



Newsletter 2/2009 – April 2009

Feedback

- 1) SACNASP survey: I want to thank everyone who responded to the questionnaire. In total 27 members have responded. Attached is a summary of the responses we have received (Table 1). It shows the distribution of the qualification of those who replied and also indicates the spread of the expertise among the respondents. If you haven't responded yet, please complete the form and mail it to Paul (ps@univen.ac.za) as all the information will be sent to SACNASP later in the year again.
- 2) I want to thank everyone for the responses and comments on the first newsletter and other documents circulated. It is very clear that the animal (Society) is alive and growing.
- 3) The first and second circular for the conference in June is out. If you haven't received the information, please contact Yolandi (ycloete@uj.ac.za) as soon as possible.

Conference

As most of you are aware the conferences will take place from 21 – 24 June 2009 at Magaliesberg Conference Centre, Broederstroom, South Africa. The theme for the conference is **"Beyond rapid assessments - time for an aquatic research renaissance in South Africa"**.

No mid-conference or post-conference tours are organised by the organising committee. If people are interested in possible activities or options of venues and

places to visit, please contact Wynand (Wynand.vlok@gmail.com) and we can assist where possible.

Many may ask: Why the theme for this 42nd SASAqS meeting? This was the rationale behind the theme and we want you to use this to start the debate. Please forward your comments or letters to the Newsletter Editor.

"Beyond rapid assessments - time for an aquatic research renaissance in South Africa"

For the past decade much of the activities in South African freshwater aquatic sciences have been dominated by developing and implementing tools for rapid assessments and classification of riverine ecosystems. This has mostly been driven by the monitoring and classification requirements in the National Water Act. The Society, individual researchers and research groups have played a leading role and in this regard. Aquatic science did not operate in a vacuum but actually served a need that was related to policy. Unfortunately we have not progressed beyond that initial starting point. The initial scientific tools and approaches that were developed to meet these needs have to a degree been abused and manipulated to suit a range of differing management requirements. Thus the policy has started to form the basis of the discipline and not the science itself. When one considers that in the past five years there has been a marked decrease in the environmental quality of our surface waters, questions can rightly be asked what contribution is science making to answer the questions and whether the answers that we have been putting forward are relevant to the questions being posed. The powerful problem-solving characteristics of the scientific method should continuously be engaged, something which has sadly diminished within the freshwater scientific sector. It is for this reason that the theme of this year's conference is structured around a call for a renaissance in aquatic research to ensure that that the good science is practiced first and foremost by scientists.

Prof Victor Wepener (Dept. of Zoology, University of Johannesburg)

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will take place at 17h00 on 23 June 2009 at Magaliesberg Conference Centre, Broederstroom, South Africa. All members and non-members are invited to attend.

Members are invited to submit agenda items to Paul (psu@univen.ac.za) before the end of April.

Call for submissions for Medals

To date no nominations for the presentations of medals for 2009 have been received. The closing date for submissions is 30 April 2009 and the completed documents must be e-mailed to Jan Roos (jcroos.water@gmail.com). The criteria for submissions were in the first newsletter. If you haven't received it, contact Paul for a copy.

Webpage

The Exco want to thank Mike Silberbauer for his work and enthusiasm as Webmaster. He is really done a sterling job in getting the page sorted out. If you have information you want to post, contact Mike or Paul. The webpage is there for members to use! Please give some feedback on how the page can be improved.

Membership fees

- 1) The Exco want to thank Hendrik Jerling for his term as the Honorary Treasurer. He took over during a time when the whole system has crashed and all data was lost. He built the system again and ensured that we got invoices to most members again!
- 2) As you know, Nico Smit is the new Honorary Treasurer. We want to thank him for helping out in this position.
- 3) The fees for 2009 will be R300-00. Nico mailed the invoices during the last week and if you haven't received yours towards the end of March, please contact him (nicos@uj.ac.za).
- 4) All members with outstanding subs, the following arrangements were made. Once Nico had time to look at all the accounts, he will contact the individuals and arrange for payment of outstanding subs.

- 5) From the Exco we ask for some patience and assistance. We know that some people have received invoices for the 2009 subscription fees and they may not be members of the Society anymore. Please indicate this to Nico (nicos@uj.ac.za) and he will remove you from the mailing and membership lists. A similar situation will happen with the newsletter. We have received two lists and are in the process of updating and consolidating the information into one list for the Society. If you don't want to receive the newsletter, please inform Paul (psu@univen.ac.za).

General comments

- 1) The Exco invites members and non-members to submit material for the newsletter. This is the members' newsletter!
- 2) We also invite submissions for the Journal. As Mike Coke has indicated the efforts "for citation have been crowned by Thompson Reuters at last including the African Journal of Aquatic Science in their Journal Citation Reports (JCR) and Science Citation Index Expanded. The JCR is the world's leading authority for evaluating the impact and influence of the world's foremost research journals and, among other data, presents the widely-used journal impact factors. We will receive our first impact factor in the 2009 JCR which is published in the spring of 2010".
- 3) Please ensure that you register for the conference and send in the abstracts well before the closing date!

And last (but not least) !!!! – We have received membership applications from 29 prospective new members – these applications have been forwarded to Nico Smit who will invoice them.

Hope to see you all in Broederstroom!

Wynand Vlok

Table 1 : Summary of SACNAS replies

Replies:

	Number of members
M+5 year (or more) University or Technicon qualification	18
M+4 University or Technicon qualification	9
M+ 3 University or Technicon qualification	

Fields of expertise:

Agricultural Science		Hydrological Science	1
Animal Science		Industrial Science	
Biological Science	7	Marine Science	3
Botanical Science	1	Materials Science	
Chemical Science	1	Mathematical Science	
Earth Science	2	Mathematics Education Science	
Ecological Science	15	Metallurgical Science	
Environmental Science	8	Microbiological Science	
Food Science		Natural Science Education Science	
Forensic Science		Physical Science	
Forestry Science		Radiation Science	
Geographical Information System Science		Soil Science	1
Geographical Science	1	Water Care Science	1
Geological Science	2	Zoological Science	7