

SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF BOTANISTS



**Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting
held
Wednesday 18th January 2012
Lecture Hall A
University of Pretoria**

1. Welcome

The president, Dr Nokwanda (Nox) Makunga, welcomed the members to the meeting at 16h30.

2. Present (62):

Jill Farrant, Tshego Gill, M. Chinsamy, Jesse Kalwij, Ben-Erik van Wyk, Steve Johnson, W.G. Alberts, K.M. Swanepoel, Gerard Prinsloo, Quenton Kritzinger, Heino Heyman, Marion Meyer, J. van Staden, JN Eloff, Juan Vorster, Paul Hills, Sjirk Geerts, Adejami Aremu, T.A. Netshivhulana, Luke Jimu, Jephris Gere, Gina Arena, Arina Heystek, Stephen Amoo, Mathew Adamu, Emmanuel Adewvy, Johan van der Linde, Stefan van Wyk, Peter Tshisikhawe, Pumeza Cingo, Chris Hendriks, Francois Kruger, Sarah Stanton, Robyn Powell, William Bond, Sivuyisiwe Situngu, Sebola Patrecia, Masiagwala Phuluso, Manessa Matukana, Jimmy Bezeng, Ledile Mantga, Kowiyou Yessoufou, Sydney Ramulifho, Mphephu Tshililo, Khathushelo Magwede, Dave Berger, Bothma Visser, Patricia Tilney, Michelle van der Bank, Carina Becker, Jolanda Roux, Kevin Balkwill, Eddwina Muleya, Glynis Goodman-Cron, Pieter Winter, Gondiswa Figlan, Roy Lubke, Ashton Ruiters, Marianne le Roux, Anthony Magee, Stephen Boatwright,

Apologies: Gideon Smith, Shayne Jacobs and Muthama Muasya

3. Minutes of the 37th AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were distributed on the website as well as on the notice board at the conference. Kobus Eloff proposed that the meeting consider the minutes in order and as read. Hannes van Staden seconded the proposer.

4. Matters arising from previous minutes

There were no items arising.

5. President's report

- The President congratulated Robyn Powell, last year's Best Young Scientist Award winner, for the talk she presented at this year's conference.
- This year's three bursary holders were asked to provide progress reports of their work at some stage.
- Appeal to members to respond to call for nominations for awards and prizes as soon after it appears in May and put forward nominations before the August 31 deadline.
- Appeal to members to take better note of calls for nominations to fill vacancies in Council.
- The new members of Council were announced as follows: Paula Watt, Merne Light, and Dave Thompson. Alan Ellis accepted the Honorary Secretary post.
- Votes of thanks were extended to Quenton Kritzinger as moderator of SAABNet, Hannes van Staden as Editor-in-Chief of the South African Journal of Botany, to Paul Hills in his new job as Treasurer and to Jill Farrant, Vice-president.
- The outgoing Council was thanked for their time and commitment over the past year. The names of the new Council members were announced: Paula Watt, Merne Light and Dave Thompson. Alan Ellis has accepted to take on the position of Honorary Secretary.

6. Treasurer's report

As the treasurer's report was posted on the conference notice board, only the highlights were presented verbally at the meeting by Paul Hills:

- The lower income compared to last year was explained as a result of the lower exchange rate on the income from Elsevier and the lower savings rate on the savings accounts.
- [Paul, will you please fill in here. There are many points you made that I did not record. Thanks.]
- Kobus Eloff expressed concern that as assets are increasing perhaps Council should consider spending more money assisting conference organizing committees and giving out more bursaries

- The permanent secretary has been granted an increase in salary based on more time required for current tasks, cost of living increase and anticipated increase in workload from new interactive website.
- The treasurer's report was accepted and approved by the members present

7. South African Journal of Botany report

As the SAJB report was posted on the conference notice board, only the highlights were presented verbally at the meeting by Hannes van Staden, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal:

- Authors can track the status of their publication by using the reference number given to them by Elsevier (our publisher) when their papers were approved for publication. Use the reference number in the appropriate field at <http://authors.elsevier.com/TrackPaper.html>
- A bottleneck in publication occurs when editors can't get cooperation from their sub-editors.
- The Editor-in Chief said that he looks at every abstract submitted but rejects them out of hand if the English and content are both bad, but will suggest the author enlist the help of an English speaker if the paper otherwise has potential.
- Abstracts are citable and increase one's index.
- Next year there will be a Special Edition (two extra issues) on the subject of Medicinal Plants. Elsevier has agreed to publish these at no extra cost and no page limitation.
- Appeal made to South African authors to publish in the Journal as there are many people outside the country who wish to.
- Mycological papers will now be invited. Marieka Gryzenhout will act as the mycology editor.
- The Editor-in-Chief gave a special vote of thanks to editors Ben-Erik van Wyk, John Manning, Anthony Magee and Stephen Boatwright.
- There was concern expressed from the floor regarding the digitalization of the issues of our journal that fell under the NISC era. Roy Lubke offered to use his contacts at NISC to release the documents that NISC hold copyright to. It was suggested that acknowledgement of NISC could be made on the issues for advertisement if they agreed to the request.
- The Report was approved and accepted by the group followed by a hearty applause.

8. Report back by SAAB student council

Chris Hendriks, the student council president, gave an oral report with the following highlights:

- He congratulated his fellow student council members and especially the UKZN and Pretoria members for publishing three newsletters during the year. The layout and style of the last issue were particularly improved.
- The student council has a presence on Facebook and wants to add blogs and a chat room.

9. Next Conference

- Steve Johnson has accepted to chair the Local Organizing Committee at UKZN (Pietermaritzburg) for next year. The last Congress that was there was in 1991. Steve mooted the idea of using the Drakenville venue even though it is two hours drive from the PMB airport. There were no objections to this.

10. General

- Hannes van Staden announced that Kath Gordon-Grey had died. This followed by several months the announcement of the passing of Sarie Perold, the winner of last year's Silver Medal award. Obituaries of both of these sisters of South African botany will appear in the SAJB.
- Jill Farrant and Kobus Eloff thanked Nox Makunga for the great job she is doing as SAAB President and announced that she has won the TW Khambule NRF Research Awards which will be given to four black South Africans who have made a significant contribution to science, engineering or technology.
- Hannes van Staden thanked the LOC for their work in organizing the conference.
- The President acknowledged Jill Farrant co-winner of the The L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards for Women in Science for 2011

11. Closing

- The meeting close at 18h00

Minutes compiled and submitted by Myke Scott, Permanent Secretary