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Cover photo. Dunes in the Namib Rand in semiarid southern Namibia sparsely covered by vegetation. The flat pediment of the Horseshoe Mountains in the background is covered by grasses following a wet season. In the hyperarid Namib only the cumulative effect of rare occurrences of rainstorms over many years (10^4 – 10^5 years) can generate the occasional grass cover necessary for calcic soil horizons formation in an environment of regular salic–gypsic soils. (Photo courtesy of Hans Hoffmann. See the article by Amit et al., pages 177–187, in this issue.)