

Motions to amend the Constitution of the Australian Society for Fish Biology

Note: Motions 1-3 are those that were approved at the 2008 AGM (with some minor modifications), but for administrative reasons (of the Victorian legislation under which the ASFB is a registered society) have to be voted on again

Motion 1:

Background

Amendment will allow up to 2 State and Territory representatives on the Executive Council plus up to 2 student representatives

It is proposed to amend section 23 (1) (e) from

“Subject to section 23 of the Act, the Council shall consist of:--

(a) the officers of the Society;

(b) the immediate past President;

(c) the Newsletter Editor;

(d) the Workshop Editor; and

(e) additional Councillors, numbering not less than eight, nor more than eleven members, including one from each state and territory—

each of whom shall be elected at an annual general meeting of the Society in accordance with Rule 24, sub-clauses (3-6); or if no general meeting is held during the year, an election by postal vote

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

(e) additional Councillors, numbering not less than *nine*, nor more than *eighteen* members, including *up to two* from each state and territory *and up to two student members*—

each of whom shall be elected at an annual general meeting of the Society in accordance with Rule 24, sub-clauses (3-6); or if no general meeting is held during the year, an election by postal vote

Motion 2:

Background

Amendment will formalise existing practice of having New Zealand representatives on the Executive Council

It is proposed to amend section 23 (1) to include a new subsection (f):

(f) additional Councillors, up to two members as representatives of New Zealand

Motion 3:

Background

Amendment will allow 2-year terms for Exec Council representatives

It is proposed to amend section 23 (2) from:

(2) Each ordinary member of the Council shall, subject to these rules, hold office until the annual general meeting next after the date of his election but is eligible for re-election

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

(2) Each ordinary member of the Council shall, subject to these rules, hold office until the second annual general meeting next after the date of his/her election but is eligible for re-election

Motion 4 (change from financial year membership to rolling membership)

Background

Continuous subscription via the internet raises the question whether it would be more appropriate to set up a rolling membership from the date of payment to the day prior to that date in the following year, e.g. from 3 April 2009 to 2 April 2010. Although the constitution states that the annual subscription is tied to the financial year, some members may be discouraged from extending their subscription when realising that their subscription lasted only a few months.

It is proposed to amend section 8 (2) from

8.(1) The Society will derive its normal operational funds through annual subscriptions.

(2) The annual subscription is payable on or before 1 July of each year.

(3) Subscription rates shall be established or altered by a majority vote of the members present at an annual general meeting.

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

8.(1) The Society will derive its normal operational funds through annual subscriptions.

(2) The annual subscription is payable any time during the year and is valid for 12 months.

(3) Subscription rates shall be established or altered by a majority vote of the members present at an annual general meeting.

Motion 5 (reduction in time for membership to lapse)

Background

Currently, a member whose subscription is not paid within the two years following their due date will no longer be considered member of the Society. This rule originates from the time when members mainly paid their subscriptions at conferences and thus could retain membership even when missing a conference.

This lapse period seems excessive now that we have online membership payment and we should shorten this period to 12 months (which allows some time to potentially receive arrears membership payments)

It is proposed to amend section 10 (1) from

10.(1) A member whose subscription is not paid within the two years following that date will no longer be considered member of the Society.

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

10.(1) A member whose subscription is not paid within the 12 months following that date will no longer be considered member of the Society.

Motion 6 (membership and eligibility)

Background

Motion 2 specifically incorporates New Zealand representation into the Executive Council. New Zealand representatives are also currently on several of the Society's committees (Threatened Fishes Committee, Alien Fishes Committee). In theory, they should be considered as 'Foreign' members under the current constitution, and consequently have no voting rights at the AGM. They also cannot be an office bearer as a Foreign member (see Motion 2). It seems logical to include them as 'ordinary' members.

Extending the above, is consideration of whether there should be a Foreign member category, noting that under the proposed changes only members from Australia and New Zealand can be elected to the Council (refer motions 1 & 2). There are, however, no stipulations on nationality for officers of the society.

Student membership is intended to facilitate involvement of students in the Society and to facilitate professional interaction, but student membership is currently restricted to Australian students only. ASFB student memberships are offered or proposed to be offered as parts of ASFB extension activities to other international societies (e.g. American Fisheries Society), but the current constitution does not strictly allow this. Similarly, the Executive Council has been approached to provide travel assistance for ASFB conference attendance to Pacific Island students (Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea etc). Furthermore, student membership currently does not distinguish between students in full-time employment who probably should qualify as ordinary members.

It is proposed to amend section 4 (1) from

4 (1) The membership of the Society shall consist of ordinary, student, life and foreign members: -

“Ordinary” membership is limited to resident individuals of Australia and its territories

“Student” members include students of Australian and Territorial universities and schools

“Foreign” members include all other individuals

“Life” membership is conferred on individuals considered to merit such recognition by the society in the manner described below

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined, deleted text is indicated with a strikethrough)

4 (1) The membership of the Society shall consist of ordinary, student, and life members: -

“Ordinary” *members refer to individuals who do not qualify for student membership or life membership*

“Student” members include registered students of recognised tertiary or secondary education institutions who are not in full-time employment

~~“Foreign” members include all other individuals~~

“Life” membership is conferred on individuals considered to merit such recognition by the society in the manner described below

Motion 7 (timing of annual general meeting)

Background

The current constitution prescribes that the AGM shall be held between 1 July and 30 October each calendar year, as this timing for conferences usually coincided with a university break (allowing those employed at Tertiary institutions to attend). The Society has not always held its AGM between these dates, (e.g. the 2009 Freemantle Conference) and so the bracket of dates should or removed.

Note: requirements of the Incorporation Body (Consumer Affairs Victoria), under which the ASFB was incorporated, may mean we may not be able to alter the timing of the AGM – this needs to be clarified prior to voting at the AGM.

It is proposed to amend section 13 (1) from

13 (1) The Society shall in each calendar year, between 1 July and 30 October, convene an annual general meeting of its members

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

13 (1) The Society shall in each calendar year, between 1 March and 30 November, convene an annual general meeting of its members

Motion 8 (publishing of agenda for annual general meeting)

Background

The current constitution requires the agenda for the annual general meeting to be published in the Society's newsletter prior to the AGM. This is rarely done, as the newsletter is only published twice a year and agenda items may often be generated by Executive Council meetings held after the newsletter has been published.

It is proposed to amend section 13 (6) from

13 (6) The agenda of the annual general meeting shall be published in the last Newsletter of the Society circulated prior to the Annual General Conference

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

13 (6) The agenda of the annual general meeting shall be circulated prior to the Annual General Meeting

Motion 9 (Duties of Workshop Editor)

Background

The current constitution states that the responsibilities of the Workshop Editor are to organise the scientific content and editing of the Proceedings of Workshops held in conjunction with the annual conference. These duties reflect the past situation where the Society's Workshop Editor was a professional editor, and was intimately involved in the preparation of the workshop proceedings. In recent years the role has changed, and the workshop editor has little role in organising the preparation of or editing the proceedings. The role of this position is now that of workshop and conference oversight and coordination, providing advice to the workshop and conference organising committee, discussion and suggestion of potential workshop themes etc, and the title and duties should be changed to reflect this.

It is proposed to amend section 30 from

Workshop Editor

30. The Workshop Editor shall be responsible for organising the scientific content and editing the Proceedings of Workshops held in conjunction with the annual conference.

to (changed or additional text is in italics and underlined)

Conference and Workshop Coordinator

30. The Conference and Workshop Coordinator shall facilitate, on behalf of the Society, the organisation of the annual conference and related events and the delivery of outputs that arise.

It is also proposed to amend other sections of the Constitution which refer to Workshop Editor to reflect the change in title to Conference and Workshop Coordinator) [section 23 (1)(d); 23 (3)]