

**MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS**  
**37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2000, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG**

**Attending: Rob Hart, Chris Dickens, Nelson Mwanyama, Mike Coke, Steve Terry**

**Apologies: Wynand Vlok, Cate Brown, Rebecca Tharme, Ben Van der Waal, Steve Mitchell, Alan Whitfield, Heather Davies-Coleman, Jay O'Keefe, Louw Hoffman, Nikkita Muller, Patsy Schermann, Johan Grobbelaar, Christa Thirion, Janine Adams, Paul Skelton, Rob Palmer, Bryan Davies, Ferdi de Moor, Bill Rowlston, Bonani Madikezela, Dirk Roux, Kate Rowntree, Michelle Sanders, Nancy Raynor, Mark Graham, Brian Fowles, Angus Burns, Charles Breen, Brian Allanson, Roddy Ward, Rodney Owen**

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>WELCOME</b>	
1.1	Those few able to attend were welcomed. A quorum of 5 members was present, so the meeting continued, but the low attendance was noted to be a problem. As the meeting was not held in association with a conference, this could not be avoided.	
<b>2</b>	<b>ISSUES ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 36<sup>TH</sup> MEETING HELD IN SWAKOPMUND</b>	
2.1	One correction to the minutes was made, accepted and signed by the Chair	
2.2	No-one willing to take on the year 2000 conference. The SADC initiative to have this in Maputo also did not materialise.	
2.3	There is no formal record of previous medals awarded by the Society. A list is in preparation. It was noted that no bronze medal awards for MSc and PhD students have been made. A call was made for applicants for this.	<b>All</b>
2.4	Documentation of the Society is poor, and the by-laws are generally superficial and noted only in the back of the constitution book. The Secretary is to request members to notify the Chair of any archives of relevant items that may exist.	<b>MG</b>
2.4.1	No archive of spare journals of the Society appears to exist and most spare copies appear to have been discarded. A request for a by-law to document honoraria received by the treasurer, editor and secretary has been made. This issue will be held over until the next AGM.	
2.4.2	The Society computer (a 386) has been scrapped.	
2.5	The '99 – 2000 subscription rate of R 75 was implemented in 1999. A differential rate for other SADC (non – SA) members was accepted - to be applied where there was a need (on application). For 2001, the invoice needs to indicate that non-SA members can apply.	<b>MG</b>
2.6	It was noted that for overseas members, the cost of the money transfer might exceed the subscription. The offer is to be made to these members for them to pay a larger amount in credit to the organisation, from which future fees can be deducted.	<b>NM</b>
2.7	No adequate notification of changes in e-mail addresses is being received. There are about 20 returns on bulk e-mail sending, and an attempt will be made to identify problems and trace the members.	<b>MG</b>
2.8	Publishing of papers or conference proceedings should not be automatic and should go through a peer review process. Members were encouraged to present articles for publication. The suggestion was made for a separate section in the Journal for "regional" information, which may not be of international status. Alternatively the LIMSOC newsletter could be revived. For the present, this is to be held over until the new Journal is working properly, but the issue of accessibility will need to be kept in mind. SASAqS is to propose to host the 2010 S.I.L. conference. Chris Dickens will be the regional representative of SIL in 2001.	<b>MG</b>
2.9		
<b>3</b>	<b>PRESIDENTS REPORT</b>	
3.1	The Presidents report was tabled and accepted (see attached at the end of these minutes).	
3.2	There is a need to keep conferences going, working 3 years in advance. At present, Northern Province, Bloemfontein and Cape Town have agreed to host the conference, and there is possibility of a Kenyan venue in future.	
3.3	Due to insufficient nominations despite several calls to the membership, the meeting agreed that the current EXCO should stay in office for another year. However, this issue must be resolved at the next conference.	
<b>4</b>	<b>TREASURERS REPORT</b>	
4.1	Nelson Mwanyama accepted the Treasurer post in 1999. After initial problems with the computer system, things are coming right.	
4.2	A problem has been noted with identification of members where payment is made through universities, as the members involved are not named. This is to be followed up with the relevant Universities.	<b>NM</b>
4.3	Problems have been experienced with the accounting software packages used, but these are now resolved. Problems included the erasure of a computer hard drive, necessitating re-capture of account information. Invoicing was undertaken in October once the problems were resolved. A trial balance has been undertaken and some discrepancies were noted and are being dealt with prior to full auditing of the accounts.	
4.4	As at July 1999, R143000 was moved into a money market account, with R 10971 earned in interest so far. The active current account earned R 561 interest. The last available figures were R 153000 in the money market account, R 3600 in the current account with additional amounts of R 27000 and R15000 on loan.	
4.5	All accounts relating to the Swakopmund conference have been received. Conference expenditure of R10000 was made for students. Some of this has been paid back.	
4.6	The Chair proposed that in future conference budgets must be incorporated into the Society's account where they will be subject to audit. All conference moneys should be disbursed by EXCO according to the constitution. The 1998 accounts audit statement has only recently been received after many letters of complaint.	
4.7	It was recommended that a new society computer be obtained, on which all the Member details and also all necessary software are in place.	
4.8	Reasons given as to why audited statements were not available at the AGM were accepted. These will be made available at the next AGM. A vote of thanks was made to the Treasurer.	<b>EXCO</b>

		<u>ACTION</u>
4.9		
4.10		EXCO
		NM
<b>5</b>	<b>EDITORS REPORT</b>	
5.1	Volume 24 was produced in May, and there have been a few mail returns. The volume was of 168 pages, costing R 11600 for 400 copies, or R 29 a copy, including postage. The page cost was R 69. Typing and map costs were R 3460; printing was R 5550 and postage etc. R2560. Volume 25 has 25 articles pending so far, about 100 pages in total. More are being received.	
5.2	The NISC group are interested in taking on the Journal. This will include copyright. The total cost may increase as a result, and accessibility might decrease. An editorial board is required by NISC, and a varied team would be required. 94 Names have been suggested. A Job description for the Editorial Board is required. The board should number about 10 people. A formal proposal on this item is to be prepared.	MC
5.3	The contract with NISC was discussed. Comment was called for. As well as owning copyright on material, ownership of the Journal name will go to NISC if the above is accepted, but this was not seen as a serious problem. The AGM supported signing of the contract, and this will be forwarded to NISC as soon as possible.	
5.4	No newsletter was prepared in 2000. It is hoped that the web page could be used in future for most issues previously covered here.	CD
5.5	The Editor was thanked for his report.	
5.6		
<b>6</b>	<b>REGIONAL REPORTS</b>	
6.1	Only one regional report was received.	
6.2	It was proposed that the constitution be changed so that there is no longer a requirement for regional representatives. Electronic methods were recognised as replacing this need. This issue is to be proposed at the next AGM.	CD
<b>7</b>	<b>CONGRESSES</b>	
7.1	Preparation for the next conference is going ahead well. A reminder is to be sent out. At the next conference, a venue for the 2004 conference will need to be confirmed.	MG
<b>8</b>	<b>AWARDS</b>	
8.1	The existing list of past awards is to be made available on the web site.	CD
<b>9</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>	
9.1	Nothing was noted.	
<b>10</b>	<b>GENERAL</b>	
10.1	It was noted that the invertebrate guides are starting to become available. The first is now out, and the next few in the series are expected to follow soon. The request was made that anyone with suitable photographs for use on the covers (pristine habitat etc., related to the various contents of the series!) should come forward. The Society acronym was discussed. This is not formally described anywhere. It was recommended that in accordance with standard usage, no full stops be used and that the "q" be in lower case (i.e. SASAqS)	All
10.2		All
<b>11</b>	<b>NEXT MEETING</b>	
	The next annual general meeting is to be held at the next SASAqS conference	

S Terry

2/4/01

## Presidents Report – 2000

Although this has been a busy year for the Society, it has been marked by the failure to host our annual congress. Despite numerous attempts to find a host, the final effort of joining with a Mozambique initiative failed to get off the ground. Anyway, as a WISA meeting was held this year, together with the Vaal river conference and several other commitments, maybe the breather was acceptable, although not desirable. Fortunately, we have prior offers to host the next three congresses, so this problem should not arise again for some time!

This year saw the publication of the first of the Guides to the Freshwater Invertebrates of Southern Africa. Resulting from a long-standing effort to get these keys published, together with commitment from many SASAqS member, this is the first of ten volumes that should be on the shelves by mid-2002. So far the book has been widely appreciated and is being sold by the WRC for R50. A review of the first volume written by Jan Heeg will appear in the SIL News letter. The volumes are also advertised on our new SASAqS web site, designed by Robyn Hoole of Umgeni Water and now managed by Mike Silberbauer. The web site is being used to house basic information about SASAqS and will carry items such as the Newsletter, announcements of congresses etc. It also has copies of the membership forms and research papers that are of particular relevance to the Society. An example is a paper by Tally Palmer detailing the societies contribution to the drafting of the Water Act. The address of the web site for those who have not seen it is [www.ccw.ac.za/sasaqs](http://www.ccw.ac.za/sasaqs).

Those members who have working e-mail addresses, will have noticed that Society communication has become rather electronic. If you haven't received almost weekly messages on some matter or other, it means that your e-mail address is not working! For those members who do not have e-mail, I must apologise but we have failed to keep up correspondence via the postal system. Important information certainly goes out by post but it would not be possible to send all of the electronic messages by post as well. If any members are aggrieved by this, please let me know of your feelings.

A recent happening of real importance is the proposal to change the name of the journal to the African Journal of Aquatic Science, and also to enter into an agreement with NISC to publish and elevate the journal to international standards. Reviewing minutes of previous AGM meetings, a common bleat from members has been that the journal has an inadequate standing in the scientific community, and as a result is on a downward spiral of diminishing support. Initial probes to the Society membership, firstly to establish support for the NISC publication route, and then to change the name, have returned a favourable vote in excess of 98%. So we are set to embark on a new venture that should elevate the journal to full international standard. Inevitably this will come at some cost to the Society, but for the next two issues there will be no change.

Earlier in the year EXCO were called on to represent the Society on a number of matters. Most significant were issues regarding SACNASP and the development of a professional code of conduct and job reservation, which just may become law. These issues raised considerable ire from some members. In the end, a diplomatic but firm letter from the Society was sent to an uncertain fate at SACNASP.

EXCO have been called on this year to outlay funds to two worthy causes – both of which will return the funds. The first was to help initiate the Ecological Flows conference due to be held in 2002 in Cape Town. A sum of R15 000 was lent to them interest free. The second was a sum of R27 000 to Mick Angliss and his team, for advance booking of accommodation for the 2001 SASAQs Conference. Without this advance, we would have a conference with no beds for the delegates!

The current Council (with the exception of the Editor who serves a 4 year period) have reached the end of their term of office. Several notices and requests for nominations of replacements have gone almost unheeded. According to the constitution the Regional Reps are required to submit, if possible, block nominations. Alternately single nominations are acceptable. Two nominations for President were rejected by the nominees, while single nominations have been received for Secretary and Treasurer. The only other nominations were for the current EXCO, in total or as individuals, to serve a second term but the Constitution does not allow for this but limits the term of office to 4 years. Unfortunately, EXCO have been unable to finalise the issue, so a decision will be made at the AGM as to what happens over the next year. The suggestion is that the current EXCO continues in its role until the 2001 congress where a new EXCO will be elected for 2002.

I would like to thank all the members of the EXCO who have done so much over this past year. It has certainly been a full but fruitful year. I would also like to thank all SASAQs members for their support and enthusiastic participation in Society activities. There are many forces working against the successful functioning of this Society, so I would urge members to consider their own levels of commitment to the aquatic sciences, and to make amends if these are wanting! More than ever before, the countries of Southern Africa need aquatic scientists. SASAQs may be the best vehicle for these scientists to work together to have maximum influence.

Dr. Chris Dickens

## Editors Report – Mike Coke 2000

Volume 24, Numbers 1 & 2, for 1998/1999 eventually saw the light of day in May this year and was a wild attempt to catch up with our publication schedule of two issues per year. A chronic shortage of acceptable incoming manuscripts was the main problem here, but the technicalities of producing camera-ready copy both took their toll in hair and time. My editorial explained all that, and it drew some wry responses in return.

Costs: Volume 24 (1&2), comprising 168 pages, cost R 11 600 to produce. This works out at R 29 per copy and R 69 per page. Gone are the days of free secretarial help. Typing and maps cost us R 3460, printing cost R 5550, whilst wrapping and postage cost R2560.

For Volume 25 (2000) we have succeeded in pulling in an amazing 55 manuscripts from the 1999 Swakopmund conference, plus an even more amazing R 20 000 of funding from the Department for International Development who were the main sponsors of that conference. Whereas I already have over 100 pages of copy for Volume 25 number 1 ready for publication, the process has been halted by an attractive but unconcluded offer by NISC to produce and promote our journal for us. If the contract gets signed we will put out a bumper issue, comprising all the Swakopmund papers, in January.

There are already 14 manuscripts accepted or under review for Volume 26 (1), which I hope will appear in mid-2001.

We were approached in early September by Margaret Crampton of NISC with a proposal that they produce our journal and market it internationally. They offer to take over the layout, proof-reading, editing, submission of page proofs to authors, copy alteration, printing, packaging, marketing and distribution aspects, which would potentially save me, as editor, a good deal of work. But it will cost. NISC reckon that they can make it viable if subscriptions are increased to what they term 'reasonable' overseas and 'reasonable' African rates, at the same time as acquiring from us, for no cost, the copyright to back numbers so that they can sell complete texts of all published material. Finally, in order to achieve international credibility, they would require us to set up an Editorial Board.

Two issues in particular bother me: the cost of the journal to members, and its accessibility to novice authors. If these can be resolved equitably, I feel we'll be on a good wicket. The issue of giving away, rather than selling, the copyright to our back numbers, is the sort of thing that scares my publisher-wife stiff - copyright being their lifeblood. However we, in practice, earn virtually nothing from our hard copy back numbers, whilst NISC would have the hassle of scanning them in in order to make them available electronically.

The issue of setting up an Editorial Board is currently under discussion. I've contacted a number of SA journal editors and found that a Board is more or less what you make it. Some are pure window-dressing, using big names to impress goodness-knows-who, some are advisors and sometimes consolation-givers to their Editor, and some are working teams of active specialists who oversee the refereeing process before the Editor gets going with his nit-picker kit. But, to the CSI, who determine a journal's impact factor, which in turn determines whether certain authors do or don't submit their work to you for publication, an Editorial Board if international repute is crucial.

My suggestion is that we select as Editorial Board members a team of specialists from various countries, with a predominance from South Africa, who will not only solicit but also oversee the refereeing of papers in their fields and countries, and who will pass scientifically-acceptable manuscripts to the editor for his opinion and publication.

I contacted a select 51 of our 280 members for their recommendations as to who they'd like to see on our Editorial Board. I got 20 responses, which I find a disappointing level of interest from the cream of our society in its prime product. Be that as it may, they suggested 90 individuals and three organisations for consideration. We now need to decide on the job description, who to approach and when to stop.