



AFRICAN BONSAI ASSOCIATION

The African branch of World Bonsai Friendship Federation

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African Bonsai Association (ABA)

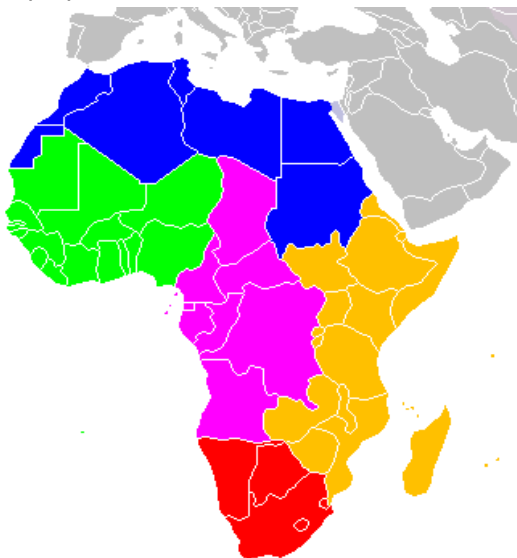
President Jonathan Cain
Vice President Willem Pretorius
Treasurer Heinrich Crystal

Restructuring

The African Bonsai Association's (ABA) penetration into the rest of Africa has declined. There are 11 political countries, that report into ABA. All of these country entities are either clubs, or a small group of people interested in bonsai. The only hierarchy region, with a National Body, Regional Structures and Clubs is South Africa, under the name of South African Bonsai Association (SABA). Reunion has also many clubs, but affiliates to France.

It was proposed in Nov2023 that the political countries merge into 5 sub regions. This is possible, due to communications and meetings, around the world, becoming easier. The structure would simplify the managing of 54 political African countries, where the sub regions could administer their bonsai interests, language and culture.

The proposed structure, would fall under fall under ABA having the following sub Regions.



1. Northern African Region
2. Southern African Region
3. Central African Region
4. Eastern African Region
5. Western African Region

Each of the 5 regions, would be represented through the Chairman of the sub-region, who will also be invited as International Consultants to WBFF. The 5 Chairmans, will administer their respective sub-Region, and report into ABA. The president of ABA, would remain the Director to WBFF, in line with the WBFF Bylaws.

Membership into the new structure will be clubs, business an individuals from the whole of the region of Africa. At face value this restructuring is welcomed and feasible. SABA, being the only paying affiliate to ABA, SABA will to have formally accept the re-structuring, through its members. However, this structuring will probably be on hold, as SABA is awaiting its Tax clearance. This Tax clearance will enable

sponsorships from Companies which will then be able to deduct these donations/sponsorships as a Tax-Deductible expense. Funding can also be applied for from the likes of the LOTTO and other Government Organisations which assist Non-Profit Companies in this regard.

The following countries have agreed to affiliate or Consult on their country's activities.

1. South Africa - affiliated
2. Mauritius
3. Madagascar
4. Reunion
5. Tunisia
6. Algeria
7. Namibia
8. Ghana
9. Botswana

SOCIAL MEDIA and INTERNET

Face Book remains an important and simple link to the events and what is happening in the bonsai world. African Bonsai Association has 3.8K members, while WBFF has 20.2K members.

The webpage links are as follows.

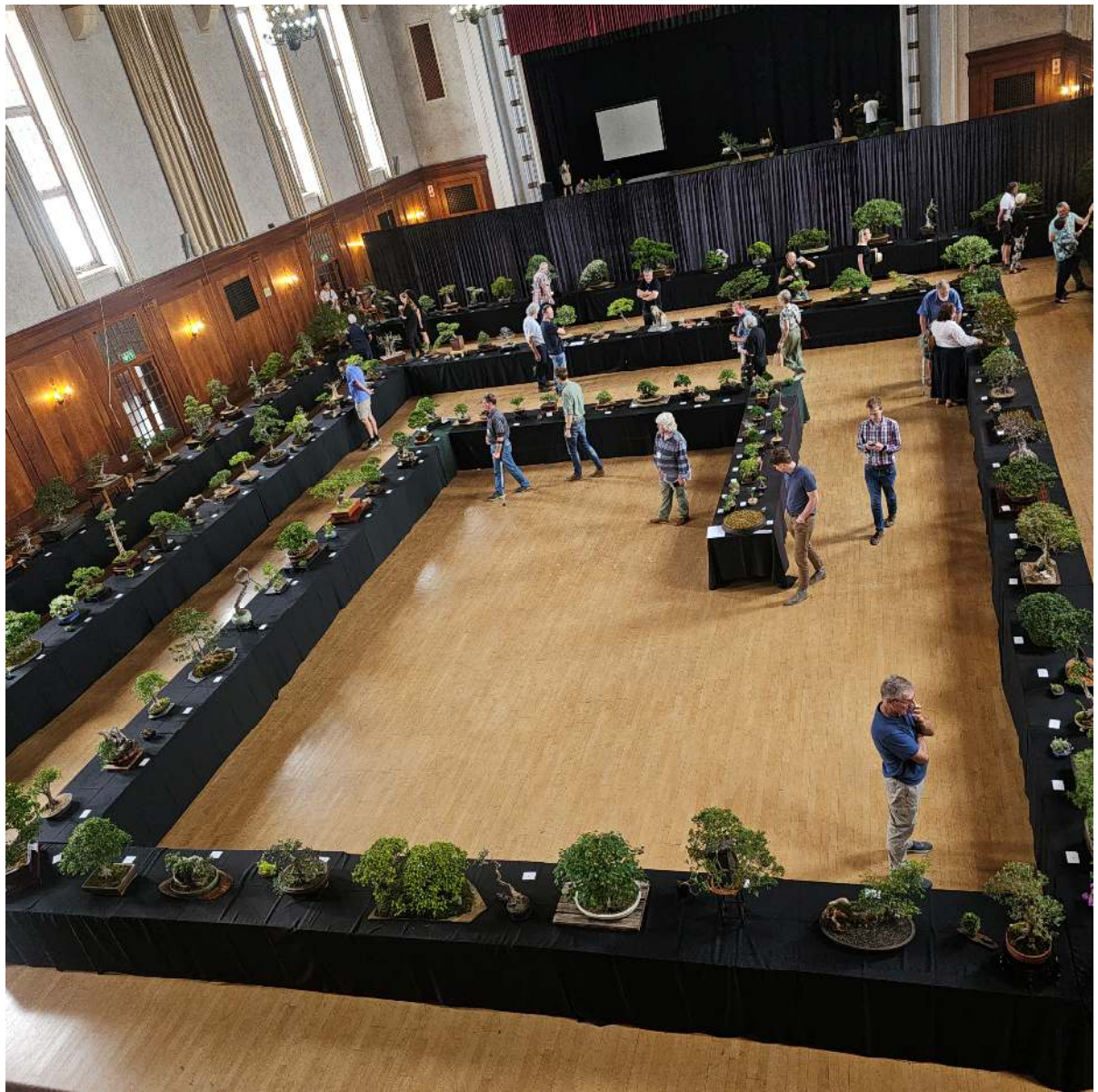
<https://www.saba.org.za/>

<https://www.africanbonsai.org/>

The 6th African Bonsai Convention Stellenbosch, Cape Town

Every 4 years, ABA invites the African Region to hosts an International Convention. The 6th African Convention was held in the town of Stellenbosch (Cape Town), Western Cape, South Africa. SABA, The Cape Regional Association of Bonsai and Boland Bonsai Kai, were the hosts.

Demonstrators from all regions around South Africa, showed their talents. The emphasis, was to encourage female talent, and the international Headliners were Elsa Boudouri from Greece and Jennifer Price from the USA.







Please look at some photos of the event.

<http://www.africanbonsai.org/ABC6Demonstrations.html>

<http://www.africanbonsai.org/ABC6Exhibition.html>

<http://www.africanbonsai.org/ABC6Awards.html>

<http://www.africanbonsai.org/ABC6NewTalent.html>

Jonathan Cain
President : African Bonsai Association.

WBFF report from South Africa

Membership

SABA currently have 19 clubs that belong to SABA. With a total of 464 members.

Convention

In 2024 SABA hosted African Bonsai Convention 6 in Stellenbosch Cape Town. Every year a National Bonsai event is held. The Pretoria/Johannesburg area will be next. BRAT will host a mini convention in last quarter 2025; date and venue are still to be set.

SABA Structuring

SABA welcomed Scott Bredin and dr André Swart as additional members to the SABA EXCO at the 1st meeting after the AGM at the end of 2024. EXCO online meetings, are held on a regular basis.

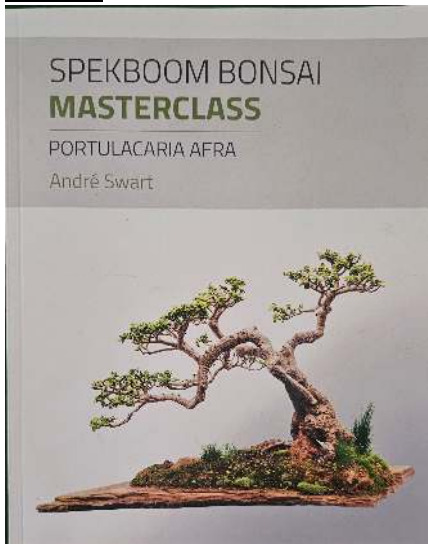
Feedback on the Tax Exemption and registration of SABA as a Non-Profit Company with the Department of Social Development.

Tax exemption has been obtained and confirmation of receipt of the registration documentation has been received from DSD; awaiting their feedback.

Online Meetings

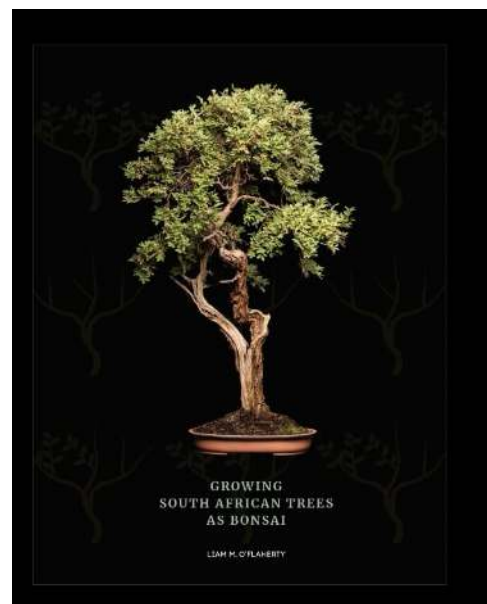
The monthly Katrivier Bonsai Kai, Zoom meeting is open to all SABA members. SABA will promote in the hope of enticing more members to join, this very informative platform.

Books



The book on Portulacaria afra “SPEKBOOM BONSAI MASTERCLASS” has been published by Dr Swart. This covers the species often referred to as “Dwarf Jade”. The species is widely used in bonsai in the region, being extremely tough and easy to grow.

South Africa is blessed with 742 numbered tree species. Many species, have not been tried and reported on their ability and suitability for bonsai. Another book on “Growing South African Trees as Bonsai” has been published by Liam O’Flaherty. This should go a long way on paving the road to new bonsai species.



WBFF report from Western Cape

The big event in our region last year was the 6th African Bonsai Convention which was held from 8-10 November 2024, in the city hall, of Stellenbosch.

For the first time in our history the two international headliners were female. This was deliberately done to attract more females to a mainly male dominated hobby. Jennifer Price from America and Elsa Boudouri from Italy were excellent and inspired a lot of women to join our exciting hobby.

ABC6 was well attended and the daily visitors exceeded expectations. The bonsai and suiseki display included 230 outstanding bonsai from all over the country. The display in the form of a labyrinth was the talk of the town and probably the best we've had at any national convention.

The demonstrations were of high quality and struck a fine balance between the exotic and indigenous. The highlight was when Jennifer and Elsa combined on stage to redesign a historic black pine from the national heritage collection dating from 1943.

The multiplying factor of a convention like this can not be underestimated. It could be seen at the end of year club exhibitions and by the new enthusiasm amongst bonsai people. I think it is fair to say we are back from the Covid lockdown with all clubs in the region registering new members.

At the end of the year we also had a bonsai exhibition at the Babylonstoren wine farm outside Stellenbosch with 70 trees on display that had visitors streaming in big numbers to the farm.

The rest of the year had the normal club activities and exhibitions. One new club in the region started in Hermanus which we hope will join the national body soon.

Willem Pretorius
International Consultant.

SPECIAL REQUEST FROM WILLEM PRETORIUS (vice President ABA and WBFF IC) TO WBFF

Hallo Jonathan,

I have started on a book with the working title The Ma in Bonsai – embrace the space. Though it is about the importance of space in designing bonsai it is also about how bonsai fills the empty space in people's lives.

I have over years interviewed various bonsai artists from all over who experienced trauma and took up bonsai to help them.

Without sounding melodramatic - in large part bonsai saved them.

For example we have a blind bonsai artist, one who lost his leg in a landmine, one who escaped Siberia, a ballerina whose career was ruined after an injury and took up bonsai when she saw a Literati. I myself found huge comfort in bonsai after I survived a car bomb. I have also discovered a local artist who use bonsai for traumatized people in therapy.

Furthermore we have various stories of how bonsai is used to inspire people and in the vision of WBFF help to build world peace across cultural divides.

Here I am thinking of the Hiroshima tree in America, we also have a Hiroshima peace tree bonsai forest in Stellenbosch, the forest of Nelson Mandela, the Friendship Forest designed in Paris, the wonderful stories of bonsai people helping out after the disasters of Fukusjima and the tsunami, etc.

The more I think about it the more excited I became.

Because the stories and people are from all over the world, I thought it would be a great project for the WBFF and I hope they can be the publisher.

I would also presume that board members of the WBFF would have many more inspiring stories of people in their own regions that would make such a book even more far reaching.

I will be doing the book, **but I request that with the WBFF** it could become so much more than just a local project.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

Willem.

WBFF report from Mauritius - Hem Nunkoon.

Since 2023 till now, we have been able to organise small Bonsai exhibitions, the last one was done in December 2024. It was a wonderful experience to meet people who thought that there were no Bonsai artists in Mauritius and many visitors were amazed to see Bonsai trees in this small Island.

This year, my wife and I have workshops at our house to welcome people of all ages who wish to learn the basics of Bonsai maintenance, those courses are free.

This year we welcome the arrival of Jonathan and Denise Cain, from South Africa.



Hendrik Koekemoer	President	Tel: 463587
Helga Wolf	Tesouriere	Tel: 402399
Thea Koekemoer	Sekretaresse	Tel: 463587

26 February 2025

Jonathan Cain
President ABA
WBFF – Director for Africa

RE: ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Dear Jonathan.

Namib Bonsai Kai, which is situated in Swakopmund Namibia, was founded in November 1997. Currently, this is the only bonsai club in Namibia, with members residing in Swakopmund, Walvis Bay, Hentiesbay and Tsumeb. During 2024, I received information from Bonsai growers in Windhoek, which are in the process of establishing a Bonsai club in Windhoek. This will be finalised during this year, 2025. It will be a very big benefit for Bonsai as such, where skills and knowledge can reach more people. We foresaw a very close relationship between us.

Namib Bonsai Kai held meetings every 2nd Saturday of each month, with the AMG held in February 2024. During the AMG, the management members are elected or re-appointed. No shows were held during 2024. A show in planning for Windhoek was postponed due to the venue/shopping centre being shifted to another place.

The meetings during 2024 were in the form of demonstrations on certain Bonsai topics and/or the more experienced members gave workshops where members worked on their trees and advice was given. Members were introduced to Indigenous species such as *Tamarix usneoides* (Tamarisk), *Sesamothamnus guerichii* (Herero Sesame-bush) and *Gymnosporia* (Namibia orange-spike thorn). They were also encouraged to use indigenous trees. A workshop was also held in August 2024 at one of our members in Tsumeb, which is 562 km from Swakopmund. During this meeting, members could work on different species, which are not growing, in our coastal climate.

Namib Bonsai Kai will strive to promote the art of Bonsai to the public of Namibia through meetings, demonstrations, workshops and shows.

Greetings

Hendrik Koekemoer
ABA Consultant
NAMIBIA