



14th Annual General Meeting of the South African Wetland Society
19 May 2025 12h00 – 13h30
Zoom Online Platform

No.	Agenda item	Actions
1.	Welcome	
1.1	Shaddai Daniel (chairperson) welcomed all to the 14 th AGM for the SAWS.	
2.	Attendance Register, Apologies and Proxies	
	The attendance register is attached as Appendix A .	
2.1	Apologies: Christa Custers, Craig Cowden, Fiona Eggers, Rian Pienaar, Roderick Juba, Shaun Taylor, Suzanne Grenfell, Wendy De Klerk and Wietsche Roets.	
2.2	Proxies: No proxies were received.	
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting (2024 AGM, 17 April 2024)	
3.1	There were no corrections required.	
3.2	The 2024 AGM minutes were accepted by Olivia Brunings and seconded by Kate Snaddon.	
4.	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting (2024 AGM, 17 April 2024)	
	The Society gave feedback on the following matters that arose from the 2024 AGM:	
4.1	Action 1: The Trustee responsible for the Provincial Forums is to host an online meeting with Forum chairs. Shaddai Daniel indicated that the trustee engaged with individual Forum Chairs through online meetings. A formal meeting with all Provincial Chairs will be coordinated by the incoming Board.	Action 1: The Trustee responsible for Collaboration Engagement is to coordinate an online meeting with all Forum Chairs.
4.2	Action 2: Distribute the full NWI frequency survey report to the wider community once it has been finalised. Shaddai Daniel indicated the report has been finalised and distributed. It was attached to the calendar invitation for this AGM.	
4.3	Action 3: Finalise and distribute AGM minutes before July 2024. Shaddai Daniel indicated this was completed. The minutes are available on the SAWS website.	
4.4	Action 4: The Trustees to look into a short-term investment to maximise some of the interest from the bank account. Marc De Fontaine indicated that a significant trend in interest accumulation was not observed. Managing interest separately is complicated due to variable financial activity, such as sponsorship deposits and profit shares from Indaba events, which include both SAWS and third-party funds. These fluctuations make it difficult to isolate or strategise around interest specifically. However, a meeting with the bank is scheduled in the coming month to discuss setting up bank accounts for the Eastern Cape Wetland Forum. During this meeting, investment options will also be explored.	Action 2: MD to raise the matter of interest investment strategy with the bank and report back to the Board.
5.	Additions to the agenda	

No.	Agenda item	Actions
	• Trustee nominations • Membership	
6.	Presentation of the Chairperson's Annual Report	
6.1	The Chairperson's report of March 2024 to February 2025 was presented by the Chairperson, Shaddai Daniel. The chairperson's report and presentation are attached as Appendix B. 6.6.1 Strategic framework: It was recognised that the strategic functioning of SAWS needed to be standardised in accordance with the SAWS mission, vision and objectives. As a result, we developed a strategic framework. This resulted in 8 strategic goals being distilled, which were further refined and actioned through 5 portfolios: • Governance, Finance & Administration • Communications & Information • Collaboration & Engagement • Capacity Development • National Wetlands Indaba This resulted in the development of the SoP to guide the actions and conduct of SAWS. 6.6.2 Membership: Current membership is 84, Of which 21 are students, 49 are ordinary members, 11 are premium members, and there are three retirees, pensioners. There has been a decline in membership in comparison to last year. Membership benefits offered by SAWS were reiterated to members. These include discounted rates to attend the National Wetlands Indaba (NWI), free access to the SAWS webinars, SWS membership and benefits, Access to the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) Candidate Mentorship Programme (CMP), mailing list, SACNASP CPD points, etc. 6.6.3 Provincial forums: • The main aim of this portfolio is to provide support and initiate collaboration with the provincial forums. After extensive engagements, a fund to support the provincial forums was made available. This fund intends to increase its support base by co-hosting an event chosen by the forum. Unfortunately, SAWS did not receive any submissions/interest from the forums. The initiative will be available for the next financial year (2025/2026). • Many of the Provincial Forums hosted the 2025 World Wetland Day (WWD) events, supported by SAWS: ○ WCWF and TMNP hosted a "walk & talk" at Silvermine Nature Reserve. ○ MPWF -hosted a "walk & talk" focused on species of concern and wetland rehab at De Berg Nature Reserve in Dullstroom. ○ GWF - hosted a "walk & talk" event focused on wetland wildlife at the Colbyn as well as at Kyalami. ○ In KwaZulu Natal, uMngeni-uThukela Water (UUW), SANBI, and GroundTruth, hosted a celebratory event at the Mthinzima wetland with over 100 learners. ○ SAWS was honoured to contribute a South African perspective to the Editor's editorial for the South Sustainability Journal in celebration of WWD 2025. This editorial shared variables in wetland loss, while highlighting the distinct structural and driving factors of wetlands in South Africa and Peru. 6.6.4 Milestones: • Webinar Series: We've hosted seven webinars covering diverse topics and discussed by various specialists within the field. We reached 1,146 attendees over our seven	

No.	Agenda item	Actions
	webinars. The series has been well received by the SA wetlands community, even reaching a small international audience. - SAWS has been in discussions with the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA), Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), and SACNASP over the past year to explore potential collaborations and partnerships, expand opportunities, and increase membership benefits. - Since 2020, SAWS has run four successful cycles of the SACNASP CMP. Last year, we had two mentees which were Anwin and Sakona and two mentors which were Toni Belcher and Dr. Matthew Ross. - A survey was conducted to assess interest in SAWS-branded apparel, with the field hat emerging as the most popular item. The hats were subsequently made available for purchase at the NWI 2024. 6.6.5 National Wetlands Indaba 2024 - Hosted by the Eastern Cape Wetlands Forum (ECWF) with support from SAWS. 136 delegates were in attendance, of which 23 were students, and 14 of those were sponsored by the WRC as part of the 3-year partnership between SAWS and the WRC. - Student awards, sponsored by the Water Research Commission (WRC), went to Kagiso Moteke (best poster) and Mpho Maketa (best presentation). - Special thanks to all sponsors WRC; MONDI; Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA); Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT); Sarah Baartman District Municipality; South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI); Western Cape Wetlands Forum; South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP); Kouga Local Municipality; Gamtoos Water; Department of Water & Sanitation and Event Synthesis International. - National Wetland Award Winners were: - WetRest (Education & Skills Development) - Bramley Lemine (Science & Research) - Dr Damian Walters (Stewardship) - Sinazo Songca (Young Professional) - The 2025 National Wetlands Indaba will be hosted by the Gauteng Wetlands Forum. 6.6.6 Challenges - Provincial forum participation at the NWI has been challenging, especially since dedicated sessions were removed from the official programme. A request was made for an online event for the forums will be held separately from the NWI. - A key challenge raised regarding the CMP was the need for clearly defined expectations and individual responsibilities. - An open call was made to the SAWS members to become mentees, as the success of the CMP depends on the availability of mentors. There is a continued need to recruit more mentors to support the programme effectively.	Action 3: Coordinate and host a separate online event for provincial forums, decoupled from the NWI, in the new financial year.
6.2	Discussion of the Chair's Report No discussions regarding the Chair's report were noted.	Action 4: Finalise and distribute AGM minutes.
7.	Adoption of the Annual Chair Report The Chair's report was adopted by Samatha Adey and seconded by Carina Burger.	
8.	Presentation of the Annual Financial Report	
8.1	The SAWS bookkeeper, Mrs Janine Mienie, presented the Annual Financial Statements for the financial year March 2024 to February 2025. Janine began with an overview of the Statement of Financial Position (also referred to as the balance sheet), followed by Revenue and Expenses, Changes in Equity, and ended with the Statement of Cash Flows. The Annual	

No.	Agenda item	Actions																																																																																																																																																																				
	Financial Statement is appended in Appendix C, and snapshots of the Financial Position and Revenue and Expenses are provided below. Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet): Statement of Financial Position as at 28 February 2025 <table><tr><th>Figures in Rand</th><th>Note(s)</th><th>2025</th><th>2024</th></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Assets</td></tr><tr><td>Current Assets</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Cash and cash equivalents</td><td>2</td><td>535 751</td><td>368 538</td></tr><tr><td>Debtor – Indaba expenses receivable</td><td></td><td>24 674</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Total Assets</td><td></td><td>560 425</td><td>368 538</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Equity and Liabilities</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Equity</td></tr><tr><td>Accumulated surplus</td><td></td><td>377 425</td><td>352 588</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Liabilities</td></tr><tr><td>Current Liabilities</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Creditor - ECWF</td><td></td><td>151 900</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Provisions</td><td>3</td><td>31 100</td><td>15 950</td></tr><tr><td>Total Equity and Liabilities</td><td></td><td>560 425</td><td>368 538</td></tr></table> - Janine noted that there is a debtor on the books of R27, 900. - Marc De Fontaine indicated that SAWS covered the initial payment for the accommodation, and this amount was not accounted for in the profit share distributed between SAWS and the ECWF. Revenue and expenses: Statement of Comprehensive Income <table><tr><th>Figures in Rand</th><th>Note(s)</th><th>2025</th><th>2024</th></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Revenue</td></tr><tr><td>Membership fees by EFT</td><td></td><td>35 540</td><td>21 310</td></tr><tr><td>Membership fees by online and webinar</td><td></td><td>32 869</td><td>36 713</td></tr><tr><td>CMP Income</td><td></td><td>-</td><td>57 175</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>4</td><td>68 409</td><td>115 198</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Other income</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>5</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Profit from Indaba</td><td></td><td>83 263</td><td>40 983</td></tr><tr><td>Hat sales</td><td></td><td>7 260</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Interest received</td><td></td><td>18 824</td><td>12 637</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>109 347</td><td>53 620</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">Operating expenses</td></tr><tr><td>Auditors remuneration</td><td>6</td><td>(5 650)</td><td>(5 500)</td></tr><tr><td>Bank charges</td><td></td><td>(428)</td><td>(357)</td></tr><tr><td>CMP expenses</td><td></td><td>(40 289)</td><td>(17 367)</td></tr><tr><td>Conference expenses</td><td></td><td>(20 241)</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Marketing expenses</td><td></td><td>(7 938)</td><td>(7 755)</td></tr><tr><td>Postage and courier</td><td></td><td>-</td><td>(549)</td></tr><tr><td>Software and Online systems</td><td></td><td>(55 393)</td><td>(55 791)</td></tr><tr><td>Student support - Non NWI</td><td></td><td>-</td><td>(2 800)</td></tr><tr><td>SWS Annual membership</td><td></td><td>(9 500)</td><td>(2 579)</td></tr><tr><td>Website hosting and back-end software support</td><td></td><td>(13 480)</td><td>(3 593)</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>(152 919)</td><td>(96 291)</td></tr><tr><td>Surplus for the year</td><td></td><td>24 837</td><td>72 527</td></tr><tr><td>Other comprehensive income</td><td></td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Total comprehensive income for the year</td><td></td><td>24 837</td><td>72 527</td></tr></table> Comments received about the Financial presentation: No questions were received on the balance sheet, revenue and expenses, equity and cash flow statements.	Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2025	2024	Assets				Current Assets				Cash and cash equivalents	2	535 751	368 538	Debtor – Indaba expenses receivable		24 674	-	Total Assets		560 425	368 538	Equity and Liabilities				Equity				Accumulated surplus		377 425	352 588	Liabilities				Current Liabilities				Creditor - ECWF		151 900	-	Provisions	3	31 100	15 950	Total Equity and Liabilities		560 425	368 538	Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2025	2024	Revenue				Membership fees by EFT		35 540	21 310	Membership fees by online and webinar		32 869	36 713	CMP Income		-	57 175		4	68 409	115 198	Other income					5			Profit from Indaba		83 263	40 983	Hat sales		7 260	-	Interest received		18 824	12 637			109 347	53 620	Operating expenses				Auditors remuneration	6	(5 650)	(5 500)	Bank charges		(428)	(357)	CMP expenses		(40 289)	(17 367)	Conference expenses		(20 241)	-	Marketing expenses		(7 938)	(7 755)	Postage and courier		-	(549)	Software and Online systems		(55 393)	(55 791)	Student support - Non NWI		-	(2 800)	SWS Annual membership		(9 500)	(2 579)	Website hosting and back-end software support		(13 480)	(3 593)			(152 919)	(96 291)	Surplus for the year		24 837	72 527	Other comprehensive income		-	-	Total comprehensive income for the year		24 837	72 527	Action 5: SAWS to resolve and redistribute the profit share accordingly.
Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2025	2024																																																																																																																																																																			
Assets																																																																																																																																																																						
Current Assets																																																																																																																																																																						
Cash and cash equivalents	2	535 751	368 538																																																																																																																																																																			
Debtor – Indaba expenses receivable		24 674	-																																																																																																																																																																			
Total Assets		560 425	368 538																																																																																																																																																																			
Equity and Liabilities																																																																																																																																																																						
Equity																																																																																																																																																																						
Accumulated surplus		377 425	352 588																																																																																																																																																																			
Liabilities																																																																																																																																																																						
Current Liabilities																																																																																																																																																																						
Creditor - ECWF		151 900	-																																																																																																																																																																			
Provisions	3	31 100	15 950																																																																																																																																																																			
Total Equity and Liabilities		560 425	368 538																																																																																																																																																																			
Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2025	2024																																																																																																																																																																			
Revenue																																																																																																																																																																						
Membership fees by EFT		35 540	21 310																																																																																																																																																																			
Membership fees by online and webinar		32 869	36 713																																																																																																																																																																			
CMP Income		-	57 175																																																																																																																																																																			
	4	68 409	115 198																																																																																																																																																																			
Other income																																																																																																																																																																						
	5																																																																																																																																																																					
Profit from Indaba		83 263	40 983																																																																																																																																																																			
Hat sales		7 260	-																																																																																																																																																																			
Interest received		18 824	12 637																																																																																																																																																																			
		109 347	53 620																																																																																																																																																																			
Operating expenses																																																																																																																																																																						
Auditors remuneration	6	(5 650)	(5 500)																																																																																																																																																																			
Bank charges		(428)	(357)																																																																																																																																																																			
CMP expenses		(40 289)	(17 367)																																																																																																																																																																			
Conference expenses		(20 241)	-																																																																																																																																																																			
Marketing expenses		(7 938)	(7 755)																																																																																																																																																																			
Postage and courier		-	(549)																																																																																																																																																																			
Software and Online systems		(55 393)	(55 791)																																																																																																																																																																			
Student support - Non NWI		-	(2 800)																																																																																																																																																																			
SWS Annual membership		(9 500)	(2 579)																																																																																																																																																																			
Website hosting and back-end software support		(13 480)	(3 593)																																																																																																																																																																			
		(152 919)	(96 291)																																																																																																																																																																			
Surplus for the year		24 837	72 527																																																																																																																																																																			
Other comprehensive income		-	-																																																																																																																																																																			
Total comprehensive income for the year		24 837	72 527																																																																																																																																																																			
9.	Adoption of the Annual Financial Report The financials were provisionally accepted, provided that this query is resolved. Our action was to resolve it and redistribute the final/complete financials that account for the above amount.	Action 6: Distribute the corrected/complete Annual Financial																																																																																																																																																																				

No.	Agenda item	Actions
	Provisionally accepted by Cariena Burger and seconded by Steven Ellery and Charlene Russel.	Report to all members.
10.	Discussion of additions to the Agenda Two additions to the agenda were made.	
10.1	Trustee Nomination The current board of trustees' term (2022–2024) has ended, but no nominations for a new board have been received. It was emphasised that the society is a voluntary, community-driven organisation, and trustee roles depend on members' willingness to serve. Four or five of the current trustees are not standing while the others are prepared to carry on for a second term. The way forward proposed by SAWS: - As per the Constitution, the board must consist of at least seven trustees. We currently meet this requirement, as seven current trustees have indicated their willingness to serve another term. We therefore propose to continue with normal operations under the current trustees and, if necessary, co-opt additional trustees.. - There were no objections to this proposal. Marc De Fontaine opened the floor to chat about these challenges; the responses/suggestions from SAWS members are indicated below: - Donovan Kotze reflected on his own experience becoming a trustee and suggested encouraging early-career scientists and students to join the board. While they may initially lack experience, they can gain valuable skills by working alongside more experienced members. He noted that this has worked well in the past and supported continued efforts to canvas for new trustees. Donovan also mentioned that the Indaba played an important role in attracting new trustees, especially young professionals, and decoupling the AGM means the board needs to put in a lot more effort. - Llewellyn Taylor suggested creating a brief document/flyer outlining what it means to be a trustee, including expected responsibilities and estimated time commitments. This could help potential candidates better understand the role. He recommended circulating the document widely to encourage interest and identify possible volunteers. - Marc De Fontaine and Shaddai Daniel noted some responsibilities of a trustee, including communicating on WhatsApp groups, working with the NWI LOC, preparing for AGM, working on events/activities, flexibility to work on passion projects to the benefit of the wetlands community, etc. - Marc De Fontaine noted that we may need to reconsider the minimum number of trustees required to run the society. Currently, it's 7 as per the constitution. A reduced number of trustees (e.g., 4) will mean a reduction in SAWS's daily operations. - Sue George noted in the chat, "You should always have an odd number to ensure that anything requiring a vote is not even yes". Sue also noted similar challenges of volunteerism with IAIAsa, especially in the current climate where people increasingly expect compensation for their time. Sue emphasised that voluntary associations rely on member involvement and encouraged continued efforts to recruit volunteers. Sue noted that this is a common issue across many associations and reminded members that these organisations exist for their benefit, so it's important for everyone to contribute to their sustainability. - Donovan Kotze noted in the chat, "there should not be fewer than seven members to allow for the board's basic functions to be maintained". - Jacquette Adam noted she will stand again.	Action 7: Distribute document/flyer to members outlining the benefits of becoming a SAWS trustee.
10.2	Membership	

No.	Agenda item	Actions
	The membership numbers have taken a dip to 84 members for the last financial year, and there is a serious need to grow the society's membership base. Marc De Fontaine opened the floor for comments and suggestions. The responses and proposals from SAWS members are summarised below: • Marc De Fontaine highlighted the opportunity to increase student membership by promoting the society as a platform for gaining exposure to the wider professional community, including potential future employers. He suggested that the society should actively engage with university contacts to improve outreach and communication around membership benefits. He noted that the low membership fee (R50) makes student recruitment more feasible and encouraged the society to more deliberately drive student engagement through academic networks. • Kate Snaddon suggested that SAWS should consider promoting student membership through different vehicles (e.g. forums or NWI). She shared that the Western Cape Wetlands forum actively works to build capacity among young people, and perhaps the forum itself could promote SAWS membership. Kate provided some examples, students sponsored by the forums themselves could automatically be granted SAWS membership as part of their sponsorship and SAWS membership could be a part of their NWI registration. This could help grow the society's younger membership base and encourage long-term involvement. Kate also suggested that SAWS should challenge all the consulting companies to pay the membership fee for their young professionals/interns. • Alanna Rebelo suggested that offering membership options at the Indaba is critical, as most societies get most of their memberships from their conferences (e.g., Snapscan). Alanna also suggested that SAWS should consider exploring a 2-year membership to ease the admin burden and look into batch membership. • Marc De Fontein noted that the society considered purchasing a tap and go machine to make membership payments convenient at the Indaba, but noted a challenge around a long-term monthly fee vs using it for 5 days at the Indaba. • Leslie Hoy suggested exploring potential collaborations with other related professional groups, such as environmental assessors or impact assessors, who often work within the wetland field. He also proposed engaging academic institutions and lecturers who specialise in wetlands and related training programs to increase membership and knowledge sharing. Bringing these educators on board could help connect with their students and promote sustained engagement with society. • Sue George indicated that IAIA has a major challenge with student membership/participation. She found that the best success comes when the initiative is championed by a lecturer at the learning institution. • Luke Bodemann suggested the website could have registered student profiles per province as an added benefit to being members, which will open them to mentorship, research initiatives and perhaps some part-time work experience so they see the value of being part of a society on that front. • Michal Grenfell asked whether it is possible to batch-register students, or to pay for a batch of students on one invoice (to reduce the admin load). • Olivia Brunings suggested that SAWS should consider a reduced rate for young professionals, perhaps just for the first year after graduation, to introduce them to the working world.	Action 8: SAWS will consider the suggestions from the members.
11.	Closure Shaddai thanked all the attendees for a very fruitful AGM.	

Compiled by: Faeza Fortune

Accepted by: Shaddai Daniel (SAWS Chair)

Date: 16 July 2025

Date: 13 August 2025

