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**Printed by:** CPW—Pietermaritzburg

**Published & Distributed By**  
The Grassland Society of Southern Africa

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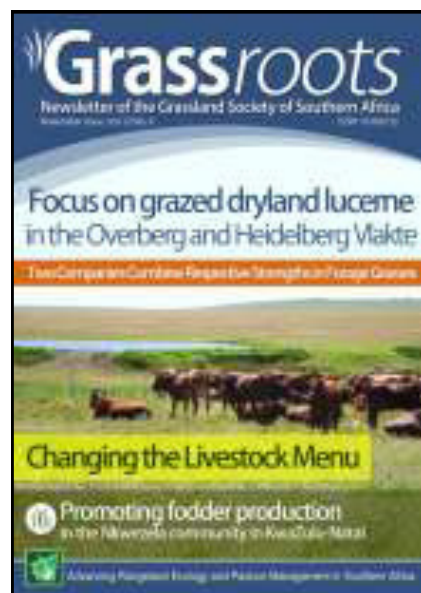
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# Editor's Note



Welcome to our last edition for 2012! Time is moving fast and yet again we approach the end of another year. During the past year, increasingly more attention has been directed towards systems that are adapted to climate change and minimised greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring food security and sustaining our natural resources. Our grassland scientists and agriculturalists played integral parts in addressing these challenges during 2012. In this issue a range of interesting articles, journal inputs and news snippets have been put together to keep you informed on the latest advances currently adding value to the field of Grassland Science.

News in this issue includes important information about the 'new' South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) as well as a report-back from the SACNASP Voluntary Associations Workshop held during August 2012. Among other news included is information about SANSOR's annual congress and new general manager, the Communication Initiative's eLearning Africa 2012 report and the University of Fort Hare's Green Week

Furthermore, we bring you two feature articles related to lucerne production in the Swartland, Overberg and Heidelberg Vlakte. Valuable information about lucerne's exceptional forage properties, which makes it the most productive pasture legume in the Western Cape, is revealed. Motivating approaches on the promotion of fodder production in KZN's rural areas are inspirational and is included as another feature article. Keep reading to find more interesting articles in this issue.

We are looking forward to see what 2013 might have in store for the field of Grassland Science and we strongly encourage everyone to participate in events related to the science and practice of range and pasture management during 2013.

As this year comes to an end, we wish you a happy festive season and a prosperous 2013!

*Pieter Swanepoel*

# Letters

**A**lan Savory seems to live in a different world than I do: I cannot see “that agriculture is producing more eroding soil than food” nor “vast grasslands turning to deserts” nor the “extreme dangers of man-made desertification and climate change” as Savory does. The world I live in has different features: Never before the globe has been home to 7 billion people with such a high living standard, life expectancy, available technology (communication, mobility, agriculture, and health care), level of security, human rights, and education. The fact that a small part of mankind is still involved in warfare and/or suffering hunger does not change this general picture.

I have been involved in applied research in rangeland and grassland management for 40 years in three different continents with a special focus on the restoration of degraded lands. Undoubtedly, in most parts of the globe, grassland conditions have improved during the last century due to technological and managerial improvements (adapted cultivars of grasses and legumes, fertilizers, herbicides, appropriate machinery, soil conservation tillage, conservative stocking rates, fencing, less use of fire and even improved cattle breeds and veterinary care etc.). Yes, pasture and rangeland improvement may raise

carrying capacity by the factor of three or four, but increasing stocking rate per se (even with rotational grazing as Savory suggests) cannot restore degraded rangelands (unless other crucial factors are simultaneously put under control, hidden by Savory’s side note of the - considerable - investment of 1.8 \$/acre, or unless a series of favorable years pretend sustainable improvement).

Did anyone of the readers of Alan Savory’s eloquent essay understand what holism means in terms of the daily and long term decisions to be taken on farm level? I didn’t! I am convinced that millions and millions of farmers, ranchers and herders around the world do practice holistic management on their appreciated land (not comprehending the term holism), in a much better way than Alan Savory recommends in his very selective and partly contradictory manner, always following the modern trends of green romanticism which are “en vogue” and therefore a good source for public and private fund raising.

Dr. Albrecht Glatzle

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**O**n behalf of the University of Fort Hare Students Green Campus Initiative (UFH SGCI), I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your participation in the UFH Green Week 2012 held from the 25th of August to the 1st of September 2012, in the Alice and East London campuses. Thanks to your participation, we were able to raise awareness among budding environment enthusiasts about the prevalent condition of our local environment, and how carrying out a tree plantation drive was one of the many ways in which we could help salvage this current deplorable situation.

Thanks to our Green Week events, we were able to attract as many as 75 interested individuals on the opening day, each of whom helped plant 20 indigenous trees. These trees will now be taken care of by our organization. During the course of the week we were also able to hold successfully panel discussions in East London and Alice as well as LKA lectures which were well attended. Up to 1200 students and staff members made a pledge to Make a Green Difference by signing and making a palm print on a piece of cloth. We have also persuaded these individuals to approach us with newer ways of spreading environmental awareness, for which we will conduct many more such events and make our campus a better place to live in.

This event would not have been a success without the generous support you have provided us throughout. We deeply appreciate your support to our efforts to make our campus more habitable. We sincerely hope that this association will be maintained and that you will continue to support us in our future endeavors.

**Njongenhle Nyoni**

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**S.G.C.I**

