

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS
53th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD on the 29 June 2016 @ 15h10, Skukuza, Kruger National Park, South Africa

1 WELCOME AND OPENING

Prof Nico Smit, the society president, chaired the meeting. All members were welcomed and the conference organizing team were thanked for their efforts.

2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Attending: Members: R. Greenfield, T. Botha, R. Dorrington, J. Adams, G. Bate, W. Vlok, J. van Vuren, L. Barkhuizen, G. Jansen van Rensburg, K. Dyamond, L. de Necker, R. Gerber, A. Whitfield, D. Lemley, M. Fernandes, G. Matcher, V. Siddarthan, M. Graham, N. Odume, MA. Gibixego, A. Lenkwe, L. Khuzwayo, N. Mbandzi, V. Wepener, L. Human, G. Snow, T. Palmer, J. King, M. Kekana, J. Lebepe, S. Buthelezi, G. O'Brien, H. Kemp, B. Madikizela, A. Addo-Bediako, P. Mensah, K. Mgaba, C. Curtis, U. Pretorius, H. Erasmus, A. Greyling, E. Bester, L. Mnisi, L. Taylor, T. Vogt, E. Netherlands, N. Wolmarans, T. Dalu, R. Wasserman, L. Motu, D. Woodford, T. Bellingan, L. Bloy, B. Hannweg, J. Beukes, A. Kock.

Non-members: A. Joubert, A. de Klerk, V. Dlamini, M. Magoro.

Apologies: N. Rayner, H. James, N. Masikane, W. Powell, N. Rossouw, I. Wagenaar, W. Mhlanga.

3 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- 3.1 **A. Gibixego** requested that she would like to present information on the Young Water Professionals.
- 3.2 **T. Palmer** requested that a discussion of Department of Water and Sanitation officials not attending SASAqS be discussed.
- 3.3 **G. O'Brien** requested that he would like to make a proposal regarding his Swimway programme to the AGM.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGENDA

The minutes of the 52nd Annual General meeting were accepted as a true reflection of the proceedings. Proposed by **W. Malherbe** and seconded by **A. Whitfield** and **G. O'Brien**.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 52ND AGM

These matters were addressed under the agenda items and individual reports.

6 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SASAqS Presidents Report

N. Smit indicated that each portfolio will report on their activities during the year. He indicated that he wanted to highlight the following issues:

- As part of the legacy of the current EXCO and his term as president, he would like to bring the society's journal, AJAS, closer to the society and ensure members and EXCO are more involved. For that reason, EXCO launched the survey of the journal and the experiences of publishing within AJAS. He indicated that **W. Malherbe** will present the results as part of the editor's report.

- **N. Smit** indicated that he would like to ensure that the annual conferences remain a highlight of SASAqS throughout his term as president.

SASAqS Office bearers during 2015- 2016 were:

President – Prof Nico Smit

Vice-President – Prof Victor Wepener

Honorary Secretary - Dr Wynand Malherbe

Honorary Treasurer – Dr Richard Greenfield

Additional member – Dr Gordon O'Brien

Additional member – Dr Stanley Liphadzi

Honorary Editor - Mr Mike Coke

Webmaster - Dr Mike Silberbauer

President's report was accepted.

7 TREASURERS REPORT

R. Greenfield reported on the financial report of the society.

R. Greenfield reported back on the process of changing signatories on the Nedbank account to himself, **W. Malherbe** and **V. Wepener**. Signatories on the account had not been changed for numerous years (more than 10 years) and it was a significant challenge to change them.

He indicated that the Water Research Commission sponsorship of students has contributed to very financially successful conferences in the last two years and as such it made it possible to present two travel bursaries during 2016 and 2017. He indicated that the students who received the bursaries will be notified shortly. Applications for 2017 will be communicated via email towards the end of 2016.

He indicated that EXCO is investigating the use of PayPal for international members to pay their membership fee into. However, SASAqS would need to open a FNB account as it is the only way to access the PayPal money. He asked the AGM for comments:

R. Dorrington enquired what the annual charges of PayPal and FNB account would be.

T. Palmer enquired how the signatories for the account would work.

M. Graham asked why SASAqS is sticking with Nedbank as our bank and if it would not be more logical to move all the accounts to FNB.

The proposal to open a PayPal account was accepted and permission was granted to open a FNB account. **R. Greenfield** indicated that EXCO will investigate the possibility of moving all accounts to FNB.

Changes to the constitution were also discussed as WRC needed a Tax Clearance Certificate to pay over student sponsorship. SASAqS needs to register at SARS as a Non-Profit Organisation to be able to apply for a tax clearance certificate. However, **N. Smit** indicated that a dissolution clause needed to be added to the constitution as that is a requirement of SARS. **N. Smit** also indicated that this had been discussed in 2015 and he explained the clause. The AGM agreed that the amendment to the constitution should be drafted and sent to the membership for comments and acceptance.

The WRC student sponsorship criteria were also presented to the AGM. Late notice of the criteria for the sponsorship from the WRC made it impossible to advertise the sponsorship more widely and criteria was based mostly on SASAqS student membership. The organising committee also decided to sponsor some SASAqS student members that fell outside the WRC sponsorship amount.

Treasurers Report was accepted

8 EDITORS REPORT

W. Malherbe presented the editors report. The editor, **M. Coke**, only presented a brief report for the AGM. The full report is attached at the end of the minutes.

W. Malherbe also presented the results of the AJAS satisfaction survey that was completed prior to the annual SASAqS conference. See the attached PDF for details.

Comments from the AGM regarding the editor's report and survey:

- **T. Palmer** moved to thank **M. Coke** (Editor) for all his hard work as editor of AJAS.
- **J. Adams** indicated that AJAS should be actively looking at a replacement for **M. Coke** as it will be a significant loss to AJAS if he retires. She suggested to get someone to help **M. Coke** as well in the interim.
- **A. Whitfield** indicated that we could possibly invest more funds into the editor position as an attractive package could be an incentive for a new editor. **N. Smit** indicated that **M. Coke** could potentially feel bad if we offered his replacement a large sum of money and he never received such monies. Therefore, **N. Smit** proposed a significant increase in the honorarium for the editor. An increase of 10% was proposed and accepted by **T. Palmer** and **J. Adams**.
- **N. Smit** also indicated that more associate editors should be appointed that are active in SASAqS.
- **N. Smit** indicated that more reviewers from SASAqS members should be used and that members should offer their services. He also indicated that members should consider publishing more in AJAS.
- **P. Mensah** indicated that SASAqS should consider publishing a special edition from a conference. **N. Smit** indicated that a similar proposal was made at the Augrabies conference. From this conference a special edition on Deltas in Africa was published.
- **W. Vlok** indicated that more effort should be made to advertise AJAS and promote it. Requests for articles was one suggestion. **W. Malherbe** indicated that Taylor and Francis does promote their journals.
- **N. Smit** indicated that people should make an effort to cite AJAS as much as possible to increase its visibility. **N. Smit** indicated that we will aim to circulate the Table of Contents of each edition that is published to the members.
- **C. Curtis** indicated that he has never been asked to review an AJAS paper even though he is a member of SASAqS.
- **T. Palmer** indicated that a list of SASAqS members and their specialties should be circulated to the associate editors and possibly the editor.

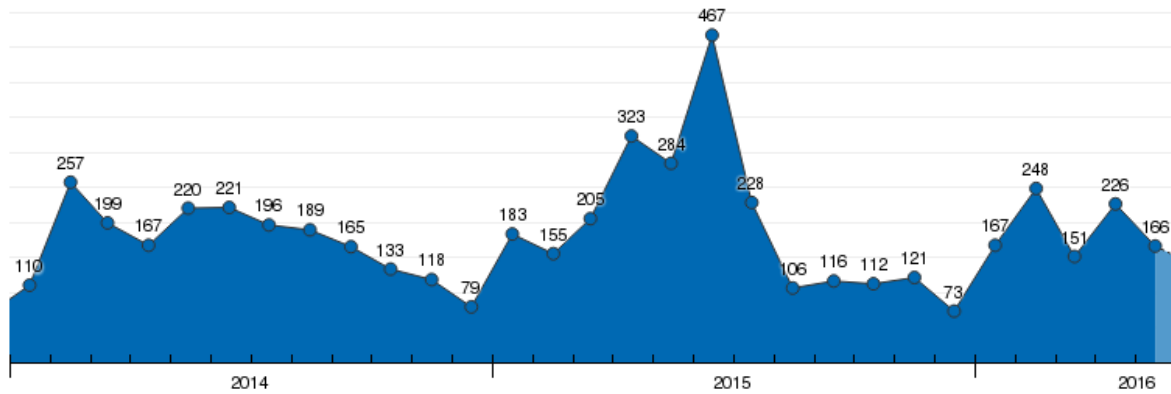
Editor's Report was accepted.

9 WEB MASTERS REPORT

SASAqS on the Web

<http://www.riv.co.za/sasaqs/index.html>

Mike Silberbauer sent through a web masters report for 2015 – 2016. The monthly number of site visits increased around the 2015 conference, but have decreased to fewer than 10 a day. **Wynand Malherbe** has been keeping the lines of communication going with frequent emails.



Web Master's Report was accepted.

10 COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Nothing to report.

11 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

T. Botha presented at short presentation of the activities of the NWU students. She indicated the proposed student logo and various student activities that are being held.

- **N. Smit** indicated that each university / institution should form their own branches and organise student activities.
- **G. O'Brien** volunteered to host students on an excursion in the KZN Midlands at a facility of UKZN but students need to get there themselves.
- A student from WITS indicated that a framework should be formulated for student activities and then distributed to each university. **T. Botha** indicated that a WITS representative was selected during the 2015 SASAqS conference. Representative was **L. Mnisi**.
- **N. Odume** indicated that a national student body should be formed. Their agenda could then be implemented at each university or province.
- **W. Vlok** indicated that a list of students should be provided to all conference organisers.
- **N. Smit** indicated that the student turnover is quite high making it difficult to keep track of students and to make sustainable actions and representatives.

12 CONFERENCES

2017 Conference

R. Greenfield from University of Johannesburg will be hosting the 2017 conference in Gauteng.

2018 Conference

R. Wasserman indicated that **O. Weyl** from SAIAB has offered to host the 2018 conference.

2019 Conference

No planned place or organisers to date, volunteers welcome.

13 AWARDS

- There were quite a few awards during this year. The medal winners will be announced during the conference dinner.
- **V. Wepener** indicated that two travel awards were awarded during 2016 – **J. Lebepe** and **N. Wolmarans**.
- Their will again be two awards for 2017 – deadline will be during early 2017.

14 HONORARIA

As per Treasurer's report discussion the AGM indicated that the honorarium for the editor will be increased by 10 %.

It was proposed and accept that the treasurer's assistant also receive a 10 % increase.

15 BY-LAWS

The new award must be placed into the constitution of the society.

16 CONSTITUTION

N. Smit will circulate the new legal clause to incorporate into the Constitution so that SASAqS can register as an NGO. This will enable SASAqS to receive a tax clearance certificate necessary for receiving future sponsorship from the Water Research Commission and various other institutions.

17 EXCO COUNCIL

2016, 2017, 2018 (elections for new members in June 2018)

President: Nico Smit

Vice President: Victor Wepener

Treasurer: Richard Greenfield

Secretary: Wynand Malherbe

Ordinary members: Gordon O'Brien, Stanley Liphadzi

Hon. Editor: Mike Coke

Webmaster: Mike Silberbauer

18 GENERAL

18.1 South African Veterinary Council

R. Greenfield indicated that research aquariums need to register with the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC). R Greenfield is representing SASAqS while **O. Weyl** is also involved in the process. The SAVC are currently reviewing the registration documents. **N. Smit** thanked **R. Greenfield** and **O. Weyl** for all their work with this.

18.2 Young Water Professionals

A. Gibixego presented short presentation about the Young Water Professionals and their [] within WISA and the South African water resources sector. See attached PDF. Comments from the AGM and from **A. Gibixego** indicated that SASAqS should consider being more involved with social media either Facebook or Twitter. **P. Vogel** updates the SASAqS Facebook page during the annual conference.

18.3 Department of Water and Sanitation

T. Palmer raised the issue that fewer government officials are attending the annual conferences. She indicated that SASAqS should work harder to network with government officials. It is important to bridge the gap to the various other professions – she indicated they were able to bridge the gap to engineers in previous projects. It is important to bridge the gap to government officials as that way SASAqS will be able to influence policy.

- **B. Madikizela** (Water Research Commission) indicated that lots of research has been completed into the biophysical aspects but not as much into the social-ecological aspects. WISA projects are more aligned to the national problems whereas SASAQs projects often do not deal with government problems.
- **M. Graham** indicated that there was an engineer presentation at a WISA conference and it dealt with how the Reserve for the system that was calculated are not relevant.
- **C. Thirion** indicated that many people in DWS are not approved to attend conferences in time and that costs are then carried by personnel themselves. There are limited funds available to attend conferences and there are also WISA and the Wetlands Indaba that attract people. She indicated that younger people in DWS are often more easily approved to attend.
- **N. Smit** indicated that five DWS people registered but were not able to attend as their attendance was not approved in time.
- **M. Graham** indicated that SASAQs should look at more student funding. He indicated that SASAQs should work more closely with WISA and see if students can present at both conferences. **A. Gibixego** could be a link for this.
- **N. Odume** indicated that WISA is the biggest water society in South Africa but that water resources science at WISA was not active. He suggested that SASAQs approach WISA and enquire who is representing the ecology in their society and conferences. He suggested that WISA is much better equipped to go beyond academia.
- **N. Smit** indicated that SASAQs should remember what the society's vision is.

18.4 World Fish Migration Foundation

G. O'Brien raised the point regarding the World Fish Migration Foundation and indicated that the foundation is looking to create international associations. He enquired if SASAQs could support WFMF in South Africa. **V. Wepener** indicated that we would help, support and represent World Fish Migration Day in 2018.

18.5 SASAQs membership categories

W. Malherbe enquired if the constitution could be amended to revive Honorary Membership for the society. This membership category will be entitled to all member activities and discounts for the annual conference but no access to the journal will be provided. The AGM approved it and the changes to the constitution will be circulated for final approval.

19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

June / July 2017

20 CLOSING

Nico Smit closed the meeting and thanked all those present for their input.

Signed

Vice President (V Wepener)

Date

Accepted

President (N Smit)

Date

Appendix

2016 EDITOR'S REPORT

The number of manuscripts received per year continued to rise, this year peaking at 191. The number of rejections/withdrawals remained steady at 66% (Table 1). On account of this, the purely administrative requirements of editing the journal, let alone those of maintaining its literary excellence, are becoming considerable.

Both our Impact Factors have continued to rise year-on year. The 2-yr I.F. is now 0.806, which puts us above that of several other South African journals.

For the first time in AJAS's history, we succeeded repeatedly in having more 'accepted' papers on hand on manuscript-handover date than could be accommodated in a single issue of the journal. We hope to maintain this admirable situation in the future. All 'overflow' papers, as well as those that are laid out early on, get published online ahead of the hard-copy publishing date.

Table 1: AJAS manuscript activity, 2013 - 2015.

Peaks indicated in **bold type**.

Year	2013	2014	2015
No. of MSS received	153	172	191
No. of MSS rejected, deleted or withdrawn	104 68%	115 67%	[126] [66%]
AJAS Vol. Number	38	39	40
Total No. of pages	471	481	449
Total No. of papers	53	55	48
	1	1	2
Total No. book revws			
2-yr Impact Factor	0.500	0.647	0.806
5-yr Impact Factor	0.593	0.682	0.752
MSS authorship			
	12	8	14
SASAqS members			
	36	47	34
Non-members			
Number of articles published per region			
South Africa	21	27	22
Southern Africa	14	13	7
Northern Africa	15	15	17
Africa general	3	0	2
Overseas	0	0	0

TOTAL	53	55	48
-------	----	----	----

The listing of AJAS as an ‘international’ journal continues to be a problem in that it brings in numerous non-African manuscripts. A total of 45 (23%) of those received in 2015 were rejected on the basis of their being ‘non-African’ and therefore beyond the scope of AJAS.

In a number of cases our Associate Editors have failed to keep in touch with the manuscripts assigned to them, resulting in their falling behind schedule in the reviewing process. One AE disappeared completely, having failed to respond to emails for several months, and so was replaced. Disappointingly few AEs respond to emails sent to them about progress with the manuscripts assigned to them. In addition, a number of ‘willing’ reviewers failed to submit reviews, despite repeated requests therefor. I have had to apologise to authors for delays in these instances.

In September 2014 AJAS was approached to publish a special issue of 120 pages comprising selected papers from a conference, ‘Contemporary evolution of African deltas and floodplains’, held in Dar es Salaam in May 2014. Eventually, after considerable effort in liaising with the issue’s guest editors and several publication deadline deferrals, a series of only five papers and a guest editorial, together covering only 46 pages, was published in March 2016.

On account of plagiarism, one Nigerian paper was withdrawn from the publication process by our publisher during the layout stage. NISC complained bitterly to me about the poor condition of this particular manuscript’s text, saying “This paper really was a shocker and should have received more attention [i.e. by its Reviewers and Associate Editor] before being accepted for publication - if it were accepted at all.”

Conversely, one prominent supervisor complained to me about the quality my editing of the English of his student’s manuscript.

Mike Coke
Editor, AJAS.
24 August 2016