

DIRECTOR PROFILE

WESSA Non-Executive Board Director - Water

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

WESSA is a century-old, membership-based environmental NGO working nationally through education, advocacy and action for environmental and social justice. We lead citizen action in climate action, biodiversity and habitat protection, and promoting a culture on tolerance of pollution.

Cutting across these three priority areas is our focus on improving water security and water quality, being among the most pressing environmental and social issues in South Africa. As WESSA enters its second century, **the Board seeks an experienced leader who can strengthen its strategic governance of WESSA's work protecting South Africa's water resources**, including marine and freshwater ecosystems, estuaries, wetlands and catchments, and WESSA's role alongside government, municipalities and communities.

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

The Director should understand South Africa's water challenges: scarcity and variability, declining water quality, ageing infrastructure, and the governance of water at catchment, municipal, and national levels. Experience in at least one of the following will be particularly valuable: water resource management, hydrology, estuarine, wetland or freshwater ecology, water law and policy, municipal water services, or water stewardship. **Experience of, and exposure to, pollution and waste management and the legislation that governs them would also be advantageous.**

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BOARD

The Director will **give the Board informed insight on coastal, catchment and wetland priorities, on the evidence behind WESSA's advocacy** and guide how WESSA should engage with water institutions and local communities. The Director will help the Board ask the right questions and support the Executive team. The role does not carry operational programme responsibilities.

ATTRIBUTES

Beyond subject knowledge, the Director must bring sound governance judgement, integrity, accountability, discretion and the ability to challenge constructively and be heard. Previous board or senior leadership experience is strongly preferred, as is an understanding of fiduciary duties and of how a non-profit company/NGO board differs from an executive team. **A genuine commitment to WESSA's Mission, and the standing to represent the organisation and its members credibly in water governance and civil society forums, are essential.**

In support of greater diversity and representation on the WESSA Board, nominations of suitably qualified black women (African, Coloured and Indian, as defined in South African employment equity legislation) are particularly encouraged. **Persons in the employ of the state or who are an advisor or consultant contracted with a coastal municipality are ineligible for this role.**

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INDEPENDENCE AND BOUNDARIES OF THE ROLE

This is a governance role. It is separate from any technical, advisory or contractual engagement with WESSA's programmes and from the role of a WESSA Patron or donor. The Director is not appointed to represent an employer, sector body, funder or advocacy position. As with every WESSA director, the appointee will act in the best interests of the organisation as a whole, observe fiduciary duties, maintain appropriate independence, declare actual or potential conflicts of interest (including relationships with water utilities, water-use licence holders, municipalities or water-sector contractors that engage with WESSA), and recuse themselves where required.

The position is voluntary and carries no remuneration.

Applications/nominations to be sent to this email address: applications@wessa.co.za

The deadline for applications/nominations: 15h00 SAST, 30 November 2026

ENDS