



WESSA
PEOPLE CARING FOR THE EARTH

List of Board Members for re-election

TO THE WESSA BOARD



Non-executive Director: Dr Gary M Koekemoer

Gary has a deep interest in complex systems, especially human and natural interactions. He recently earned his PhD in philosophy with a focus on race and complexity systems. Prior to this, he obtained a Master's degree in Labour Relations, also with a systems-oriented perspective. His journey started with community mediation, where he played vital roles in the Port Elizabeth Peace Committee during the early 90s, working to foster collaborative efforts during South Africa's transition to democracy.

Afterward, Gary worked in executive HR positions in various FMCG corporations across Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. His extensive international experience living in diverse places has provided him with a profound understanding of various cultures, institutions, and natural environments.

In the past decade, he has devoted his efforts to leadership training and environmental activism. Gary holds multiple positions within WESSA, including serving on the national board, chairing the Environmental Governance Committee, and leading the WESSA Eastern Cape branch. As an open-water swimmer, he's passionate about the ocean and its preservation, engaging with the community, businesses, and municipalities to address environmental challenges. He also leads a team focused on climate-resilient development pathways for Nelson Mandela Bay and holds a post-doctoral research position at NMU's Institute for Social Cohesion and Identity (ISCIA). Gary is a dedicated advocate for environmental and societal well-being.



Non-executive Director: Mr John Wesson

John brings a wealth of experience and expertise in the field of parks, recreation, conservation, and wildlife management. He served as the head of parks, recreation, and conservation in a local authority in the Free State for nearly two decades. With professional qualifications as a Horticulturist, Landscape designer, and Parks and Recreation manager, John has dedicated his career to these areas. Notably, he holds the status of Fellow of the Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration (FIPRA) and has significant experience as a regional and senior manager with Wildlife Society of South Africa (WESSA).

Beyond his professional career, John is a multifaceted talent, excelling as a nature photographer, artist, and writer. He is also an experienced trails and adventures leader and a lecturer in birding, gardening, and photography. With over 45 years of birding experience, he has served as an honorary conservation officer for Free State conservation for about two decades. His diverse skill set includes security training, wildlife, bird, and photographic safaris

guiding, as well as recognised fellowships such as the Fellowship of the Photographic Society of SA (FPSSA).

He is a professional member of the Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA) and a longstanding Rotarian with a Paul Harris PH+8 recipient status. His commitment to environmental causes is demonstrated through his leadership as Chairman of various organisations, including WESSA, Birdlife Harties, Magaliesberg Protection Association, National Association of Conservancies of SA, and as the manager, editor, picture editor, and writer for the African Wildlife & Environment magazine. John also held positions as Chairman of WESSA Goldfields and established several bird clubs during his four-decade-long involvement. His photography skills extend to his role as a director of the Photographic Society of South Africa, and he is actively engaged in citizen science, with a record of over 450 full protocol cards submitted and as a SAFRING registered bird ringer.



WESSA Chairman, Non-Executive Director: Mr Janssen Davies

Appointed as Chairman of WESSA's Board of Directors in October 2023, Janssen Davies brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to WESSA's mission of safeguarding the planet for future generations. With a proven track record of leadership in the environmental and business sectors, Janssen is well-poised to guide WESSA into a new era of impact and sustainability as the organisation approaches a millennium of conservation in Southern Africa.

He plays a pivotal role in setting the strategic direction for WESSA ensuring the continued success of initiatives aimed at combating climate change, conserving biodiversity and reducing pollution. He works closely with a dedicated team of experts, staff, membership, and partners to further the organisation's mission and advancement in educating, advocating and acting with and for citizens of the country.