



ADVISORY NOTE: SAC2025/001ADV

Advisory Note to Registered Natural Scientists: Preparing for the Implementation of the Identification of Work (IoW)

1. PURPOSE

This Advisory Note is directed at all Registered Natural Scientists under the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP). It aims to provide guidance on the Identification of Work (IoW), explain its regulatory significance under the Natural Scientific Professions Act, 2003 (Act No. 27 of 2003) ("the Act"), and highlight steps that scientists should take to prepare for its implementation.

2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND MANDATE

SACNASP is a statutory professional regulatory body established under Section 2 of the Act. Its objectives include regulating the practice of natural scientific professions, ensuring public protection, and maintaining high standards of professional and ethical conduct.

SACNASP's authority to define and implement the IoW is derived from the following legislative provisions:

- Section 14(b): Determining the requirements for registration of categories and fields of practice;
- Section 14(d): Ensuring the maintenance of acceptable standards of natural scientific practice and professional conduct;
- Section 27: Submitting the Identification of Work for natural scientific professions to the Minister, through the Director-General of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), for formal determination.



3. DEFINITION OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF WORK (IOW)

The IoW is a statutory mechanism that defines categories of natural scientific work to be performed only by individuals registered with SACNASP in accordance with their field of practice and professional category.

Once formally determined, the IoW will serve as a regulatory instrument to:

- Clarify legal boundaries for the practice of natural science professions;
- Prevent unqualified or unregistered persons from executing defined scientific functions;
- Enhance accountability and ethical compliance in regulated work.

4. DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION HISTORY

SACNASP has initiated consultations with recognised Voluntary Associations (VAs), in line with its statutory obligation under Section 14(c) of the Act, which mandates the Council to consult with VAs in determining matters relating to the practice of natural scientific professions.

Upon conclusion of this process, further consultations will be undertaken with other impacted parties within the natural scientific professions, including government departments, public entities, academic institutions, and the private sector. The finalised IoW document will be submitted to the Director-General of the DSTI for consideration and formal determination in terms of Section 27(3) of the Act.

5. ENFORCEMENT AND APPLICATION

Upon formal determination, the IoW will form part of SACNASP's regulatory framework and enforcement mechanisms. It will:

- 5.1. Provide legal clarity on which categories of natural scientific work may be undertaken exclusively by registered persons;



- 5.2. Strengthen oversight and support the enforcement of ethical and professional standards;
- 5.3. Enable institutions and regulators to assess whether scientific work falls within a defined and protected scope under the loW.

6. CATEGORIES OF REGISTERED PERSONS

In terms of Section 18(1) of the Act, SACNASP registers individuals in the following categories:

- Professional Natural Scientist (Pr.Sci.Nat.)
- Certificated Natural Scientist (Cert.Sci.Nat.)
- Candidate Natural Scientist (Cand.Sci.Nat.)

Only individuals registered in these categories may perform work reserved under the loW once formally determined.

7. GUIDANCE FOR REGISTERED SCIENTISTS

Registered Natural Scientists are advised to:

- Review their current registration status to ensure that it accurately reflects their field of practice and area of expertise;
- Engage proactively with their Voluntary Associations (VAs) and SACNASP on any clarifications needed regarding their professional scope;
- Stay informed of further announcements and opportunities to participate in the loW consultation process;
- Prepare for future compliance, understanding that once the loW is formally determined, performing work outside a registered field may constitute a contravention of the Act;



8. INDICATIVE TIMELINE

- **Current Phase:** Consultations with Voluntary Associations (VAs) ongoing (2025).
- **Next Phase:** Broader stakeholder consultations to be initiated following 2025 VA process.
- **Formal Submission:** Final IoW to be submitted to DSTI for Ministerial determination thereafter.
- **Implementation:** Enforcement and compliance expected post-approval (date to be communicated following DSTI decision).

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, queries, or clarification, registered scientists are encouraged to contact SACNASP at sacnasp@sacnasp.org.za.

