

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS

38TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON 6TH JULY 2001, AVENTURA ECO EILAND, NORTHERN PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

Attending: Mike Coke, Kedibone Mpheriwane, Pumza Maseti, Tovhowani Ndiitwani, Kevin Rogers, Brian Marshall, Braam Pietrse, Ben van der Waal, Jay O'Keeffe, Bill Roxxlston, Tally Glen, Steve Mitchell, Heather Malan, Wilson Mhlnaga, Dirk Roux, Mick Angliss, Stan Rodgers, Wynand Vlok, Bonani Madikizela, Cain van Ginkel, Jan Roos, Freek Venter, Midu Mzimela, Victor Wepener, Digby Cyrus, Fiona Mackay, Evan Dollar (non-member), Charles Breen, Kate Rowntree, Rodney Owen, Chris Dickens, Mark Graham.

Apologies: Patsy Scherman, Nikite Miller, Jenny Day, Paul Fouche, Mike Silberbauer, MaryJean Gabriel, Maitland Seaman, Andrew Deacon, Harold Champion, Pat Reavell, Nelson Mwanyama, Shirley Bethune, Kevin Roberts

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ACTION

1 WELCOME

Those attending were welcomed by Chris Dickens. Apologies noted.

2 ISSUES ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 37TH MEETING HELD IN PIETERMARITZBURG

Society records/documentation. MG requested info from all members (particularly past EXCO members). Nothing forthcoming. Jay O'Keefe subsequently notified EXCO that most of SASAQs archives are kept in the Cory Library, Grahamstown (Shirley Stewart the contact person there). Included in this is a full set of all previous journals. NISC notified that the Cory Library to continue getting future journals as a subscriber.

No other matters arising

3 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past year

2000/2001 was a busy year despite having not had a conference, with the new journal being born and the society web site up and running. In the process there have been a fair number of problems. On the list of problems was the collapse of the society treasury computer, which promptly lost all the society records to cyberspace! This has taken most of the last year to repair, but is now in excellent condition.

Conferences

As you all know, the year 2000 was an unfortunate year from the point of view of not having had our annual conference. Hopefully this is something that will not become a regular occurrence. The current conference has been outstanding and truly in the nature of SASAQs conferences, and it looks as though we are secure for the next two years and will be looking to find a venue for the 2004 conference.

The Journal – African Journal of Aquatic Science

Just to give you some idea of what has happened with the journal, this must be viewed in the light of the difficulties that the old journal was facing. At several past AGMs, it was recorded that the journal was in trouble, was faced with declining submissions, and was certainly not the journal of choice of most of our members. It also had very limited status in the country and was not adequately abstracted. All of this was pushing it into a downward spiral so that there was a distinct possibility that it would cease to be.

On top of the above, were the duties required of the Editor, which were onerous to say the least. Besides having to edit and chase after referees, the Editor had the responsibility of producing page proofs and getting the issue published. While this was just acceptable if the journal pattered along with only a single issue per year, this model was just not tenable if the journal was to become vibrant. Anyway, the company NISC approached us with an offer to take over the publication of the journal. A letter was sent out to all members, who returned a nearly 100% vote of acceptance to go this route. A legal contract was signed with NISC which gives them a lot of control in the publication, something we were not that happy about, but which proved to be unavoidable. The result was an agreement where NISC are to do all of the lay-out, publishing, marketing, sales and distribution as well as getting the journal properly abstracted. The journal will be produced in hard copy version and also on the Internet. The SASAQs commitment is to provide good quality papers that have been refereed and corrected. This year (2001) the society is carrying the cost of all publication, but next year things will be different as it will be up to NISC to negotiate a subscription with all members. In this they have been very accommodating in taking the views of the Society into account.

Soon after commencing work, NISC suggested a change in the name of the journal to the *African Journal of Aquatic Science* – something that was also tested with the membership and gained nearly 100% support. We hope to see the first issue of that journal at this conference. The result of all of this should be a journal of which we can be really proud, producing several issues per year, all of international standing. Unfortunately this may come at a price, but it is a situation of either this or of no journal at all.

The Web site

If you haven't taken a look at the web site, please do. The new address is <http://www-dwaf.pwv.gov.za/iwqs/sasaqs/>

This was designed by an IT buff at Umgeni Water, but has been taken over and streamlined by Mike Silberbauer. The site includes items such as conference announcements and details about the Society. It also includes things such as significant projects that the society participated in, such as the formulation of the concept of the Reserve, driven by Tally Palmer, as well as the publication of guides to the identification of aquatic invertebrates that is currently under way. If any of you have suggestions for inclusion on this web site, please get in touch with council or Mike.

The Executive and Council

As you know, the constitution currently requires the council to serve for a three year period. For the current council, this term of office was due to expire in December 2000. Several notices for nominations were sent out, and although a few for individual nominations were received, these were insufficient for a new council. Accordingly, at the AGM in November 2000, it was agreed that the current council would continue to operate until this conference, whereupon if necessary, brute force would be used to find replacements! That process will take place later during the AGM. We have some suggestions for changes to the constitution that will be dealt with later.

Membership

One change to our membership policy is that the society will consider applications from African countries to the north of us, for a reduced membership fee.

Departure

This should be the last year of office served by the current council. I must say that it has been a great privilege and honour to serve the Society. It has been a lot of fun as well! Whoever takes over the reigns, we wish them the best and will support them in whatever way we can.

Chris Dickens

A vote of thanks was proposed from Bill Rowston to the outgoing EXCO.

4 TREASURER'S REPORT

Background

My apologies for not being able to attend this year's conference and AGM due to other engagements. My term as Honorary Treasurer ends at the end of this year, 2001, and it would be advisable that a new treasurer is identified at this AGM.

At the beginning of my term, April 1999, I just deposited cheques as they came. This caused a problem for some cheques especially those from the universities that pay for its SASAQs members whose names do not appear on the accompanying documentation. A lot of time was spent on calls to such institutions in order to establish who the cheques were paying for. To date there are still five cheques for which we haven't been able to establish whose subscriptions they were paying. If you have proof of payment relating to any of the five cheques, please send me the proof and I will credit your SASAQs account with the amount appearing on the cheque.

You have before you copies of the audited financial statements for the 1999 and 2000 financial years. Due to a computer crash at the beginning of 2000 the 1999 accounts could not be audited in 2000 as we had to start from scratch relying on hard copies of the accounts we had.

Income Statement (page 3)

Subscriptions have remained fairly consistent between R14,500 received in 1998 and the R16,700 and R13,400 received in 1999 and 2000 respectively. Subscriptions have only been raised in the books as and when the subscriptions have been paid by members. In December 2000 subscriptions outstanding amounted to R15,500 whereas in December 1999 outstanding subscriptions amounted to R8,450. This is largely due to late invoicing such that most members paid their subscriptions in the following year.

Interest income has decreased from R17,800 in 1998 to R10,300 in 1999 and increased to R16,000 in 2000. The decrease in 1999 was due to a general drop in interest rates while the increase in 2000 was due to better management of surplus funds (investment into a money market account) and additional funds after the Namibian conference.

Conference Surplus

The final surplus after the Namibian conference amounted to R52,016 before payment of bursaries amounting to R10,000. There was no conference held in the 2000 financial year.

Expenditure was of little significance except for the following items.

	2000	1999
* Computer expenses (New software to assist with debtors statements and collections)	1,704	-
* Honoraria	4,861	2,250
* Journal expenses (No journal was published in 1999)	12,355	1,645

Balance Sheet (page 2)

Investments moved from R133,000 in 1998 to R202,000 in 1999 and ending off at R165,000 in 2000. This is due to the conference surplus in 1999 and the deposit made in 2000 for the 2001 conference (R27,000 advance accommodation booking and R3,000 start up fund for the conference) as well as a loan (R15,000) being made for an Environmental Flows conference. These amounts will be refunded during the course of 2001.

Accounts payable include a provision of R9,000 raised in 1998 for the printing of the journal. It was SASAQs policy to set aside money for the printing of the following year's journal, hence the 1998 provision.

The finances of SASAQs are in a good state but it would be advisable that conferences are run at a profit as they are a significant source of income when the profits are substantial.

Brian Marshall proposed acceptance of accounts. The AGM accepted these accounts.

Nelson had proposed the occasional need for a bookkeeper to assist with the Treasurers functions. This was agreed to by all at the AGM.

**Mark
Graham**

Chris Dickens noted the importance of auditing of all Conference monies. He had requested this of the Aventura conference and suggested it be added to the Society's constitution. This was supported by the AGM.

5 EDITOR'S REPORT

Having originally had great difficulty assembling enough material to make up an issue of the Journal in 1999, and eventually publishing a sort of omnibus-issue numbered Vol. 24 (1&2) 1998/1999 [which has been simply dreadful for subsequent authors to quote in their References], things suddenly swung to the opposite end of the scale in July of that year. At the Society's conference in Swakopmund we netted a huge number of manuscripts, plus R20 000 of support funding for publishing them. All of a sudden I was faced with a vast editorial burden. However, by December 2000 I had 100 pages laid out ready for publication as Vol. 25 (1) 2000.

Meantime, in September 2000 Margaret Crampton of the National Inquiry Services Centre [NISC], Grahamstown, had approached the Society with a proposal for joint publication and world-wide promotion of our Journal under the name *African Journal of Aquatic Science*. After deliberations, in December 2000 we agreed to a three-year contract with them. My main concerns at that time were the cost of the improved journal to members, and its accessibility to novice authors.

So, in the end we had to forego our almost-published issue of the Journal, as well as the costs we'd incurred in laying it out, and to take a leap of faith into the new publishing era. What with various delays and misfortunes, five more months went by. Eventually we said Volume 25 had to be out in time for the July 2001 conference and that's what has happened - although Margaret has brought only 15 copies of it with her for distribution.

Now that the *African Journal of Aquatic Science* Volume **25** (2000) is out, I hope you are all pleased with its new face. NISC will promote it internationally, which we hope will bring in some valuable overseas library subscriptions. The new, imaginative cover, comprising a collage of aquatic organisms and environments as well as the former journal's three wave-forms design, is the product of Margaret's daughter's design expertise. An Editorial Board of nine internationally-renowned aquatic experts has been assembled and have taken on a two-year term of office. It is hoped that they will assist by overseeing [but not necessarily doing] the refereeing of many of the incoming papers, thereby making my own task more achievable. NISC has set international-level subscription prices for overseas subscribers. These do not, however apply to SASAQs members and it is hoped that Society membership fees, including receipt of the journal, will remain relatively unchanged.

I currently have approximately 40 manuscripts of various lengths on hand. Ten of these have already been accepted for publication and many others are in the

pipeline. I am also hoping to receive a number of manuscripts from the 2001 conference authors. So, all being well, we should have at least one, perhaps two, more issues out this year.

Mike Coke
Editor, African Journal of Aquatic Science.

Charles Breen proposed acceptance of the Editors Report, seconded by Wynand Vlok.

Jay O'Keefe queried whether SASAQs still retained the editor's function in the new relationship with NISC. Mike Coke assured AGM of this fact.

Wynand voiced concern over length of time between submission and publishing of papers. Mike assured that this will speed up with the new inputs from NISC. Jay queried whether Mike needed more editorial support given the increase in potential throughput to the journal. Agreed by all that only if necessary but that Mike currently felt he could cope. Mike clarified the roles and responsibilities of the new Editorial Board.

Newsletter

This has become virtually non-existent in the last year. Chris Dickens proposed that this should be resuscitated and given a professional feel. Digby proposed a quarterly newsletter.

Mick Angliss proposed a conference newsletter that could feature the various highlights of the conference. The AGM approved his suggestion.

**Mick
Angliss**

6 REGIONAL REPORTS

Namibia Regional Rep's Report – Shirley Bethune

I note that there is a suggestion that regional reps have become obsolete in the electronic age - and that this will be put forward at this AGM. I would caution against this, here in Namibia we are still fairly isolated. In response to your call for a Conference venue, I regret that the answer is Not Yet - we like at least a six year break. I am looking forward to those proceedings of the Swakopmund conference and would like to put forward a vote of thanks to the editor for all the work that has gone into that.

The main activities involving Namibian aquatic scientists, outside their day to day work related tasks, during 2000/2001 were three books, two identification courses and assistance with the curation of the freshwater fish collection at the National Museum. The book on Water Plants of Namibia by Dr Nicolas Clarke and Esmeralda Klaasen has been printed and was launched on 6 June 2001 and is available at R150.00 plus postage from Barbara Curtis at the National Botanical Research Institute in Namibia - Private Bag 13184, Windhoek, Namibia. Tel: 09 264 61 2022021, Fax 258153 and email treeatla@mweb.com.na. It is an illustrated identification manual of water plants in Namibia with distribution maps of each. There is also a companion guide to the Cyperaceae (Sedges) of Namibia that was published in 1999. The two books currently being finalised after review of the draft manuscripts are one on Water Pollution in Namibia and the other on Wetlands of Namibia. All have been sponsored by Sida and compiled by SASAQs members. During 2000, two identification workshops were held. The first on freshwater crustacea and molluscs of Namibia was presented by Dr Nancy Rayner and Barbara Curtis at the National Museum in January 2000. The second on freshwater fishes was presented by Prof Paul Skelton in June 2000 also at the National Museum and attended by some 30 participants including UNAM and Polytech students. Following Paul's visit, Roger Bills twice spent time at the National Museum helping to sort and catalogue the rather neglected freshwater fish collection and submitted a report with recommendations to improve curation. The next identification workshop on water plants will be held at the National Botanical Research Institute from 10 July and will be presented by Barbara Curtis, Shirley Bethune, Esmeralda Klaasen and Colleen Mannheimer. Finally a logframe for wetlands was prepared and included in the National Biodiversity Strategy and input was given to the team drafting the new Water Policy and Law for Namibia. The water policy was accepted by Cabinet in September and makes some provision for an environmental reserve and advocates water demand management.

I trust that this will be useful. I regret that we will not be attending the Conference nor the AGM this year and wish you all of the best.

KZN Regional Rep's report - Rodney Owen

Focus has been an attracting the marine side of KZN to SASAQs, hopefully through the new journal. It is unfortunate this has been delayed. Talks planned for ORI have had to be delayed until 3/8/2001. There is no hope for the future in our present format. SASAQs still seen as old LIMSOC by the marine fraternity.

Suggest combining conferences say every 2-3 years, with ZOOSOC or CERM. Will depend on organisers and locality. UCT would be the best bet in the near future.

7 CONGRESSES

- 2002 Bloemfontein in July (Jan Roos to get dates to Steve Mitchell to get these into WATER SA journal). Accepted by AGM. Jan to feed this back to Maitland Seaman.
- 2003 Cape Town. AGM requested Cape Town organisers to get marine involvement wherever possible.
- 2004 Gauteng to host this conference as the then outgoing/current EXCO.
- 2010 Combined SIL conference in SA. Johan Grobbelaar to remain proposer for this conference and represent this at the next SIL meeting.

**Jan
Roos /
Steve
Mitchell**

8 AWARDS

All members were reminded of these, especially for next year. The awards byelaw was to be displayed at this conference and if no objections would be accepted. Post Conference Note. No objections received and so Awards Byelaw accepted.

9 COUNCIL

At the end of their term the current EXCO will have been in office for 4 years. The following candidates for the new EXCO were proposed to the AGM: Kevin Rogers – President, Dirk Roux – Honorary Treasurer, Victor Wepener – Honorary Secretary. All at the AGM agreed to these proposals and seconded by Jay. In terms of EXCO continuity the WISA model of the vice president becoming the new President after the incumbent presidents term in office was proposed and agreed to by all at the AGM. Digby Cyrus as the current vice president was proposed by Charles Breen and seconded by Jay. MG to draft a byelaw detailing this proposal (see attached to these minutes).

10 GENERAL

Jay O'Keefe noted that the Society had been central to many of the principals enshrined within the new **Water Law**. Department of Water Affairs & Forestry (DWAFF) were now trying to make the act "work". However there was no central channel for the Society to advise and make contributions to DWAFF in interpreting the Law, especially with regard to revision of the Resource-Directed Measures (RDM) process and associated manuals. Jay proposed appointing a small team/group to attend a July 2001 meeting with DWAFF to establish these channels of communication. The majority of members at the AGM agreed to this proposal. The group to circulate their proposal to all SASAQs members for comment and contribution before the meeting. CD indicated that all present who may be interested in an input to this process should contact Jay.

**Jay O'
Keefe**

The **Earth Summit** in 2002. It was agreed that Herman Wiechers run with this input to the Summit.

Mick Angliss proposed putting forward a resolution to the Minister re the **loss of aquatic expertise** in the country to meet its various obligations. Agreed that Mick put a proposal together on this issue and report back at the Conference Resolutions (final day of conference).

**Mick
Angliss**

ACTION
Tally
Palmer

Tally Palmer was requested to report back at the Conference Resolutions on the latest with regard to the **RDM** process.

Honoraria

The AGM voted to scrap the last byelaw covering Honoraria. In future the amount for Honoraria would become a standard item on the agenda for review at each future AGM.

Victor
Wepener

Regional Representatives – the need for these

This item was fully debated by those present at the AGM and taking into account the comments made by Shirley Bethune in her report. Brian Marshall proposed scrapping regional representatives and maintaining the country representatives for the rest of Africa. This was agreed by all present at the AGM. Charles Breen reiterated the commitment needed to building relationships with the rest of Africa.

Photographs for Invertebrate Guide books

Steve Mitchell noted they are still looking for good photographs to be used on the covers of the WRC sponsored invertebrate guide books. Steve to circulate a list of those still needed.

Steve
Mitchell
/ Mark
Graham

11 NEXT MEETING

AGM to be held during Bloemfontein Conference 2002

EXCO continuity byelaw - 2001

In any given term of office the EXCO will comprise a President, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, and Vice President. As per the term of office specified in the constitution the EXCO should wherever possible be in the same geographic locality. The Vice President need not be in the same geographic locality and will succeed the current President at the end of any given cycle.