

STATUTES OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT ENTITLED MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Whereas a period of successful operation of twelve years has elapsed during which MIO-ECSDE has acted as an effective federation of Mediterranean NGOs working in the areas of the protection of the Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development with active participation of more than 80 NGOs.

The initial Founders, The European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Belgium and The "Elliniki Etairia" (Hellenic Society for the Protection of the Environment and the Cultural Heritage), Greece, joined by The Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), as well as the NGOs represented in the Executive Bureau of the organization (see attached table) agree and confirm the statutes of the organization as an International Federation, in the form of an independent legal entity, a civil, non-profit society for the Protection of the Environment and Culture and the promotion of Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region according to the article 741 *et seq.*, of the Greek Civil Code, subject to the requirements and publicity under Article 784 of the Greek Civil Code in conformance with Article 107 of the Greek Civil Code and Article 12 of the Greek Constitution, under the name "Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development", in abbreviation MIO-ECSDE.

This organization is the continuation and absorbs the pre-existing civil society with the same name as adopted with the statutes of 1993 (No 19511) and amended in 2000 (No 12958) incorporated as amended herewith.

Whereas the Mediterranean Sea and its Basin is an environmentally crucial region requiring urgent protection, a fact recognized by the reviewed Barcelona Convention (1975, 1995), the setting up of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and a series of declarations and resolutions,

Whereas the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation as defined in conclusion of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean conference of November 95 will lead to new policies in the field of security, free trade zone, both having a major environmental component,

Whereas the role of the protection of the natural environment is directly related to the strengthening of the Cultural Heritage and the Sustainable Development of the region as it was recognized also at the Rio UNCED in 1992 and Mediterranean Agenda 21 of 1994,

Whereas for the implementation of the aforementioned, the role of non-governmental organizations is of decisive importance for the active participation of the citizens,

Whereas the contracting parties wish and could contribute, in an essential way to the implementation of the aforementioned,

Whereas a pilot period has successfully elapsed during which the MIO/EEB was operational as a “project” under the supervision of the Elliniki Etairia and the co-ordination of Prof. M. J. Scoullou, and has been followed by a period of 2 years concluded by an assessment of the services M.I.O. is and should be offering...

The terms and conditions of this establishment as adopted in 1993 and amended in 1995 and in 2007 are complemented by the Internal Rules and Regulations of MIO-ECSDE and are as follows:

ARTICLE 1: THE NAME

The name of the Society is “Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development” (MIO-ECSDE).

ARTICLE 2: THE MEMBERS

The full Members are the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Elliniki Etairia, the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) and NGOs, working on goals compatible with those of MIO-ECSDE at the Mediterranean (including Jordan and Portugal) and/or at National level provided that they accept the Statutes and on the condition that they are not part or branches of political parties or religious organizations.

Corresponding members can be: NGOs from non-Mediterranean countries, local groups, etc.

Applications for full and corresponding members are submitted according to the criteria described in the Internal Rules and Regulations of MIO-ECSDE.

Members are accepted by decision of the two-thirds of the MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau and approval by the MIO-ECSDE Forum (AGM).

ARTICLE 3: THE SEAT

The seat of the Society will be Athens (12 Kyrristou str. 10556) while other offices, branches, etc. in Greece or other countries can be established in order to effectively promote its objectives.

ARTICLE 4: OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

MIO-ECSDE is a technical and political instrument facilitating the intervention of NGOs in the Mediterranean Scene, in narrow co-operation with all socio-economic actors and international and national organizations and authorities willing to play an active role in favour of the environment, culture and sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region.

The objectives of the organization are:

to contribute directly and indirectly to the protection of the environment, marine, terrestrial and atmospheric, of the Mediterranean Region, including wild flora and fauna, biotopes, forests, coasts, as well as the conservation, restoration and promotion of the cultural elements of cities, archaeological and traditional settlements and monuments and in general, the cultural heritage of the populations bordering the Mediterranean, aiming at the promotion of the sustainable development of the area under the conditions of Peace. In this sense it may also assist and facilitate the functioning of thematic and other networks or initiatives with relevant objectives.

The specific goals are:

- to promote the co-operation, understanding and collaboration of the Mediterranean peoples, especially between the NGOs of the European Union, the Mediterranean Countries of Europe, those of Africa and Asia, for the protection of the Natural and Cultural heritage of the Mediterranean, and its sustainable development,
- to assist with all available means the establishment, operation, strengthening, co-operation and co-ordination of the efforts and activities of environmental, cultural and development organizations,
- to promote the co-operation on issues of environment and sustainable development between Mediterranean NGOs and/or Governments, National Parliaments, International Organisations and productive sectors active or having interest in the Mediterranean Area,
- to promote research, study and education on Mediterranean issues as well as the collaborations between NGOS and Scientific and Academic Institutions aiming at the deeper comprehension of the problems of the natural and man-made Mediterranean environments and also the expansion (generalization) of high quality environmental education, education for sustainable development, environmental awareness and sensitization of Public Authorities and the Mediterranean Public at large,
- to draft, carry out and/or support programmes, projects and studies, and undertake all the necessary actions for their dissemination through publications, public presentations, memoranda, etc., on the entire spectrum of issues mentioned above,
- to facilitate a decentralized cooperation amongst NGOs thematic networks and topic centres located in the Mediterranean region and which are in charge of specific themes.

ARTICLE 5: DURATION

The duration of the Society will be unlimited.

ARTICLE 6: FUNDS

The Society is an international public interest, non-profit organization, therefore there is no distribution of profits or interest to its members.

The funds of the Society can only be used for accomplishment of the objectives of the Society.

The endowment of the Society will be constituted by the capital contribution of the Founding and other members, other support from physical or legal entities private or public, from assistance by the State, the European Union, UN, or any other fund that accrue to the organization from other sources. The Society can receive funds from services rendered in the fields of its expertise and from the sales of its publications and other products.

The Founding Members, EEB and Elliniki Etairia had initially subscribed 125,000 (one hundred and twenty five thousand) DR or 500 (five hundred) EURO, thus constituting an initial capital of 250,000 (two hundred and fifty thousand) DR or 1000 (one thousand) EURO to begin operations.

The liability for each Founding Member is limited to the amount of their initial subscription.

The annual fees of the Members are defined according to a two-third decision of the Executive Bureau approved by the AGM.

ARTICLE 7: THE ORGANS

The organs of the Organisation are the following:

- the Executive Bureau
- the Chair and the Co-Chair
- the MIO-ECSDE Annual General Meeting here called Forum
- the Mediterranean Advisory Council (if and when functional)

The everyday work of the organisation is facilitated by a Secretariat acting under the guidance of the Executive Bureau and supervised by the Chairperson, assisted by the Co-Chairperson.

ARTICLE 8: THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU, THE CHAIR AND CO-CHAIR

The Members of the Executive Bureau are elected by the MIO-ECSDE Forum amongst its full members for a term of two years according to the following composition:

- one member per E.U. Mediterranean Member State, (including Portugal)
- an equal number of members from non E.U. Mediterranean States (including Jordan)
- up to three members representing international Environmental and/or Development NGOs active in the Mediterranean
- one member from the European Environmental Bureau and one Member from Elliniki Etairia as founding member
- One member from RAED

A representative of the Mediterranean Advisory Council (if it exists) has the status of Observer.

The General Assembly elects one Chairperson and one co-Chairperson among the Members of the Executive Bureau, securing the regional balance

The Executive-Bureau should meet at least once a year the results of which are communicated to all its members.

The Executive Bureau has the authority to make decisions on each issue of operation, governing and management of the Organisation.

The Executive Bureau establishes or abolishes *ad hoc* committees, confirms financial expenditures and approves the annual budget.

The Executive Bureau meets extraordinarily at the written request of the two thirds of its Members or of the Chairperson.

A quorum at the Executive Bureau meetings is designated as one half of the members, present or represented, plus one. Binding notifications or apologies to the meetings must be reported to the Chairperson at least 10 (ten) days previous to the fixed date of meeting. If a quorum is not established, a new meeting must take place in 15 (fifteen) days with the same terms. If again a quorum is not established, a new meeting should take place in 15 (fifteen) days, where a quorum is designated as $\frac{1}{2}$ of the members present or represented irrespective of representation.

Decisions at the Executive Bureau Meeting require a majority of votes of Members of the Executive Bureau present or represented.

At every meeting minutes are kept and signed by the Chairperson and are circulated within 45 (forty five) days of the meeting, and ratified at the next meeting.

Decisions will be made between meetings by written consultation and agreement of the majority or other means to be decided by the Executive Bureau.

The Chairperson, having received delegation, binds the Organisation with his/her signature under the Organisation's name. He/She co-ordinates the activities of the Organisation according to the decisions of the Executive Bureau. He/She represents the Organisation in front of Public and other Authorities, the Court and in all other transactions.

The term of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson is one year and there is no limit on new mandates thereafter.

The Executive Bureau or the Chairperson could designate specific roles or tasks to particular members of the EB (e.g. the role of Treasurer) and/or to the

MIO-ECSDE staff in the case of e.g. submission, signing and/or supervision of specific projects and contracts.

ARTICLE 9: THE MEDITERRANEAN ADVISORY COUNCIL (MAC)

The Mediterranean Advisory Council consists of representatives of donors (Governments, public and private entities), International Organisations (European Union, European Parliament, UNEP/MAP, CIESM, etc.), and personalities from the entire Mediterranean region, civil society, scientific, business, and political space. The members are nominated by the Executive Bureau and the Mediterranean Advisory Council itself and are confirmed by the Executive Bureau for a period of 3 (three) years with no restriction for re-nomination.

The Council meets at least once every second year and provided the members have been notified 12 (twelve) weeks in advance, it has a quorum irrespective of the number of the represented members. Consultations could be made through mail, fax, E-mail, etc...

The Advisory Council debates on issues as ethics, security, civil society rights and responsibilities in the Mediterranean and addresses its recommendations to the Executive Bureau of MIO-ECSDE. It proposes and indicates directions for new MIO-ECSDE activities.

The Members of the Council elect their Chairperson. The Council decides about its representation in the Executive Bureau where he/she can participate as observer with the right to speak.

Physical or legal persons, Governments, International Organisations, the European Union, UN, or enterprises can be donors. The Council decides about the acceptance of new donors as members. The minimum fees-contribution are defined in agreement with the Executive Bureau. The Advisory Council could propose to the Executive Bureau persons who merit an honorary title or office. Personalities invited to participate are not remunerated but also are not obliged to contribute financially to its work.

The functioning of the MAC is not a prerequisite for the smooth operation of MIO-ECSDE and its operation will be decided by the Executive Bureau when conditions are favorable.

ARTICLE 10: THE MIO-ECSDE FORUM (THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING)

Full and Corresponding Members compose the MIO-ECSDE Forum. Full members that have paid their due fees only have voting right.

The Chairperson and Co-Chairperson are responsible for the call for the Annual General Meeting. This shall happen with 6 (six) weeks notice in

advance, which may be effected by post, fax or e-mail and shall include an agenda with the following items with a written statement to each item:

1. Approval of the Minutes of the previous Meeting
2. Matters arising
3. Report from the Chairperson
4. Presentation of Accounts
5. Budget
6. Discussion of the Activities
7. Future activities
8. Elections (if appropriate)
9. Approval of New Members (if appropriate)
10. Approval of revision of annual fees of members (if appropriate)
11. Any other business.

MIO-ECSDE facilitates the meetings of the NGO Members of the MIO-ECSDE Forum and informs them regularly through a Newsletter.

ARTICLE 11: DISSOLUTION

In the case where the organization becomes inactive or does not any longer serve the aims and goals described in Article 4 the Executive Bureau or the AGM may request the dissolution of the Organisation. Such a decision should be unanimous.

In the event of the dissolution of the Society there is no distribution of profit or interest to its members. The two Founding Members could only request the return of their capital contribution without interest.

The remaining capital funds and all assets of the Society are to be transferred to another suitable non-profit legal entity by unanimous decision of the members, without right to sell it or change the use of it.

ARTICLE 12: ACCOUNTS

The financial accounts and the books of the Society will be kept on an annual basis. The financial period terminates on 31 December of each year. An external independent auditor, appointed by the Executive Bureau, will supervise the Society's financial situation and its books and will audit the annual budget and accounts.

ARTICLE 13: CHANGE OF THE STATUTES

The AGM (the MIO-ECSDE Forum) with a simple majority or the Executive Bureau unanimously could decide on possible changes in its statutes, including a change to another non-profit legal entity. In such an event, the property of the Society, as well as the programme of its activities, are transferred to the new legal entity.

ARTICLE 14: ARBITRATION

Any dispute that may occur between members of MIO-ECSDE and the Organisation due to the application and the interpretation of the Statutes will be resolved according to the provisions of the Greek Civil Code Procedure on Arbitration (Articles 867-903)

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The present document has been approved and signed by the Members of the Executive Bureau:

Chairman:	Prof. M. Scoullos (Greece)
Co-Chairman:	Dr. Emad Adly (Egypt)
Members (in alphabetical order):	
Mr. Z. Alawneh	Jordan
Mr. M. Alves	Portugal
Prof. G. Arapis	Elliniki Etairia
Mr. V. Attard	Malta
Mr. RN Bendaoud	Algeria
Ms. P. Bonelli	Italy
Mr. G. Cingal	EEB
Mr. M. Ermis	Turkey
Prof. M. Ftouhi	Morocco
Mr. J-V Geronimi	France
Mr. M. Ghandour	Lebanon
Mr. A. Juarez	Spain
Prof. Y. Nouri	Tunisia
Mr. A. Rabi	Palestine
Ms. A. Theodosiou	Cyprus
Mr. M. Vogrin	Slovenia

The amended statutes were approved by the members of the Executive Bureau at their meeting of 2 December 2007 and confirmed by the 12th_AGM of 2 December 2007 held in Cairo.