



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

For The Financial Year Ended
31 March 2024

*WESSA 98th AGM
5 October 2024*

The year commenced with the appointment of new Directors at the Annual General Meeting held on 30 September 2023. The Board plays a vital role in shaping WESSA's strategic direction, providing executive oversight, and ensuring sound governance. We are fortunate to have a highly skilled and committed Board, willing to support and share their unique experience and expertise to advance WESSA.

I am particularly excited about the appointment of Augustine Morkel as our Vice Chairman. With his considerable experience in the conservation NGO sector and expertise in revenue generation and business development, Augustine has already made a significant contribution to our fundraising and revenue strategy. Similarly, the diverse skills and expertise of our Board are well positioned to fully enable a One WESSA approach required to drive our mission to Educate, Advocate, and Act.

We established a Business Development Committee focused on driving revenue generation and enhancing business development strategies, ensuring long-term financial sustainability of WESSA.

As the Board of WESSA, we are optimistic about the significant international and local developments in the conservation and environment sector. Key developments such as the Global Biodiversity Framework with its 30% protected areas target, the signed National Climate Change Act, the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity, and the UNESCO Greening Education Partnership among others are closely aligned with our mission. These initiatives support WESSA's core thematic areas of climate action, biodiversity and habitat conservation, and pollution reduction.

In March our previous CEO, Helena Atkinson transitioned to join the Peace Parks Foundation while continuing to serve on WESSA's Board as a Non-Executive Director. We wish her every success in her career and look forward to continuing close cooperation and collaboration with her.

I am proud to announce the appointment of Cindy-Lee Cloete as WESSA's CEO, effective 1 October 2024, following her role as Acting CEO since 1 March 2024. Having been with WESSA for over eight years, Cindy has excelled in leading our Programmes and Projects division. She brings new energy to the organisation and is widely respected in the sector for her intersectional approach to the well-being of both people and the planet. Cindy embodies WESSA's Educate, Advocate, and Act theory of change, and I am confident she will successfully lead the team in implementing our strategy, driving meaningful impact across our thematic areas.

We are energetically rolling out our strategy in our chosen thematic areas of climate action, biodiversity & habitat conservation, and pollution management. Through a "One-WESSA" approach we are enlisting the skills, experience, and energy of our volunteer membership structure to support our staff in the implementation of our strategy leading up to our Centenary in 2026 and beyond.

I would like to acknowledge the professional dedication, commitment and hard work of all our Board members, the CEO, Exco, and our staff as well as our volunteer members who continue to be the lifeblood of the organisation. Our gratitude to our donors, sponsors, and supporters without whom we would not be able to fulfil our mandate.



Chairman
Janssen Davies