

## Message from SANBI to BotSoc AGM

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc) have been strategic partners since both organisations were established in 1913. There is a long history of collaboration and mutual support between both organisations, which is well documented in various journals and magazines that have been published over the past century.

After 2000, SANBI formalized its arrangement with BotSoc which culminated in a Collaboration Agreement signed between both parties in December 2019. This agreement is currently under review, as per the terms of the agreement. One of the areas that has needed to be revised is the free access benefit to national botanical gardens by members of BotSoc. The existing access arrangement is no longer considered as a suitable and sustainable arrangement for SANBI, primarily due to the following reasons:

- Significantly reduced garden revenue as a result of the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions
- The need to ensure SANBI is able to engage in similar agreements with other like partners approaching it with terms which are equitable to all parties
- The fact that SANBI intends to explore its own loyalty benefit programme as many government agencies have, e.g. the 'Wild Card' system.

The Collaboration Agreement needed to be reviewed and amended through negotiation by both parties. New arrangements are being developed through consultation with BotSoc's Council and management representatives to take us forward as partners.

SANBI Management continues to value BotSoc as a strategic partner and looks forward to further collaboration underpinned by our revised agreement, once finalized, and mutual support as we move forward together under revised terms and conditions.

We urge members to continue to support BotSoc and SANBI to continue their important work in the biodiversity conservation sector, as this remains our focus as partners.



Mr. Elliot Mashile  
Chief Operations Officer, SANBI