



2nd AGM of the South Africa Wetland Society

Wednesday 23 October 2013 at 5pm,
National Wetlands Indaba, Cape St Francis Resort, Cape St Francis, Eastern Cape

No.	Item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piet-Louis Grundling (PLG) welcomed everyone to the 2nd AGM of the South African Wetland Society. It was announced (in the meeting and <i>via</i> email) that Michelle Hiestermann was to stand down as Society vice chairperson from the end of October 2013, due to work and family commitments. Craig Cowden was introduced as the new vice-chairperson of the Society. 	P-L Grundling
2.	<p>Attendance Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members of the society were requested to fill in the attendance register which was circulated (see Appendix 1). There are 29 SA Wetland Society members at the 2013 Wetlands Indaba, and more than 15 are present at the meeting, representing a quorum of paid up members. Members were asked to fill out a proxy form for those unable to attend the AGM (see Appendix 2). 	P-L Grundling
3.	<p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Appendix 3 for a list of apologies. 	K Snaddon
4.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One change made to minutes of the 2012 AGM: the Society's name corrected to South African Wetland Society. Paul Fairall (PF) proposed that the minutes to accepted; approved. 	P-L Grundling
5.	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no matters arising from the previous minutes. 	P-L Grundling
6.	<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>6.1 NPO/PBO status.</p> <p>6.2 Society support to the provincial forums.</p> <p>6.3 Award nominations process.</p> <p>6.4 Society activities planned and ideas.</p>	
7.	<p>Annual Report</p> <p>7.1 Presentation of the Chairperson's Annual Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 1st board continued in 2013 to build on the firm foundation established by Phase 2 Planning Committee. The society continued to grow not only in numbers but also in stature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SACNASP has recognised the Society as crucial in establishing a Wetland Science field of practice. 	P-L Grundling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has been consulted in various wetland matters related to delineation, training and policy. ○ The Society chaired the 2013 National Wetland Awards. ● Membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Society membership has grown from 67 ordinary members to 101. ○ Students: 1 to 11. ○ Organisations: 6 to 11. ○ Benefactor: 0 to 1. ○ Members from all provinces except Northern Cape. ○ 17% of membership is government or related organisations. ● Board members have been hard at work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marc continued to run the society like a clock and especially the e-communications. ○ Judith managed our finances. ○ Craig, Kate, Michelle and Nancy focused on the accreditation process. ○ Eric dealt with forums in need. ○ Gary with our legal status. ○ Michelle with education and training. ○ Nancy with delineation. ● They will report individually on their work. I am truly blessed and am grateful for their dedication. ● Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involve members in initiatives such as provincial forums ○ Building capacity in the community of practice. ○ Strengthen the hand of our colleagues in government – especially enforcement. ○ Interact with other related and relevant societies / groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We must not isolate ourselves. ○ Elevate the status of the national awards by all embracing participation of the larger wetland community. ● In closing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is going well with the Wetland society. ○ We have made great strides in serving the larger wetland community in 2013, and we endeavour to do even better in 2014. ○ HOWEVER, we need your involvement. Please provide us with regular feedback and positive proposals. 	
7.2	Adoption of the Chairperson’s Annual Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PF proposed that the Report be accepted; approved. 	
8.1	Financial Presentation of the Annual Financial Report. See Appendix 4. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PLG presented the Financial Report on behalf of Judith Taylor, Treasurer. ● PLG reported that as of 13th September 2013 the bank account of the Society was at R33 352.48. 	P-L Grundling

8.2	<p>Adoption of the Annual Financial Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jane Eagle proposed the adoption of the Annual Financial Report; accepted. 	
9.	<p>Regional Accreditation Workshops Report Back (see Appendix 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three workshops were held in different provinces (Gauteng, KZN, W Cape). The aim was to get feedback from Society members and the broader wetland community as to whether accreditation is a requirement, and whether this was the appropriate route to follow to boost the profession. The highest % of attendees that were Society members was in KZN. The proceedings of the workshops have been combined and sent to all attendees and all Society members. Craig then went on to present the main findings of the workshops (see Appendix 5). In the W Cape, the designation of the new Field of Practice (FoP) with SACNASP was not unanimously accepted, and attendees wanted to see further investigation. The community was most interested in Best Practice Guidelines. Generally, there is an urgent need for skills development, and for field trips and training days. 	C Cowden
<p>10.</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p>Working Groups</p> <p>Best Practice Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad objective of the Society: To promote standards and quality of wetland work. This can be achieved through the development of best management practice guidelines and the standardisation of tools/methods for wetland work. Proposed focus areas of the society: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform members of existing methods / tools. Facilitate discussion on existing approaches, and aim for standardisation. Develop guidelines for selecting the right tool / method, and how to apply and interpret. Promote use of standardised set of tools / methods. Comments/questions from the floor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DWA would support the development of guidelines. There was general discussion around the Society's involvement in the development of tools and policies for their use. It was cautioned that the Society may not have the capacity to do so, especially in reaching a unified position on contentious issues. The Society could rather be a channel through which members can be engaged and informed. Heather Malan was keen to assist with this working group. <p>Membership & Fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As no tax exemptions can be given it is extremely difficult to raise any substantial funding, however the Society has received the following: Andre du Plessis donated R4,500.00 for expenses at the founding workshop in July 2012. SANBI (John Dini) donated the venue and 	<p>C Cowden / K Snaddon</p> <p>P Fairall</p>

	<p>decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There was some general discussion around who is responsible for providing the definitive list of information/methods required for assessment reports/authorisation procedures (e.g. WULA). Some feel government (DWA, DEAT, etc) should provide this, but perhaps the Society needs to provide guidelines, with input from all parties. ○ Ashton Maherry requested that wetlands delineated in the field should be added to the national wetlands map. <p>10.5 Wetland Training & Community of Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Michelle was warmly thanked (and applauded) for her contributions and wished luck with her new family. ● Broad objective of the Society: To ensure professional development of the wetland community of practice. ● Proposed focus areas of the society: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify member training needs and define the different levels of training that members are able to undertake. ○ Promote mentorship and peer review. ○ Promote field visits aimed at discussing wetland issues, sharing experience and developing members' understanding relating to such issues. Include authorities who are reviewing EIA's in these field visits. ○ Support the wetland forums and Indaba as a vehicle for learning for the wetland Community of Practice. ○ Ensure quality assurance of wetland training through monitoring & evaluation of existing training initiatives and training of training providers. ○ Promote basic wetland training in all regions (lower level training has been identified as an immediate need to allow access/competence in existing higher level training). ● Comments/questions from the floor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bertus Fourie was keen to assist on this working group. 	<p>P-L Grundling (for M Hiestermann)</p>
<p>11. 11.1</p>	<p>Discussion of Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>11.1 NPO/PBO status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Society needs to register as a PBO in order to be able to accept funds, and certify for tax exemption. ● It will take some time to register with SARS. ● The Society remains a voluntary association. <p>11.2 Society support to provincial forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This issue was raised during the provincial report-back session, especially in light of the fact that some Forums are really struggling to continue operating. ● The Society offered a hand of help to these Forums, and all were encouraged to contact the Society secretary Marc de Fontaine for assistance. 	<p>P-L Grundling</p> <p>K Snaddon</p>

<p>11.3</p>	<p>Award nominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue was raised regarding how to involve the larger wetland community in the nominations process, in order to really encourage young people to strive for the award. • Society has always been closely involved in the nominations process by urging the Forums to nominate candidates. • However, the Society still had to re-open the nominations after the first round had closed. • The Society will begin the process earlier in 2014, and aim to streamline the nominating procedure. • Aim to create an award for “upcoming practitioners” to encourage young people in the industry. • The Society is always looking for new ideas to promote the Awards. • PLG thanked John Dini for this year’s Award ceremony and for allowing the Society to play a pivotal role in the ceremony. • Comments from the floor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perhaps Forums should receive a floating trophy for best Forum of the year. ○ There should be a civil society category for awards. ○ Should combine Research and Education into one category. • PLG stated that the Society would revert back to the judges to discuss ideas for the Awards, and share these with the members. 	<p>P-L Grundling</p>
<p>11.4</p>	<p>Planned activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was general support for regular talks and site visits; not more frequently than quarterly. • The Society should involve the Forums in this. • Perhaps there should be regional field trips. • The Society could empower struggling Forums by organising a Society meeting/field trip to revive membership. 	<p>Board</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting of the Society will be held at the next National Wetlands Indaba provisionally set for October 2014. 	<p>All</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Closure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLG thanked all who attended the 2nd AGM and signed up to the Society and invited everyone to join. 	<p>P-L Grundling</p>

Appendix 3: Apologies

Marc de Fontaine
Vanessa Vermaak
Judith Taylor
Johan van der Waals
P S Roussouw
Lourens van Zyl
Thabo Motleung

Appendix 4: Annual Financial Statement (Judith Taylor, Treasurer)

	<u>1 Jan - 25 Jul 13</u>
Income	
Investment Income	29.79
Membership Fees	<u>49 500.00</u>
Total Income	49 529.79
Expense	
Bank Charges	32.30
Miscellaneous Expense	435.00
Reconciliation Discrepancies	-50.00
Travel and Meetings	<u>15 038.10</u>
Total Expense	<u>15 455.40</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>34 074.39</u>
Profit for the Year	<u><u>34 074.39</u></u>

Appendix 5: Main findings from the Accreditation workshops held by the Society in 3 provinces

- **Introduction**
 - Multi-disciplinary wetland community of practice in South Africa
 - Need to standardise these skills and benchmark the ethics of the community through a set of resources (qualifications, short courses, workshops, documents)
 - A professional accreditation or certification programme is a potential vehicle for this
- 3 regional workshops during May 2013
 - Gauteng regional workshop (including Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North-West provinces);
 - KwaZulu-Natal regional workshop (including KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces); and
 - Western Cape regional workshop (including Western Cape and Northern Cape provinces).

• Regional Workshops	• Number of Attendees
• 1. GAUTENG (GP, L, NW & FS)	• 36 attendees (39%)
• 2. KWA-ZULU NATAL (KZN & EC)	• 19 attendees (58%)
• 3. WESTERN CAPE (WC & NC)	• 34 attendees (18%)

- **Workshop outcomes**
 - Affiliation of the society to SACNASP as a Voluntary Association for member registration & legal compliance
 - New Field of Practice (FoP) called “Wetland Science” within SACNASP categories to be explored.
 - Society members to provide guidance and form part of the evaluation committee for this FoP
 - Arrange specialist field visits to discuss wetland issues and share experience.
 - Clarity on the society’s role in this accreditation issue.
 - Database of registered members of SACNASP
 - Provide further training needs for member development