



8th AGM of the South African Wetland Society

Monday, 8th October 2019,

National Wetlands Indaba, Karibu Conference Centre,

Limpopo Province

No.	Item	Action
1	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lulu Pretorius (LP) welcomed everyone to the 8th AGM of the South African Wetland Society. 	
2	Attendance Register <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people present at the meeting were requested to fill in the attendance register that was circulated (see Appendix 1). The SAWS membership cost was included in the Indaba registration fee which means that all conference delegates are now SAWS members. A total of 27 members were in attendance, with an additional 4 members having given attending members proxies. This represents a total of 31. 	
3	Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Appendix 1 for a list of apologies. 	
4	Minutes of the Previous Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No matters arising from the previous minutes (7th AGM). Action items carried over from minutes of 7th AGM (i.e. still requiring action) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up on “lessons learnt” from previous Indabas. KZN Forum sent their version to the Northern Cape Wetlands Forum. SAWS needs to produce a list of activities that earn CPD points- this still needs to be completed. Brochures on SAWS must be made available at Indaba each year. Piet Louis Grundling (PG) proposed that the minutes be accepted; seconded by Ian Bredin (IB). 	
5	Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No matters arising from previous minutes. 	
6	Additions to the Agenda (discussed under Item 10)	
6.1	Changes to Constitution	
6.2	Timing of invoicing for membership	
6.3	Frequency of Indaba	
7	Chair’s Annual Report Key focus areas for 2018/2019: Indaba:	LP
7.1	Wetland Indaba <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted with Indaba, through providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loans for deposits and service providers; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liaison for funding for students (this year, WRC were unable to assist, but SACNASP, Gauteng WF, and ERA funded 9 students). ○ Administrative and logistical advice and support ○ Sponsorship (SAWS raised funding from Mondi, SACNCASP, GWF, WCWF, ERA) ○ Collation and formatting of abstracts and programme; ○ Organisation of the Gala dinner; ○ Facilitation of keynote speakers. ● SAWS membership was once again included in registration fee. ● The way forward for Society and Forums and Indaba will be discussed later in the agenda. We need to look at how to make it all easier and more efficient. 	
	<p>Q&A: Piet-Louis Grundling (PL): This year's Indaba did not have the normal build up, and SAWS advice was not taken at several turns. We must ensure that the Indaba planning process is well documented and passed from Forum to Forum. LP: Part of the problem was that there was a brand-new SAWS Board. She proposes that 2 Board members of SAWS must always be on the Organising Committee. PL: Proposes that these 2 should be SAWS members, but not necessarily Board members.</p>	<p>Ensure that 2 SAWS members are on the Forum Indaba Organising Committee: LP/KS</p>
7.2	<p>Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Society membership still growing - 166 (2017) / 178 (2018) / 310 (2019) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ordinary members: 133 / 141 / 155 / 306 ○ Students: 20 / 21 / 23/ 25 ○ Organisations: 13 / 13 / 12/ 12 ● Membership still mostly private sector (consulting firms), 15% government or related organisations, still very few students ● There was a significant rise in the number of members in 2018 when membership fees were built into the Indaba registration fee. ● Membership database is kept up to date as is practically possible but some members do not keep their email addresses up to date with SAWS. ● Membership fees have been kept the same since inception of the Society: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ordinary – R250. ○ Student – R50. 	
7.3	<p>Auditors and SARS requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Griesel-Nel (GN) are the appointed auditors for SAWS. We are busy with the process of approving GN to interact directly with SARS on our behalf, to enable more efficient processing of our Annual Financial Statements. As part of this process, the SAWS Trustees are currently finalising submission of Trustees' personal data and the appointment of a Public Officer, whose details will be lodged with SARS. ● Furthermore, the official address for SAWS will be that of GN, easing communication with SARS. 	
7.4	<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Facebook & SA Wetland Portal</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FB Likes have grown from 652 in 2017 to 943 in 2018 and 1240 in 2019. ○ Portal Discussion Forum page sees very little interaction (apart from Tumi's training course database). ○ SAWS Working Groups (WG) are encouraged to add as regularly as possible, but people seem more interested in FB. ○ Our posts just in the past week have reached 2441 people, and engagement is 577. 	
7.5	Going forward	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on getting the foundation right in terms of constitution, NPO status, timing of invoicing and membership • Finalizing MOU with SWS, and putting it into action • Continuing to drive the WG objectives • Figuring out how to grow our member base • Improving our communication systems and platforms. <p>Adoption of the Annual Chair Report: The Chair Report was accepted by Kathy Taggart and seconded by Shaddai Daniel.</p>																																					
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p>Financial</p> <p>Presentation of the Annual Financial Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAWS bank account was scammed of approximately R80k, of which about R30k was recovered. SAPS is prosecuting, and SAWS needs to decide whether it will also prosecute. • As a result SAWS has tightened up the way we make payments, to avoid a repeat. • The following summary bank statement was presented, however, the bank balance is incorrectly recorded here. Despite the scam reported above, the bank balance is not in the red. This will be updated via email to the members. <table border="1" data-bbox="411 913 821 1283"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">1 Mar - 7 Oct 19</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ordinary Income/Expense</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bank Interest Earned</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6 334,35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gifts and Donations Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">80 000,00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indaba Students</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-8 500,00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Membership Fees</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7 150,00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">84 984,35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gross Profit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">84 984,35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expense</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bank Charges</td> <td style="text-align: right;">129,02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conference expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3 737,60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indaba loan</td> <td style="text-align: right;">75 000,00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Miscellaneous Expense</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8 270,94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reconciliation Discrepancies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 099,83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Expense</td> <td style="text-align: right;">88 237,39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Net Ordinary Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-3 253,04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Profit for the Year</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-3 253,04</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Adoption of the Annual Financial Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Annual Financial Report was adopted by Piet-Louis Grundling. Seconded by Ian Bredin. 		1 Mar - 7 Oct 19	Ordinary Income/Expense		Income		Bank Interest Earned	6 334,35	Gifts and Donations Income	80 000,00	Indaba Students	-8 500,00	Membership Fees	7 150,00	Total Income	84 984,35	Gross Profit	84 984,35	Expense		Bank Charges	129,02	Conference expenses	3 737,60	Indaba loan	75 000,00	Miscellaneous Expense	8 270,94	Reconciliation Discrepancies	1 099,83	Total Expense	88 237,39	Net Ordinary Income	-3 253,04	Profit for the Year	-3 253,04	
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<p>9</p>	<p>Working Groups Report Back – Objectives and Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Groups: Online Survey done in Feb 2019: SAWS members to vote on Working Groups selection for 2019-2020, in an effort to better meet the needs of members • 56 responses (20% of members), majority consultants, researchers/university and government – results show 4 key WG’s but general interest across ALL working groups • Overall positive response regarding interest in affiliation with International Society of Wetland Scientists 																																					
<p>9.1</p>	<p>Awareness Campaigns (T Ngobela / P Frenzel)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the SAWS brand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brochures and banners at NWI conference and other gatherings ○ Register SAWS as a beneficiary of the MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet programme ○ Increased social media presence • Establish interest in young wetland practitioners through the development of student wetland forums at universities 																																					

No.	Item	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a student wetland forum at the University of the Western Cape (Environmental and Water Science Unit) ○ Investigating links to other student structures e.g. IAIAAs ○ Increased participation of students in provincial forums (sharing of info and meetings) ● Raise awareness of the importance of wetlands at schools and institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compiling generic material for schools ○ Organised a meeting with Miss Earth ○ Support the 2020 World Wetlands Day ● Establish sustainable funding sources for SAWS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2020 focus 	
9.2	<p>Good Practice (A Teixeira-Leite / K Snaddon) <i>To promote standards and quality of wetland work through the development of 'good' (best) management practice guidelines and the standardisation of tools/methods for wetland-related work.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keeping the society up to date and informed of the latest available tools/methods, approaches and guidelines for wetland assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop online platform to track latest version of wetland assessment tools (under development) ○ Promote standardization of assessment tools/methods through consultation with SAWS, professionals, Government (<i>future task</i>) ● Identifying information gaps and assisting with supporting training needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ID gaps in understanding with regards to the application of wetland tools/methods (<i>possible future survey?</i>) ○ Linkages between best practice and training courses, available literature / guidelines (posting journal articles and literature on Wetland Portal SA website) ○ Organise appropriate field trips covering training and calibration of methods ○ Inform members of available training opportunities (co-operate with the 'Training' Working Group) 	
9.3	<p>Legislation and Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote open communication between the national regulatory bodies and the wetland community of practice ● Discussions held with DWS to host an on-line chat forum (capacity within Department?) ● Alert members to recent changes or additions in legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2020 compile a list of legislation available on wetland portal (to be reviewed annually) ○ Promote training events for developing members' understanding of legislation relating to wetlands ● DWS presenting Section 21 (c) and (i) training course at the 2020 Wetland Indaba. 	
9.4	<p>Membership and Funding (M de Fontaine / J Taylor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dealt with in Chair's Report 	
9.5	<p>Liaison with Provincial Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aiming to improve communication through quarterly/biannual newsletters and updates, and pulling Chairs into activities of SAWS ● Still much improvement required – Forums slow in feeding back to our websites and FB re meeting dates and minutes, outputs, etc. Please remember to cc Marc de Fontaine on all Forum comms ● One of the ways to improve communication between the Society and Forums: sessions at NWI 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAWS to facilitate CPD points for Forum meetings (½ point per meeting) • Society can offer their bank account for managing Forum funds (if needed), with each Forum being a cost centre, ring-fencing funds for the Forum's sole use. Annual admin fee. 	
9.6	<p>SACNASP and CPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and accredit relevant wetland courses for CPD points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accreditation of courses and forum meeting ○ In 2020 develop standard protocols to review training courses that should be accredited through SAWS. • Further investigate Wetland Science as a Field of Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting held with SACNASP on 8 August to re-open the discussions of Wetland Science as a Field of Practice ○ Negative feedback for stand-alone FoP, however a sub-field under existing FoP to be further investigated in 2020, e.g under Soil Science, Ecological Science etc. • To provide a line of communication between SAWS members and SACNASP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting held with SACNASP on 8 August to discuss specific concerns raised by SAWS members on qualifications • SAWS a Voluntary Association under SACNASP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attended SACNASP VA meeting on behalf of SAWS • Documentation review 	
	<p>Q&A: Nancy Job (NJ): Is there a review standard for courses that gain CPD points? Kathy Taggart (KT): SAWS was asked for their opinion on the standards. NJ: Need to put together a working group to develop this standard.</p>	Develop review standard for events/courses that earn CPD points
9.7	<p>Liaison with Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being worked on between SAWS and SWS, in which the benefits to SAWS members are clarified. • SAWS will meet shortly with SWS to discuss amendments to MOU, which were required to ensure that both parties are happy with the arrangement. • The increase in SAWS membership has been kept to a minimum, while still offering a valuable set of benefits. • We can only become affiliated with SWS in 2021. But SAWS may get 2020 affiliation at no cost. 	
	<p>Q&A: Damian Walters (DW): What are the fees for membership? LP: The suggested (from SAWS) structure is as follows - 1. Students: free; 2. Ordinary (no journal): \$8 on top of SAWS membership; 3. Ordinary (with journal): \$15. We are waiting for their approval. Ian Bredin (IB): there is no charge for submissions to journal. SWS is looking at all developing countries, and aiming to affiliate more broadly, to increase membership in Africa.</p>	
9.8	<p>Training, mentorship and capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in identifying member training needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interactive session planned at NWI 2019 and training needs survey planned for 2020 • Alert members to training opportunities and assist them in selecting appropriate assessment tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Original <i>Training database</i> compiled by the "Wetland Alliance for Training, Education, and Research" (WATER) was updated in April 2009. The aim of the information database is to assist members with their training requirements and developing, supporting and 	

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	<p>facilitating high quality, relevant wetland education and training in South Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uploaded the spreadsheet and shared with members: https://forum.sawetlands.org/viewtopic.php?f=35&t=82 ○ An <i>inventory of assessment tools</i> relevant to wetlands was compiled in September 2019 and uploaded for sharing with members. The inventory, which includes a brief description of each tool, is designed to inform members of the different wetland tools available and for what purposes each tool can be applied. ○ Database and inventory to be updated annually ● Support the provincial wetland forums and Indaba as vehicles for learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting a focus on capacity building and training at NWI 2029 ○ In 2020, assist Provincial wetland fora in accessing appropriate training ● Promote quality assurance of wetland training through monitoring & evaluation of existing training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Covered by the SACNASP, Training & CPD working group ○ In 2020, contribute to developing standard protocols to review training courses that should be accredited through SAWS. ● Promote mentorship and peer review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2020, compile brief guidance on what individuals should be aiming for in terms of their own mentorship and peer review ● Promote field learning events for sharing experience and developing members' wetland understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assist in training within NWI 2019 ○ Learning events to be informed by training needs survey 	
	<p>Q&A: LP: Emphasis at NWI 2019 is on training and capacity building. There is a big demand for training. PL: Forums must more actively engage with SAWS/academics/specialists to create more training opportunities. NJ: Need to connect with SAWS members and get training expertise from our membership</p>	<p>ALL: create training opportunities</p>
<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p>	<p>Discussion of Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>Amendments to the Constitution</p> <p>The following amendments are proposed:</p> <p>10. BOARD</p> <p>10.1 Constitution of the Board</p> <p>10.1.5. The Board shall be authorised after its election into office to co-opt a maximum of three (3) additional Members who shall have full voting rights at Board meetings. These Members shall be co-opted should the Board Members deem it necessary for furthering the objectives of SAWS.</p> <p>NEW WORDING: 10.1.5. The Board shall be authorised after its election into office to co-opt as many additional Members as the Board deems necessary for furthering the objectives of SAWS. Co-opted Board Members shall have full voting rights at Board meetings.</p> <p>In the vote, 18 members voted for this amendment – amendment ACCEPTED.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>LP: change 10.1.5 in the Constitution to include new wording.</p>

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	<p>10.2 Responsibilities of the Board 10.2.2 Within two (2) weeks of each AGM, The Board shall elect from among its members a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.</p> <p>ADD NEW CLAUSE: 10.2.3. In order to qualify for election, the Chairperson should preferably have served on the SAWS Board for at least a two (2) year period.</p> <p>In the vote, 6 members voted for this amendment – amendment REJECTED</p>	
10.2	<p>Timing of invoicing for membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most fees are now paid with Indaba registration. • Will invoice non-Indaba attendees after Indaba, so all invoices done at the same time. 	
10.3	<p>Frequency of Indaba</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been suggested (by SAWS Boards) that Indaba could be held every 2nd year. • Board will send out a survey to members to ask for opinions. 	Board: Survey
	<p>Q&A: Alanna Rebelo (AR): Survey must provide clear options for selection. PL: Conferences held by other organisations are too expensive to combine with them. We would also lose momentum / clarity if we partner with other organisation. Gail: Members can choose to only come every 2nd year if it's too frequent for them. Indaba will be forgotten if it's every 2 years. DW: Wetlands and rivers increasingly seen as overlapping, so there is opportunity to combine (maybe with SASAQS). Graeme: Need to grow the brand and remain autonomous. Student: Needs to happen every year, so Indaba has a good presence. Naledzi: The Forums could identify wetlands to work in every 2nd year.</p>	
11	<p>Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 2020 Indaba. 	
15	<p>Closure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP thanked everyone for attending the 8th AGM and closed the meeting. 	

Appendix 1: Attendance Register

See attached.

Appendix 2: Apologies

Marc de Fontaine

Dean Ollis

Denise Schael

Phumelele Gama

Gary Marneweck

Fiona Eggers

Craig Cowden