

SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS AGM 1995

Minutes for the 32nd Annual General Meeting held in Grahamstown, June 28th at 11:00 am.

1. Welcome and attendance

The president welcomed everyone to the 32nd SASAQS annual general meeting.

Present:

J. O'Keeffe (President), J.A. Cambray (Acting Secretary and Acting Treasurer), B.R. Allanson (Editor), A.K. Whitfield (Regional Reps), J.B. Adams, C. Benade, I.R. Bills, S.J.M. Blaber, A.H. Bok, C. Buxton (invited), H.F.B. Champion, M. Coetzee, M. Coke, J. Day, H.F. Dallas, B.R. Davies, N.T. Demetriades (representing A.T. Forbes), F.C. de Moor, H.H. du Preez, M.J. Gabriel, N. Grange, K.C.D. Hamman, A.D. Harrison, R.C. Hart, C.J. Hay, N.D. Impson, P.B.N. Jackson, C.D. McQuaid, N. Muller, R.K. Owen, R.W. Palmer, N.A. Rayner, D.J. Roux, K.M.F. Scott, M.J. Silberbauer, P.H. Skelton, C.D. Snaddon, L.R. Taylor, J.O. Tetteh, M.C. Uys, P.W. Wade, D.C. Weeks, S. Weldrick, V. Wepener and M.W. Wishart (n = 45).

2. Apologies:

D.J. Alletson, P. Ashton, H.M. Barber-James, M. Chutter, D.P. Cyrus, C. Dickens, P. Goetsch, L. Hill, J. Howard, J.M. King, U. Looser, C.G. Palmer, T. Pike, G. Quibell, G. Ractliffe, M. Seaman, W. Selkirk and M. van Veelen, (n = 18).

3. Additions to the agenda:

Attendance of aquatic scientists at other conferences - Mr B. Benade.

4. Minutes of the 31st AGM:

It was noted that R. Hart had sent in his apologies. With this amendment the minutes were accepted. (B. Davies proposed, J. Day seconded).

5. Matters arising:

5.1. Journal Editor Prof. Allanson generously agreed to continue for a further term as editor.

5.2. Medals committee

Dr J. Day had been co-opted onto the committee listed at the last meeting. 5.3. Marine & Phycology representatives

Prof. C. McQuaid was the marine representative. There is as yet no phycology representative.

5.4. Information to members of government

(Point 18.2 of 1994 minutes) The President would offer the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry membership to the Society.

5.5. Term of office of Council

The President proposed that it would be put to the membership that the term of office for the Council should be three and not two years. This requires a change to the constitution and members would have to be balloted. Prof. B. Allanson suggested that this be raised during the year and discussed at the 33rd AGM. Dr P. Skelton moved that if the ballot favoured three years then the present council should sit for three years. The President said that the Council would ballot members and that he would report on results at the next AGM.

6. President's report (see addendum):

The report was presented by J. O'Keeffe and accepted.

There were 231 members in 1994 and only 200 paid up members in 1995. There had been ten new members and five resignations during the year. However, a number of inactive or retired members, and some whose careers have been redirected, have recently been removed from the list of members, so that the reduction over the past year is more apparent than real. The President opened his report for discussion. Dr P. Skelton noted that Africa is opening up for

South Africans and in general Africa lacks good societal contacts. The President noted that it was good to hear this from Dr Skelton as he has been elected as the international link person for the Society. Prof. Allanson said that the Society requires a glossy brochure which it then could circulate to potential members. The brochure should contain the aims and objectives of the Society. Public Relations work on behalf of the Society is important.

The President said that he would investigate the possibility of a brochure. Prof. B. Allanson suggested that Gencor or Mazda be presented with a specific request to sponsor the brochure. Dr P. Skelton suggested that there could be a foreign membership category at a reduced subscription rate and that they would get the newsletter and possibly not the journal. Mr D. Weeks said that there could be a subsidy for foreign students as some journals had special lower rates for third world subscribers. The President said that the Council would take all these suggestions into consideration.

7. Treasurer's report (see addendum):

The report was presented by Dr J.A. Cambray and accepted.

Dr P. Skelton pointed out that the role of the Society is not to have money in the bank but to employ the capital. The President suggested that some of the money could be used to subsidise several students which would enable them to attend the 1996 conference at Victoria Falls. The committee could invite written applications from students. Prof. C. Buxton suggested that the society should invest some of the accumulated funds and spend the interest on projects.

8. Editor's report (see addendum):

The report was presented by Prof. B. Allanson and accepted. The last issue of the journal had been delayed as he had been overseas for two months. Potential contributors to the journal must comply with the requirements and read the instructions on the journal. Figures should be able to be reduced to fit the journal's requirements. The Editor noted that he had been concerned for some time that the FRD gives national journals lower ratings whereas international journals are given high ratings. It was suggested that the FRD are being very short-sighted in this policy which would ultimately result in the demise of the South African journals. The Committee for Scientific Publications is reviewing which journals they will support in the future, but we are independent which is a healthy situation for our journal. Authors should attend to the comments made by these referees as soon as possible. The next issue will be out before October. The idea is to have two issues a year. The research notes section included articles of interest of less than two pages (NOT full-length manuscripts). In closing he noted that it had been a successful but frustrating year for the editor and that feedback was essential. Finally, he thanked his wife, Susan, for all the hours she spends on the journal. Prof. B. Davies noted that the Editor was doing an excellent job. The President thanked the Allansons for their continuing good work.

9. Newsletter report:

The Newsletter editors are Mandy Uys, Angus Patterson and Mike Silberbauer. There are two issues a year with Mandy and Angus doing the Spring issue and Mike the Autumn one. They thanked the contributors and pleaded for more contributions. They would also like feedback. They plan to publish an E-mail address list. They need to know what people are doing, their interesting findings, questions they have, humour, information on conferences, book reviews and letters to the Editor. Mandy suggested that copies could be sent to non-members. Dr P. Skelton suggested that membership applications be included if the newsletters are sent to non-members especially those outside the country.

10. Regional Representative's reports:

It was agreed that these reports would appear in the next newsletter.

11. Congresses

11.1 1996 Congress. Mr D. Roux noted that his regional report was almost entirely devoted to the Victoria Falls conference. The three problems to be discussed were logistics, costs and the closing dates for abstracts. The costs would be R2500 at the venue which included R550 for registration. Travel costs are separate and from Johannesburg a return flight would cost R1100. Students could choose less expensive accommodation. It was agreed that the society would investigate ways to make it possible for students to attend. Dr J. Day suggested that SASAQS use some of its funds to help students. A differential rate for overseas participants could apply. Dr Day noted that if Vic. Falls is supposed to be an African conference then we must take note that the rest of Africa is poorer and this would influence their participation. The date for abstract submission had now been changed to January-February 1996. The President thought that it was good for the society to put on a "fancier show" once every three or four years and thought that Vic. Falls should be a real success. He thanked Mr Roux for his report and the work of the organising committee and encouraged them to proceed.

11.2 1997 Congress. There was an offer by the University of Zululand to host the 1997 conference. Mr R. Owen said that they had a strong, cohesive Dept of Zoology and that they had several positive responses to offers of sponsorship. Accommodation would not be on campus but at one of the local resorts.

12. Membership and growth of the Society

The President said that he had received a Fax from the Marine Science Society of Southern Africa (MSSSA) (Denzil Miller). Their members have been presented with three options, 1- affiliate with another society (the Institute of Ecologists and Environmental Scientists or SASAQS; 2 - continue as a separate society; 3 -disband.

Prof. C. Buxton was representing the MSSSA and he gave a brief background. With the demise of SANCOR in 1990 the marine scientists decided that they required a society. Prof. Buxton said he was the Eastern cape chairman and noted that it had been difficult to get the society off the ground. He thought that it was logical for the MSSSA to join with SASAQS which would be to the benefit of both societies. Another possible affiliation could be SAIE but this is not a learned society. The President pointed out that there is at present no hindrance for marine scientists to join SASAQS and in fact some of them are already members. There are no constitutional implications. If in discussions with the Marine Society it was decided that there would have to be some constitutional changes then members would be balloted. Prof. B. Allanson said he supported the inclusion of the marine scientists and added that it might be wise to change the name of the journal to South African Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research which would be a wider market. The President asked if there were any objections to proceed with negotiations with the Marine Society. Dr A. Whitfield suggested that the marine scientists could be offered a reduced or free membership for one year to bring them in and make them aware of the positive benefits of belonging. The President suggested that SASAQS positively go for a merger making it attractive to the Marine Society and not prescriptive. Dr J. Day said that this will have to be discussed by the Council and that the handling of sensitive issues and membership would have to be done by post. The Council was given a mandate to proceed with negotiations. The President noted that he had to respond quickly to the points raised by Denzil Miller in his FAX.

13. The Society and the new Water Act.

The President noted that Dr C. Palmer had been nominated by the Society as our representative

on the Minister's Committee to consider the response of the public to 'You and your water rights'. She will be in Pretoria for one month with this committee.

14. General.

Mr C. Benade suggested that aquatic scientists should sell themselves by attending symposia/conferences etc. organized by other disciplines such as engineers, hydrologists, etc. Dr F. de Moor said that Prof. R. Crosskey may run a blackfly workshop in 1997 or 1998 but that this is a very specialised topic. He asked if the Society would support this venture. Dr P. Skelton suggested that this could form part of one of the Congresses. Dr F. de Moor said that they would expect about 100 participants just for the blackfly workshop. The President said that he would talk to Dr de Moor about the involvement of the Society. The President welcomed a new member, Mr J.O. Tetteh from the University of Swaziland.

15. Closure.

The meeting closed at 12h45.

Signed: President:.....date:.....

Secretary:..... date:.....