



Newsletter 2021

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Message from the Outgoing SAAG President

So far, the year 2021 has again been a challenging year for us all, whether active within academia or the industry. With first the 2nd, and now 3rd wave of Covid-19, it appears that the pandemic does not wish to give us a break. Fieldwork and working in industry is still affected, teaching loads remain high, and there was and continues to be great uncertainty among our students and colleagues.

Following my message to you toward the end of 2020, I would like to give you an update about our SAAG activities in 2021.

I would like to highlight the South African Geographical Journal's SAAG [Special Issue](#), which was published earlier this year. An update on relevant [IAG related news](#), SAAG's contribution to [#IntGeomorphWeek2021](#), and our comments to the recently published [Geoscience Act Regulations 2020](#) are given, as are the benefit from SAAG as a [Voluntary Association with SACNASP](#), and how you, as a member, can suggest [activities for CPD credits](#) with SACNASP. It is also a pleasure to inform you that SAAG's VA status has been [renewed until 2026](#).

I also give a summary of the recent [SSAG-SAAG Joint Online Conference](#), which concluded on 8 September. Not only did the SSAG and SAAG join forces in organising the conference, but it was also (for the first time) held online. Information of our [Biennial General Meeting](#) is also summarised.

SAAG members will also be pleased to read that the outgoing Council took the decision to [extend current memberships](#) for another term. The outgoing Council and I acknowledge that many of us have been affected negatively regarding field work, consulting work, and importantly, income streams, and we hope that this alleviates some of the pressures many of us find ourselves under. To our young researchers and students, consider joining the [Southern African Young Geomorphologists \(SAYG\)](#).

And don't forget that you can [join our email list](#), or post messages to us to be disseminated to all of our members. In these uncertain times you can use this channel to share your thoughts on geomorphology, any projects or funding, and southern African geomorphology-related news.

Finally, I introduce the [new SAAG Council](#), who will steer you through 2021-2023, until our next Biennial Conference. I, and my fellow outgoing Council members, wish the President, Laura Bannatyne, and the Council Members a successful and productive term.

Yours,
Christel Hansen
SAAG President 2019-2021



SAGJ Special Issue

At the SAAG 2019 Biennial Conference a call was made for contributions towards a special issue on geomorphology in commemoration of 30 years of the SAAG. Eight research papers were published by the [South African Geographical Journal](#) across two issues in 2020 and [2021](#). The papers covered a broad range of themes on geomorphology on the sub-continent and islands, and are available online at the SAGJ website. The SAAG wishes to thank Paul Sumner and Werner Nel for taking up the roles of Guest Editors and putting their energies into this special issue.

IAG related news

International Geoheritage Day

In the 2020 newsletter I spoke about a planned International Geoheritage Day. Geodiversity is integral to ecosystem functions and biodiversity, also having cultural, economic, and aesthetic value. It has intrinsic value to multiple spheres of our lives and should receive special recognition. Recognising geodiversity and geoheritage would protect it, while also enhancing their awareness and education among the public. SAAG supported the call for an International Geoheritage Day, joining the voices of the other 70 countries globally that also expressed their support. During April 2021 the UNESCO Executive Board Commissions approved this initiative, being formally accepted by the Plenary meeting of the UNESCO Executive Board. Subsequent to this it will be submitted to the 41st session of the UNESCO General Conference that will be held in November 2021. You can read more on International Geoheritage Day at www.geodiversityday.org, and online via #InternationalGeodiversityDay

#IntGeomorphWeek2021

SAAG joined geomorphologists around the globe in celebrating International Geomorphology Week on 3 March 2021. All material from our event is available online. Have a look at an overview of International Geomorphology Week at <https://saageomorph.wixsite.com/saag/intgeomorphweek> and the talks, presentations, Q&As and recording <https://saageomorph.wixsite.com/saag/2021>. URLs to individual talks are listed below:

- Presentation by the SAAG: <https://bit.ly/3kRLEAL>
- Kate Rowntree: <https://youtu.be/hVE1aGXil-Y>
- Heinz Beckedahl: <https://bit.ly/3sT13DE>
- Presentation by the SAYG: <https://bit.ly/3qnXJyO>



- Q&As: <https://bit.ly/2PD5jZR>
- Session recording: <https://youtu.be/mePseq9PtrY>

The SAAG would like to again express their gratitude to all our speakers and panelists and also our participants for taking part in our lively discussion/panel at the end of the session.

Geoscience Act Regulations 2020

The Geoscience Act Regulations 2020 Draft Regulations of the Geoscience Act 100 of 1993 have been published for public comment (access the regulations uploaded on [our website](#)). Following engagement with our members, SAAG responded as a Voluntary Association under SACNASP to the Minister, noting our objections. You may read these [here](#). SAAG, represented by Christel Hansen (President), David Hedding (Treasurer), and Michael Loubser (Secretary) further made oral representations to the Minister on 16 August.

SACNASP Accreditation

Voluntary Association

SAAG is a recognised Voluntary Association (VA) of the [South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions \(SACNASP\)](#). Our membership was renewed in July this year to July 2026. You can view the certificate [here](#).



CPD activities

Because SAAG is a recognised Voluntary Association (VA) of the [South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions \(SACNASP\)](#), our members can earn CPD credits for any event that SAAG puts forth for CPD credit accreditation. Furthermore, membership to SAAG also gives you 1 CPD credit (under Category 3A). Access the SACNASP CPD website at: <http://professionalcpd.co.za/home/>.

Events captured for CPD credits in 2021 are as following:

- International Geomorphology Week session 3 March: 0.5 credit (2021-0681-001671)
- SSAG-SAAG Joint Online Conference: 2 credits (2021-0681-001897)
- BGM: 0.2 credits (2021-0681-001916)
- Geomorphology of the Free State Excursion: 2 credits (2021-0681-001922)
- SAAG membership (per year, membership certificate required): 1 credit



CPD guidelines

Any SAAG member can identify activities and submit these to SAAG for inclusion in the list of CPD credits. To this end SAAG published [guidelines on their website](#). SAAG also encourages its members to register with SACNASP under the Earth Science category, or whichever category is most aligned to your background and skill set.

SAAG Membership

Due to the current restrictions imposed by the pandemic and the financial difficulties many of us find ourselves in, the SAAG Council took the decision to extend all existing memberships by their equivalent term for free. For example, if you had a two-year membership 2019-2021 then this was extended to 2023. An existing one-year membership for 2021 was extended by another year to 2022.

New members wishing to join would have their membership doubled in duration upon payment. For example, if you joined us in 2021, you would (upon receipt of payment) have received a membership certificate to the end of 2022.

2021 Biennial Conference & Meetings

Conference

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Council took the difficult decision not to hold an in-person conference for 2021. Instead, SAAG joined forces with the [Society of South African Geographers \(SSAG\)](#), who had to postpone their 2019 conference due to the pandemic, in holding a [joint online conference from 6-8 September](#).

The conference had several excellent sessions on human geography, physical geography, and geoinformation science, bringing together all areas of geographical sciences. While sessions were designed to run in parallel, with a Human Geography focused session parallel to either a Physical Geography, or GISc session, we hope that the conference participants took the opportunity to easily change between these parallel sessions, enjoying the full breadth of presentations and topics on offer. This flexibility was a definite advantage of the online format. Similar to this, the online format allowed the



SSAG and SAAG to reduce conference participation fees, reducing these to R 500.00 for full fees, and R 300.00 for students. This increased accessibility to the conference, especially to our students.

As an exciting new initiative, we also paired one experienced researcher and one young geomorphologist or young geographer to convene each session. This allowed our young researchers the opportunity to get involved, learn some valuable skills, and to help convene a session.

The conference, while online and different to previous iterations of our biennial conferences, was still a great opportunity to network, showcase our work, and see the work of others, and we would like to thank all of the speakers who presented their work. The Book of Abstracts can be viewed [here](#).

SAAG would like to express their gratitude to Ian Meiklejohn, the team at Rhodes University, and the SSAG for their work on making the conference the success that it was.

Panel Discussion

SAAG organised a panel discussion on the last day (8 September) of the SSAG-SAAG Joint Biennial Conference. Five invited panelists spoke to the theme of *Navigating the changing work requirements and conditions during and post pandemic*. It was an incredibly dynamic and lively discussion and I hope you were able to join us. SAAG also wishes to express their gratitude to our panelists: Namso Nyamela (Consultant - Environmental Scientist; SAAG Council Member), Dr Julia Giddy (SSAG Council member); Dr JJ Gregory (SnP, SSAG member); Professor Werner Nel (SAAG member); Ms Renee Grundling (SAYG Chair, SAAG member).

Best Paper Award

[IGU's Young and Early Career Geographers' Taskforce \(IGU-YECG\)](#), the Students and New Professionals (SnP), and the Southern African Young Geomorphologists (SAYG) coordinated a Best Paper Award during the conference. Students and new professionals were invited to submit their work for consideration and the 1st and 2nd prizes were sponsored by the [IGU-YECG](#) & [Society of South African Geographers \(SSAG\)](#), and SAAG respectively. First place and the monetary award of R 2,050.00 was awarded to Elizabeth M. Rudolph, David W. Hedding and Werner Nel for their paper titled *A spatial reconstruction of Marion Island's palaeo-ice extent*. Second place and the monetary award of R 1,000.00 was awarded to Rosina Sheburah Essien and Manfred Spocter for the paper titled *Addressing the issues of solid waste management in Accra's open-air markets: (Dis)connecting Northern and Southern perspectives*.



Biennial General Meeting

A few amendments to the SAAG Constitution were approved at the recent Biennial General Meeting held 14:00-16:00, 10 September 2021. The updated Constitution is available on our [website](#). To review the BGM's Agenda and Minutes, please also visit our [website](#).

Southern African Young Geomorphologists - SAYG

I would like to again highlight the work of the [Southern African Young Geomorphologists \(SAYG\)](#). The SAYG group is a subsection of SAAG, an IAG National Scientific Member, and part of the [IAG Network of Young Geomorphologists' Groups](#). SAYG members are students, post-grads, post-docs, researchers, and career scientists interested and/or engaged in geomorphologic research and related topics in southern Africa. The IAG is supportive of young geomorphologist groups and the establishment opens the door to our young geomorphologists to potential funding opportunities to attend geomorphology events, as well as access to numerous other resources. We encourage all undergraduate or postgraduate students and scientists who have received their highest degree (*i.e.* BSc, BScHons, MSc or PhD) within the past seven years to join the SAYG. Membership is free.

- Facebook Page: **Southern African Young Geomorphologists: @sa.young.geomorphologists**
- Instagram: **@sa_young_geomorphologists**
- Website: <https://saageomorph.wixsite.com/saag/about-sayg>
- Email: sayg.group@gmail.com

For any questions please contact your SAYG representative, Renée Grundling, at sayg.group@gmail.com.



Your new Council

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the [new Council](#) (2021-2023) to you. The Council was voted into office during the online Biennial General Meeting held 14:00-16:00, 10 September 2021. Your Council members for the next term are:

President - Mrs Laura Bannatyne
President-Elect - Dr Liezel Rudolph
Treasurer - Prof David Hedding
Mr Sibusiso Sinuka
Mrs Marike Stander



Ms Namso Nyamela
Ms Renée Grundling

I would also like to express my gratitude to the [outgoing Council](#), for their work these last two years.

Get in touch

Join our email list (saageomorph@googlegroups.com). The email list serves as a source of information for all geomorphologists, especially those in southern Africa. You do not have to be a member of SAAG to post to this list. We welcome any information on events, funding and studying opportunities, and geomorphology relevant items. Send us an email at saageomorph@gmail.com and we will ensure your message reaches our subscribers.