

# SERVICES OF CTHB AND TPCP

## Tree Health Extension

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### Objectives:

Extension activities form an important component of the Tree Protection Co-operative Programme (TPCP) and DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology (CTHB). These activities are divided into a number of components. They include all activities linked to the monitoring of pests and diseases of native and plantation trees. Furthermore, they form an important component in the training of our post-graduate students and the creation of awareness amongst the general public, foresters, farmers and conservation staff. Monitoring includes efforts to detect new pathogens and pests in a timely fashion and evaluation of the change in status of pathogens and pests, which have been present for many years. One of the key components of the monitoring programme is the Diagnostic Clinic that provides one means of rapid detection of new diseases and pests. Data from the clinic and field extension/monitoring activities also form part of a longer term historical record of pests and diseases in South Africa and many other countries where the teams work.

**Field activities 2005/2006:** During 2005 a total of 51 field trips were undertaken in South Africa, accounting to 520 person days in the field. In 2006, 44 field trips were undertaken to areas in South Africa and two field trips to neighbouring countries, representing 531 person days in the field in South Africa and 113 in neighbouring countries. These field trips included more than 20 presentations at field days in 2005 and six in 2006. The dissemination of information regarding pests and diseases forms an important part of the field extension activities and often results in the report of new outbreaks by foresters, farmers and botanists/conservationists. Fieldtrips are also important in obtaining inputs from visiting international scientists. Several field visits with foreign visitors were, therefore, undertaken in 2005/6. During these visits it is attempted to provide as much exposure of these visitors to farmers and foresters as possible, with guests often presenting talks at small field days. Visiting scientists are also crucial in the training of students and staff of the TPCP and CTHB, providing them with valuable international views.

**Diagnostic Clinic:** The Diagnostic clinic received a total of 1065 samples for the period January to the end of December 2005. Most samples were received in April. Of the samples sent, the majority were from pine (79%), 13% were from eucalypts and 7% were classified as other. The clinic received a total number of 1635 samples during 2006. Pine samples, including both nursery samples for *Fusarium* screening and disease analyses samples, comprised approximately 67% of the total number of samples received. Of the rest of the samples, 8% were

from *Eucalyptus* and 24% of samples were classified as other. Black wattle samples made up the remaining 1% of total samples received. Samples classified as "other" include water, soil, seed, insect and Petri dish samples, as well as native or other non-native tree species.

**Newsletters, articles, treehealthnet, internet:** The TPCP and CTHB extension services include several media other than field visits. The groups publish a newsletter, *Tree Health News*, twice a year. This newsletter is distributed by the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research (ICFR), together with ICFR news. Furthermore, regular articles are published in forestry and agricultural magazines. The group also manages a list server, *Treehealthnet* which alerts foresters and farmers to new disease outbreaks, interesting forestry facts and field visits to their areas. News items and scientific articles are posted on the TPCP and CTHB websites ([www.fabinet.up.ac.za](http://www.fabinet.up.ac.za)). The TPCP and CTHB are active participants of the Forest Invasive Species Network for Africa (FISNA) and publish new disease reports on the webpage. (<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/26951/en/>).

### Photos from field trips



**Fig. 1** Staff from the Copperbelt University, Zambia and TPCP/CTHB during a visit to forests and plantations in Zambia

**Fig. 2** Foresters, international visitors and TPCP staff during a field visit to a *Sirex* infested Pine compartment

**Fig. 3** Students visiting the Kruger National Park herbarium during field work in the park. (Irene Barnes, Mrs. Thembi Khoza of Sanparks, Vuledzani Muthelo)

**Fig. 4** Nursery management staff and international visitors during a field tour of South African plantations. (Mrs. Gerry Berghdal, Prof. Dale Bergdahl, Arthur Ndlovu, Wynand de Swart and Prof. Jolanda Roux)