

**UPDATE ON NEM:BA AND THE AIS REGULATIONS
NOVEMBER 2009**

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (or “SANBI”) has been assisting the Department of Environmental Affairs with various technical issues related to the formulation of the draft regulations on Alien and Invasive Species (“AIS”) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (“NEM:BA”). SANBI co-ordinated the trout workshop held in Pietermaritzburg in January, at which Dr Ernst Swartz of the SA Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity (“SAIAB”) announced that a series of workshops to map the present distribution of trout would be held in those provinces in which trout presently occur (following the introductions made over a century ago). This exercise would form the basis for the delineation of trout zones, within which the management of trout (listed in the regulations as an Invasive Species Regulated by Area) will be accepted as a valid land use, when the regulations are promulgated.

Members of the Environmental Committee and chapters have attended these workshops to contribute to the process. Those members of the Environmental Committee who attended the KZN workshop held in Pietermaritzburg in early June, provided detailed comment on the draft principles that would be employed in the trout mapping exercise. While these contributions were welcomed by Dr Swartz, the product that he finally sent out for comment was acutely disappointing, and unfortunately it has been necessary for both Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and we FOSAF representatives to reject them. Subsequently, we have been informed that Dr Swartz informed EKZNW that he will accept whichever model can be agreed upon in discussions between themselves and stakeholders. A workshop has been arranged in Underberg 7 – 9 November to find a compromise solution to balance the interests of biodiversity conservation and those of the trout industry – a message that we in FOSAF have been advocating since the start of the process to develop the AIS regulations. We have drafted a memorandum which outlines how we believe this can be achieved (at least in KZN Province), copies of which will be circulated after the workshop.

Dr W. R. Bainbridge,
Chairman, Environmental Committee
3.11.09