

FOSAF CHAIRMAN'S 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Another year has passed so quickly and it is once again my privilege to report to FOSAF's members, leadership, partners and stakeholders on our various activities, challenges and achievements during the last year. As in past years we will follow the strategic framework format.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

The State:

It was reported last year that despite our good faith efforts to engage with the DEA, it had unilaterally reneged on the Phakisa agreement. Not only did this make a mockery of all our mapping and other engagements at both provincial and national levels, but it meant that the funds we had raised for this were largely spent on an outcome which it now appears clear that DEA (and its partners) never intended honouring. What was not a waste of money or time was the development of a useful mapping tool and data set that has provided us with our own reliable maps against which to assess and compare those being produced by SANBI and other entities (based on purist thinking and sadly lacking any iota of practical applicability) in this on-going debacle.

after years of attempts to negotiate a lawful, workable and sustainable basis for regulating South Africa's trout fishery were rejected by DEA, FOSAF has as a last resort, served papers to interdict the Minister of Environmental Affairs. We are indebted to our legal team who are acting *pro amico*. At this stage we have filed and served our replying affidavit and all that remains is for the parties to file heads of argument so the case can be set down for argument, hopefully before year end.

In a nutshell FOSAF is seeking to set aside the draft NEMBA AIS Lists and Notices published by the Minister in February 2018 (and the various correction notices published subsequently), because they do not comply with the requirements laid down in section 100 of NEMBA. These Notices are defective because the Minister failed to properly advertise them, failed to allow the prescribed time and most importantly, failed to provide "sufficient information to enable members of the public to submit meaningful representations or objections." This failure to provide basic information in relation to the extent, nature of and reasons for the proposed changes, undermines the Constitutional right to informed consultation and participation in law making that underpins the right to dignity and which promotes good law making and effective and accountable government.

Another area that sees FOSAF challenging the State involves the Aquaculture Development Bill tabled in Parliament last year. FOSAF as a member of Trout SA and through it Aquaculture SA, are opposing this Bill which contrary to its title, will not enable the development of the sector because it duplicates a range of existing controls and permits that over-complicate what should be a simple and practical framework for farming aquatic species. We have registered as I&APs with parliament. Aqua SA has commissioned an economic study on the impacts of the Bill and in addition are facilitating a legal opinion regarding the constitutionality of some parts of the Bill. It is the sector's view that Aquaculture is and must remain part of Agriculture. A few minor amendments to existing agricultural legislation will ensure there are adequate controls and management provisions to cover aquaculture. This is a much more workable and cost-effective alternative to what the Bill proposes.

I must offer a huge thank you to all those people and organisations who have kindly invested thousands of hours and donations to support the trout value chain. We will continue to keep you informed about our progress in these important campaigns.

Public:

In the past year FOSAF has upped its profile considerably. Notwithstanding this many people still claim to know little or nothing about FOSAF and what it is we do. I find this so difficult to understand.

Peter Arderne, Andrew Vester (our webmaster) and the great team of countrywide reporters ensure that FOSAF continues to maintain a visible presence on the internet and social media. Peter remains a steadfast slave driver of this merry bunch of flyanglers and we are grateful to him and them for their updates and maintaining our profile. The Fly of the month feature continues to be well supported. May I remind you that we urgently need a group of people to take on Peter's role. I can't stress enough the important responsibility Peter with Vicky's support has selflessly performed for FOSAF.

I am grateful to the many flyfishers out there who have without much fanfare knuckled down and got stuck in helping with a range of community based issues like the sewerage issues in the Vaal and Crocodile catchments, mining problems in the trout triangle, the litter clean ups and river health education and fishing programs for young people, various research initiatives, community based flyfishing ventures, and riparian zone clean up initiatives. All of these done on a voluntary basis.

Chris William's who works on behalf of FOSAF and the YWG, together with a range of allies, keeps us updated on an almost weekly basis. One of the tragedies of our society is that many people do not realise that it is the citizenry that own South Africa's infrastructure. Unless we all buy-in to the efforts to ensure these communal assets are maintained and kept in working order, none of us will be able to realise the right enshrined in Section 24 a) of the Constitution which reads: "Everyone has the right- ... to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being;" But for the SANDF's involvement in repairing and safeguarding such vital infrastructure the situation would be a lot worse.

Last year I spoke about Andrew Fowler's work on riparian zone vegetation removal. That work has continued and in addition the NFFC have revived the project started by the Bushman's River Fishing Club - where it is working with the amaHlubi Community to provide excellent fishing for its members and the public. A steady income for the community will see this project achieving useful results.

These are just two examples of sterling work being done by flyfishers across the country. They deserve our support and congratulations. It is this kind of example that promotes the flyfishing ethos and spirit that FOSAF seeks to engender in the youth and other newcomers to our sport.

FOSAF continues to be an active member of Trout SA. We participate in a useful think tank that draws on opinion leaders from a range of resource based entities all of who find themselves at the sharp end of national policies and the insidious legislative overreach aimed at control and co-option rather than building a vibrant economy that all South Africans can become part of. Our participation allows for access to national commodity based and business formations like AGRI SA and BUSA. Leveraging the links built last year we are able to box way above our weight. In addition it has been heartening to find support for our policy based approach which eschews unethical deal making. This has

meant that regardless of the issue or the forum we find ourselves in, our thinking is appreciated and is often endorsed by many of the stakeholders we come into contact with. This had proved to be a valuable approach which I believe will serve us well in the future.

Anglers:

Much concern was expressed at Flyfishing magazine's shift to e-publishing. In hindsight, this signalled that all was not well with the publication. We repeat our gratitude to Erwin Bursik, the late Dave Rorke and Sheena Carnie for their coverage and on-going support of FOSAF activities. Resurrected as the Southern African Fly Fishing Magazine by Ian Cox, Andrew Mather and Andrew Savides the publication continues to grow from strength to strength and still provides FOSAF with a useful platform. The Mission is another excellent publication that has also offered us support. The many flyfishing talk/chat groups and forums have also been valuable. Finally the Tippet remains an important and respected mouthpiece for FOSAF. Our sincere appreciation must go to Stuart and Liz Tough who have been responsible this publication since its inception. You will no doubt agree with me that they have done a sterling job in doing so.

FOSAF continues to network and engage with many other angling bodies including the competitive fly anglers SAFFA. The positive energy that abides between our organisations and the mutual support and respect we have experienced is much appreciated.

I indicated last year that I would be attending the SACRAA Bosberaad in May 2018. This was a useful opportunity to share views and perspectives. I believed FOSAF's presence and contribution was appreciated. Although we do not always see eye to eye on some things, the mutual respect and shared interests mean that we must continue to work together in the best interests of flyfishing.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

Secretariat

It is with sense of regret that I announce the news that Liz and Stuart Tough have resigned as the FOSAF Secretariat. They have been the backbone of FOSAF for the last 23 years since taking over the administration of FOSAF from Pam and Jim Read. They were responsible for FOSAF membership issues including renewals and communication with new members, liaison with the magazine and lucky draw prizes as well as producing the Tippet, financial management and payments. They also demonstrated excellent organising skills in looking after the logistics and communication for AGMs and the EXCO meetings and communication between EXCO members. This was indeed not an easy job, as they have had to deal with individual members scattered across the country as well as Chapter Committees situated in each region.

We have all developed close relationships with these stalwarts of flyfishing over the years and we are indeed going to miss their efficiency and commitment. We would like to thank Stuart and Liz sincerely for having looked after the FOSAF administration so well for such an extended period. It is my privilege to express our very great appreciation and admiration on behalf of all of us at FOSAF as well as other members of the flyfishing community for all they have done over the years. We wish them well and everything of the best in this next chapter of their lives.

EXCO

We have had a number of Telkom conference calls this year. This remains an effective and relatively inexpensive way of communicating. Emails have also been a useful way of

staying in touch. I also regularly telephone chapter Chairperson's and other EXCO members to ensure we all stay in touch and up to date with current matters of interest and concern.

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 Brian Clark (and reg Morgan), Jim Read (and Tom Bloy), Leonard Flemming (and now Tudor Caradoc-Davies) 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 has ably led this committee for many years. He has indicated a need to start taking things a little easier and this is why Andrew Mather has agreed to step up to the plate to provide some support. As I said last year we owe Bill a huge debt of gratitude for his 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 could often result in problematic outcomes. It is Bill's leadership that guided FOSAF to be a pioneer in developing a more pragmatic and progressive approach to biodiversity management and conservation.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Sadly the efforts at developing a much more nuanced and at times targeted approach to marketing FOSAF did not achieve the outcomes we had hoped for. I am hoping that in the year ahead a new bunch of FOSAF people can pick up this task work at revising some of the messages we need to get out there so that these can be used to attract better support for FOSAF. We will need to consider how we promote and 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 the splendour of the Mpumalanga Trout Triangle and we trust that this trend will continue. It is important to bring FOSAF closer to our members and regions and new people there. Hopefully we will also get to wet a line in these places by doing this as well!

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks must go to Peter and Vicky Arderne, Chris Williams and their team for the generosity and hospitality. Our special thanks also go to the Dullstroom Inn and Middlepunt Farm for hosting us.

My heartfelt thanks are also due to:

- Our Auditor Prof Swanepoel of A.P. Swanepoel and Co for efficiently and speedily producing readable AFS; and
- last but not least - the rest of the EXCO for their on-going support and commitment.

Ilan Lax
FOSAF National Chairperson
(April 2019)