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Nuusbrief van die Suid-Afrikaanse Genootskap van Plantkundiges

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Changes in the offing for the production of the *South African Journal of Botany*

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The *South African Journal of Botany* has now been produced for some 17 years on behalf of the South African Association of Botany and the National Botanical Institute. It was initiated in 1982 at a time when a number of so-called national science journals were started under the auspices of the Bureau for Scientific Publications.

On 19 April 1999, in an address delivered at the inauguration of the National Research Foundation, the Minister of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr B.S. Ngubane, announced that " *We will support only the top general science journal and we will provide medium-term seed funding for the development of one or two journals in niche research publication areas.*" (see <http://www.nrf.ac.za/news/ministeradres.stm>).

This announcement necessitated an in-depth analysis of the current state of funding of the *Journal*, as well as the mechanisms according to which it is produced. As part of

this analysis the *Journal* will be discussed at the annual general meeting of SAAB in January 2000 at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. So bring your ideas and sentiments on the topic to the meeting. They may well prove to be vital to a secure future for the *Journal*.

Council members for 2000

The following SAAB members have been elected to serve on SAAB council for the new millennium. Congratulations and we hope you will have a very productive and constructive term!

Prof. Hannes van Staden
Prof. Ted Botha
Dr Nigel Barker
Dr Sandra du Plessis
Dr Chris Willis
Re-elected was:
Dr Frans Weitz

The executive committee consists of:

Prof. Frikkie Botha (President)
Dr Mike Cramer (Honorary treasurer)
Dr Bettie Marais (Honorary secretary)
Dr Marianna Smith (Permanent secretary)

The NBI will appoint a delegate to represent them on the council during the annual SAAB conference in Potchefstroom in January 2000.

Letters to the editor

Meneer,

Hierdie skrywe is in reaksie op die artikel, *Status of Botany in South Africa*, wat verskyn het in *Forum Botanicum* 36(2): 1--5 (1999). As ons daardie artikel lees, is dit nie vir ons 'n wonder dat Plantkunde in Suid-Afrika nie op dreef kom nie.

Die eerste en belangrikste feit wat ignoreer word, is dat mense wat besluit om 'n loopbaan van Plantkunde te maak, dit doen omdat hulle geïnteresseerd is in *plante*. Ons wil beweer dat universiteitscurricula daardie belangstelling nie bevorder nie, maar doodmaak. By ons opleidingsentrums is daar 'n feitlik universele neiging om daardie basiese biologiese kennis wat Plantkunde aantreklik maak, te minag en so ver as moontlik uit die curricula te verwyder en te vervang met vakrigtings wat op molekulêre en sellulêre vlak toegespits is, soos fisiologie en biotegnologie, selfs op eerstejaarsvlak. Gesprekke met eerstejaarstudente het openbaar dat so 'n proses-benadering, eerder as 'n organisme-benadering, op daardie stadium vir studente afstoot eerder as aantrek, met die gevolg dat hulle belangstelling verloor in Plantkunde as 'n loopbaan. 'n Gevolg van hierdie benadering is ook 'n korps van hoogs-gekwalifiseerde plantkundiges wat nie kennis het van plantsoorte en hulle biologie nie, en selfs beweer dat hulle trots is daarop dat hulle niks van daardie aspek weet nie. Na ons mening sou dit veel beter wees om in die eerste jaar hoofsaaklik klem te lê op die verskeidenheid van hoofsaaklik inheemse plante

en hulle biologie; omdat die soort student wat vir plantkunde inskryf, die soort mens is wat vetplantjies op die vensterbank aanhou. Uiteraard is die basiese beginsels van morfologie reeds op hierdie tydstip van belang; maar dit is slegs nodig dat studente bewus word van die verskeidenheid prosesse wat binne plante plaasvind. Ons maak die stelling dat mense wat van die begin af geïnteresseerd is in chemie, eerder sal inskryf vir biochemie, en dat mense wat geïnteresseerd is in biotegnologie, eerder sal inskryf vir genetica. Deur groot dosisse van hierdie vakrigtings in die eerstejaarskursus in te skryf, word die teikengehoor gemis en die student wat in plante geïnteresseerd is, weggedryf. Na blote bewusmaking van plantprosesse, behoort studente in hulle tweede jaar eers die keuse gebied te word om in daardie rigtings te spesialiseer as dit vir hulle interesseer.

Die tweede feit is dat werkseleenthede in plantkunde so min is, dat dit riskant is om 'n loopbaan in plantkunde te beplan. In die huidige klimaat van *regsteilende aksie* is dit baie moeilik om op grond van meriete alleen een van die tradisionele navorsingsposte in die staatsdiens te bekom. Vir vakrigtings soos taksonomie en fisiologie is daar eitlik geen ander werkseleenthede as in die staatsdiens nie; en as poste daar onseker is, sal niemand in daardie vakrigtings spesialiseer nie. Die uitsondering is die ekoloë wat tans op vryskut-basis 'n bestaan kan maak uit ontwikkelings-impakstudies. Dit is versierende van die regering om ooreenkomste oor die handhawing van biodiversiteit te sluit, maar baie kortsigtig om nie personeel beskikbaar te stel om die agtergrond-nligting in te samel en om die biodiversiteit te handhaaf en bestuur nie.

Derdens word plantkundige navorsing aan universiteite byna heeltemal finansier deur die *National Research Foundation* [NRF], van tevore die *Stigting vir Navorsingsontwikkeling* [SNO]. Die NRF is skynbaar nie primêr geïnteresseerd in *navorsing* nie, maar in *navorsing as opleidingswerktuig*. Daarmee het ons nie 'n probleem nie, maar daar behoort

onderskeid getref te word tussen *navorsing* en "*capacity-building*". As sulks bevorder dit snyvlak-navorsing bo basiese dokumentering van ons flora. Snyvlak-navorsing is belangrik as ons ons steeds verswakkende tegnologiese posisie ten opsigte van die ontwikkelde wêreld wil behou, maar ons glo nie dat ons werklik kan kompeteer met die finansiële reuse elders in die wêreld nie. In die proses word groot bedrae navorsingsgeld egter na hierdie duur navorsing kanaliseer, waarskynlik ten koste van lae-aansien navorsingsrigtings. Ons bevraagteken ook die koste-effektiwiteit van die NRF se politieke beleid van "*capacity building*". Laastens, in befondsingsprogramme word toenemend klem gelê op befonding deur industriële vennootskappe. Laat ons die aandag duidelik daarop vestig dat dit slegs moontlik is in gevalle waar die navorsing direkte korttermyn kommersiële toepassings het. Meeste vakrigtings, insluitend die dokumentering van ons inheemse flora, het slegs langtermyn toepassings, en kommersiële instellings is nie bereid om vir sulke navorsing te betaal nie. Om die waarheid te sê, hulle telefoneer daagliks vir inligting en benamings, maar is uiters traag om vir daardie inligting te betaal.

Vervolgens lewer ons graag kommentaar op spesifieke afdelings van die artikel, *Status of botany in South Africa*:

Introductory statements by Prof. J. Grobbelaar

Hier word die unieke geaardheid van ons flora beklemtoon. Ons inheemse flora is, as besondere natuurlike hulpbron, inderdaad een van die belangrikste redes om plantkunde in Suid-Afrika te bedryf. Ons moet egter vra: hoeveel van ons plantkundiges werk op ons inheemse plantsoorte, hoeveel befonding word daarvoor beskikbaar gestel, en watter werksgeleenthede is daar in hierdie rigting vir voornemende plantkundiges?

Wat betref die NRF-beoordeling van plantkundiges, is dit nie noodwendig 'n veroordeling nie. Die NRF beoordeel volgens

maatstawe soos snyvlak-geaardheid en internasionale aansien; maar op hierdie tydstip is dit vir baie plantkundiges belangriker om plaaslike probleme op te los waarvoor snyvlak-tegnologie nie noodwendig 'n prioriteit of koste-effektief is nie. Dit is kortsigtig om sulke plantkundiges te minag.

Consequences of the rating system

- "*Plant Sciences received a small portion of the research budget ...*". Die persentasie van die totale befonding is hoegenaamd nie van belang nie. Wat wel belangrik is, is dat plantkunde voldoende befonding moet kry om te kan werk. Sekere soorte navorsing is inderdaad duurder as ander. Wat vir ons waar lyk, is dat daar in baie kringe neergesien word op vertakkings van plantkunde waar navorsing relatief goedkoop is. Dit is 'n wan-opvatting dat duur navorsing noodwendig meerderwaardig is in vergelyking met goedkoop navorsing. Intendeel, goedkoper navorsing is dikwels meer toepaslik en praktykgerig. Dit is ook so dat "goedkoop" navorsing dikwels gladnie uitvoerbaar is indien 'n realistiese befondsingsaansoek slegs gedeeltelik toegestaan word nie.
- "*Fewer student bursaries ... were available to Plant Sciences ...*". Weereens is dit nie van belang nie, solank voldoende beurse gereedlik beskikbaar is vir goeie studente. Dit is veel belangriker om te verseker dat gekwalifiseerde plantkundiges moet kan praktiseer.
- "*South Africa's biota had not received the research input it warranted*". Dit is waarskynlik waar. Aan die ander kant mag dit die moeite werd wees om 'n keer te kyk presies hoeveel inligting ons reeds beskikbaar het, en eerder daardie inligting te dokumenteer as om nog meer nuwe inligting in te samel. Daar is 'n aantal voorbeelde beskikbaar van sulke samevattende dokumentering van bestaande inligting, wat uiters nuttig blyk te wees.
- "*Overseas concerns and researchers exploited the indigenous flora*". Dit is heeltemal waar dat buitelandse instansies

fortuine maak uit Suid-Afrikaanse plantsoorte. Ons wys egter daarop dat daar, na die beste van ons wete, die afgelope 350 jaar geen enkele inheemse plantsoort plaaslik veredel en kommersialiseer is nie. As die buitelanders dit nie gedoen het nie, sou ons beskawing veel armer gewees het. Wat betref buitelandse navorsers wat op aantreklike Suid-Afrikaanse plantgroepe werk, is dit inderdaad irriterend. In die lig van hoe min ons egter plaaslik doen, sou ons dink ons behoort dankbaar te wees vir enige hulp om ons plante te dokumenteer en te benut.

Current evaluation and rating system of the FRD

Ons het geen rede om te dink dat daar teen plantkundiges diskrimineer word nie. Wat egter waarskynlik lyk, is dat die NRF nie die plantkundige behoeftes van die land verstaan nie, en dat die beoordelingsmaatstawe dus nie doeltreffend is nie.

The way forward

- *"How should we get botany within the average grading ratio?"* Hierdie probleem sal slegs opgelos kan word indien die NRF kan verstaan wat die land se plantkundige behoeftes is, en ophou om lantkundiges te beoordeel volgens onvanpaste maatstawe.
- *"Was botany as a subject still relevant?"* Enigiemand wat so 'n vraag vra, behoort onverwyld plantkunde te verlaat. In die onmiddellike toekoms behoort daar veral een prioriteit te wees, naamlik om die flora van Suid-Afrika te dokumenteer sodat ons weet wat ons het en weet waarvan ons praat. Die opvatting dat ons flora reeds voldoende versamel en dokumenteer is, is 'n mite. Die huidige politieke neiging om studente van spesifieke bevolkingsgroepe in 'n vakrigting te druk, is tot ondergang gedoem omdat loopbaankeuse, veral in plantkunde, berus op die student se mentaliteit (persoonlike belangstelling) asook loopbaanmoontlikhede.

Plantkunde was nog nooit baie betalend nie; en is gevolglik alleenlik aantreklik vir iemand met die belangstelling en uitsonderlike mentaliteit om daardie nadeel oor die hoof te sien.

▪ **Concerns expressed**

"The loss of research capacity." Dit is inderdaad ons grootste probleem. Sekere soorte navorsing kan nooit in vennootskap met nywerhede gedoen word nie omdat dit nie korttermyn finansiële voordele inhou nie. Sulke navorsing moet uitgevoer word in permanente inrigtings wat deur die belastingbetaler finansier word. Dit is 'n wanopvatting dat sulke inrigtings hulself totaal of gedeeltelik moet kan finansier, en dit is nie in belang van die belastingbetaler of die land nie.

"Difficulties of recruiting overseas". Dit is nie van toepassing nie. Ons het genoeg plaaslike talent, en die probleem is bloot om dit aan te moedig, te werf, op te lei, en in diens te neem.

"Loss of opportunities ... because of the commercialisation of research programmes/projects". Dit is waar. Ons is te geneig om korttermyn doelwitte na te jaag ten koste van langtermyn doelstellings.

Possible solutions

- *"Learn from [other] countries"*. Ons kan baie leer van Australië, veral van die *Flora of Australia* program.
- *"Commercialise products and research"*. Soos hierbo verduidelik, is die moontlikhede beperk; en dit is juis hierdie mode-neiging tot kommersialisering wat die vak tans soveel skade berokken.

Concluding remarks

- *"It was up to botanists to improve their FRD ratings by changing the emphasis from*

largely descriptive to more ground-breaking science". Dit is onsin: geen "ground-breaking science" sal ooit van enige waarde wees indien die beskrywende basis nie eers daargestel is nie, en die basiese dokumentasie van ons flora is nog ver van klaar. Dit is ook nie altyd duidelik wat met sogenaamde "ground-breaking science" bedoel word nie. Almal kan tog nie potensieële Nobelprys-wenners wees nie.

- *"A number of workshops.."*. Ons het reeds te veel werkswinkels en vergaderings, wat nog nooit die situasie verbeter het nie. Laat ons liewers met rus sodat ons plantkunde kan bedryf.

In opsomming, ons het genoeg plantkundige talent, maar daar is 'n gebrek aan aansig op bestuursvlak en doelgerigte aanmoediging op universiteitsvlak, asook onvoldoende geleentheid om te praktiseer. Dit is nodig om ons prioriteite te her-omskryf, en om die middele daar te stel om daardie doelwitte te bereik sonder die stigma van korttermyn kommersialisering of die onrealistiese strewe na navorsingsdeurbrake.

Literatuurlys

Akeroyd, J. 1999. Botany at the Millenium. *Plant talk* 18:3

Hedberg, I. 1998. Teaching crisis for whole-plant biology. *Plant talk* 15:4

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Geagte Drr Vorster en Van Wyk,

Baie dankie vir u mening. Dit is presies wat ons met 'n publikasie soos Forum wil bereik. Ons nooi ander lede om hulle mening te lug, of om met bogenoemde outerus saam te stem of te verskil. - Red.

Mistaken Identity

Dear Editor

In Forum Botanicum 36:2 p.6 it is stated that James S. Watt of Swakopmund was the co-author of Watt & Breyer-Brandwijk's *Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of Southern Africa*.

In fact, this esteemed book was written by John Mitchell Watt and M. G. Breyer-Brandwijk. J.M. Watt was born in Port Elizabeth on 1 December 1892 (which would make him 107, not 93!) and died in Brisbane, Australia, on 23 April 1980. This information is to be found in Gunn & Codd's *Botanical Exploration of Southern Africa* (of which I have the honour to be preparing a new edition).

James Shaw Watt (now resident in Swakopmund) is commemorated in *Combretum wattii*, as mentioned by Gunn and Codd on the same page as their biography of J.M. Watt.

Yours sincerely

Dr Hugh Glen
National Botanical Institute
Pretoria
0001 South Africa

Dear Dr Glen

Thank you for pointing this out to us. Good luck with your preparation of the new edition of Botanical Explorations in Southern Africa. Please keep us posted on the progress. - Ed.

Minutes of SAAB Annual General Meeting

Venue: Auditorium, Trisnet Building, Umtata

Date: Friday, January 15, 1999

Time: 14h45

1. Welcome

The president, Professor J U Grobbelaar welcomed the audience and council members present. He expressed his condolences to the deceased members. Doctor K Esler took the minutes for the meeting.

2. Attendance and apologies

The following members were present at the meeting.

Bajinath H, Barker N, Bredenkamp C, Botha FC, Burns A, Cramer M, Dilika F, Eloff JN, Esler K, Gaur A, Grobbelaar JUG, Haller A, Hutchings A, Lubke RA, Magwa ML, Mathekgwa ADM, Naidoo G, Naidoo T, Nel M, Pieterse AJH, Ripley BS, Schoeman L, Tyiso S, van der Merwe C, van Staden J, van Wyk BE, Verhoeven R, Watt DA, Williams R

Apologies were received from:

Nicholas A, Peter C, Von Siger I, Ward CJ

3. Minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting, held on January 16, 1999 at UCT

The minutes were unanimously accepted as being read.

One alteration needs to be made. Prof. J N Eloff will still be available to help until the new editor of SAJB is appointed. The change has been accepted.

Prof J van Staden proposed to accept the minutes as correct and was seconded by C Bredenkamp.

4. President's report, January 1998 – January, 1999

Prof. J U Grobbelaar read the presidents report.

5. Treasurers report

Prof. R Verhoeven presented this report, which was not audited. There are no financial problems and the society is roughly breaking even.

Prof. J van Staden posed a couple of questions:

Why was there a drop in membership numbers?

What the reason for non-payment was, did all the members received accounts?

The answers to these questions were impossible without more information from the secretary.

The council president indicated that one of the first tasks of the new secretary would be to establish the status of non-paid members.

The secretariat is moving to Stellenbosch.

Prof. Verhoeven proposed a small increase in membership fees. He indicated it would be the first increase in two (2) years. Prof. J van Staden proposed the increase go ahead and was seconded by Dr N Barker.

The Membership fees will be as follows:

Retired membership	R30
Student membership	R45
Affiliate membership	R85
Ordinary membership	R110
Family membership	R160
Life membership	R2200

Dr N Barker wanted to know if the Society is advertising internationally to increase its funds. Possibilities are a web site, send forms with the Journal, or for members to put SAAB web page at the bottom of e-mail signatures.

Prof. J van Staden congratulated Prof. R Verhoeven on his excellent work.

1. SAAB trust

There are no new developments other than in the president's report.

2. SAJB

Prof. JN Eloff, the outgoing editor, presented his report – see written report.

Prof Eloff was thanked for 15 years of service to SAAB.

Prof. Snowy Bainath requested information about financial situation of the journal, which was not covered in detail by Prof. JN Eloff. Prof. Eloff indicated that problems should not be experienced with regard to finances.

Prof. van Staden proposed a motion of thanks to Prof. Eloff from the floor.

3. *Forum Botanicum*

Four issues of this publication were promised, but only one saw the light. Another issue is virtually ready for press. The council will follow this up with Gavin Hellstrom.

Prof. J van Staden stated that the name of the publication is not clearly identifiable as a SAAB newsletter publication and the newsworthy items are watered down as they are spread over a host of other issues. The council should consider getting various groups under a single Botanical Newsletter. More groups of people would provide more copy.

SAAB pays the editor of *Forum Botanicum* R2000 per issue. This is an excellent opportunity for a 'driver/mover'.

Prof. JN Eloff proposed that *Forum Botanicum* appear with the journal, as this would provide a deadline and will save costs.

4. Regional Branch Reports

These reports were presented and accepted.

5. Constitution

A proposal for a change in the constitution was presented by Prof. FC Botha and was accepted unanimously. Paragraph 3.2.1 on

page 9 in the constitution should be changed to the following: "The Council consists of ten members, of which seven members are elected, one is nominated by the NBI and two (the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer) are appointed."

6. SAAB Congresses

2000

Prof. AJH Pieterse made brief comments on the congress that will be held in Potchefstroom in 2000.

He invited all members present.

The first announcement is already in the process of distribution.

The logo for the congress will be an Oak leaf, as Potchefstroom is considered to be the Oak City of South Africa and possesses the longest Oak lane in the country.

At least 6 excursions and 4 workshops will be presented and 5 plenary speakers are already invited.

2001

This congress will be held at RAU in Gauteng under the auspices of Prof. BE van Wyk.

2002

Rhodes University in Grahamstown will host this congress and Dr N Barker will serve on the organising committee. A new lecture complex will also be erected and will probably be available.

2003

There is a possibility of having a joint University of Pretoria/NBI venue. There are plenty of offers.

12. Motions

See heading 10.

13. General

13.1 Duration of Conferences

Feelings were that the meetings must be shorter to cut costs. Possibly three (3) days of parallel sessions will be enough. This will

be a guideline to local organising committees as from 2001.

Prof. J van Staden noted that the evenings could be used as part of the conference as well. It was unanimously agreed.

13.2 Frequency of Conferences

Prof. Van Staden stated that biannual conferences would mean that a group of students will loose out and this will dilute the impact of SAAB. He was supported by Prof. Ben -Erik van Wyk who emphasised that basic botanical research should be supported. Ms Christine Bredenkamp pointed out that we should try and keep the intact structure we already have.

Dr Nigel Barker said University residence fees are increasing and it should be the duty of the Local organising committee to find reasonable accommodation. Prof. Van Staden informed the meeting of an agreement between University principals on the pricing of accommodation for conferences. The organisers should investigate this at individual Universities. Prof. Johan Grobbelaar will investigate this at his University and it was requested that Potchefstroom do the same.

The summary of the discussion about the frequency of SAAB conferences was that the present status quo should be maintained.

13.3 Time of meetings in January

RAU requested the meetings to move to a later date, ca. the 16th of January. Ms Rose Williams suggested moving it to the 3rd week in January, also ca. the 16th. This was unanimously agreed upon.

13.4 Working group for Plant Utilisation

Should we continue with this committee?
YES
Prof. Snowy Bainath stated this group originated with Bruce McKenzie in the Western Cape and it is not the same as IPUF.

A suggestion was put forward to remove this working group and replace it by IPUF and to ask Prof. Ben-Erik van Wyk to be the representative for SAAB. This proved to be unacceptable to the meeting.

Several groups are dealing with the same issues and some clarity is needed. There is a need for one reporting body. Prof. Snowy Bainath believed a formal letter should be written, as we do not have authority. The need for a chairperson to clarify was stated and Prof. Ben Erik van Wyk was nominated, seconded and accepted as chair of the working group for Plant Utilisation.

13.5 Closing

Prof. Frikkie Botha thanked Prof. Johan Grobbelaar for his dedication and enthusiasm throughout his term in office as SAAB president.

AGM 2000 – Potchefstroom

The next AGM will be held on Friday, 14 January 2000, at 15h50 after the last session at the confernece venue. All members are invited to attend.

SAAB secretariat will have a table available for the duration of the conference. Members are invited to settle their membership fees.

Recommended English Tree Names Sappi & Jeep Sponsored Workgroup

Over the last five years or so, various people involved in promoting trees on a popular level in recreation and tourism, began to feel that the number of English names for indigenous trees needed changing. Despite substantial groundwork that was done by the Dendrological Society, Fritz and Jutta von Breitenbach in particular, some English names are confusing, poor translations from Afrikaans, uninteresting and even, in some cases, inaccurate. It was decided to hold a

Conference to look into the possibility of revising some of these tree names.

Unless ordinary people learn to recognise trees, they will never develop a love for them. This tree “addiction” leads naturally to the caring and conservation of our vast botanical resources. The clarification of the English names will make it easier for the layman to tackle the 1,200 indigenous species found in South Africa!

The **Sappi and Jeep Tree Names Conference** was held at the Avis Conference Centre on the 19th July 1999, in association with the National Botanical Institute and sponsored by Sappi and Jeep. The Conference was organised by Jacana. The forty Conference delegates represented the National Botanical Institute, the Dendrological Society, the Botanical Society, The Tree Society and Trees for Africa, South African National Parks, the Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa, educational institutions, tourism and wildlife conservation. Several tree “authors”, artists and publishers also attended.

The aim of the group was to create a list of principles to be used in changing tree names, ranking them in order of importance and relevance. The **Sappi and Jeep Workgroup** have subsequently used this list in the process of reviewing tree names.

Since then the Workgroup has met regularly and a great deal of ground has been covered. In effect, the whole procedure concerning name changes has been done as a group. Virtually every name listed below is the final “consensus” (certainly not always unopposed!) of the Workgroup.

The **Sappi & Jeep Workgroup** is looking to stir up a lively response from your readers/listeners. This is an opportunity to speak up – we want to hear any comments or criticisms! No matter how well the group has worked, there will be some names that individuals or other groups find unacceptable. Obviously some mistakes will have been made and there will be suggested names that will prove to be unpopular. For this reason, a serious effort is being made to run an interactive system with the Conference participants and with the public. A complete list of the proposed name changes can be obtained from Jacana, upon their receipt of a postal order to the value of R16.00 to cover administration and postal costs. Easier still, go

to this internet address where the list will be live and updated regularly
<http://www.wits.ac.za/museums/herbarium/trees.htm>.
The list will be up-and-running on the net on the 10th October 1999.

Below are a few interesting examples that the Workgroup has come across while working through the list of indigenous trees:

- The name Protea comes from the Greek god Proteus, who was able to change his shape into many different forms to escape from his enemies. Protea is a genus, which has a wide variety of species; this is therefore very appropriate.
- In the Rhus family, it was decided that this huge group, with its large number of species of trees, as well as shrubs, had too many names that are misused in English. The name Rhus itself dates back 2 000 years or more and appears in the writings of Pliny and other scholars of this family of plants, which also occur in the Mediterranean. To combine this ancient name “Rhus”, but give some sub class for the groups, the genus was divided into Currant-rhus, Karree-rhus and Kuni-rhus.
- One of the least helpful names in the old English list is the regular use of the name “Common” and wherever this is possible, this has been changed to something more interesting and useful, eg. when, in the previous revision, Kaffirboom was no longer acceptable, it was changed to the Common Coral Tree. In this revision, it has been suggested to pick up on the ancient reference, that this tree was the sacred tree of local people, and to rename it the Sacred Coral Tree.
- Perhaps the worst of the translations was the *Acacia robusta robusta*. Named Enkeldoring in Afrikaans, this was called Ankle Thorn in English! This *Acacia*, with its superb upward-facing thorns, has an old English name of the Splendid *Acacia* and this seems much more fitting.
- Real significance has been given to looking at the names of trees from neighbouring countries. However, most names from Mozambique are unpronounceable to English speakers so the greatest influence has tended to be from

Zimbabwe. This influence occurs particularly with trees which have a wider distribution northwards. Thus names such as Jesse Bushwillow, Baboon Bread and Snugglebush could be entertaining English speaking adjustments to the list.

- In the middle of the 19th Century, a botanical specimen of a *Clausena anisata* was sent to Kew, England, where the formal acceptance and naming of new plants was controlled. The only common name attached to this specimen was *Perdepis* because the crushed leaves smell like horse urine. By return mail, Kew accepted the English name *Perdepis*, pronounced *Purrdaypiss!* In light of this, the Workgroup feels that *Perdepis* should remain - rather than horsewood - which has very little meaning and relevance.

Jacana would be delighted if you would agree to support this interesting and necessary initiative by disseminating this information to the public. Attached is the A List, the first part of the Indigenous Tree List that has been worked on, and the principles used to arrive at the suggested changes.

Recommended English Tree Names

Sappi & Jeep Sponsored Workgroup

Below are a number of important sections to consider when looking at the changes to the tree list:

- The first contains the principles/criteria we have used, as directed by your choices at the conference and through the prioritising system you all voted for.
- Secondly, follows a list of examples of how the principles were applied.
- Thirdly, is the schedule ahead giving dates and deadlines.
- Lastly, is the list of suggested name changes. There are also detailed explanations about the 9% of names which have changed totally and the rationale behind groups of trees where a first or second name has been changed or added.

Please read both the listed principles and the procedures before engaging too seriously with the suggested name changes list, as we believe our explanations are critical to your understanding of the actual process that was used.

Principles/criteria generated during Workshop applied by the Workgroup - more or less in this order of priority:

1. Every effort should be made to change as few names as possible. However, if any name does not sufficiently meet the criteria listed below, it is better to change it, and try to do the whole list properly in a co-ordinated way.
2. Some name changes are in common use that are not English, but unless they are significantly inaccurate they should remain eg. *Tamboti*, *Marula*, *Mitzeeri* and *Guarri*. Previous direct translations into English have caused some of the least useful names, for eg. a good non-English word like *Ouhout* existed previously and was translated as *Oldwood*; *Perdepis* became *Horsewood*; *Boekenhout* became *Beech*.
3. Names should be scientifically accurate: this applies to appearance, distribution, habitat, generic classification eg. *Beech*, *Teak*, *Plane*, are inaccurate. *Outeniqua* may be inaccurate for a more widely occurring plant.
4. Names must be politically sensitive eg. old provincial names like *Natal* and *Transvaal* have been re-assessed and changed.
5. If there is more than one tree in a genus, the shared second name should link them. *Black Storm* should thus become *Leafless Wormbush*. However, sometimes within genera it would be helpful to recognise sub-groups eg. *Bead-beans* and *Bush-cherries* within *Maurea*. Once the species in a genus share a second name, each species should have a first name, unless point 2 overrides this.
6. Where there is an invasive alien with the same name as an indigenous tree, it is imperative to separate them eg. the *Syringas* and *Wattles*.

7. Where there is likely to be confusion between the English names of different genera, a mechanism must be found to differentiate between them, for eg. Milkwoods, Ironwoods Stinkwoods. When too many trees share the same description eg. Common, Wild, the name needs to be more informative and / or less confusing.
8. Names must be correctly spelt and punctuated in terms of standard and botanical English. Hyphens may be used where this aids clarity, eg. White-stinkwood could separate members of *Celtis* from other Stinkwoods.

If a name is to be changed because the above principles have been applied the following have been taken into account:

9. As much of the original name as possible should be preserved.
10. Previously used names have been given priority, eg. Umdoni Waterberry.
11. New names should be descriptive of special features (to aid identification of tree.) This could be distribution, habitat or features of the leaves, fruit, etc. eg. Small-leaved.
12. New names should be easy to pronounce, easy to remember, simple, elegant and not too long.
13. If the botanical genus name is easy this may be included in the name eg. *Acacia*, *Albizia*, *Croton*.
14. New names have been chosen to popularise the tree by being descriptively positive or interesting.
15. Names currently used in surrounding countries have been seriously considered, particularly if the tree's distribution predominantly occurs within the neighbouring countries.
16. A name previously used for any southern African species should not be used for a different species.

Examples of how the principles were applied:

1. The genus *Podocarpus*
Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, Yellowwood.
Is this name accurate, acceptable and consistently applied? Yes. Thus it is not necessary to change the common name of the genus.
Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? Some need to be changed: *P. latifolius*, currently known

as the Outeniqua Yellowwood, occurs more widely than only in the Outeniqua region, and therefore the name Broad-leaved Yellowwood has been proposed for this species. It has been proposed that the common name for *P. Falcatus*, Real Yellowwood, be changed to Narrow-leaved Yellowwood in order to match the change made to the name of *P. Latifolius*. This brings about better consistency, even though the name Real Yellowwood has some historical significance as being the superior species used for lumber, it causes confusion in the present day furniture and curious industry.

2. The genus *Celtis*
Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, White Stinkwood.
Are there any problems with this name? Yes, there are other genera called Stinkwood.
What changes can resolve this? A hyphen to make White-stinkwood will differentiate *Celtis* from *Ocotea*, the Stinkwood.
Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? No changes need to be made.
3. The genus *Ficus*
Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, there are two: Figs and Rock Figs.
Are these names accurate, acceptable and consistently applied? Mostly, but not all.
Are there any meaningful groups that should be recognised within the genus? Yes, those that always occur on rocks could be distinguished as Rock-figs.
Has this classification been consistently applied? No, there need to be some additional Rock-figs.
Are there other subgroups that could be recognised? Possibly Strangler-figs, but some individuals of species are stranglers and some are not, thus the term is difficult to apply so that it does not cause confusion. Possibly Cluster-figs: but it is not easy to communicate whether we are talking about clusters on the specialised branches (like in *F. Sur*) or amongst the leaves; and in *F. Sycamorus*, one subspecies has fruits on specialised branches, while another does not, so this name cannot be consistently and helpfully applied.

4. The genus *Faurea*
Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, Beech.
Are there any problems with this name? Yes, Beech originates from the Dutch name Boekenhout, which means that the wood looks like that of European Beech. However, *Faurea* is certainly not European Beech; the wood does not resemble that of Beech, and other genera also have the name Beech.

What changes can resolve this? Either use a more suitable Beechwood, or use the generic name *Faurea*.

Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? No changes need to be made.

5. **The genus *Protea***

Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, Sugarbush.

Is there a problem with this name? Yes, Sugarbush is the direct translation from the Dutch Suikerbos. Amongst English speakers in South Africa and elsewhere, the genus is far better known as *Protea*.

What changes can resolve this? The generic name *Protea* can be used as the common name.

Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? Some changes need to be made, but we will refer to the *Protea* Atlas Group for their input.

6. **The genus *Cadaba***

Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, Worm-bush.

Is the name consistently applied to all species? No. *Blackstorm*, although relatively well known to a small group, does not show the generic relationship, nor is it descriptive.

What changes can resolve this? It would be helpful to have an all-embracing second name. *Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed?* We should change *Blackstorm* to *Leafless Worm-bush*.

7. **The genera *Acacia* and *Albizia***

Is there a currently accepted common name for these genera? Yes, Thorn and False Thorn.

Is there a problem with this name? Yes, the name can include the Spike Thorns and Buffalo Thorns. Also, False Thorn is misleading because members of the genus do not have thorns.

What changes can resolve this? The botanical names *Acacia* and *Albizia* can be used.

Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? Some need attention, eg. it was debated whether the name *Candle-thorn* or *Candle-pod* is correct. In this case *Candle-pod* was considered more accurate because it is the pod and not the thorns that are being described. The name *Knob Thorn* was retained (with hyphenation i.e. as *Knob-thorn*) because the thorn is on a knob. In the case of the name *Flaky Thorn*, *Flaky-bark* was necessary to maintain accuracy.

8. **The genus *Pittosporum***

Is there a currently accepted common name for this genus? Yes, *Cheesewood*, or *Kasuur*. *Cheesewood* is a name used internationally for some *Pittosporum* species, although the name is rather ambiguous on its own (without a descriptor). It allows confusion with other members of the world-wide genus which are invasive weeds.

What changes can resolve this? It is proposed that the name be changed to *Lover's Cheesewood*. The Afrikaans name *Kasuur* originates from the word *Kaarsuur*, which means candle hour (referring to the opsiters used by the parents of courting lovers of bygone days) and this tree was so named because the flowers exuded their scent during the "kasuur".

Schedule ahead

The Workgroup has a deadline for early next year and Jacana would appreciate any coverage and feedback as soon as possible. We realise that many of you have long lead times but hope there is space to fit this in your schedule in the next few months. As stated in the other letter, the internet site will be live on the 10th October 1999 or lists are available from Jacana.

We look forward to any feedback. Please send responses to Pam or Bridget at Jacana Education, tel: (011) 648-1157 and email: sappi.jee@hotbot.com.

Please let us know whether you think this is a positive undertaking or not. We envisage this process being completed by early next year.

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