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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR THE 100th BUSINESS YEAR 2024/25

on Thursday, 4 September 2025 at 19h00
at Namibia Scientific Society, 110 Robert Mugabe Avenue, Windhoek.

Attending:
- in person: 29 members, 2 non-members
- virtually (via Zoom): 6 members and 1 non-member;

The attendance register is available for inspection at the NSS office.

Apologies: 10 members and 16 guests sent their apologies.
The list of apologies is available in the NSS office.

Minutes recorded by: Ruth Moldzio

1. Welcome

The Chairperson of the Committee, Prof. Michael Backes, welcomed all present, with special mention of corporate members, representatives of study and regional groups, and partner organisations.

As more than 15 members were present, the meeting was duly constituted, and the quorum met.

2. Supplement to the agenda under Miscellaneous

Members were invited to propose additional topics for the agenda under Miscellaneous. No items were added.

3. Acceptance of the minutes of the AGM held on 15 August 2024

It was noted that the minutes had been distributed in the 2024 Newsletter, included with the AGM invitation, and made available at the entrance to the venue.

Michael Backes informed the meeting of an error in the previous minutes: the financial report had not been seconded by Rob Johnston, but by Robert West. No further amendments were proposed.

The minutes were accepted as amended, proposed by Lutz von Dewitz and seconded by Diana Thompson.

4. Discussion and acceptance of the Committee’s Annual Report

The Committee's Annual Report was presented by Prof. Backes.
Key highlights included:

- The special events and projects planned and executed in the year
- The envisaged revamp project of the administration building and the final result
- The vision for the future (new library building)

The full report will be published with the minutes in the 2025 Newsletter.
The members present acknowledged the report by acclamation.

5. Annual Reports by the study groups

The annual reports of the following study groups were presented:

- Astronomy Working Group: Presented by Lutz von Dewitz
- Namibia Ornithology Group (Namibia Bird Club): Presented by Gudrun Middendorff
- Herpetology Working Group: Presented by Alfred Schleicher
- Namibian Hydrogeological Association (NHA): Presented by Ester Gustavo

All reports were received with appreciation and will be published with the AGM minutes in the 2025 Newsletter.

6. Annual Reports by the regional groups

Prof. Backes noted that despite two written requests, the Namibia Scientific Society had, unfortunately, not yet received the annual report from the Tsumeb Museum.

The annual report of the Grootfontein Museum was presented by Gunter von Schumann.

The annual report of the Lüderitz Museum was presented by Doran Schoeman.

All reports of the regional groups were acknowledged and can be viewed at the NSS offices.

7. Discussion and approval of the Business & Financial Report

The Annual Financial Report for the financial year April 2024 – March 2025 was presented by Treasurer Francois du Plessis.

An overview of income and expenses was given. It was noted that while current financial assets had decreased owing to the building renovations, the total asset value had increased by nearly N$900,000, attributed to an appreciation in property value.

The report was accepted as presented, proposed by Hanjo Böhme, and seconded by Johannes van der Westhuizen.

8. Appointment of an auditor

Prof. Backes informed the members that the Namibia Scientific Society (NSS) is currently registered with the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) as a members' association, but is not registered with the Business and Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA) as a business entity.

In the light of potential legislative changes and the anticipated need to apply for grants related to the planned library construction project, the possibility of registering the NSS as a Section 21 company is currently under consideration.

Until such a change is formally implemented, it was proposed that Beancounter Financial Services CC continue to oversee the Society's financial affairs, based on their reliability and established track record.

This proposal was seconded by Gudrun Middendorff and received unanimous support from all members present.

9. Stipulation of the Membership Fees

The Committee proposed that the membership fee should remain unchanged, as the last increase was implemented in 2023.
The members present agreed. The fees for 2025/2026 will therefore be:

- N$ 400.- for Namibian members,
- N$ 4000.- for corporate members, and
- € 20.- for foreign members.

A 50% discount continues to apply to pensioners and students.

10. Approval of the Committee's actions

Dieter Ludwig offered to formally move for the approval of the Committee's actions. Before doing so, he expressed his appreciation for the dedication and contributions of both past and current Committee members, and invited those present to observe a moment of silence in honour of the late members.

He reflected on the challenges of the past year, noting that it had been a particularly demanding, yet meaningful, one. He expressed his sincere appreciation to the Committee and staff for their exceptional commitment and, in many cases, voluntary service.

The motion was seconded by Gudrun Middendorff, Hanjo Böhme, and Dr John Irish.

The proposal was received with applause and unanimously approved by all members present.

11. Election of the Committee:

Prof. Backes thanked Dieter Ludwig for his kind words and outlined the composition of the Committee for the past year:

- Prof. Michael Backes (Chairperson),
- Frank Wittneben (Vice - Chairperson),
- Francois du Plessis (Treasurer),
- Doran Schoeman,
- Guido Röschlau,
- Heike Uhrich,
- Michael Hasheela,
- Dr Roger Swart,
- Zandré Duvenhage,
- Alfred Schleicher (Co-opted)

In accordance with the Constitution, the terms of Prof. Backes, Mrs Uhrich, and Messrs Wittneben, Hasheela, and Duvenhage had expired. All of these Committee members made themselves available for re-election. As the maximum number of Committee members permitted (nine) would be met, and no further nominations were received, the re-election of all nominees was proposed without a formal vote.

The proposal was approved by acclamation.

12. Amendments to the Constitution

Zandré Duvenhage presented the proposed constitutional amendments, which had been distributed more than 21 days in advance, in compliance with the Constitution. The changes were as follows:

- substitution of the old logo with the new logo
- substitution of the word *Committee* with *Executive Board* throughout the entire document
- addition of *Jubilee Membership* under # 4. Honorary Members

All changes were unanimously accepted.

13. Miscellaneous

No further matters were raised under this point of the agenda.

In closing, Prof. Backes thanked all members and guests for their participation and invited everyone to a social gathering following the official proceedings.

The AGM was closed at 21h00.

Prof. Michael Backes	Ruth Moldzio
Chairperson	CEO
Namibia Scientific Society	Namibia Scientific Society