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THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS



JANUARY 2004

From the EXCO:

WELCOME BACK: We are looking forward to an exciting new year and trust that the Christmas break has rejuvenated everyone. This is the final year of the Gauteng EXCO's term of office and we would like to remind the Society members of the objectives set: contribute towards integrating science and management and to promote and increase connectivity within the Society and with other relevant organisations. SASAqS News is therefore regarded as the "Voice" of Society members to communicate ideas, information on water issues, courses, conferences, interesting papers, etc. with fellow Society members. So **PLEASE**, anybody wishing to submit an item for inclusion in the next issue must email the information to Victor Wepener (vw@na.rau.ac.za) before the 10th of the particular month.

"Water Resources as Ecosystems: Scientists, Government and Society at the Crossroads " SASAqS CONFERENCE 2004 – Gauteng: We would like to remind you that the annual SASAqS conference will be held from 5 to 8 July 2004. Members interested in attending are asked to reply to the conference organizer, Lesley Stephenson (stephensonl@ebe.wits.ac.za). For more information please read the attached call for papers.

MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP FEES 2004: A request from the Treasurer, Dirk Roux. Please notify him by email or fax of an electronic transfer or bank deposit so that we are able to attach the name of a member to the membership received. Dirks contact details are: droux@csir.co.za or fax (012) 481-2506. Please inform the Secretary (Victor Wepener - vw@na.rau.ac.za) of any email or postal address changes or change in membership status.

SASAqS AWARDS: This is the first call for nominations for the SASAqS Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals. We particularly encourage nominations for the bronze medal. Please email nominations (which includes a CV of the nominee and a detailed motivation) to the chairman of the Awards Committee, Digby Cyrus dcyrus@pan.uzulu.ac.za. More information regarding SASAqS Medals can be found on www.dwaf.gov.za/iwqs/sasaqs/Medals.htm.

▶ **RESEARCH – Wetland Water Quality database:**

My colleague, Jenny Day and I at the Freshwater Research Unit, UCT are currently busy with a project whose major objective is to develop water quality standards for wetlands (excluding those linked to the sea) in South Africa. In other words, to decide upon the maximum allowable concentrations of: chemical constituents (e.g. salts, nutrients, toxic substances) and the allowable range of physical variables (temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen) that should be allowed in a wetland (palustrine, riverine, endorheic, lacustrine systems). This would need to be linked to the level of protection for each wetland e.g. Ramsar sites would require more stringent standards than wetlands in an urban or agricultural setting.

The problem is that there is very little chemical monitoring data for wetlands in this country, and limited knowledge of the ecology. In addition, the water chemistry of our wetlands is naturally variable both geographically and with time. To help with this task we are compiling a database of water quality data for South African wetlands. Although the database cannot

hope to be comprehensive we are trying to get data from all over the country and for all types of wetland.

IF YOU HAVE ANY WATER QUALITY DATA FOR THE DATABASE WE WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL!

Your contribution would be acknowledged in the WRC report for the project and in any papers concerning the database. What we need is values of water quality variables for a given wetland that are linked with a date (or approximate date, eg. year and season). Additional information such as lat/long, extent of impact, main source of water feeding the wetland, wetland type etc. would also be useful, but are not essential. The data may be raw data or in the form of publications (send us the reference if you like and we can track it down). We realize that everyone is busy but feel that this is a really important task. Once the data has been entered and the database interrogated we want to use it to draw up water quality guideline values for different parts of the country. We would like to circulate the tentative values to experts in the country for their input. If you would like to take part in that exercise please let us know.

Best wishes and many thanks for any help you may be able to give us,

Heather Malan, Phone: (012) 650 3872 Cell: 083 682 3958, Fax: (021) 650 3301, email (hmalan@botzoo.uct.ac.za)

Postal address: Freshwater Research Unit, Rhodes Gift, University of Cape Town, 7701.

▶ **MEETINGS:**

1. SASAqS Annual Conference (5-8 July 2004) – Midrand, Gauteng (Lesley Stephenson, Wits University)
2. Second Announcement and Call for Papers for 4th International Conference on Marine Pollution and Ecotoxicology (1-5 June 2004) – City University of Hong Kong (Conference is now posted on the conference website at www.cityu.edu.hk/bch/conf2004)

▶ **PUBLICATIONS:**

All members of the Society are once again invited to send in the references of their latest publications. In this manner other members of the Society can remain updated with the latest research output in aquatic science in South Africa.

▶ **JOB OPPORTUNITIES/ COURSES / BURSARIES AND FELLOWSHIPS:**

1. **Rand Water – Scientist:** The overall responsibility of the successful candidate will be to develop the section's competency in aquatic toxicology while adding value to the section's overall capabilities. NB closing date is 2 February 2004. For more detailed information refer to the attached file or contact SUSAN RAMETSE on Fax: 016 421-5104 OR Email: srametse@randwater.co.za
2. **Rand Water – Hydrobiologist:** The overall responsibility of the successful candidate will be to perform analyses in the Hydrobiology Section. NB closing date is 2 February 2004. For more detailed information refer to the attached file or contact SUSAN RAMETSE on Fax: 016 421-5104 OR Email: srametse@randwater.co.za

Please visit the Society website on www.dwaf.gov.za/iwqs/sasaqs/ for updates on SASAqS matters.