

FOSAF NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S 2013/14 ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Once again it's my privilege and duty to report to FOSAF's membership and other external stakeholders on our activities and achievements during the past year.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

State:

As reported last year we have continued to be involved with the DEA around the draft NEM:BA AIS lists and regulations. These were published for implementation in July last year despite our warnings to the DEA that they were acting outside the law. After much correspondence and discussion the old lists and regulations were replaced. We were afforded a preview of the drafts subsequently published in February of this year. We have engaged in a difficult campaign of correspondence and publicity that sought to highlight FOSAF's views as the reasonable and sensible party in this difficult and challenging terrain.

We have prepared and circulated a submission document of representations, objections and comment which has been forwarded to the Department. We still do not believe that the draft regulations and lists are lawful or proper, given the wording of the NEM:BA, and continue to demand that the framework must be further amended and be consulted upon in an open and public manner as required by both the Constitution and NEMA. We will continue to keep you all posted on further developments.

Public:

As reported upon previously, we have continued to make an effort to improve FOSAF's communication with members and the public through our website, Facebook, Flyfishing magazine, the Tippet and through the efforts of our members and leadership. Despite all of these efforts far too many fly- and other anglers remain unaware of our achievements and the hard work that many of you are engaged in on their behalf. As agreed at our previous EXCO we met with a professional for advice on our marketing issues. This was primarily aimed at trying to understand what we see ourselves doing and how we want to be seen. I must be frank that I do not believe we are all on the same page and this is part of why we are unable to sell the FOSAF brand. Unless we can all agree on what this is, (and we plan to spend some time working on achieving this at the EXCO tomorrow) I fear we will continue to see our organisation's public image fade away.

The formation of a new commodity association - Trout SA - is an important positive outcome of our work on NEM:BA. We have managed to pull together a broad group of related organisations and individuals involved in the trout value chain, to build on the support shown by aquaculture and other interests.

Anglers:

The Tippet continues to be well received. I get a fair amount of feedback from many people about it. Our thanks are again due to Stuart and Liz Tough who put in all the hard work to get it published.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

EXCO

The EXCO only met once on a face to face basis. However, regular emails and telephonic discussions on an individual basis have sufficed to ensure reasonable contact. We have much more to do to ensure improved communication and we will propose some ideas in this regard at the EXCO. The secretariat continues to provide the fulcrum for contact with and between all chapters. There is of course much more we can do to ensure that our leadership plays more of a public role to promote FOSAF.

Chapters

Full chapter reports will be forthcoming at the EXCO however I will briefly note some observations:

Eastern Cape: I was again privileged to attend the EC AGM in November 2013. Brian Clark continues in the Chair and it is fair to say the Chapter is in a healthy state with most of their clubs staying on board.

Northvaal: the Chapter continues to be led by Peter Mills. Peter Arderne must again be mentioned for his continued outstanding work at expanding the Chapter's involvement in the Steenkampsberg environmental project. Working together with the conservation authorities and other stakeholders, the aim is to secure the health of the many rivers in the chapter's area of influence. Peter Mills continues to lead the Yellowfish

Working Group. We wish he and Peter Arderne well with their annual deliberations in June at Thaba Nchu in the Free State and look forward to the proceedings' publication.

The Western Cape: Leonard Flemming has served as Chairperson of the WC Chapter and has managed the difficult role of interacting with the CPS and Cape Nature. He has also continued with their activities in support of aquatic biodiversity conservation efforts. I am concerned at the lack of support for FOSAF in the Cape and would urge the formation of a more active committee structure to assist in the work and activities of the Chapter. This chapter has some serious challenges to negotiate a win-win for flyfishing interests in the Western Cape.

KZN: Jim Read continues lead an active and committed chapter committee. While the chapter has maintained a relationship with the provincial conservation agency and other stakeholders, the freshwater fishing liaison committee has not met for some time. We are concerned at the apparent breakdown in effectiveness of this and other communication channels with EKZNW. While some clubs in the region remain active there is a need to ensure other clubs remain viable.

Free State: Dirk Human once again reports that he has had a difficult year and has struggled to achieve significant buy-in from the various fly-anglers and clubs in the province. The state of many of the rivers and the fish in them remains a concern. As noted previously FOSAF will have to find new alternatives to achieve its goal of uniting flyfishers in the region and we once again commend Dirk for his persistent efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Dr Bill Bainbridge continues to lead this committee. Much of the focus has been on the NEM:BA process which is reported on above. We have yet to see the outcomes of the revised Biodiversity Risk and Benefit Assessment conducted by DAFF.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Peter Arderne has worked tirelessly at updating the FOSAF website and Facebook page. This requires regular contact with a range of local people in each area. In this regard Peter is a wonderful ambassador for FOSAF and flyfishing.

CONCLUSION

Special thanks are due to Stuart and Liz Tough for their efficient commitment in managing FOSAF, the AGM and EXCO and our travel arrangements and logistics. Their willingness to go the extra mile is appreciated.

Thanks are again due to:

- John Webber for AFS. He and Liz keep us on the straight and narrow and ensure our financial accountability and credibility;
- our President Andrew Levy and vice-presidents Tom Sutcliffe and Bill Mincher for their wise counsel when its needed;
- the rest of the EXCO for their on-going support and commitment.

I think it is important to again thank the wives and partners of EXCO members for sharing their significant others with us and holding the fort in their absence on FOSAF business.

FOSAF has struggled to get through to fly anglers with a meaningful and significant message. Whether this means our message or the way we are putting it across is inappropriate is something I do not feel qualified to comment on. What I can say is that FOSAF continues to do exceptional work on behalf of flyfishing in South Africa and somehow this needs to be made much more publically known. Attracting new people to support our efforts is critical and we simply have to find a way to get that right.

I again look forward to another year of sharing and building FOSAF's mission to address the issues and opportunities that face all Flyfishers.

