

## **MOTIVATION FOR PERMIT TO COLLECT FOSSILS FROM ELANDSBERG, MATJESFONTEIN AND BERSEBA FARMS NEAR SUTHERLAND**

The Sutherland in the Northern Cape Province has a wealth of vertebrate fossils, and more recently, important plant fossil localities have come to light in this area. Fossils from the Beaufort Group of this region are providing valuable insights into the animals and plants that proliferated during the Middle Permian.

A team comprising Dr Johann Neveling (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria), Prof. Marion Bamford (BPI, University of the Witwatersrand), Prof Robert Gastaldo (Colby College, Maine, USA) and Dr Conrad Labandeira (Smithsonian Institution, USA) are interested in researching the floras and other associated fossils we may find in this area.

A local contact, Mr Jaco Groenwald (Sutherland resident and expert locator of fossils), who has helped us in the past with his local knowledge, interest in fossils and immersion in the local farming community, has identified three farms in the Sutherland area (Karoo Hoogland Municipal area, Namakwa District, Northern Cape Province) where fossils, including permineralised wood logs and plant impression fossils have been reported by the landowners.

This application seeks to obtain permission from SAHRA to collect fossils on the aforementioned farms. The landowners in question have provided letters of permission:

Elandsberg Farm: Mr N. Kersop, Tel: 023 571 2775

Matjesfontein Farm: Mr Albertus and Mrs Ester Jordaan, Tel: 082 579 6238

Berseba Farm: Mr Etienne van der Nest

Fossils collected will be prepared, studied and lodged at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, by Dr Billy de Klerk, myself, and our team of technical staff, and the permineralized wood will be sectioned and analysed by Prof Marion Bamford at the BPI, Wits, before being returned to the Albany Museum for curation.