NOTE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Welcome to the South African Geographers’ 2009 annual Newsletter, reporting on the calendar year 2008! Geographers across the country are thanked for providing their departmental news, including appointments for 2008, lists of publications (2008-dated), completed masters’ theses and doctoral dissertations. Our Society thanks Prof. Maano Ramutsindela, co-editor of the South African Geographical Journal, for championing the Routledge negotiating process. I am glad to report that Gustav Visser, the Society President, has indicated that Routledge will publish our journal as from 2009. I join him in thanking Maano for managing and negotiating this highly complex process on behalf of the Society. The Society now publishes an academic journal that is ISI accredited, as well as produced and marketed through arguably the most respected publisher of academic geography and related disciplines’ research. Also included in the Newsletter is a list of SSAG Council members and portfolios for 2008-2009.

This edition of the Newsletter is my final version and I pass the task of producing the next addition to my soon-to-be-appointed successor. I wish all geographers the best for the rest of 2009; thank you for all your support and correspondence – without your contributions our newsletter would not exist!

Dr. Sanette Ferreira, University of Stellenbosch.
SOCIETY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND PORTFOLIOS 2008-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AFFILIATION</th>
<th>PORTFOLIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof. G.E. Visser</td>
<td>Department of Geography, Free State University</td>
<td>President Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. B. Maharaj</td>
<td>Dept. of Geography, University of KwaZulu Natal</td>
<td>Past President Special Projects Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. L.M. Magi</td>
<td>Dept. of Geography, University of Zululand</td>
<td>Ex Officio: Newsletter IGU Special Projects International Contacts/IGU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. M. Ramutsindela</td>
<td>Dept. of Environmental and Geographical Science</td>
<td>Co-editor journal Constitutional matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. P. Sumner</td>
<td>Department of Geography</td>
<td>Co-editor Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. K.F. Mearns</td>
<td>UNISA, Department of Environmental Sciences</td>
<td>Gender Capacity Building Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. A.C. Harmse</td>
<td>UNISA, Dept of Geography</td>
<td>Website Liaison Hon. Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. C. Seethal</td>
<td>University of Fort Hare, Dept of Geography and Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Hon. Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. P.Q. Siyongwana</td>
<td>N.M.M. University, Geography Department</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. S. Oldfield</td>
<td>Dept. of Environmental and Geographical Science</td>
<td>No specific portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. T. Nzama</td>
<td>University of Zululand</td>
<td>No specific portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. S. Ferreira</td>
<td>Univ. of Stellenbosch, Department of Geology, Geography and Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. S. Narsiah</td>
<td>Dept. of Geography, University of KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. R.J. Davies</td>
<td>Dept. of Environmental and Geographical Science</td>
<td>Ombudsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. S. Brits</td>
<td>Dept. of Geography, Free State University</td>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Portfolio’s not on the list above: Election Officer (temporary appointment Gustav Visser)

CAPE TOWN UNIVERSITY

Department of Environmental & Geographical Science

2008-dated publications


**Completed theses and dissertations**


Departmental news

The Department had its official opening of its post-graduate computer laboratory in October 2008. The opening was attended by a number of SSAG members including Prof Mike Meadows, Prof Brij Maharaj, Prof Roddy Fox, Prof Kate Rowntree, Prof Vincent Kakembo, Dr Srinil Pillay, Dr Pakama Sigonyama and staff members from different Faculties of the University of Fort Hare. Professor Gideon de Wet (Executive Dean of Research: Fort Hare) officially opened the postgraduate computer laboratory on behalf of the University’s Vice-Chancellor, Dr. M. Tom.

Dr. Luvuyo Wotshela visited Oxford University to finalise two book publications with Prof William Beinart, and Dr. Werner Nel spent six weeks on Marion Island as part of the SANAP/NRF Geomorphology and Climate change project. Prof Cecil Seethal attended a conference at the Institute of Research and Development (IRD) in Bondy, Paris in July 2008 as part of on-going research on the territorial dynamics of the peripheries of six metropolitan areas of the South (viz., Hanoi, Vietnam; Shanghai; Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Mexico City; Lima, Peru; and Cape Town).

Academic visits:

The following academics visited the Department and presented papers/lectures:

Professor Myriam Houssay-Holzchuch (Department of Geography, Ecole Normale Superieure, Lyon, France) presented a seminar entitled, “Public Spaces in Cape Town – A Socio-spatial Perspective”. (7-8 February 2008). (Alice Campus).

Professor William Beinart (Rhodes Professor of Race Relations, Oxford University) presented a seminar entitled, “Land Reform in South Africa and Zimbabwe”. (20th March 2008). (Alice Campus)

Professor Mike Meadows (Professor and Head: Department of Geography, University of Cape Town, and Vice-President of the IGU) visited the East London and Alice Campuses in October 2008 and presented a guest lecture to the Geography postgraduate students in East London. His presentation was entitled, ‘Back to the Future’: A Geographer’s View of the Changing Southern African Environment on the Quaternary environment of the Western Cape.

Conference presentations:


**2008-dated publications**


**Completed theses and dissertations**


**Student numbers (2008)**

- All undergraduate = 100
- BSc Honours in Geography = 7
- M Phil in Environmental Studies = 17
- M Sc Geography = 6
- Ph D Geography = 5

**FREE STATE UNIVERSITY**

*Department of Geography*

**Departmental news**

The growth in undergraduate student numbers which was a feature of 2007 continued into 2008. Environmental issues appear to be driving a new generation of undergraduates to register for degrees in Geography. The Department continues to draw students in roughly equal proportions from both the natural sciences and the humanities. On the GIS front, the laboratory has reached its maximum capacity with 39 computers. The Department holds a site license for 500 GIS seats, thus accommodating an increasing number of users from outside Geography. Data holdings were increased to more than 600 Gb with the addition of more aerial photographs, satellite images and digital maps of southern Africa. Another significant trend is the number of Honours and Masters students undertaking research dissertations where aspects of environmental management form the focus. Three students were registered for PhDs in 2008.

Dr Tabukeli Ruhiga joined the Qwaqwa campus as a Lecturer at the start of 2008. Dr Ruhiga’s research focus is on land resources, settlement location, and rural poverty. He is also working on comparative profitability in the small business sector. Staff were active in a number of diverse research directions. Prof Gustav Visser received funding from the NRF’s Focus Area Research Grants Program to support research into second home development in South Africa. This grant made possible research visits to universities in
South Africa and abroad. Activities included presentation of a lecture series on identity-based consumption and urban morphological change at the University of Stellenbosch, and the presentation of a paper at the Annual Conference of the Royal Geographical Society in London. Prof Visser was, for two months, a research visitor at the universities of Umeå (Sweden) and Oulu (Finland), where he presented seminars to doctoral students and departmental staff on South African second home development, urban tourism in Africa, and tourism-led gentrification. He also visited Berlin, Helsinki and Stockholm to gain greater insight into the outcomes of state-led urban regeneration. In October, Prof Visser and Prof Lochner Marais launched an edited collection of research essays entitled: *Spatialities of Urban Change: Selected Themes from Bloemfontein at the Beginning of the 21st Century*.

Prof Peter Holmes presented a paper at the Third International Southern Deserts Conference in the Kalahari in September. This was organized by Prof David Thomas of Oxford, a leading international authority on southern hemisphere deserts. He and Prof Holmes have undertaken collaborative research investigating dryland landforms in the Western Free State. The Kalahari conference was attended by researchers from South Africa, The United Kingdom, Australia and Chile. Prof Holmes and Dr Charles Barker attended the Southern African Association of Geomorphologists Biennial Conference at the University of Pretoria in September. Prof Holmes presented a paper on aeolian erosion on Free State drylands, and Dr Barker presented a paper on the use of geomorphometric variables as an aid to water allocation management in non-perennial catchments. Mr Alex Adjei attended the Provincial Tourism Conference in Bloemfontein, where he presented two papers on aspects of tourism in the Free State. Honours student Leroy du Plessis was invited by the SA Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns to present findings from his research project on the use of remote sensing to determine subsurface flowlines at the Akademie’s student symposium at the University of Johannesburg.

With regard to community service, Dr Barker presented short courses in GIS to the staff members of the Maluti A Phophung Municipality, the Department of Economic, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Free State Province,) and the Centre for Disaster Management. He was also elected a member of the Stuid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns. Ms Sheila Vrahimis was appointed by the Provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Sport, Science and Culture to the Free State Geographical Names Committee. She continued to drive the four year degree program module Concepts of General Science. A local fieldtrip took in Naval Hill, the South Park landfill, Soetdoring Nature Reserve and Boyden Observatory. Such trips are invaluable in linking theory to practice, particularly amongst underprepared students. Ms Tobeka Mehlomakulu took undergraduate tourism students on a fieldtrip to the Florisbad archeological site. On the Qwaqwa campus, Dr Hennie Claassen and Mr Alex Adjei took the third year environmental management students to the site of the Braamhoek hydro-electric power station, while Mr Pululu Mahasa took the first years to Golden Gate. Mr Adjei also took the third year urban studies students to Durban and surrounds.

Prof Gustav Visser continues to serve as President of the Society of South African Geographers, while Mrs Sandra Brits keeps the Society’s books.

Prof Martha Richmond, Director of Environmental Studies at Suffolk University, Boston (USA) visited the Qwaqwa Campus in May. She presented a number of lectures in environmental management and biodiversity to staff and students. Community service again featured strongly on the Qwaqwa campus, with Drs Claassen and Ruhiga and Mr Adjei offering Integrated Development Planning training to officials and councilors of the Maluti-a-Phofung Municipality, Mr Adjei offering training in Responsible Tourism to local communities in Ermelo, Secunda; Witbank; Nelspruit and Upington, and Dr Ruhiga facilitating a workshop on IDP and Poverty Alleviation for the Thabo Mofutsanyane District Municipality in KwaZulu Natal.

A number of staff benefitted from the University’s new Strategic Cluster research initiative. Profs Holmes and Visser, Dr Ruhiga, and Mss Vrahimis and Mehlomakulu received funding to initiate and/or support research. It is apparent that this source of funding will become increasingly important in future.
2008-dated publications


Conference contributions


Staff

**Main Campus:**

Professor: Prof. Peter Holmes

Associate Professor: Prof. Gustav Visser

Senior Lecturer: Dr Charles Barker

Lecturers: Mss Eldalize Kruger, Tobeka Mehlomakhulu, Sheila Vrahimis

Professional Officers: Mss Sandra Brits, Liesel Cronje

**Qwaqwa Campus**

Associate Professor: Prof Willie van Zyl (on secondment in 2008)

Senior Lecturer: Dr Hennie Claassen

Lecturers: Dr Tabukeli Ruhiga, Mr Alex Adjei

Junior Lecturer: Mr Pululu Mahasa

KWAZULU-NATAL UNIVERSITY - PIETERMARITZBURG

Department of Geography

Departmental news

Prof. T. Hill was appointed Deputy Head of the School of Environmental Sciences

Dr. O. Mutanga was conferred his Professorship in December 2008.

Conference attendance/academic visits


Prof. B. Maharaj also presented the paper "Migrants and urban rights: Politics of xenophobia in South African cities," at the International Political Geography Conference, Riems, held from 2-4 April 2008.

Prof. B. Maharaj presented "Global diaspora, networks and poverty alleviation" at the Global Civil Society Conference, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, held from the 1-3 May 2008.

Professor Hill also attended a conference on Ecosystem Health held in Mexico in December 2008.

Professor H. Beckedahl, Ms. D. Trotter (both from UKZN) and Mr. S. Singwane (University of Swaziland) recently undertook a visit to Halle in Germany in September 2008. The visit formed part of a three way collaborative partnership between the Martin Luther University in Halle (Germany), the University of Swaziland and UKZN, which is being funded by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) through until 2011.

Professor H. Beckedal attended the Problem Soils in South Africa Seminar in Midrand, Gautend on the 3-4 November. He presented a paper titled, A classification of Problem Soils for the Rehabilitation of Erosion.

2008-dated publications


**NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

*Department of Geosciences*

**Departmental news: Workshops-2008**

Kakembo, V., 2008: Organised a Community workshop on 26 - 27 September 2008 at Mgwalana village community centre, Nqushwa rural municipality, Eastern Cape to provide feedback to the local community as to the effective methods of restoring degraded hillslopes. This was based on results of successful plot trials over a 5 year period. A joint proposal with the local community to rehabilitate eroded landscapes invaded by P. incana is to be submitted to the Landcare Programme of the Department of Land Affairs.


**Collaboration with overseas partners-2008**

Collaborative research funded by the South Africa Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD) is undertaken by Vincent Kakembo (NMMU) and Prof Erik Cammeraat of the Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED-Physical Geography), University of Amsterdam. A joint research project entitled “Vegetation invasions: implications for hydrological and erosion response, land degradation and climate change” is undertaken.

Niels Weiss, an MSc student from the University of Amsterdam is currently co-supervised by Erik and Vincent. Niels’ work focuses on the effect of Pteronia incana invasion on infiltration characteristics, soil water repellence and soil surface conditions. Joint fieldwork is underway with Ms S. Ndlela, an NMMU MSc student investigating Landscape connectivity and dysfunction in the same area.

**Conferences-2008**


**2008-dated publications**


Completed theses and dissertations


Minnie, J., 2008: Habitat and foraging models as aids in the identification of priority areas for mitigating actions to reduce the incidence of electrocutions of the threatened Cape Griffon (Gyps coprotheres) in the Eastern Cape Province. Unpublished MSc dissertation, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.


Student Numbers - 2008

First year: 84
Second Year: 45
Third Year: 29
Honours: 11
Masters: 9
PhD second year and upwards: 8

PRETORIA UNIVERSITY
Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology

Departmental news

In January 2008 Dr Francois Engelbrecht was promoted to Senior Lecture. Professor Ingrid Stengel left UP in August, moving back to Namibia. Greg Breetzke graduated with his PhD in GIS and crime but also left us moving to New Zealand in February 2009. Dr Dan Darkey and Arina Potgieter moved from Mamlodi to the main campus with effect from January 2009. Professor Keith Beavon was reappointed as Honorary Professor. As Extraordinary Professors the department are honoured to list Dr L.W.Combrink (Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory, Hartebeesthoek), Prof I.U. Stengel (NamibGeo Vista Geoconsult & Imaging, Windhoek), Dr Siva Venkataraman (National Laser Center, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Pretoria), Professor Kevin Hall (University of Northern British Columbia, Canada) and Professor Jan Boelhouwers (Uppsala, Sweden).

Prof C.J.deW. (Hannes) Rautenbach serves as Chair of the Organising Committee of the annual conference of the South African Society for Atmospheric Sciences (SASAS) that took place at the University of Pretoria between 30 September and 1 October 2008. This was also an UP centenary celebration event. Hannes was elected as President of the South African Society for Atmospheric Sciences (SASAS) at the annual SASAS conference in October 2008, was elected as Council Member of the National Association of Clean Air
(NACA) in September 2008 and was invited to serve as a Co-Lead Author for a Theme Plan that forms a core part of the National Science Plan on Global Change of the Department of Science and Technology (DST). Hannes serves as co-lead author in the South African Second National Communication (SNC) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) in partnership with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), Paul Sumner and Werner Nel (UFH) visited the University of Mauritius on a collaborative rainfall monitoring project. Post-graduates Jay le Roux and Mike Loubser departed in late December on a three month visit to Antarctica, working within a SANAP geomorphology project run by Ian Meiklejohn. Liesl Dyson won the Educating Africa, Pan-African Awards for Entrepreneurship in Education: Teach A Man To Fish prize. This prize was awarded for the Community Project Activities during the past ten years.

Conference attendance/academic visits

Ian Meiklejohn organised the Southern African Association of Geomorphologists Biennial Conference, held in September at UP. The conference was entitled South African Geomorphology in the 21st Century and formed part of the UP Centenary Celebrations. Professor Kevin Hall (UNBC, Canada) presented the keynote address. Hannes Rautenbach organized the 2008 Annual Conference of the South African Society for the Atmospheric Sciences in collaboration with the KARA Heritage Institute held in September at UP. The conference was entitled Heritage and Rain and formed part of the UP Centenary Celebrations. Professor Mathole Motshekga (Kara Heritage Institute) presented the keynote address. Hannes presented the talk “The influence of Marion Island Topography on the Hydrostatic General Circulation of the Southern Ocean” at the annual conference of the South African Society for Atmospheric Sciences (SASAS) in October, and gave a talk as invited opening keynote speaker at the Annual General Meeting of the South African Stud Book and Animal Improvement Association that took place in the C.R.Swart Auditorium of the University of the Free State on 22 October 2008. He was asked by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to visit the University of Tokyo between 14-18 October 2008 with a JICA partner to negotiate with Japanese Authorities about a collaborative JICA/JST research project in the African Centre for Climate and Earth System Sciences (ACCESS).

Hannes was invited by the President of the American Meteorology Society (AMS) and attended a meeting on 13 January 2009 in Phoenix Arizona, USA, to establish an informal forum that brings together the leadership of the world’s approximately sixty-five meteorological societies. Also in January, Hannes gave a talk as invited opening keynote speaker during the Combined Conference of the SA Society of Crop Production, Soil Science Society of SA, SA Society for Horticultural Sciences and SA Weed Science Society at the University of Stellenbosch.

Joel Botai presented two papers at the Asia Oceania Geosciences Society, 2008 (AOGS2008) conference 16-20 June in Busan, Korea. Ian Meiklejohn, Paul Sumner and postgraduates Taryn Bigwood, Henno Engelbrecht, Gerda van Dijk and Mike Loubser presented papers at the Southern African Association of Geomorphologists Biennial Conference, held in September at UP. During the Annual Conference of the Atmospheric Society of Atmospheric Sciences that was held in September Francois Engelbrecht (and co-authors) received the Stanley Jackson award for the article entitled: "On the development of a new nonhydrostatic atmospheric model in South Africa" in the South African Journal of Science. The Stanley Jackson award is a prestigious award by the society for papers which have made significant contributions to the atmospheric and oceanic sciences.

2008-dated publications


**Completed theses and dissertations**


RHODES UNIVERSITY

Department of Geography

Departmental news

2008 has been a busy and productive year for staff in the Rhodes Geography Department. We are particularly pleased that our international linkages have been extended and strengthened, resulting in collaborative research and an increased publication output. While our most senior colleague, Emeritus Professor Lewis, has been busy consolidating his research output, younger staff members and postgraduate students have also made an effective contribution.

For Prof. Roddy Fox 2008 was a year of continuing with research into educational simulations and scenario building. The research was undertaken in Sweden (HögskolanVäst, University of Linköping), Finland (Turku School of Economics) and South Africa during summer schools and as components of degree curricula. He was accompanied to Finland by Prof. Kate Rowntree and Ms Linda Fraenkel, who has developed the water management component of the African Catchment Game as her Masters programme.

Prof. Kate Rowntree continues her collaborative research into land degradation and sediment dynamics in catchment systems in the Karoo with Prof. Ian Foster (Coventry University) and Dr John Boardman (Oxford University). In associated work she and postdoctoral fellow Dr Suzanne Grenfell and Mr Mike Grenfell monitored soil erosion rates in an investigation of the development of discontinuous gulleys in the Karoo. Prof. Rowntree’s WRC project on Developing a Stakeholder Driven Catchment Management Plan in the Kat River Valley is nearing completion; several noticeable outcomes have come from this endeavour, one of the most significant is the proposed implementation of the of the ecological Reserve for the Kat River, one of the first Rivers in South Africa for this to happen. Ms Sharon Birkholz, a Masters student working with Prof. Rowntree on the Kat River Project, presented a paper on her research into the human-river relationships in the Kat River Catchment and their implications to IWRM at the International Conference on Exploring Transdisciplinary Discourses: Water, Society and the Environment, Africa in April 2008, her talk was voted the second best student presentation. In collaboration with the Department of Environmental Science, Prof. Rowntree has been working on a rehabilitation project in the Kouga Catchment (Eastern Cape), with funding from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) through Working for Water (WfW) programme.

Ms Gillian McGregor has been active in the Eastern Cape through her research at Cape St Francis/Oyster Bay and as Chairperson of the Thicket Forum. Her work in the headland bypass dunefield between Oyster Bay and Cape St Francis is a cooperative project between Ms McGregor and Prof. Richard Cowling (NMMU) and Prof. Fred Ellery (Department of Environmental Science, Rhodes University). This area is a unique wetland system that has the potential for RAMSAR status in spite of the several developments that are earmarked for the region. In her role as Thicket Forum chairperson, Ms. McGregor and secretary, Ms Bronwyn Palmer (MSc Student in the Dept. of Geography) organised the annual Thicket Forum for 2008,
this event was held in August at the Thomas Baines Nature Reserve and was attended by a diverse range of delegates including: government officials, scientists, consultants, reserve managers, farmers and students.

Ms Leanne Du Preez spent three months in the UK on a British Council exchange grant, spending time in Liverpool, Oxford and Coventry. The main aim of her trip was to allow her to network with experts in her research field (geomorphology and land degradation, SA landscape history and policy). She had the opportunity to interact with Prof. Ian Foster (Coventry), Prof. Janet Hooke (Liverpool), and Prof. John Boardman (Oxford). Back home Ms Du Preez presented a paper at the SAAG conference in Pretoria in September entitled “Puppets or Puppeteers, Scientists or Seers? The role of fluvial geomorphologists in SA river management”. The paper was well received and has led to further discussion in the secondary education community.

In 2008 Mr Gijsbert Hoogendoorn was appointed as lecturer in the Department on a two-year contract. During 2008 he was involved in the co-authoring of four book chapters in an edited collection by Prof. Lochner Marais and Prof. Gustav Visser called ‘Spatialities of Urban Change: Selected themes from Bloemfontein at the beginning of the 21st century’. During July Mr Hoogendoorn was a visiting student at the Department of Tourism at the University of Otago in New Zealand where he presented a seminar on second home development.

2008-dated publications


**Academic/scientific Conferences**


Departmental news

During 2008, the Department of Geography consisted on nine members of academic staff a secretary, and a technical assistant. Mr K. Govindasamy joined the Department as a post graduate assistant, while Mr M. Mabala joined the Department to assist us administrative matters. Mr D.W. Hedding joined the Department as a lecturer in March 2008. Dr A.C. Harmse applied for early retirement at the end of 2008. The Department of Geography re-located to the Florida Campus in December 2008.

Dr A.C. Harmse was invited to be part of the distinguished speaker panel of the 3rd Annual Conference on Spatially Enabled Government. Her presentation was titled: Looking at development regions in the South Africa Space Economy and an evaluation of the location of nodes identified in the Integrated Rural Development Programme.

Ms M.D. Nicolau was invited to give a key note address at the Florida Society of Geographers in Miami, Florida, USA in January. The title of her address was Teaching Geography at a distance: how it is approached by the University of South Africa.

Mr R.W. Pretorius attended an international workshop on Evaluating Climate Change and Development organised by the Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office in Alexandria, Egypt during 10 to 13 May.

Mr D.W. Hedding helped co-ordinate the first Antarctica Science Winter School during 14 to 18 July. He presented his geomorphologic research that he is currently conducting in Antarctica and the Prince Edward Islands to students at the Winter School.

The Department of Geography, donated 10 indigenous trees to Ilanga Women’s Organisation perma-culture project. Members of staff in the Department planted the 10 trees to mark the 2008 Africa Day celebrations. This was followed by the organisation of an African Day conference on 30 May with colleagues from the Department of Political Sciences. The title of this one day conference was Africa’s Environmental Politics, Opportunities, Challenges and Threats.

With the outbreak of the Xenophobic attacks in South Africa during May of 2008, the Department of Geography started an institutional initiative to collect food, blankets, nappies, clothing and other non perishable. Over a period of two months over R45 000 worth of goods was collected and donated to the Red Cross for distribution to various camps in the Pretoria region.

On 6 June a one day seminar titled Kick the habit! Towards a low carbon economy was organised to mark World Environment Day. A number of external and internal speakers and guests were invited. The activities of the day provided all members of the Unisa community with the opportunity discuss initiatives and resources to promote low carbon economies and life-styles.

The Department arranged a children’s map competition in preparation for the Barbara Petchinik Map Competition which is run bi-annually by the ICA, in an attempt to promote geographical literacy in children. Over 500 maps drawn by children from various schools were submitted for the competition. The Department of Geography, Unisa will assist the national co-ordinator of this competition during 2009.

The Department initiated a research project in the Dullstroom area. The research themes include tourism and economic development, water resource use and management. As part of this project the Department has become involved with the activities of the Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Centre and are the proud sponsors of a Fish Eagle and a Barn Owl.

During the second half of 2008, the Department introduced a short learning programme in “Exploring Geographical Information Systems”. The year also saw the totally redevelopment of some undergraduate
study material into more innovative open distance learning contexts, the study material developed moves away from the traditional correspondence teaching, and includes a variety of multi media modes of tuition.

2008-dated publications


Completed theses and dissertations


Student Numbers- 2008

- First level: 1450
- Second level: 534
- Third level: 246
- Honours: 163
- 11 Masters and
- 14 Doctoral students.

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
Geology, Geography & Environmental Studies

Departmental news

Since the amalgamation and integration of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies with the Department of Geology in January 2007, the resulting so called ‘cross-cutting entity’ actively strives towards a coherent identity. Also the search for new physical space in the “Kamer van Mynwese Building” to further develop our Geographical Information Technology (GIT) section, as reported in the previous newsletter, continues.

The Department was awarded strategic funding from Stellenbosch University to appoint three additional Geographical Information Technology (GIT) staff members in 2009. A replacement for Nadia Smith, who resigned at the end of 2008, will also be appointed. The expansion of the GIT section to five staff members will provide momentum to the department’s aim to offer a unique SAQA-accredited degree programme in GeoInformatics which will enable graduates to qualify for professional certification.

Our valued departmental secretary Mrs. Desiree Muller has left our Department at the end of December and was substituted by a friendly and highly competent Mrs. Alicia Hector in February 2009.

On the research front, two inter-institutional research programmes were successful in securing the necessary funds from SU, SANPAD, and other sources to financially stimulate and support post-graduate research and expand inter-institutional research cooperation between tertiary and parastatal institutions over the next two years. These are: (i) Table Mountain Park: Conservation, responsible tourism development and Cape Town residents – A co-operative project between Stellenbosch University, Table Mountain Park Research Unit and London University, Salzburg – Project leader Dr Sanette Ferreira; (ii) Spatial and structural
relationship between the informal and formal economy in selected urban areas of SA – SU, North West University and Free University Amsterdam – Project leader Prof Ronnie Donaldson.

Dr Ravit Goldhaber, human geographer from Israel joined the Department in April as a post-doctoral fellow and is being hosted by Ronnie Donaldson. Her research focuses on ‘Retirement Gated developments in the Western Cape’. Her presence in our Department has strengthened the Human Geography capacity until mid-2009.

Ronnie Donaldson is still involved with consultancy research projects with SANPARKS and Cape Town Routes Unlimited (CTRU). Hannes van der Merwe, Sanette Ferreira and Adriaan van Niekerk have completed an extensive project for CTRU, titled: ‘A Spatial GAP-analysis of Tourism Development opportunity for the Western Cape Province. Hannes van der Merwe and Bennie Schloms have also completed reports for Overstrand Municipality related to rural tourism and alternative agricultural opportunities in local economic development of the Strandveld region.

Visitors:
Prof Jurgen Breuste, HOD Geography and Geology at Salzburg University visited the Department as part of a co-operation agreement between Stellenbosch University and Institute for Geography, Research Group Urban Landscapes. Proffs Otto Verkoren, Tom de Jong and Henk Huisman from Utrecht University Geography Department visited us in collaboration with our three-year SANPAD Project – Corinne Laman, Kim Smid and Marije Severs (Dutch students from Utrecht University) conducted their research on three West Coast towns of our province. Prof Bert Veenendal, head of the Department of Spacial Science at Curtin University in Perth presented a lecture on 15 May.

Conferences:
Sanette Ferreira has attended the International Geographical Union (IGU) conference in Tunis in August and presented a paper: ‘One Decade of Transfrontier Areas in Southern Africa’. Ronnie Donaldson (presenter) and Sanette Ferreira’s paper on, ‘Perceptions of international visitors to South Africa on safety and security – implications for the 2010 FIFA World Cup’ was presented at the Annual International Conference of the Royal Geographical Society, London 27-29 August. The same paper was presented at the Sport Science in Action -SASReCon Conference, Port Elizabeth, 25-27 June. (Not attending: R Donaldson with K. Swart, S Ferreira), and ‘Challenges facing Football in the 21st Century’ 15th – 17th May 2008, University of Bern, Switzerland. (Not attending: R Donaldson with K. Swart, S Ferreira).

2008-dated publications


Donaldson, R., 2008: Eden and Overberg District: visitor tracking and Blue Chip tourism enterprise potential. Research report prepared for Department of Economic and Tourism and CTRU (the Western Cape Provincial destination marketing organization).

Donaldson, R., 2008: Table Mountain National Park visitor and user survey, summer, autumn, winter, and spring results. Four separate reports prepared for SANPARKS.

Swart, K., Donaldson, R. & Cornelissen, S., 2008: Desktop study on soccer tourism and 2010 World Cup Western Cape citizens’ expectations. Research report prepared for CTRU (the Western Cape Provincial destination marketing organization).


Completed theses and dissertations


Student Numbers- 2008
First year: 430
Second Year: 160
Third Year: 80
Honours: 12
Masters: 22
PhD /DPhil: 9

WESTERN CAPE UNIVERSITY
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies

Departmental news

Our academic staff remains at seven. Sally Peberdy was appointed Associate Professor. Qualified in Canada and England, and previously with the Southern African Migration Project and a Research Fellow at Wits, Sally brings to the Department considerable experience in southern Africa as a published researcher and university lecturer specialising in migration.

Staff continue to be active in external examining, presenting once-off lectures to visiting school and university student groups, in joint undergraduate teaching in University-wide Environmental Awareness modules, and in delivering specialist GIS teaching to teacher communities in co-operation with the Provincial Education Department and a GIS vendor.
Conference contributions

Michael Dyssel attended a conference on field work in Geography at the University of Artois, Arras (France) on ‘Fieldwork and Further Education and Training (FET) in South Africa’s High School Geography Curriculum’. He also presented a paper about ‘Revisiting Fieldwork Activities in Geography’ in September at UWC at a one-day Geography Mini-Conference on “Changing Geography for a Changing World” organized by the Western Cape Education Department and co-hosted by our Department. He attended a commemorative / retrospective conference on ‘Ten Years of Environmental Impact Assessments’ in Somerset West in November 2008.

Sally Peberdy attended a Department of Home Affairs workshop in Pretoria on ‘Regional Migration and Youth in Southern Africa’. Her presentation to a round table discussion on ‘Immigration and Young People’ was on ‘Regional Youth Migration Patterns and Trends: Policy Challenges for Host Countries’. The IOM and Rural Health International held a Stakeholder Workshop on Healthworker Migration in Pretoria in April. Sally’s presentation was on ‘Migration policy and healthworker migration’. She was a key note speaker at a conference hosted by the Department of Social Development in Somerset West where she presented on “Challenging Xenophobia in the Wake of the Xenophobic Attacks.”

Gordon Pirie attended a conference at the University of Michigan on the subject of private-public partnerships directed at ‘new’ and more sustainable urban mobility. He presented a keynote address at the Ghent University Africa Platform on ‘Measuring and Moralising Geographical Mobility in Africa’.

Visitors

Two international visitors of note visited as part of the UWC ‘Cities in Transition’ research programme. Prof Will Pansters (Utrecht University, Netherlands) gave an illustrated lecture entitled ‘Lynching and policing in fragmented mega-Mexico City’. Prof Ben Derudder (University of Ghent, Belgium) lectured on ‘Global Cities’ to first, second and third year geography undergraduates and led a postgraduate seminar.

2008-dated publications


Completed theses and dissertations


Student numbers (2008)
All undergraduate = 350
BA Honours in Geography = 14
MA Geography = 4
PhD Geography = 3

WITWATERSRAND UNIVERSITY
School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies

Departmental news
Wits’ Geography ended the 2008 academic year with great successes, plans for a new teaching curriculum that will be launched in 2010, and research collaborations and initiatives that promise to make 2009 an eventful one. After 5 years as the Africa representative for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Coleen Vogel finalised her contributions to an initiative that, together with Al Gore, was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. She has been invited to serve on the Advisory Board of the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) research and capacity development program, and is a recent member of the international Scientific Committee for Integrated research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) supported by ICSU and ISSC. Also in 2008, Zarina Patel was appointed to the Board of the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa; Teresa Dirisuweit received grants from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and from Volkswagen Stiftung for international cooperation between Germany and African Countries; and Jennifer Lalley received an NRF grant for research on the biogeography of lichen-inhabiting arthropods. Stefan Grab was invited to serve on the International High Elevation working Group within the Coordinated Energy and Water Cycle Observations Project (CEOP), and received an NRF grant for SA-Spain research programme on Kilimanjaro. International departmental collaborations were established or continued with the University of Edinburgh, University of Oxford, University of Sheffield, University of Brighton, University of Nanterre, and Simon Fraser University.

Head of School, Professor Charles Mather, accepted a Professorship at Memorial University in Canada where he will further develop his research on the impact of globalisation and market liberalisation on food and agriculture, still focusing on Southern Africa. Prof. Karim Sadr has taken his place as head of the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies, and Stephan Grab has taken the role as Head of the Geography Department.

Dr. Emma Archer, former lecturer, moved to CSIR’s division of Natural Resources and the Environment where she heads up their climate change research focus. Ms. Tracy Cull left Wits after 12 years of running our first year programme, to accept a position as training advisor for the Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme. Former tutor, Ms. Caryn Abrahams moved to the University of Edinburgh to complete her PhD.

New appointments: Julia Mambo was appointed as our new environmental studies and GIS lecturer and will head up our growing GIS curriculum. Her research interests lie in environmental change, HIV, food security and development. Secondly, Devlyn Hardwick joined us from CSIR as a physical geography and GIS tutor, with research interests in geomorphology and hydrological systems.

2008 Conferences and Workshops
Archer E. Arid Zone Ecology Forum/Interfaces, Oudtshoorn.
Archer E. By Invitation. Africa Climate Change Forum, Rwanda.


Carr, SJ, Grab, SW, Rea, BR. Reconstructing the extent of past glaciation in eastern Lesotho during the LGM. European Geosciences Union (EGU), Vienna, Austria.

Grab, S. Climate and geophysical changes within the Trans-African alpine zone: scientific advances and future prospects. International Conference on “Mountains as early indicators of climate change”, Padova, Italy.

Lalley JS Recovery of lichen soil crust: restoring cover or ecological integrity?. Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting, Boston.


Patel Z Contributor to Assessing Local Government Collaborations for Sustainable Development. Centre for Sustainable Community Development. Vancouver.

Rogerson C Mega-events and shared growth in urban tourism: The 2010 FIFA World Cup challenge of incorporating emerging small tourism enterprises. Mega Events and Urban Tourism, Shanghai, China.


2008-dated publications


**Completed theses and dissertations**


