

Rangelands Partnership International Activities & Initiatives 2014-15

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NOTE: See below brief report on July 2014 trip to attend, present, and build collaborations with the Grassland Society of Southern Africa (GSSA).

1. CSIRO and Australian Rangelands Society – Australia Collection
 - a. 1000+ previously unavailable proceedings articles and bi-national meeting reports digitized and made available in the “Australia Collection”.
 - b. CSIRO Publishing contacted us through “contact us form” about hosting Australian Rangelands Society journals metadata on Global Rangelands. This month, they sent 36 years of content to be loaded; approximately 938 articles dating from 1976.
2. Grassland Society of Southern Africa (GSSA) – Southern African Collection
 - a. *African Journal of Range and Forage Science* – received file from Taylor and Francis (941 abstracts & citations from 1976-2015)
 - b. GSSA research database - Matt working with GSSA; files should arrive soon
 - c. Grassroots bulletin/newsletter – tbd
 - d. GSSA conference proceedings - tbd
 - e. South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON) reports – Colleen Seymour (Barb to contact)
 - f. GrassSA/Research stations - Chris Dannhauser (Barb to follow up)
 - g. Institutional reports – Paul Gordijn (Barb to follow up)
3. International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – have been in communication with Dr. Jonathan Davies after he was told about GR from a mutual colleague I met at GSSA, Bill Henwood (IUCN Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative). Jon then sent message via “contact us” form. IUCN’s **Global Drylands Initiative** has relevance to Global Rangelands and we are in discussion on how to collaborate. In April, I will be talking with Jon about a possible project to create a “State of the World’s Rangelands Map” and accompanying material. Need to know who in RP would be interested in participating. A planning meeting may be held sometime this year, possibly at UA.
4. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations-Related
 - a. FAO Docs (full-text) rangelands resources – new file received to upload
 - b. AGRIS database records – file received and ready to upload
 - c. Led development of a Linked Open Data proposal for \$8.5 million with six international partners (Global Rangelands only US participant); FAO/GODAN in discussion with Gates Foundation and DFID for funding.

- d. Research Data Alliance meeting in San Diego, March 9th – helped prepare opening presentation for the *Interest Group on Agricultural Data* re: GODAN, CIARD, and LOD proposal.
 - i. Working with contacts at Cornell and IFPRI on organizing a satellite North American GODAN event to be held sometime this year. May be a “Wikipedia” event to prepare ag-related information
- 5. LandPortal.info (improving land governance and securing land rights for landlessness and vulnerable people)
 - a. In process of testing ability of the Land Portal and Global Rangelands databases to automatically harvest relevant metadata records from each system.
- 6. University of Sonora, Hermosillo
 - a. Host a state “Sonoran Rangelands” site for collaborators in the Range program at the University of Sonora; provided technical assistance for adding new content to their website (inactive this year).
- 7. International Livestock Research Institute (member CGIAR)
 - a. My contact at the headquarters in Ethiopia, the Head of Communications and Knowledge Management, has agreed to a collaboration that will allow for the harvesting of metadata for rangelands-related resources from their database.
- 8. International Arid Lands Consortium (IALC)
 - a. They have a new MOU with BARD for cooperative US-Israel projects (water for ag); US is primary with sub-contracts to foreign collaborators.
 - Should consider partnering with IALC - water and range)
 - Put together short overview of international relationships
 - May be extended to India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan
 - Mike McGirr is heading up FAS; Julia is his support staff

Trip Report – Barbara Hutchinson
Grassland Society of Southern Africa
 49th Annual GSSA Congress

“Advancing Rangeland Ecology and Pasture Management in Africa”
 20-25 July 2014, Phillip Sanders, Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa
 Submitted to The Rangelands Partnership Executive Committee
 September 8, 2014

With considerable thanks to The Rangelands Partnership, I received approval for travel support in the amount of \$2,200 to largely cover the costs of airfare from Amsterdam to Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa (returning to Dusseldorf) to attend the 49th Annual Congress of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa (GSSA). Costs for registration, housing and meals were covered with my own funds. The odd routing was due to my need to stop in Germany for a family reunion with my son-in-law’s family.

I worked closely with the GSSA Managing Director, Freyni Du Toit, via email to determine the best approach for including my presentation on Global Rangelands and The Rangelands Partnership on the Congress program. She suggested I submit an abstract for a regular presentation and that was approved. Soon after, the GSSA Council met and Freyni told them I wanted to meet with them and why. At that point, the Council changed my presentation to a “Platform Presentation” and ultimately to a “Keynote”. I presented a 45 minute overview of Global Rangelands on Wednesday evening, July 23rd, to all the attendees. Afterwards at dinner, I was approached by a number of people asking more about GR and if there were other opportunities to be involved. One of them was Clinton Carbutt, of Exemvelo KZN Wildlife, South Africa. He has virtually introduced me to Bill Henwood, the Project Director for the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative in Vancouver, B.A., Canada, which is affiliated with the IUCN. I have already heard from Dr. Henwood and am hoping to be able to report soon that they will be willing to collaborate.

On the following day after my talk, I met over lunch with the entire GSSA Council. We had a lively discussion and all were VERY positive about collaborating and offered a variety of options for building a “Southern Africa Collection”. Due to a considerable back-log and continuing travel commitments, I only recently have followed up with the various Council members. However, I feel sure over the next few months we will begin the process to bring Southern African resources into the Global Rangelands database.

Related Links:

<http://www.grassland.org.za/events/annual-congress/gssa-congress-2014/keynote-speakers>
<http://www.grassland.org.za/events/annual-congress/gssa-congress-2014/events/annual-congress/gssa-congress-2014/GSSAC49FirstAnnouncement%20UPDATE.pdf>