

<b>GSSA Strategic Planning Workshop, 5 February 2002, JD Scott Room, University of Pietermaritzburg</b>		
Present: W Goqwana, A Swanepoel, S Kassier, D Goodenough, N Allsopp, K K Kellner, A R Palmer, K P Kirkman, T Everson, CR Hurt Apologies: G Peddie A de Beer		
Acceptance of agenda: Proposed: T Everson Seconded: W Goqwana		Cham pions
<b>1</b>	<b>Relevance and recognition: evaluation of progress</b>	
1.1	Publications: status of publications, popular media, advertising, funding	
	Journal: ARP reports that the journal is now being run as a professional venture by NISC with copyright vested in NISC. A consequence is that the GSSA loses some control over the management of the Journal and its pricing. Currently subscriptions for members is set at R110 in a 3 year contract. CRH says that by allowing NISC to take over the subscriptions and marketing of overseas members, the GSSA may lose some of these members. CRH proposes that the publications committee should come up with proposals for the contract to replace the initial 3 year contract with NISC. This should be tabled at next council meeting	ARP
	TE reported that R46 000 was borrowed form Trust to pay the last journal published by the GSSA. There are insufficient funds in the bank account to pay this back.	
	Bulletin: Lolly Stuart has offered to do the Bulletin at no extra cost to the GSSA. Advetising will cover costs of typesetting and printing. KKK proposes that the Bulletin be distributed to government departments and academic institutions.	
1.2	National environment: contact with agriculture and emerging farmers Regional bodies should be established (DG for KZN with N Miles, WG for ECape, KKK for NW and Limpopo Prov, AS for WCape) Formal ties with emerging (e.g. NERPO) and organized agriculture should be established to encourage them to come to GSSA – does the GSSA have the resources for this? CRH	
1.3	Membership: what do we offer? What do members expect? The constitution should be reexamined wrt membership categories (CRH) At Farmers' days there is the potential to invite their member organisations to join GSSA (CRH) Should strategise for African members outside SA (NA) The GSSA needs to know what members are doing professionally – members will be asked in next membership billing for information on their professional interests membership needs a champion: to show what people get for membership and what can be done to improve this	KKK
1.4	GSSA publicity: website, articles, lobbying Professional members and members institutes could have their URLs placed on website Commercial sponsorship or adverts could support pasture publications	SK DG
2	International recognition including Africa Are we doing enough to attract and keep members north of Zimbabwe. Need to identify what we can offer them. However, it is important first to work towards get local membership on board (KPK CRH)	
2.1	IRC 2003 The GSSA and NISC (journal) should have tables at IRC	CRH

	2.2	Reciprocal membership with grassland society of Victoria and others Complimentary reciprocal membership with other societies which involved the exchange of journals has been part of the history of the GSSA (CRH) Website links have been set up with other organisations. This can be done with the Grassland Society of Victoria	CRH
3	Recognition in South Africa		
	3.1	Tours Pasture tours in 2001 gave the society exposure	
	3.2	Farmers days Farmers did not know about the GSSA or see any reason to join the society (DG)	
	3.3	<p>Serving our farmer clients: proposal for more exposure by the GSSA N Miles opened this section by pointing out that the GSSA appeared to make no impact on commercial farmers, especially those in the beef, lamb and dairy industries, nor did the GSSA appear to include these in its vision. The potential for forages in communal areas also presented an opportunity. He pointed out that SASAS had worked hard on their relevancy to their associated industries. The formation of the Pasture association should be seen as an indictment of the GSSA. He also saw the dominance of ecologist in articles published in the journal and in other aspects of the functioning of the society as a drawback. He made the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish the proceedings of the congress in the Journal to encourage pasture publications</li> <li>2. Increase relevance to farmers: e.g. Prestige Farmers days</li> <li>3. Ensure publications come out of prestige farmers days</li> <li>4. Counter dominance of ecologists by promoting pasture science</li> </ol> <p>General comments: The GSSA should broaden its mindset and focus more on technical aspects of grasslands (KPK) The society has not made any strategic changes in the last 10 years (CRH) Not productive for the GSSA to set pasture scientist against ecologists. The former tend to be more involved in practical implementation whilst the latter are more involved in research (CRH) Unlikely that congress delegates will commit to producing papers for proceedings (CRH) It is also very difficult to get written papers from presenters at Farmer's days (KKK) There is a general negative attitude among younger people towards pasture and grassland science. This needs to be countered by senior people projecting a positive image (KKK) Links with SASAS should be improved (DG) If GSSA focuses too strongly on animal production and pastures, there is a risk of alienating ecologists and conservationists who also make up the GSSA (NA) Each province should have committees to identify farmers' needs. Within provinces, regional or special interest groups should be set up (SK, ARP, KPK) In the W Cape the Pasture Forum is being revived (AS) The constitution of the GSSA specifically excludes farmers from ordinary membership. If the society wishes to attract farmer members it should look at changing the constitution (NA)</p>	
	3.4	<p>Popular articles from GSSA congress papers R Bezuidenhout has said that he will write popular articles on congress papers. These would provide exposure for the researchers, their employers and the GSSA. However, there is the danger of misinterpretation (KPK) Researcher should have the final say on any article produced by R Bezuidenhout (CRH) The Society and its members need exposure so a series on grassland science giving the GSSA prominence should be encouraged (KPK CRH)</p>	

4	General	
4.1	GSSA Bulletin This has been addressed: L Stuart to produce a newsletter more frequently	
4.2	Administration L Stuart gave an overview of administration services she can offer the society. This will include managing the membership, bringing in subscriptions and doing the banking. She can also produce the newsletter with sponsorship and organize regional meetings with sponsorship. CRH was given the go ahead to sign a contract with L Stuart initially for a three month contract to get administration in order. After this her contract will be reconsidered for renewal. Debit order will be discontinued. L Stuart will clear the Hilton mailbox	CRH KPK TE
4.3	PRO K Kellner felt despondent about what has achieved as PRO. If the vice president takes on this task there is insufficient continuity. Someone with the right skills should be appointed after the constitutionality of this is checked. It might be possible for L Stuart to take over PRO under the supervision of an additional member (CRH)	KPK
4.4	Attitude of the GSSA members K Kellner reported that SAAB members were happy with that society based on an annual congress as a product form the society. Possibly the GSSA council must be more involved in congress, farmers days bulletin etc (KPK) The council should take a project approach (such as IRC) for long term improvement of member attitude towards the society (ARP)	
4.5	Future GSSA congresses K Kellner pointed out that congresses held in neighbouring countries would not get much support form local members. Council should aim to find other local venues. For university associated people July was an attractive time for congresses (KPK)	
4.6	GSSA/SASAS future cooperation SASAS is not currently interested in combining with the GSSA so it is imperative not to allow the impetus which has built up so far to collapse(CRH) A joint congress in 2004 will be discussed at the meeting on 6 March SASAS currently has one congress every 2 years. This could allow the GSSA to alternate its focus at yearly congresses or encourage SASAS to revert to annual congresses (KPK)	