

MINUTES OF MEETING FOR



THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY OF AQUATIC SCIENTISTS 60th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD on 25 June 2024 16:00 – 18:30

AGENDA

1 WELCOME AND OPENING

Prof Richard Greenfield opened the meeting and expressed his apologies for starting the meeting late. Two points were added under general.

2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted for the following people Helen Dallas, Wilbert Kadje.

3 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Water Research Commission was added under general.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Approved by Victor Wepener, seconded by Matthew Bird.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 58TH AGM

1. The matters arising regarding AJAS & NISC, discussions were made with other editors, and the recommendation was to remain with NISC. Victor Wepener asked about the relationship between NISC and Taylor and Francis. Richard Greenfield stated that discussions did not happen directly with either of the publishers. He stated that it is a long-standing relationship, and members publish for free and can be accessed. Nelson Odume stated that this is not the case elsewhere on the continent, South African universities pay. Wynand Malherbe confirmed that if you are a full paid member, you receive full access, but you need to contact EXCO to get access via Taylor and Francis. SASAqS Secretary to send guidelines on how to access the journal to full members.
2. Greenfield suggested a 10% increase to Honorarium, seconded by Nico Smit and Gordon O'Brien.
3. The constitution needs to be updated as it still requires postal services. A legal expert has looked at this and will assist going forward. Matthew Bird asked where to access it, Richard Greenfield stated it is available on the website and changes will be updated in track changes.

6 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The conference has taken up a lot of time and two EXCO members were on the organising committee; the podcast was included to increase the reach. The society was invited to assist in the World Fisheries Society meeting and assisted with abstracts as a local organising committee. American Fisheries Society in Hawaii invitation three days accommodation and registration but this invitation was declined. The agreement was setup by the late Olaf Weyl

and fisheries is not a large part of the society. The agreement included payment of travel between the two countries, and we would need to return the favour. Water lettuce and the Vaal- a statement was prepared but there were opposing views on EXCO. The reasons being there was not enough information available for a statement; the lesser of two evils. Members are free and welcome to make statements via their institutions or own behalf. The major issue being nutrient load from the WWTP upstream. As a society we need to provide empirical proof, and we need solutions rather than a repetition of the same issue.

It is the end of the Presidents term, he thanked the exco members, the editors, webmaster and Adri for their assistance.

7 TREASURERS REPORT

Membership numbers are up, 166 active full member and 56 active student members. Nelson Odume asked a question to the constitution and treasurer regarding an endowment fund which is available used where the accrual is used to support other matters. Richard Greenfield stated we have a running account and an investment account. The investment account increased by R14 000 in 2024. SASAqS is a NGO and there are SARS implications to growing the accounts too much, we need enough money in the running account to cover running expenses, but if we have enough profit, we then award travel grants. Our students are of a high calibre and need opportunities to showcase their work overseas to bring prizes home. Nelson Odume asked on how the treasurers report was structured and stated that it did not show the outline of the finances. Wynand Malherbe mentioned that the constitution has no detail on how to run the funds, the last few years the funds have become more stable, and we are able to cover all societal expenses. Bonani Madikizela asked whether a financial report was circulated, and Richard Greenfield stated audited reports are available and can be sent to members. There are three signatories on the account, current President, ex-President and Vice-President. Adri Joubert has access to the account, but payments cannot be made without Richard Greenfield approving it for her.

8 EDITORS REPORT

SASAqS Editors report 2022/2023 – Nick Rivers-Moore presented an increased general usage in the past year an IF of 1.1 and a Five year IF of 1.7. An improvement in the postproduction speed. The journal is overwhelmingly African, and the trend has remained stable. The bulk of the contributions come from Nigeria and South Africa. The presentation will be supplied to the committee after the AGM. When a paper is rejected, authors are provided with the assigned a reason (inappropriate, out of scope, etc). The bulk of the download usage bulk was from Africa with South African institutions showing the majority of this. The annual IF has dropped from 1.4 to 1.1. but the Five year IF is higher than it has been before. Nick stated it has been a good year with two special issues. One is open access. One on River Connectivity with two guest editors. And a further is being discussed.

There are major challenges with finding reviewers and this has feedback loops as students require a paper to be published in order to graduate. A plea for extra reviewers was made. Nelson Odume made comments on finding suitable reviewers and the journal policy process- he gave an example of a paper taking two years, as a reviewer suggested extensive comments. The editor must decide whether the reviewers have been appointed appropriately. He further stated that articles have been rejected based on minor comments and then it is received again six months later. A second comment was made on the average timeline of submission to publishing for the journal. Nick agreed some papers you do not want to see again, but R2, R3 states can occur. Sometimes the authors have not attended to major comments that have been sent. But he agreed a second round of review may not always be possible. Both editors are not full time and have other roles. Richard Greenfield stated that it is a conversation and there should be ways to address this based on comments/anonymity. Nelson Odume stated the associate editors need to make a call and not have an endless process that goes back and forth. Wynand Malherbe agreed that the associate editors and editors need to make a decision as it does add to the burden of review. Wynand Malherbe to check whether you can tick the

box to refuse to see the paper again. Nick agreed that a meeting would be useful, and the system needs to be understood too. Nelson Odume agreed the journal does need to be maintained. Action point for EXCO to setup a meeting for all interested and affected parties on a way forward on the journal.

9 WEB MASTERS REPORT

Dr Michael Silberbauer Web Masters Report. <http://www.riv.co.za/sasags> - Dr Michael Silberbauer stated everything is in order, but the Twitter(X) feed is not working anymore.

10 COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

No country representatives.

11 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

The student body is strong but in general students have not been interested in the general running of the society and this can be improved.

12 CONFERENCES

2025 Conference –

There have been no takers as yet. We have requested for Limpopo, KZN or Eastern Cape. An email was received earlier in the morning, but discussions still need to be made.

13 AWARDS

Wynand presented the awarding of two silver medals. One to Dr Jim Taylor and another to Dr Andrew Birkhead. A gold medal was awarded to Mark Graham

14 HONORARIA

Richard Greenfield indicated student awards will be handed out at the gala dinner.

The honoraria were approved to be increased by 10%. Approved by Nico Smit and seconded by Gordon O'Brien.

16 CONSTITUTION

This remains unchanged and changes still in progress within the EXCO, any suggested changes will be communicated via email to be round-robined. This was supported by Victor Wepener, Dana Grobler, Wynand Vlok and Gordon O'Brien.

17 GENERAL

Public comment on pressing issues: Richard Greenfield asked for the societies input on how to address public comment? A discussion needs to be had around this to find the best way forward. A guideline document needs to be setup. Action item: a meeting needs to be held with those interested in attending.

African Journal of Aquatic Science reviewers: Richard Greenfield again sent a plea for reviewers.

SACNASP: Tatenda Dalu and Byron Grant had two categories General Aquatic Sciences and Marine Aquatic Scientists. Most applicants did not get approved and had been signed off on projects they were not approved to do. Masters you need two years post work experience. BSc you need three years.

NEW EXCO:

Four were nominated for exco portfolio positions, one as an exco member.

Member of EXCO: Bonani Madikizela

Secretary: Simone Dahms-Verster

Treasurer: Samuel Motitsoe

Vice President: Tarryn Lee Botha

President: Wynand Malherbe

Past President: Richard Greenfield

Nico Smit proposed that we accept the new committee as outlined. No objections and various approvals in the room.

17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Unconfirmed.

18 CLOSING

Richard Greenfield thanked the society for their inputs and the LOC for all their hard work. The meeting was closed at 17:50.