

grass roots

Newsletter of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa

*Incorporating the Bulletin of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa
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**Bush encroachment
in Namibia: farmers
embrace
complexity**

**Forage sorghum and
millets**

***A new plan for
the Journal***

**Bankruptbush:
understanding and
managing a noxious weed**

Advancing rangeland ecology and pasture management in Africa

Editorial

Dear Readers

Welcome back to the New Year, and what an interesting year it looks like it's going to be, to put it mildly. In the last few months, the health of the world's economy plunged to lows last seen decades ago. Oil crashed from well over \$120 a barrel to \$35 a barrel within a couple of months, and the economy of the world's richest and most powerful nation, we suddenly find, was appallingly badly mismanaged by the same capitalists who created its wealth (according to *Newsweek*, a common taunt on Wall Street was "If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?"; to which we might respond, "if you're so rich, why aren't you smart?").

How that will affect each of us remains to be seen. It's a general election year in South Africa, which usually means changing policies as new ministers take the place of the old ones we're just beginning to get accustomed to. Coupled to times of economic uncertainty, we'll each just have to either weather the storm or embrace the new opportunities, depending on our approach to life.

We have an interesting issue for you this month, with lots of opportunities for young scientists and students.

Embrace, explore, and enjoy!

Alan Short

The Grassland Society of Southern Africa is dedicated to the advancement of the science and practice of range ecology and pasture management.

We welcome any contributions to the Grassroots, in the form of news, informative articles, reports, short research notes, scientific papers and letters to the Editor. Email shorta@arc.agric.za or admin@grassland.org.za or fax +27 (0)86 622 75 76

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On the cover:

Farmers in Namibia discussing “leaking” landscapes: how do we restore degraded rangelands? (P. 14) Photo: Ibo Zimmerman

News

News from NISC

NISC, the publisher of the *African Journal of Range and Forage Science*, has worked very hard in the last year to ensure that the journal is more widely recognized. The Journal has now finally been accepted on the Thomson's list of the journals with the most global impact (normally referred to as ISI-rated).

The Journal is hosted on IngentaConnect and African Journals Online, meaning that all articles can be searched using Google. In addition, the articles are submitted to all major bibliographic databases, listed on the back cover of each issue. Send any additional names of bibliographic databases to NISC for inclusion.

Language editing service

We are aware that the journal gets some submissions based on good science but where poor language and stylistic proficiency prejudice consideration for publication. NISC will offer an

affordable local editorial service from 2009. Authors may submit, via the editor-in-chief, such unreviewed manuscripts directly to NISC for editorial and stylistic revision. We will quote once we have seen the work and evaluated the size of the task, but typically we would charge authors between R25 and R65 per manuscript page.

Open access

From the first issue of 2009 we will offer authors the choice of making their article available "Open Access". Procedures are described below and in more detail on our website (www.nisc.co.za).

There is a local and international move in scholarly publishing to give authors the choice of retaining copyright ownership of their published work so that they may make the article available through "open access" channels. In keeping with other commercial publishers we need to charge a once-

off open access fee to cover the production costs and to maintain the high editorial standards associated with an international peer-reviewed scholarly journal. Once published, authors may disseminate such open access articles in whatever way they wish. Furthermore, on Ingenta (www.ingentaconnect.com) the specific article will be clearly identified as available for free download. Open access journals are perceived to have lower standards than subscription journals. Therefore, to protect the credibility of the journal, authors will only need to commit to "open access" once their article has been through the journal's standard production processes.

Costs

There will be **no page charges** for GSSA members subscribing to the Journal, for 2009.



News

Prof. Peter Scogings steps down as Scientific Editor

Prof. Peter Scogings has served for five years as the Scientific Editor of the *African Journal of Range and Forage Science*. During that time, he made great efforts to grow the Journal, both in terms of the number and quality of published articles and in terms of the international status of the Journal.

His efforts were finally rewarded last year when the *African Journal of Range and Forage Science* was accepted onto the Thomson's list of Journals (formerly ISI-rated). It will be two

years before the Journal's rating is published.

Pete is succeeded by Dr. Susanne Vetter of Rhodes University. Susi has thrown herself with enthusiasm into her new role, and we look forward to many more years of growth of the Society's most important product—the *African Journal of Range and Forage Science*.

Pete's personal accomplishment was marrying Brigid Letty in January. Congratulations to both of them and best wishes from the GSSA!

Namaqualand initiative develops restoration guide

The Namaqualand Restoration Initiative (NRI) has developed a step-by-step restoration guide for restoring land in the Namaqualand region. These guidelines include restoration packs containing seeds of some of the dominant perennial species in the area, and are designed to increase the success rate of the restoration process.

The initiative, which is funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund as well as the De Beers Namaqualand Mine, has been working in Namaqualand for the past four years testing various methods in order to come up with the best solution for restoring the land as closely as possible to its natural state.

At the recent Interfaces conference in Oudtshoorn, staff on the initiative reported back on the methodologies they had used to work out the best restoration method, and what their major achievements had been.

Raldo Kruger, a field researcher working
(Continued on page 8)



Photo: Luthando Dziba



News from the African Journal of Range and Forage Science

Exciting times are ahead for the African Journal of Range and Forage Science as plans for improving the journal coincide with an ISI rating

Susi Vetter

Scientific Editor, African Journal of Range and Forage Science

At the last GSSA Council strategic planning meeting in March 2008 it was acknowledged that the African Journal of Range and Forage Science (AJRFS) had reached a state of crisis, with low and declining submission rates and a decline in the standard of submitted manuscripts. Peter Scogings, who served as Scientific Editor from 2003 until 2008, reported that fewer and fewer GSSA members appeared to choose the journal to publish their research. In response to this, a strategic meeting for the Journal was held prior to the July 2008 Congress to plan the way forward to improving the situation. The main – and closely interlinked – issues identified for action were raising the profile of the journal, improving submission rates and reviewing the aims and scope of the journal. Plans for improving the editorial structures and procedures were also discussed.

Profile of the journal and ISI rating

Under the editorship of Peter Scogings, and together with the Journal's publishers NISC, an application was made to have the African Journal of Range and Forage Science listed on the Thomson Reuters ISI Web of Science database. Once listed on ISI, citation data are used to calculate a journal's impact factor. Essentially, the impact factor takes into account how many articles are published annually in a journal and how often these articles are cited by other authors. Researchers wanting to attract funding, promotion or NRF rating are acutely aware of the impact factors of the journals they publish in, and not being ISI rated thus makes a journal an unattractive option for publishing their research. At the same time, Thomson Reuters use the current impact of a journal to decide whether it is worthy of inclusion in their database. Despite being rated as one of the higher im-

act journals in a recent review of South African science journals, the African Journal of Range and Forage Science was stuck in the vicious circle of "no ISI rating – people reluctant to publish in the journal – not enough research in the journal to attract citations – hence no ISI rating" and at the time of the strategic planning meeting, the efforts to gain an ISI rating had remained unsuccessful. To our great delight, however, we were informed less than a month later that the Journal had been selected for inclusion in the ISI database from 2008, and authors of papers in the Journal have already reported an increase in the awareness of the work they have published there.

The challenge now is to work towards a respectable impact factor, which will be calculated by 2010. To achieve this, the journal needs to attract a large enough number of good submissions to be able to publish high-quality papers of interest to a wider readership. The

latter is crucial as a good impact factor relies on the work being cited by other researchers. Without a reasonable impact factor it will remain difficult to attract manuscripts from leading rangeland and pasture scientists in South Africa, elsewhere in Africa and beyond.

Aims and scope of the Journal

At both strategic meetings there was intense discussion about where the Journal should be headed and what it should be publishing. There appeared to be two main, conflicting and to some extent mutually exclusive ways forward. The one is to strive towards becoming more international in the scope and impact of the journal, whereas the other is to be a forum (in the absence of another journal filling that role) where locally relevant research can be published that would not make it into high-profile international journals. Much discussion was devoted to whether it would be possible to meet both aims in one journal. This is not as straightforward as it sounds. If AJRFS publishes mainly work of strictly local interest (be that in South Africa or another country), this would negatively affect its impact factor and hence the attractiveness of the journal to international

and high-profile authors. If on the other hand we are too strict about accepting well-designed local empirical studies, where else would these data become available to other researchers? Clearly there is scope for a range of research, but local studies have to meet the criterion of being applicable to systems beyond the immediate study area. It was suggested that papers reporting on studies of more local relevance should be kept short and to investigate the possibility of archiving electronic appendices and data sets which interested readers could access.

One question that has come up more than once is: if we want to be an international journal, why not drop the "African" in its title? It was agreed that we should rather work on developing a unique niche than to become another general rangeland journal. The African Journal of Range and Forage Science the only journal focusing on rangeland and pasture research in Africa, which is conducted, published and read by local and overseas scholars. African pastoral, commercial farming and wildlife systems are of international interest and research in Africa should be informing rangeland science in places like the USA and Australia, as it has already

started to do in recent years. As a case in point, the disequilibrium debate of the 1990s and early 2000s was based largely on research done in Africa and had a major worldwide impact.

The GSSA's vision and mission were revised during the strategic planning meeting in March, and it was decided at the July meeting that the Journal's aims and scope should be aligned with the Society's vision and mission. The resulting new aims and scope of the journal (see Box) succeed in reflecting both the Society's vision and mission as well outlining the scope of an internationally relevant journal reporting quality research done in, and relevant to, the African continent.

Low submission rates

At the time of the strategic planning meeting in July 2008, the rate at which manuscripts were submitted to the Journal was at an all-time low. This seemed to have a number of reasons. Active researchers with a good publication track record appeared to favour other journals over AJRFS, because of the reasons already discussed. Of equal or even greater concern was the impression that much research that is conducted, while of interest to other researchers

and practitioners in the field, is just not being published. With many researchers working in non-academic environments, the pressure (or encouragement) to publish research in the peer-reviewed literature is often not strong enough to motivate scientists to make the extra effort. Two main thrusts are planned to address these problems. The first is to encourage established researchers to publish more of their research in the AJRFS, including work by their students and research and discussion papers around topical issues. The second is to support a broader group of researchers to publish their research in AJRFS via a mentorship programme. This will be designed and piloted in 2009 and funding sought to support its wider implementation from 2010. While the exact model still needs to be

developed, in essence the plan is to team up researchers who are seeking support in turning their research into manuscripts with experienced researchers in the field, and to cover the costs of such collaborations.

The good news is that as with the ISI rating, things have looked up since the meeting in July. The rate of submissions picked up dramatically in the second half of the year and we have managed to fill the current and upcoming issues of the journal with some good papers. Thanks go to the editorial team for a sterling effort to process the wave of manuscripts that were received.

What next?

The GSSA has committed itself to achieving the objectives of the strategic plan – to improve the number and quality of submission, to attract sub-

missions from both established and less experienced authors, to improve the journal's national and international profile, to achieve a good impact factor and to improve the editorial process. To this end, provision has been made to pay an honorarium to the scientific editor who is tasked not only with the day-to-day running of the journal but also with revamping the editorial process, soliciting papers and guest issues from suitable researchers and setting up the mentorship programme. But it takes more than a good editorial team to make a good journal and I would like to end with a call to all GSSA members to support the journal – by choosing the AJRFS to publish their research, and by spreading the word to other authors to do the same.

Feedback, comments and questions are welcome – please write to journal@grassland.org.za. 

Aims and Scope

The African Journal of Range and Forage Science is the leading rangeland and pastoral journal in Africa. The Journal is dedicated to publishing quality original material that advances rangeland ecology and pasture management in Africa. Contributions reporting on research not done in Africa, which is applicable in Africa, are welcome. The Journal promotes both science and its application and authors are encouraged to explicitly identify the practical implications of their work. Peer-reviewed research papers and research notes deal primarily with all aspects of rangeland and pasture ecology and management. Articles highlighting transdisciplinary linkages among biophysical and social sciences that support management, policy and societal values are particularly encouraged. The Journal includes relevant book reviews and invited perspectives that contribute to the development of range and forage science in Africa. Letters to the editor that debate issues raised in the Journal are acceptable. The African Journal of Range and Forage Science is the official journal of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa.

The ergot fungus, *Claviceps*, on grasses: a special request for specimens

Dr Elna van der Linde of the Agricultural Research Council Plant Protection Research Institute (ARC—PPRI) has appealed to all farmers, botanists, technicians and other workers to submit any specimens of fungus-infected grasses to the address given below.

Because of the vastness of the country, as well as the fact that the fungal survival structures are only visible on grasses and sedges from February to May of each year, it is almost impossible for one person to cover all areas in search of them.

'Ergot' refers to the infection of ovaries in the florets of cereals and grasses (*Poaceae*), sedges (*Cyperaceae*) and rushes (*Juncaceae*) by 47 described and various undescribed fungal species of the ascomycete genus *Claviceps* (*Clavicipitaceae*, *Hypocreales*).

A total of 509 species in the *Poaceae*, 17 in the *Cyperaceae* and 4 in the *Juncaceae* have been reported as hosts, al-

though the actual number of hosts is considerably higher. The disease destroys between 5 and 10% of the seed in infected heads, but its main importance is the sclerotia (survival structures) which are poisonous to humans and animals due to various tetracyclic ergoline toxins - collectively referred to as ergot alkaloids - contained in them.

Consumption of ergot-infected fodder leads to ergotism, a toxicosis characterised by psychotic delusions, nervous spasms, convulsions, gangrene, abortion, infertility and reduction in milk production. Ergot poisoning continues to be of economic importance as an animal disease, although outbreaks are rare.

Research on *C. purpurea*, a fungus hosted by sedges, elucidated the morphology, taxonomy and phylogeny of the pathogen, the alkaloid profile, physiology and mode of infection, and some aspects pertaining to the epidemiology and ecology of the disease.

In recent years, much emphasis has been placed on the application of molecular methods (including DNA studies) for verifying identities and detecting genetic variability in *Claviceps* species.

Anyone encountering specimens of grasses or sedges infected with fungi that may belong to this genus, is requested to collect some seed heads, dry the samples in a plant press or even in a telephone directory, and post them in clearly marked paper envelopes (not plastic) to the address below.



Dark, elongate sclerotia of *Claviceps digitariae* on florets of *Digitaria* (Smuts finger)

Important:

Please include all collection information, i.e: Locality of collection (farm, district, nearest town, etc.), date of collection, name of collector, name of host plant (scientific or common name, if known).

Dr Elna van der Linde
Mycology Unit,
National Collection of Fungi
ARC-Plant Protection Research
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Movers and Shakers

Axel Rothauge:

After 12 years of teaching Rangeland and Animal Science at the Neudamm Agricultural College near Windhoek, Namibia, the last two of which also as Principal, I decided to work as a consultant for the largest co-operative in Namibia, Agra. The intention is to Namibianize the donor-driven development of Namibia's communal ("emerging commercial") agricultural sector and take up the slack left by the implosion of Government's agricultural extension effort to established commercial farmers. Our country has such vast potential; it would be criminal not to unlock it!

Dr Roger Uys

I have recently been appointed as the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, Regional Ecologist South Coast. This involves providing ecological advice to the terrestrial area covering the municipalities

along the coast from South of iSimangaliso Wetland Park (St Lucia) to the Eastern Cape boundary. In addition to advising the management of the Province's Nature Reserves I deal with all manner of nature conservation issues outside of protected area management from commenting on development issues, to advising landowners on fire and wildlife management, and facilitating research in our protected areas. I can be contacted at uysr@kznwildlife.com.

Peter Wragg

I'm no shaker, but I guess I have moved ... I am starting a PhD in the Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Graduate Program at the University of Minnesota in the USA. I will investigate grassland ecology, management and conservation, probably both in my native habitat (KZN mesic grassland) and in U.S. tallgrass prairie

where some similar management and conservation issues are being confronted. My advisor is David Tilman, and I will collaborate with others in SA (particularly at the University of KZN) and the USA. Email: wragg@ukzn.ac.za.

Coral Birss

I started with CapeNature at the beginning of February 2009 as Regional Ecologist for the Overberg-Hassequa and Langeberg-Karoo regions, after 5 years with Gauteng Conservation as Regional Ecologist for Southern Gauteng. Not quite so much "the same – different venue", especially since the landscape and the scale of everything has really grown and of course, this is FYNBOS and the fires are spatially spectacular to say the least; and of course, there's a sea view! I feel that I have joined a formidable group of scientists, specialists and conservators and am looking forward to getting entrenched in Fynbos ecology with a hint of Coastal and Marine ecology and touch of Karoo ecology.

Namaqualand restoration guide

(Continued from page 3)

on the NRI, said "one of the main aims is developing restoration methods for degraded areas and post-mine landscapes on the Namaqualand Coastal

Belt." This is an area about 400km wide, and more than half of it is affected by mining.

For more info contact Peter Carrick at peter.carrick@uct.ac.za



Letters

Thank you for a most interesting news letter in September where three very interesting articles appeared, for a person who finds heavy scientific detail hard to digest and also to keep them interested in a way these articles did.

Roelof Bezuidenhout touches on an important communication necessity in getting the message to people involved in doing the practical side of agriculture. The purpose of the scientific research is to get better results to assist these practical people to optimise production and profit while conserving the environment. Often this technical data is wrapped in “camouflage” for the people working in the practical situation on farms and the message is lost to these people for whom the scientific research has been conducted.

Some years ago there used to be a publication called the Farmers’ Forum that was delivered all around KZN and well accepted by the farming community. My suggestion to their editor was that instead of just featuring “advertorial articles”, often written in favour of a service, system or product, we approach scientists to write popular articles which would in turn be edited by other scientists so as to pass on the real findings. Many scientists approached were willing to do so. However, after a meeting to discuss this was organised, at the Royal Show Grounds together with scientists and their managers, management said NO and an opportunity to get important facts in a suitable format to the end user was curtailed.

The article about forage sorghums and mil-

lets was very informative and we need more of this data to become available for all forage and pasture species.

Congratulations to Richard Fynn on his article regarding “Savory Insights”. This was the best assessments of Savory’s grazing system that makes sense. Many farmers are proving that the Savory system works. If you compare this grazing system in veld management to the New Zealand ryegrass grazing systems, there are similarities. If it works for the beef farmers and the New Zealanders on intensive pastures then there must be something that is being done right.

Regards

Richard Findlay
Sustainable Soils
and Forage Systems
Pietermaritzburg

New Members

- Akona Zweni: ARC—Livestock Business Division
- Andrew Rossaak: Emross Consulting
- Aslam Pandor: Albarakah Bonsmaras
- Basanda Nondlazi:

- ARC—Livestock Business Division
- Phillip Nengwenani: DoA—Grootfontein ADI
- Marion Holmes: Karoo Pred-A-Tours

Bursaries and Jobs

<p>Postgraduate Training Fellowships for Women Scientists from Sub-Saharan Africa</p> <p>Contact Details</p> <p>Ms. Leena Mungapen TWOWS Secretariat , c/o TWAS, ICTP Cam- pus, Strada Costiera 11, 34014 Trieste, Italy Tel: +39 040 2240321 Fax: +39 040 2240689 Email:info@twows.org</p>	<p>MSc, PhD and Post-doctoral bursaries available in the Research Centre for Plant Growth and Development, University of KwaZulu-Natal</p> <p>Applications can be made to Professor J. Van Staden Please submit applications via e - m a i l t o rcpgd@ukzn.ac.za. For more information see the GSSA web-site.</p>	<p>MSc rangeland Resources Management</p> <p>University of Namibia</p> <p>See the University of Namibia website (www.unam.na) or contact E. Nowaseb (+264-(0)61-2063363/3895 or P. Petrus (+264-(0)61-2064109 for further information.</p> 
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Internship at the Heinrich Boell Foundation

Cape Town (Deadline 27 February and 30 June 2009)

Offers 3-6 months internships for graduates of political or social science, gender/feminists studies, migration studies, sustainable development, environmental science who are working on their own research projects.

Contact details: Keren Ben-Zeev
Programme Manager:
Transparency and Participation
Heinrich Boell Foundation
Regional office, South Africa
1st floor, Avalon building

123 Hope Street, Gardens
Cape Town 8001



Postgraduate opportunities 2009— Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Park

The South African portion of the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Park is offering a number of postgraduate opportunities at PhD and MSc level which will address medium to long-term changes in vegetation, fire, and large mammal populations. The programme is to be conducted under the auspices of the South African Environmental Observer Network (SAEON), in collaboration with other institutions.

The following research issues have been prioritised.

1. Landscape-level fire behaviour

Key question: What are the main controls over landscape-level spatial and temporal patterns of fire in the Drakensberg and has the spatial pattern changed over time? The study is based on long-term records and empirical investigation of landscape behaviour of fire (GIS ability essential).

2. 'Bush encroachment' of Drakensberg and surrounding grassland in relation to environmental factors

Key question: How vulnerable is grassland to bush encroachment, what are the main agents responsible, and what abiotic or biotic conditions promote such transformation? Analysis of changes apparent on aerial and lateral photographs will comprise a main component of this study.

3. Near preclusion of fire: woody ingress into grassland

Key question: What is the long-term impact of a dramatically altered fire regime on transformation of grassland to woody vegetation? This study is based on continuation of previous work on the effects of long-term fire preclusion on vegetation dynamics in several sites.

4. Grassland vegetation dynamics in response to multiple drivers

Key question: What relative influence do climate, soils, radiation, fire and land use have on the stability and resilience of botanical composition and diversity of grassland? A foundation for this study is continuation of long-term burning and grazing trials and fence line comparisons of land use.

5. Mammals in response to multiple drivers

Key question: What are the population trends of the more common mammal species in relation to various factors? This study is based on continuation of previous monitoring of large mammal populations across the Maloti-Drakensberg conservation areas.

Potential candidates should submit a brief CV and motivation (Word or pdf) to Tim O'Connor at:
t i m o c o n n o r @
xsinet.co.za



Upcoming events

From www.grassland.org.za

Veld Management and Grass Identification Courses

Date: 2 March 2009, 3 March 2009

Venue: Krantzklouf Nature Reserve, Durban

Date: 4 March 2009, 5 March 2009

Venue: Bishopstowe Farmers' Hall, Pietermaritzburg

Date: 14 March 2009

Venue: Pretoria Botanical Gardens

Date: 21 March 2009

Venue: Towoomba Research Station, Bela Bela

Tel: 083 367 5693

Contact: Frits van Oudtshoorn

Email: fritsvo@lantic.net

7th Annual Savanna Science Networking Meeting

Date: 19–24 April 2009

Deadline for submissions: 28 February 2009

Venue: Skukuza, Kruger National Park

Contact: Jackey Deacon

Tel: 082 4471 570

Email: dot@mpu.co.za

First International Workshop on Summer Dormancy in Grasses: Coping with increasing aridity and heat under climate change

Date: 6 – 8 April 2009

Venue: Ardmore Oklahoma USA

Website: [http://www.nobleorg?](http://www.nobleorg?ForageImprovement/Summer-dormancy/index.html)

[ForageImprovement/Summer dormancy/index.html](http://www.nobleorg?ForageImprovement/Summer-dormancy/index.html)

African Issues Symposium

Date: 3 March—1 April 2009

Venue: Kansas State University

Tel: Telephone

Website: www.k-state.edu/africanstudies/2009symposium

Email: dchart@ksu.edu

South African Society for Animal Science (SASAS) 43rd Congress

Date: 28 – 30 July 2009

Venue: Alpine Heath, Northern Drakensberg, KZN

Tel: 033 3559 262

Contact: Trevor Dugmore

Website: www.sasas.co.za

Email:

Trevor.Dugmore@dae.kzntl.gov.za

Developing Animal Agriculture Interest Group (DAAIG) Symposium

Date: 28 September - 2 October 2009

Venue: Gauteng (Venue to be confirmed)

Tel: 083 478 1940

Contact: Heleen Els

Email: Heleen.Els@up.ac.za

African Crop Science Society Conference

Date: 28 September – 10 October 2009

Venue: Cape Town

Email: JeannieB@arc.agric.za



Council News

The Council met on 22 January for their first meeting of 2009.

All of the arrangements for Congress 44 2009 are well on track. The theme for the Congress – *Meeting rangeland, pasture and wildlife challenges* – provides ample opportunity for all members to contribute. A number of interesting and relevant symposia and workshops have been suggested and members are requested to send their inputs to the Organizing Committee. Delegates can also look forward to interesting pre- and post- Congress tours. Members are also reminded that no accommodation is provided this year, so please make the necessary arrangements. Remember to visit the

website for updates and future information.

Copies of the GSSA Expertise Database questionnaires will be available during Congress for those members who have not yet completed theirs.

We would like to thank everybody who submitted manuscripts to African Journal of Range and Forage Science at the end of last year. The next issue promises to be a very interesting one dealing with a variety of topics.

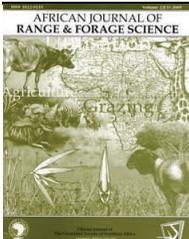
Council has been attempting to raise a number of major concerns about the SACNASP (South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions) legislation, with little success. As a result of

changes in the SACNASP committee, Council had to postpone the meeting with them regarding professional registration. Members will be informed about any further developments.

Everybody working at tertiary institutions is reminded to nominate possible candidates for the GSSA student awards.

Prof. Peter Scogings has stepped down as Scientific Editor of the African Journal of Range and Forage Science after five years. He has been replaced by Dr Susi Vetter, of Rhodes University (see page 3).

Council would like to wish everybody a very prosperous new year!



There are no page charges for GSSA members publishing in the African Journal of Range and Forage Science in 2009