

## **FOSAF CHAIRMAN'S 2017/18 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is an honour to once again report to FOSAF's executive, membership and other external stakeholders on our activities, challenges and achievements during the past year. As in past years we will use the prior strategic framework for this purpose.

### **EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:**

#### **State:**

While FOSAF continued to engage in good faith with government departments to have the Phakisa win-win implemented our efforts were not reciprocated. We were able to successfully finalise the process of mapping "where trout occur".

However, despite completing the process and some cooperation from many of the provincial conservation authorities as well as the SANBI technical staff no final maps were forthcoming from DEA. In addition despite invitations to work with the DEA and others on harmonising the legislation (national and provincial) to facilitate the agreed enabling environment for the trout value chain our offers were never taken up.

In June last year DEA unilaterally reneged on the Phakisa agreement. This breach of trust by government was reported to the Phakisa Steering Committee and then further escalated by Aquaculture SA on our behalf.

DEA again showed their bad faith by publishing new draft AIS regulations that seek to list trout as invasive. We have rallied support against this unfortunate development and we are grateful for the many letters and submissions made to the DEA in this regard by flyanglers and other trout value chain stakeholders. In addition we have also recently pulled together a consortium of stakeholders that include agriculture and game farming elements. The consortium members all made submissions and the consortium wrote to the Minister requesting a withdrawal of the gazetted notices to no avail. Lawyers acting *pro amico* are busy finalising an application to court to declare the notices unlawful and the matter should be before court soon.

We are grateful for the support we have received and the thousands of hours (and all your kind donations) that have been invested by the trout value chain and other stakeholders. Thank you to all those people and organisations who continue to support this campaign. We will continue to keep you apprised of the progress we make.

#### **Public:**

I am more than a little puzzled when people appear to know little or nothing about FOSAF and what it is we do. Objectively speaking, FOSAF continues to maintain a visible presence on the internet and social media. We are once again indebted to Peter Arderne, his cadre of reporters across the country and the webmaster Andrew Vester for ensuring our relevance and profile. The Fly of the month is also doing well as a promotional endeavour. Despite needing to take it easier, Peter has agreed to stay on while we find someone to take on his role. Once again we need to recognise the important responsibility Peter has selflessly carried out for FOSAF on our collective behalf. I urge one of our younger tech and social media savvy members to pick up this responsibility and give Peter the rest he deserves. Our thanks are also due to Vicky for supporting his efforts.

Every year over the last while we have bemoaned the fact that FOSAF needs to find a way to foster youth, race and gender and to involve communities, especially in the rural areas where flyfishing is often an important potential contributor to livelihoods. This remains a priority. Some work is being done in KZN by Andrew Fowler and his team and we should hear more about this in the future. It is heartening to see that the Northern region's youth education project has begun to reach a sizable number of historically disadvantaged young people. Our congratulations go out to Chris Williams and his team. The support of partner organisations and sponsors is also highly appreciated.

I am again happy to report that our membership whose participation is crucial continues to grow slowly. Membership remains a tricky issue. As always, we welcome any and all suggestions in this regard.

FOSAF continues to be an active member of Trout SA nationally. It has been agreed that we will be a "national member" and that our involvement in the regions is less crucial. TSA have revised their structures to provide for more efficient representation. Our involvement with TSA has provided a useful entre to AGRI SA and BUSA. Thus after presenting to AGRI SA's natural resources committee they agreed to make submissions on the NEMBA AIS regulations. This means we are able to leverage support at a much more effective level. This can only be beneficial going forward.

#### **Anglers:**

Many of you will have been alarmed at Flyfishing magazine's shift to e-publishing. I have received a lot of messages of concern in this regard. Many centre around the accessibility of the new format and the difficulty of reading it once accessed. This is something we will take up with the management team in the year ahead. We are again indebted to Erwin Bursik and Sheena Carnie for their coverage and on-going support of FOSAF activities. However, our coverage does not end there. The Mission has offered us support and many other talk groups and forums are keen to assist. Once again our thanks are due to Stuart and Liz Tough who publish and distribute the Tippet which continues to remain a positive and respected mouthpiece for FOSAF.

As was the case last year FOSAF engages with many other angling bodies including the competitive fly anglers SAFFA. SAFFA's support has been most appreciated and I am pleased to say that the positive spirit I spoke about last year continues to grow. I will be attending the SACRAA Bosberaad on 16 May 2018 to share our views and perspectives among the other angling organisations participating.

#### **INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:**

##### **EXCO**

We have had a number of skype and Telkom conference calls this year. While the former proved to be challenging the latter was a more effective but less inexpensive way of communicating. Thus while the EXCO has not met on a face to face basis, we have remained in touch and have kept communication going by emails, and calls. I also continue to stay in touch with chapter Chairperson's and other EXCO members telephonically.

Once again our thanks go to Stuart and Liz as the Secretariat and Treasury who act as a vital fulcrum for communication by keeping us all in touch. They also deal with membership/supporter applications and renewals and the finances.

Once again I also wish to thank our President Andrew Levy and Vice-presidents Tom Sutcliffe and Bill Mincher for their wise counsel and inputs from time to time.

## **CHAPTERS**

Chapter Chairperson's will provide reports and any key matters arising will be discussed at the EXCO. Accordingly, I will not dwell on these given time and space constraints. It remains for me to thank the Chapter Committees under the able leadership of Martin von Holdt (and Brian Clark), Jim Read (and Tom Bloy), Leonard Flemming and Chris Williams respectively.

It important to note that our Chapters have remained healthy with some growth evident and hopefully this will continue in the year ahead.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

Dr Bill Bainbridge continues to lead this committee. While much of the focus has been on the NEMBA process which is reported on above, Bill and I have not yet found the time to finish the review of FOSAF's policies and guidelines document. Bill is wanting to step down and I want to thank him for his many years of dedicated service to FOSAF. I earnestly believe that it was Bill's foresight for the need for a principled and policy based approach that has resulted in the kind of steadfast manner we have resisted making easy deals that result in problematic outcomes.

Despite what some conservationists say, FOSAF has been a pathfinder in developing a new and more tempered and progressive approach to biodiversity management and conservation. Bill has guided this and deserves our heartfelt appreciation.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING**

I have already spoken about Peter Arderne's efforts in communications. However, getting our message across in a manner that resonates with the broad variety of flyfishers and other anglers requires a much more nuanced and at times targeted approach. I am happy to say that KZN has a small group of people who are slowly working at revising some of the messages and these can be broadcast to attract better support for FOSAF. We will need to consider how we expand these endeavours going forward.

## **CONCLUSION**

This year's AGM and EXCO signals the further culmination of my long held wish to see FOSAF as a national body that functions nationally. This year we are in my home area and we trust that this trend will continue. This brings FOSAF closer to our members and allows for better interaction with regions. Hopefully we will also get some much needed new fishing done this way as well!

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks must go to Jim Read and his KZN Region team thanks for your generosity and hospitality. I have been privy to Jim's organising skills and endeavours and he is a veritable machine at getting things done. Our special thanks also go to Mollers and the NFFC who have opened their farm and hospitality and their waters to us. Thanks are also due to Peter Brigg for sharing his insights on his journey in flyfishing with us.

Also to Stuart and Liz Tough who despite their absence have made sure some of the documents and arrangements were in place.

Thanks are also due to:

- Our Auditors Prof Swanepoel of A.P. Swanepoel and Co must be thanked for efficiently doing the necessary in a very short space of time and producing readable AFS;
- and the rest of the EXCO for their on-going support and commitment.

As I said last year I really believe flyfishing in South Africa is undergoing a renaissance: The continuance of the Fly Fishing Film Tour SA, the Fly-tying and -fishing Expo and the many festivals as well as the highly supported flyfishing social media platforms all auger well for a resurgence of the multifaceted sport we all love so dearly.

Long may it continue and grow and thanks for all your support!

Ilan Lax  
FOSAF Chairperson  
April 2017