

July 4 2007
Annual Members Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, Republic of South Africa
Meeting Minutes

Called to order by John Robinson at 4:08 PM. A quorum was present. The agenda was described; there were no calls for additional agenda items. (Note: “BoG” refers to the SCB Board of Governors, which met all day on July 1, and for 3 hours on July 4, 2007).

1. Kent Redford moved, Delali Dovie seconded that we approve the minutes from the 2006 Members Meeting in San Jose. Motion carried, 0 opposed.
2. Paul Beier moved, Eleanor Sterling seconded that we approve the single bylaws change to allow SCB members to vote for board members in two Sections (rather than only one section). This has been our practice since the Sections were founded, and the bylaws change simply brings the bylaws into conformance with practice. Motion carried, 0 opposed.
3. David Johns provided a financial report.
4. Alan Thornhill provided the Executive Office report, highlighting the free on-line access to our journals for SCB members in developing countries, and free SCB memberships.
5. Kathy Kohm reported on *Conservation* magazine, which now has a shorter name than its previous two names.
6. On behalf of the Governance Committee, John Robinson outlined the policy on working groups adopted at today’s Board meeting: Workgroups are groups of SCB members working on issues relevant to the mission of SCB with at least 20 members at provisional approval and at least 100 members one year later, with leadership selected internal to the workgroup. The SCB BoG must approve each workgroup, based on the Board’s review of a brief document submitted by the intended workgroup describing its scope, leadership, and proposed activities, with a review every 3 years based on a report of activities in the preceding 3 years. Workgroups cannot purport to represent SCB policies or positions. Support from the Executive Office is limited to identifying potential members, providing discussion list services and web space, and space in the Newsletter subject to editor’s discretion. Work groups do not receive financial support from SCB, but can funnel restricted grants through the EO. The EO may help workgroups conduct their elections.
7. On behalf of the Governance Committee, John Robinson reported that the Governance Committee is committed to take steps to increase transparency of the nomination process. As a first step, the BoG has decided that the Governance Committee will not simply present a slate to the BoG but will accompany the proposed slate with a rationale and discussion of the names brought forward. There will be more changes in the future to open up the nominations process, perhaps by expanding the membership of the Governance Committee.
8. Tom Sisk reported that SCB Chapters will become nested within Sections over the next few years. New chapters must have bylaws approved by the section, and must include bylaws specifying how the Chapter relates to the Section. Existing Chapters will gradually be integrated into their sections.

9. Bethany Woodworth led a discussion on the challenges of supporting both global and sectional meetings. In a recent survey 40% of SCB members indicated they would attend a sectional meeting but not a global meeting. The BoG discussed reasons for maintaining the global meeting every year (networking, policy impetus, critical mass for workgroups) and reasons to meet less often (increase support, attendance, and prominence of Section meetings, serve the 40% who would only attend a Section meeting, decrease carbon emissions). The BoG vote was tied 8-8 on this issue. We seek input from SCB members on this issue via email to conference@conbio.org. At the meeting, several participants spoke; most comments favored continuing to meet annually.
10. Eleanor Sterling reported on Education Committee activities.
11. Georgina Mace reported on SCB publications. A new journal Conservation Letters will launch in 2008. Gary Meffe will continue as Conservation Biology editor through 2009.
12. Paul Beier reported that 98% of the participants at this meeting voluntarily paid the surcharge to offset the greenhouse gas emissions due to all participants traveling to the meeting. The BoG decided to keep this as a voluntary part of the registration fee, and to continue to invest for 3 years (2007-2009) in a project to store carbon by restoring subtropical thicket in the Baviaanskloof Megareserve about 100 km west of this meeting site. This project promises to provide significant carbon storage, poverty reduction (by hiring many local people to restore the vegetation), and biodiversity conservation (by conserving this globally significant biome in the threatened Cape Floristic kingdom).
13. Luigi Boitani reported that SCB hired John Fitzgerald as our first policy director 6 months ago, and that this has revolutionized SCB's involvement in policy issues. John Fitzgerald explained how the policy committee and his office can work with sections and chapters on policy issues, and our 5 priority areas led by climate change and scientific integrity in government conservation activities.
14. John Robinson thanked outgoing committee chairs Erica Fleishman (Membership), Deborah Jensen (Governance), Aram Calhoun (Student Affairs), and Paul Beier (Carbon Offsets).
15. Section reports were provided by Delali Dovie (Africa: big MacArthur grant), Erik Wikramanayake (Asia: planning global meeting in Beijing in 2009), Craig Morley (Austral Asia: first-ever Section Meeting next week), Rodrigo Medellin (Austral and Neotropical America: participation in many projects), Andrew Pullin (Europe: first European Congress in 2006 had 1000 participants, 2nd congress will be in Prague in 2009), Ellen Hines (Marine: starting a strategic plan, will meet in 2009 in DC with the Marine Protected Areas group), and Reed Noss (North America: successful meeting with ICOET in Little Rock in May 2007, much activity on policy).
16. Bethany Woodworth announced that SCB will meet in Chattanooga, Tennessee 13-18 July 2008, in Beijing China 11-15 July 2009, in Canada in 2010, and in Australasia in 2011. David Aborn invited us to Chattanooga.
17. John Robinson thanked outgoing Board members and welcomed new ones, and passed the gavel to incoming President Georgina Mace.
18. Georgina Mace expressed her commitment to continued expansion of SCB. She sees the main challenges related to expanding demands on policy issues both in the new staff EO position and in the Sections, developing capacity of the Sections, and balancing SCB's global and sectional focuses. Her priorities are to continue progress on the goals of our strategic plan, developing our publications, and getting good science into policy.

19. Adjourned 6:16 PM.

/s/ Paul Beier, Secretary