFR has registered the drone to an external ROC supplier, ensuring that the ROC regulatory components are addressed while the project can focus on the applications for the sector. This by no means absolves the ICFR from all regulatory hurdles, but certainly helps the team navigate some of the more complex components.

As part of this initiative, the Remote Sensing for Forest Management programme exemplifies a strong collaborative approach. The ICFR, University of Pretoria, and Stellenbosch University are jointly developing a cutting-edge remote sensing platform to drive innovation in forest management. With a strong emphasis on forest health, the ICFR and FABI are working to establish remote sensing tools that could become part of a national forest health monitoring program. The foundation of this monitoring system lies in spectral anomaly detection – identifying deviations in spectral signatures to pinpoint forest damage. To achieve this, the system requires comprehensive spectral datasets that encompass both pest- and pathogen- induced damage and healthy forestry species across different crop stages and seasons.

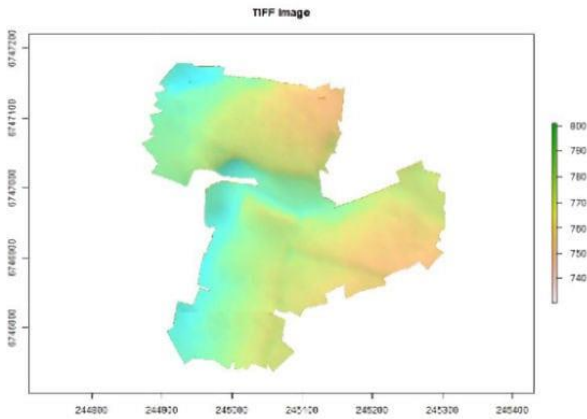
A key milestone in this initiative is the new MSc study launched in 2024 by the ICFR, focusing on the spectral discrimination of three eucalypt species – *E. dunnii*, *E. grandis* x *nitens*, and *E. grandis* x *urophylla* – at mid-rotation during summer and winter seasons. This research recognises the complexity of spectral reflectance, which varies across different environmental conditions and sites. The student on this project, Wandile Khumalo, under the guidance of Dr Mthembeni Mngadi (UKZN), Prof Onesimo Mutanga (UKZN), and Dr Ilaria Germishuizen (ICFR), has already made significant progress. In August 2024, the winter data collection for 35 compartments was successfully completed, and the team is now actively collecting summer data.

Thanks to funding support, the ICFR has also trained two permanent staff members, Greg Fuller and Xolani Colvelle, who are now licensed drone operators. This investment in expertise ensures that aerial data collection will be efficient, precise, and sustainable for future research efforts. Another critical output of this project is the development of a centralised image repository on the University of Pretoria Information Hub. Managed jointly by FABI and the ICFR, this initiative will create a catalogued, searchable forestry image library with associated metadata. This resource is expected to play a pivotal role in future research, providing a foundation for broader forest health assessments and technological advancements.

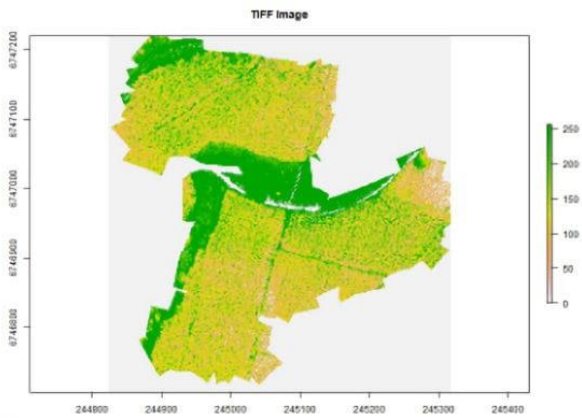
Given the legal constraints associated with drone operations in South Africa, the three collaborating institutions will plan “flying campaigns” where the



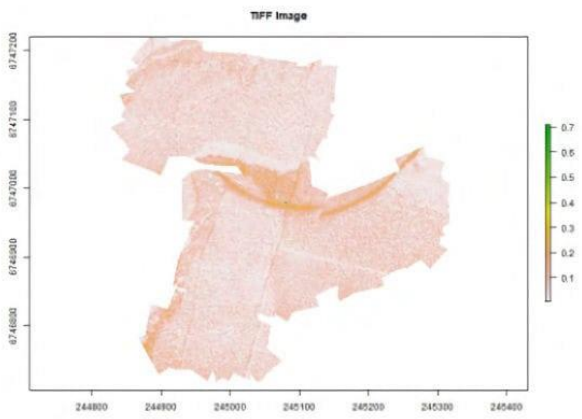
Figure 2 (for the 3 maps). Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) (a), Triangular Greenness Index (TGI) (b), and Surface model (c) generated from UAV imagery



A



B



C

ICFR drone will be deployed to collect data for various projects. This strategic approach will optimise costs and time, making aerial surveys more efficient. Additionally, this service will be offered to industry partners on a cost-recovery basis, further extending the project's impact on the forestry sector.

Source: [FSA](#)

FORESTRY NEWS

NEW FORESTS RANCE TIMBER

"We are extremely pleased to be partnering with Rance, a family-owned business, with a strong reputation for its approach to forestry management, sustainability and innovation in South Africa."



Yida Kemoli
Managing Director - Africa
New Forests



We are expanding our portfolio in Africa with the acquisition of family-owned business Rance Timber. This is New Forests' first investment in South Africa, and our second for the African Forestry Impact Platform.

With a history dating back more than 100 years, Rance consists of over 14,000 hectares of pine plantations and two sawmills and provides a variety of timber products to markets in the Eastern Cape. It is also a strong contributor to employment with approximately 1,400 people employed across its forestry and sawmilling divisions.

Like **New Forests**, Rance has a deep commitment to sustainability, communities and livelihoods. We're excited about this new investment and expanding our footprint across Africa.



You can read about this partnership here: <https://shorturl.at/QoIEU>



2025 Modern Silviculture Webinar - Registrations open!

As part of the Southern Cape Branch events, the Nelson Mandela University Forestry Department is pleased to invite you to the annual *Modern Silviculture Webinar*, successfully hosted since 2020.

Theme: Digitalisation in Modern Silviculture

This year's programme explores how emerging and existing digital technologies are reshaping forestry. Topics will include:

- Digital tools for assessments and monitoring
 - Integration of technologies with machines and silviculture operations
 - Integration of technologies with machines and silviculture operations
 - Practical experiences across the silviculture value chain, locally and internationally
 - The increasing role of artificial intelligence in forestry practices
- **Speakers**
The programme features international and local experts:
- Claire Stewart – Forest Growers Research, New Zealand
 - Thembinkosi Zulu – Nelson Mandela University
 - Harley Schinagl – TerraLab, Australia
 - Beatriz Zerbinato Balista – IPEF, Brazil
 - Darran Stone – Ellepot, Australia
 - Deon Redinger – Savithi
 - Stephanus Viljoen – Novelquip

Facilitator: Dr Muedanyi Ramantswana, Nelson Mandela University

Why Attend?

- Gain insights into cutting-edge silvicultural technologies
- Learn from global forestry practitioners and researchers
- Connect with industry stakeholders, students, and professionals
- Engage with colleagues through the Southern Cape Branch

Registration : The webinar is free to attend, but registration is required.

[2025 Modern Silviculture Webinar Registration Link](#)

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

Nelson Mandela University Forestry Department presents

Digitalisation in Modern Silviculture

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 | 9:45 – 1:30 (CAT)
Online platform: Microsoft Teams

Webinar Link:

This webinar builds on the success of events that have been hosted annually since 2020. Sustainability in forestry can be facilitated by introducing new technologies and ensuring the efficiencies of existing modern silviculture systems are augmented. The theme this year explores how new and existing digital technologies can be utilised for assessments, monitoring, and integrated with machines to enhance the performance of various silviculture activities. The webinar content will explore all the silviculture value chain activities, both locally and internationally. This theme is of interest to various stakeholders as artificial intelligence-driven systems are increasingly being incorporated into forestry activities. The webinar will provide a unique opportunity for foresters, students, professionals and forestry organisations to exchange technical knowledge and information.

Speakers:

- Muedanyi Ramantswana, Facilitator, Nelson Mandela University
- Claire Stewart, Forest Growers Research, New Zealand
- Thembinkosi Zulu, Nelson Mandela University
- Deon Redinger, Savithi
- Stephanus Viljoen, Novelquip
- Darran Stone, Ellepot, Australia
- Harley Schinagl, TerraLab, Australia
- Beatriz Zerbinato Balista, IPEF, Brazil

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

Nelson Mandela University Forestry Department presents

Digitalisation in Modern Silviculture



NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

Webinar programme
Digitalisation in Modern Silviculture

Date: 15 October 2025
Time: 9:45 – 13:45
Online platform: Microsoft Teams

Time	Title and Speaker
Session 1:	
9:45 – 9:55	Welcome <i>Prof Josua Louw – Nelson Mandela University</i>
9:55 – 10:00	"Digitalisation in Modern Silviculture" <i>Dr Muedanyi Ramantswana - Nelson Mandela University</i>
10:00 – 10:15	Precision silviculture initiatives and progress in New Zealand <i>Ms Claire Stewart – Forest Growers Research (New Zealand)</i>
10:25 – 10:40	Perspectives on Silviculture Digitalisation in South Africa <i>Mr Thembinkosi Zulu – Nelson Mandela University</i>
10:50 – 11:05	Mulchers as an Effective Tool for Residue and Fuel Load Management <i>Mr Deon Redinger - Savithi</i>
11:15 – 11:30	A Single Head Planting Solution for South African Conditions <i>Mr Stephanus Viljoen – Novelquip Forestry</i>
11:30 – 11:45	Discussion and Questions
11:45 – 12:00	Break sessions
Session 2:	
12:00 – 12:15	Smart Traceability for Forestry Nurseries: The Role and Integration of Ellepot Live <i>Darren Stone – Ellepot (Australia)</i>
12:25 – 12:40	Using Advanced Mapping Tools to Improve Silviculture Operations Management <i>Mr Harley Schinagl – TerraLab (Australia)</i>
12:50 – 13:05	Application of Drones for Stand Monitoring and Survival Assessment After Regeneration <i>Ms Beatriz Zerbino Balista (Brazil)</i>
13:30	Questions and Discussion Closure

WoodBiz Africa & SA Forestry Newsletter
Issue 51

Newsletter 51, 2025

WoodBiz_{Africa} / **SA Forestry**

We are committed to delivering quality content for and about our sector.
Visit saforestryonline.co.za and woodbizafrica.co.za

Subscribe to the regular Newsletter issued by Joy Crane in order to stay informed about Forestry and Forest Products News.

FSC® Forest Week 20-26 September 2025

Do one thing for forests

It has never been more crucial to raise awareness and inspire action that positively impacts our environment. As consumers look to actively contribute to fighting the climate and biodiversity crises, together we can show them a way to be part of the solution by supporting sustainable forestry.

The Annual Fynbos Forum took place at Wilderness from the 12th to the 14th of August 2025. Although very few of the presentations and field trips had any real relevance to forestry, Johan Baard (a Saasveld trained forester) from South African National Parks did a splendid presentation on the Passive restoration of fynbos after afforestation with exotic pines

This large-scale decommissioning of plantations in the eastern Cape Floristic Region (South Africa) between 2000 and 2020, enabled a wide-ranging study showing successful passive restoration of fynbos vegetation after afforestation. Using a paired study design, we compared the diversity, and floristic and growth-form composition of post-fire recovering fynbos in former plantations with that in recently burnt neighbouring fynbos in a natural state within the Garden Route National Park. The fynbos of the study area showed good autogenic recovery after several decades of pine afforestation and a fire subsequent to the clearcutting of these trees. Species diversity did not differ significantly between the two vegetation states. The former plantations harboured 91% of the number of native species that the natural fynbos had, while the similarity of the two floras was 65%. This is excellent recovery of fynbos after decades of management as pine plantations.



FABI : Pathogen Alert!

We would like to inform you of two new diseases reported by the TCP. We have attached the pathogen alerts for additional information.

The first is a *Eucalyptus* leaf pathogen called ***Suberoteratosphaeria suberosa***. This fungus has been recorded from *E. smithii* in the midlands region of KwaZulu-Natal. It is known from other parts of the world on various *Eucalyptus* species, causing similar corky leaf spots as the ones observed in SA. Although it has not been reported as a severe pathogen in other countries, based on field observations in the midlands, there is uncertainty with regard to the true extent of the damage that the pathogen may cause, or how the trees will recover.

!Pathogen Alert!

Suberoteratosphaeria suberosa affecting *Eucalyptus smithii*

Background
During a field visit in May 2025 to parts of the KwaZulu-Natal midlands, mature *Eucalyptus smithii* trees were observed with leaf spots caused by an unknown pathogen. Leaves were collected and brought back to the Diagnostic Clinic for investigation. A fungus was consistently isolated from the corky spots on the collected leaves. Using DNA sequencing and phylogenetic analyses, the fungus was identified as *Suberoteratosphaeria suberosa*. This fungus has been reported on *Eucalyptus* in other parts of the world causing similar corky leaf spots as the ones observed here on *E. smithii*, however this is the first time the species has been detected on material from South Africa.



Symptoms
Tan spots are present on the leaves, becoming thickened and scale/cork like with age. The fungus is mostly reported to affect older foliage, but can affect the younger foliage in severe outbreaks. With the current outbreak, we observed the foliage on the trees having an almost scorched appearance from a distance, as if fire had moved through the compartment.

Distribution and prevalence
Thus far the pathogen has only been detected on mature *E. smithii* from the Midlands region of KwaZulu-Natal.

Other reported hosts
E. agglomerata, *E. angophora*, *E. cloeziana*, *E. dunnii*, *E. globulus*, *E. grandis*, *E. grandis* x *camaldulensis*, *E. laevopinea*, *E. melliciana*, *E. muelleriana*, *E. nitens*, *E. nitens* x *nobilis*, *E. punctata*, *E. saligna*, *E. taretzonii*, *E. viminalis*

Damage
In other regions of the world where this species has been detected it has not been reported as a severe pathogen. However, based on field observations during the current outbreak in the Midlands, we are unsure of the true extent of the damage that the pathogen may cause, or how the trees will recover.

Biology and ecology
Originally treated as a species of *Myxosphaeria* and then *Tentisphaeria*, *Suberoteratosphaeria suberosa* is a known *Eucalyptus* leaf spot pathogen. Like many leaf spot pathogens, not much is known about the symptoms and severity of the pathogen, aside from sporadic reports of its occurrence in different areas. Carnegie et al. (2011) reports that although the species is common in parts of Australia, it is not often a damaging pathogen. However, symptoms can be confused with those of species of *Tentisphaeria*.

Origin and global distribution
The specific origin of the species is unknown, but it has been reported from Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia and New Zealand.

Should potential infections of this pathogen be observed/suspected, please contact Sandiwe Jali (sandiwe.jali@fabi.up.ac.za) to arrange an onsite visit or submit material to the TCP Diagnostic Clinic.
Please distribute this pathogen alert to spread awareness.

Reference
Carnegie, A. L., Peck, G. S., White, D., & Burgess, T. J. (2011). *Australian Plant Pathology*, 40 (4), 364-384.






Prepared August 2025

The second species, ***Apharknessia insueta***, was recorded from *Eucalyptus* cuttings from a nursery in Mpumalanga. All 4 species in this genus known from *Eucalyptus* in various parts of the world are fairly poorly studied. The effects *A. insueta* may have under nursery conditions is completely unknown as it has only been reported under field conditions.

!Pathogen Alert!

Apharknessia insueta on *Eucalyptus* cuttings

Background
In June 2025, the Diagnostic Clinic received cuttings of *Eucalyptus* from a nursery in Mpumalanga showing symptoms of disease and decline. The discoloured regions of the cuttings located above the root collars were dissected and isolations consistently yielded a fungus from the diseased tissues. Using DNA sequencing and phylogenetic analyses, the fungus was identified as *Apharknessia insueta*. The species is a known pathogen of *Eucalyptus*, but this is the first time the species has been recovered from material in South Africa.



Symptoms
Apharknessia insueta is more commonly associated with leaf spot symptoms. However, in the case of the material received at the Diagnostic Clinic, we observed symptoms of rot occurring above the root collar, as well as callousing of the tissue and cankering in that area. When dissecting the material, discoloration could be seen underneath the calloused and thickened tissue (arrows) at the root collar.

Occurrence in South Africa
Thus far the pathogen has only been detected in *Eucalyptus nitens* hybrid material from a single nursery in Mpumalanga.

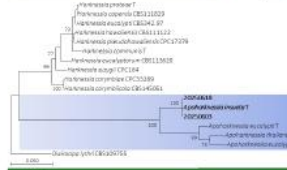
Geographic distribution
The pathogen has been reported from Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mauritius and the United States of America.




Other reported hosts
E. robusta, *E. pellita*, *E. grandis*, *E. camaldulensis*, and *E. microcarpa*

Damage
Not much is known about the symptoms and severity caused by *A. insueta*. Although species in the genus have been reported as both leaf spot and stem canker pathogens, they are typically encountered in the field not in the nursery. Thus, it is uncertain how this pathogen will affect *Eucalyptus* cuttings and seedlings under nursery conditions.

Biology and ecology
The genus *Apharknessia* currently includes four species. Three species, *A. insueta*, *A. eucalyptorum*, and *A. eucalypti* are all pathogens of *Eucalyptus* in various parts of the world. The fourth species, *A. thibetensis*, was isolated and described from stem cankers on an unknown host tree. Aside from *A. eucalyptorum* which has been attracting more research attention in recent years due to its effect on *Eucalyptus* in Brazil, very little is known about the species in this genus. Generally, they do not appear to be considered severe pathogens and are seldom encountered. However, as they are typically encountered in the field, the effects that *A. insueta* may have under nursery conditions, where it has now been encountered, is completely unknown.

Should potential infections of this pathogen be observed/suspected, please contact Sandiwe Jali (sandiwe.jali@fabi.up.ac.za) to arrange an onsite visit or submit material to the TCP Diagnostic Clinic.
Please distribute this pathogen alert to spread awareness.



Prepared August 2025

Our partners at the TCP will continue to monitor these pathogens through their field extension and diagnostic services, but also request all members to keep an eye open for these new diseases and report any suspicious symptoms that resemble those in the attached profiles.

Received from Dr. Ronald Heath from Forestry South Africa

E-mail: ronald@forestrysouthafrica.co.za

Web: www.forestrysouthafrica.co.za

For more news on pests and diseases which pose a threat to commercial tree species planted in Southern Africa, please visit the FABI website

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



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The following members celebrate their birthdays in September



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

01 Sept	TIAAN POOL	13 Sept	PIETER VAN NIEKERK
01 Sept	NKOSINATHI THWALA	16 Sept	WYNAND DE SWARDT
05 Sept	BRETT DUSTAN	17 Sept	PHILLIP CROFT
07 Sept	DAVID JAMES	18 Sept	MARTIN HILL
11 Sept	PAUL CLEGG	19 Sept	GREG FULLER
12 Sept	SAMANTHA BUSH	26 Sept	TIENIE VAN VUUREN
12 Sept	JACQUES DE VILLIERS		



The following members will be celebrating their Birthdays in October



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS			
02 Oct	SHAUN BIGGS	15 Oct	PILASANDE BHENTSHU
03 Oct	AXEL JOOSTE	24 Oct	HANNES VAN ZYL
08 Oct	JANNIE CONRADIE	26 Oct	ALME JONKER
08 Oct	WINSTON KAMFER	26 Oct	DUNCAN BALLANTYNE
09 Oct	VICTOR MUSALE	27 Oct	GLEN COOPER
09 Oct	PETER MULLER	28 Oct	HORST KASSIER
10 Oct	PAUL MARWICK	28 Oct	BRAAM DU PREEZ
10 Oct	LUNGA TSHANGISA	29 Oct	SIDHIKA NAIDOO
10 Oct	SBONGA MNGOMEZULU	30 Oct	MARIUS DU PLESSIS
14 Oct	STEVE VERRYIN	31 Oct	RONAWA NETHONONDA

The SAIF would like to wish every member who celebrate his/ her birthday in September and October, a very Happy Birthday and congratulations with reaching another milestone. Thank you for your continued support and God bless for the next year ahead.





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

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Fire Manager's Handbook on Veld and Forest Fires

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