

Vote of thanks

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Good afternoon colleagues

I am a parasitologist and being with top class rangeland scientists for these two days has taken special courage from me.

It has been two busy days characterized by collegial yet intense and robust engagements around an important and critical natural resource – the South African rangelands. The list of names of stakeholders from government and various organizations and institutions, including universities, research organizations to SOE' who attended the workshop bears testimony to the importance that you all attached to this meeting and your obvious intentions to use your time, skills and expertise in order to make a difference in the effective management of the national rangelands.

I wish to thank the DoA (Directorate Animal and Aquaculture Production) and the organizing committee under the leadership of Dr Luthando Dziba for their foresight in recognizing the importance of establishing a national forum with a dedicated mandate on national rangelands.

As scientists I probably need not overemphasize this fact – but the success and sustainability of this initiative is strongly dependent

on good partnerships and strong collaboration between all of us in this room, including skills transfer and capacity building of younger professionals.

I listened very carefully to the lively discussions, and I heard interesting words of wisdom, that we need to learn from history, that we need to collaborate and support each other and to avoid unhealthy competition etc with a view to developing a healthy rangeland system in South Africa.

The Agricultural Research Council, and specifically our Range and Forage Unit within the Livestock Business Division is willing to continue to provide all the necessary support in ensuring your success in the execution of the recommendations as given by the various task teams for a National Rangeland Monitoring Program.

Could I please ask you to give a warm hand of applause to Dr Dziba and his organizing committee, Prof. Kevin Kirkman for facilitating the program, the presenters and other facilitators who have ensured the success of this workshop.

Once again I wish to thank all of you for making time to attend this two day National Rangeland Monitoring Workshop. Have a safe trip home and God bless!

