

## **Monitoring frameworks**

Detecting change in the vegetation of the sub-continent has not been well co-ordinated, and each country has developed its own set of indices for detecting change in the rangeland structure, composition and function. In the monitoring of structural changes, the earliest aerial survey photographs and fixed point photographs provide ample evidence for the magnitude and direction of change in the standing woody biomass. These data sets are available in South Africa where archives of aerial photography (national coverage since 1935) and fixed point photographs (since 1919) have been preserved by the Director General, Surveys and Mapping and the National Botanical Institute.

Data sets of secondary production are also available with livestock numbers being accurately documented since 1923.

The archiving of NOAA AVHRR data by the CSIR's Satellite Applications Centre (SAC) since the start of acquisition in 1985, provides an excellent data set for future research on ecosystem trends. The Landsat TM data set has also been preserved by SAC and is available for the description of land cover change.