

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
NATUURBESTUURSVERENIGING VAN SUIDELIKE AFRIKA**



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

PLACE: Nombolo Mdluli Conference Centre, Skukuza, Kruger National Park

DATE: 17 September 2013

TIME: 14h45

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Guy Balme, Jeremy Bolton, Daan Buijs, André Burger, Emily Chemoiwa, Harriet Davies-Mostert, Drummond Densham, Sam Ferreira, Paul Grobler, Mike Gregor, Michael Grover, Robert Guldemond, Louw Hoffman, Hanno Killian, Kelly Marnewick, Gus Mills, Larize Nel, Pieter Nel, Dan Parker, Michèle Phab, Christine Pienaar (Kraft), Yolanda Pretorius, Frans Radloff, Brian Reilly, Wilfred Seithlamo, Jeanette Selier, Michael Somers, Tommie Steyn, Maartin Strauss, Lourens Swanepoel, Craig Tambling, Emily Taylor, Minette van Lingen.

1. WELCOME

The meeting was chaired by Prof Louw Hoffman who welcomed all members present.

2. APOLOGIES

The following apologies were received and noted: Banie Pentzhorn, Mike Cohen, Jason Marshal, Peter Scogings, Julius Koen, John Hanks, Nicholas Funda, Graham Kerley, Christo Marais, Rudi van Aarde, Mike Perrin.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held at ATKV Klein Kariba on 17 September 2012 were tabled. The minutes were circulated electronically and posted to the SAWMA website before the meeting.

The minutes were accepted as correct by the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012 AND COUNCIL MEETING 2013

4.1 Presidents' Report

The presidents' report was delivered during the Meet and Greet event on Sunday, 15 September 2013.

Prof Hoffman, SAWMA president, reported briefly on the activities of council during the period between September 2012 and September 2013. He reported that one electronic meeting was held by council during May 2013. He mentioned that the Editor's report and Treasurer's report will highlight more detail of the activities of council.

Prof Hoffman confirmed that the annual symposium still serves as the highlight on the agenda of SAWMA and has become a 'must' on the calendar. He also noted that the number of delegates at this event has now stabilized at about 180. As the attendance of students and non-members at the conference was higher than other years, he gave a brief introduction to the background of SAWMA's history: He informed delegates that SAWMA was formally constituted on 22 August 1970. By the end of 1970 the association had about 77 members. The inaugural meeting to formally launch the Southern African Wildlife Management Association took place in 1971 and a committee was elected to hold office until the first AGM in 1971. He mentioned that this was also the year that the first volume of the association's journal, South African Journal of Wildlife Research was published.

He highlighted that the first symposium in 1973 was attended by almost 450 delegates and was generally acknowledged as the most important wildlife meeting in southern Africa in decades. Prof Hoffman stated that the fact that SAWMA has survived as association for so long, has a steady membership base and managed to continue publishing research in our scientific journal is enough proof that today the association is still relevant and filling an important niche in the research and management of the wildlife of Southern Africa.

He emphasized the importance of the South African Journal of Wildlife Research as main focus of the association and announced that Dr Dan Parker took over editorship from Prof Mike Perrin after Prof Perrin announced that he wanted to step down. He thanked both for their commitment to the journal. He informed the delegates that Council was currently working to broaden the scope of the journal by trying to increase the number of review papers and papers on applied management. He mentioned that during Mike Perrin's editorship efforts were also made to include papers from a wider geographic area. The changing of the name of the journal to African Journal of Wildlife Research remains on the agenda.

The president also announced that council decided to increase the student base of the SAWMA membership by providing free membership to all FULL-TIME post graduate students from 2014, on the condition that they only receive the electronic version of the journal and not the hard copy. He emphasized that SAWMA has a number of informal networks which extend much wider than the group of active SAWMA members and the role of such networks should not be underestimated.

He mentioned that the financial statements for 2012 proof that the association's financial matters are stable, but that it has become clear that the association has become dependent on some form of sponsorships or a surplus from the symposium as well as the royalties earned by the electronic publishers of our journal to ensure that we are able to operate without financial challenges.

In closure he thanked the SAWMA council and the secretariat for administrative support during the past year.

4.2 Journal Editor's Report

The report was read by Prof Louw Hoffman, due to the absence of Prof Mike Perrin under the following headings:

4.2.1 Present status of the journal: turnaround time, review process and statistics.

The first issue was late largely because of a shortage of reviewed material to go to press. However, the second issue is already full. This means that some manuscripts are already held over until 2014.

Turnaround time and number of manuscripts: The number of issues has increased well over the past 3 three years: A total of 59 manuscripts were received in 2012 of which 20 were rejected, 23 accepted for publication and the balance are either in revision or in review. The average turnaround time from submission of a manuscript to the initial decision is still in line with previous years and is about 100 days average. The turnaround time from resubmission to final decision is shorter but varies as some manuscripts are sent back to the original reviewers.

The relationship of SA:African:International authors has not changed much. First authors are mostly from South Africa and Africa and International authors are mostly present as co-authors.

4.2.2 Journal impact factor

The previous year a rise in impact factor for *SAJWR* from 0.875 to 1.085 was reported. The impact factor published in 2013, however, dropped to 0.294. Many factors could have contributed to this, but this should change in the next year.

4.2.3 Associate editors

As the work load on present associate editors are getting heavier with more manuscripts being submitted, it was decided to identify areas for possible appointments. Louw Hoffman, Adrian Shrader and Dan Parker were appointed as associate editors during 2013.

4.2.4 Feedback on electronic publication outlets for SAJWR and Royalties earned

The contract with BioOne as foreign host for the electronic journal still proofs to be the best decision taken for our journal, not only in terms of the revenue earned from the royalties, but also from getting a broader exposure internationally. The agreement with SABINET is also proving to be the best local option as electronic publisher and hosting our website. SABINET is also hosting all the journal archive articles.

4.2.5 Feedback on Editors' Forum meetings for Scholarly Journals.

The editor did not attend the journal editor's conference in 2013.

4.2.6 SAJWR and the ASSAf open access platform

The ASSAf open access platform is just available for full open access journals and it is not financially viable for SAJWR at this stage.

4.2.7 Page charges

Page charges have remained unchanged for the past number of years. As an incentive members pay R200 per page instead of R300 per page.

4.2.8 Increasing the scope of the SAJWR & inclusion of articles from a wider geographic area.

The current agreement for the journal is that (1) sociological manuscripts should be published in SAJWR, but on the condition that it has a link to the core interest of the journal. Such manuscripts will be individually assessed on merit. (2) Submissions of manuscripts from a wider geographic area (including the whole of Africa, the Arabian peninsula and Madagascar) will be accepted in future and (3) editors should invite more submissions of global reviews relevant to wildlife research and management.

4.2.9 Guidelines for the review of review papers as well as applied management.

Although the editor has tried to source review articles from leading wildlife biologists and members of Council, the outcome has been disappointing. Everyone is too busy, either with conservation action (policy or implementation from the wildlife-conservation fraternity) or improving their publication record (H score etc., if they are from the academic sector). Although it was proposed to include a section in the journal for “best practice submissions” – local and international it has not realised yet. Guidelines for the review of review papers and best practice management papers need to be drawn up by the editorial committee.

4.2.10 Name change of the SAJWR to African Journal of Wildlife Research

At the previous AGM, it was reported that enquiries were made to various role players about the possibility of changing the name of the SAJWR to African Journal of Wildlife Research. It is believed/hoped that changing the name of the journal to African Journal of Wildlife Research could potentially increase the IF and improve the scope of the journal. In the meantime it was decided change the journal scope to include submissions from Madagascar and Arabia.

According to feedback from various role players rebranding the journal will not be without complications and we will need to amend all of the agreements that we have with individual electronic publishers, such as BioOne and Sabinet). The new editor, Dan Parker, should implement the process of the name change during 2014.

4.2.11 Special Journal Issue on Carnivores.

During the council meeting in 2013 it was proposed that one of the two issues of SAJWR for 2014 should be dedicated to Carnivores. It was also suggested that Michael Somers and Matt Hayward would drive it.

4.2.12 Appointment of new editor.

Prof Perrin indicated that he wanted to resign as editor-in- chief by the end 2013. A number of possible candidates were nominated and Dr Dan Parker was appointed to take over editorship since the start of 2014.

The final resolutions after discussion of the report were:

- Managers are encouraged to submit more applied papers for publication in the journal.
- The new editor should take the name change process further will report at the next AGM.
- Michael Somers and Matt Hayward will send invitations to individuals to submit papers for the special Carnivore issue.
- The new editor committed himself to driving the journal to new heights by investigating an online submission process, increasing the number of review articles and applied papers, look into the electronic publication process and more.
- Mike Perrin was thanked for his hard work during the past two years.

4.3 Treasurer's Report

4.3.1 Financial statements for the 2012 Financial Year

The treasurer, Pieter Nel, presented the financial statements for the 2012 financial year, provided by the independent examiner. He noted that it is important that the financial statements are not seen in isolation with other years as there are always factors which influence the surpluses/deficits and which can explain the shortfalls/surpluses.

He discussed the main income and expenses of the Association by going through the income-expenditure account for 2012. He pointed out that the income from royalties earned from electronic publications (mainly from BioOne) remains one of the most import sources of income. Despite the three journal issues being paid in 2012, the association was making a surplus of R25 326.96 in the 2012 financial year.

He reported that the interest earned from investments was about R17 000 and the total assets of the association were R285.931.91 by the end of 2012. About R50 500 of this amount were receivables from membership and subscriptions outstanding. Mr. Nel pointed out that the receivables are getting smaller each year, due to regular follow-up with members in arrears.

He concluded that based on the 2012 financials the current financial status of SAWMA can be considered as in fairly good order and that SAWMA is moving closer to the suggested total assets of about R350 000 which should be necessary for the Association's financial status to be considered safe. The financial statements were accepted and will be published on the SAWMA website.

4.3.2 Current Financial status

Pieter Nel reported that the financial status for 2013 is healthy in terms of cash flow and assets. He reported that about 140 members still owe their fees for 2013 while about 50 members are in arrears from 2012 year. Special efforts will be made in the last term to recover all outstanding fees.

4.3.3 Proposed membership fees for 2014

It is proposed to make an inflation rate increase in membership fees in 2014. It will be finalized after the 2013 financials were analyzed, but should not be more than a 6% increase.

4.3.4 Dual option for membership

The treasurer reported that since the beginning of 2013 members had the option to indicate in which format they prefer to receive the journal. So far only 60 members indicated that they prefer the electronic option to a hard copy. This has made no substantial change to the printing and postage cost yet and therefore we will continue with one fee for all members. The secretariat will continue to remind members to indicate their preference for the journal format.

4.3.5 Free electronic access to journal for Hons/Btech and/or MSc/Mtech students from 2014

Mr Nel reported that during the council meeting it was proposed and accepted to offer free electronic access to all post graduate students from the start of 2014. Should they however want to receive hard copies of the journal, they need to pay the full student membership fees.

4.3.6 Donations towards publication of Small Carnivore Conservation Publication (SCC) issue.

Mr Nel mentioned that the association made a donation towards the recent publication of the Small Carnivore Conservation Publication (SCC) issue. Some hard copies were made be made available to SAWMA members at the symposium. A link to the publication and full text will be given to all members.

4.3.7 Donations /Sponsorships received for SAWMA symposium 2013

Pieter Nel reported that a donation of R20 000 were received from Lapalala Wilderness for the 2013 symposium. The Center for Wildlife Management sponsored the mugs, Global supplies sponsored the conference bags and some books and a product from Bushnell was donated for the prizes. The sponsors were thanked for their support.

4.4 Newsletter Editor's report

Mrs Elma Marais, SAWMA secretariat, responsible for the SAWMA newsletter briefly provided feedback on the number of electronic newsletters published during 2013. The newsletter, SAWMA Matters, remains an important medium for communication and networking tool. Members were again reminded to send their news to Elma.

4.5 Feedback regarding affiliation with South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP)

Prof Brian Reilly reported that he attended 3 different meetings as SAWMA's representative at SACNASP. He mentioned that his workload with SACNASP is increasing and that there are more meetings scheduled in the future, but he feels that it is important for the association to be represented and that SAWMA members should be encouraged to apply for membership to SACNASP. His role is to supply professional advice and to be the chairperson of Botany and Ecological Science. It was agreed that by SAWMA council that he should continue representing the association at this forum.

4.6 Feedback: Cooperation with Australasian Wildlife Management Society

Prof Reilly reported that the secretariats of the two associations are networking with regards to newsletters and conference announcements. He emphasized that the idea was to have reciprocal attendance of the two association's conferences by representatives elected. He proposed that the student candidate with the best paper should be representing the association at the AWMS conference. He expressed his disappointment that this initiative has not received enough support and that available funds are a problem. He reported that he will investigate the possibility of funding if this cannot be covered by SAWMA finances. Mr Nel emphasized that SAWMA's current finances are not enough to sponsor such attendance.

4.7 Honorary award for members with outstanding contributions in conservation: feedback and progress

Prof Hoffman reported that there was not enough drive and time for council to take this proposal any further. It has been discussed at the Council meeting and it became clear that one person should drive the initial steps. Mr Julius Koen, who initially

proposed the award system, has made the following suggestions before it can be taken further and it was read to the meeting.

1. **Is there really support for this idea? If so, then members must realise that they should put in the work themselves to nominate suitable candidates.** The meeting supported the idea and agreed that the initiative should be implemented.
2. **Name: Two names have been suggested: SAWMA Zebra Award, or just SAWMA Award.** The “SAWMA Zebra Award” was generally preferred by the meeting.
3. **Financial implications will need to be considered: i.e. for the award itself and the cost to get the receiver(s) of the reward to the symposium (Travel, accommodation included)**
4. **Julius Koen suggested that only SAWMA members should qualify for this award, but this needs to be finalised.**
5. **He also suggested that a first receiver of such an award should be identified and someone must be identified/committed to do the nomination for the 2014 symposium.**

After some discussion Maartin Strauss agreed to drive this initiative and get the process in place. This was supported by the meeting. The following will need to be finalized: Should the number be restricted to one per year? should only SAWMA members qualify for nomination? Should the award be a floating trophy or a medal?

It was also proposed that members should be asked via the SAWMA newsletter to design the award and that council would make the final decision.

4.8 Outputs from side events at SAWMA Symposium 2010.

Pieter Nel reported that he was finalizing his report and it would be published on the SAWMA website as soon as it is ready. Peter Goodman has also worked on a draft paper on Green certification, but is still busy with it. Links to the reports will be published in the SAWMA newsletter when the reports are available.

4.9 SAWMA's possible role in Rhino Poaching problem.

Dr Sam Ferreira reported that the rhino issue is changing so fast with many SAWMA members already involved in various capacities, that this point should be closed on the agenda as it is not necessary for SAWMA to be involved. It was suggested that SAWMA publishes a list of names of SAWMA members and their fields of expertise on the SAWMA website and also includes registered SACNASP members. Brian Reilly was asked assist in obtaining a list of experts from SACNASP.

4.10 Student Scholarships

During the council meeting in 2013 it was proposed that the best post graduate student paper published in the SAJWR should be rewarded with a cash prize. The idea is to identify all the first authors who are post graduates. The SAWMA council will evaluate the papers and decide on the best paper during a calendar year. This meeting supported this proposal.

5. NEW MATTERS

5.1 Venue and hosts for Symposium 2014.

NMMU offered to co-host the 2014 conference with Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency. Craig Tambling proposed on behalf of Graham Kerley that the meeting will take place at Pine Lodge (about 2 km from the NMMU campus). This was accepted and the meeting agreed that he should go ahead with the arrangements.

5.2 SAWMA's advisory role

Paul Grobler proposed that SAWMA should define its advisory role with regards to certain issues: He used the example of colour variants and intensive breeding and suggested a small sub-committee should be formed to discuss this issue and provide feedback to council. He feels that a lot of time is wasted on this matter by uninformed people and that SAWMA should consider putting together a task team to put together a scientific document that states the facts and not necessarily take a specific stand.

Daan Buijs emphasized that this issue can be a minefield as it has a conservation side and a commercial side and that it will be difficult to get SAWMA members to agree as too many different organisations are represented. It was proposed that an opinion piece on this subject should rather be published in the SAJWR. This paper should be reviewed like all other articles before it is published.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place during the 2014 conference in Port Elizabeth.