



Global Network of Water Museums Non-Profit Cultural Association registered in Italy

Charter of the Association

TITLE I – THE ASSOCIATION

Article 1 - Name and Address

The Association “Global Network of Water Museums” (hereafter the “Association” - acronym WAMU-NET) is established. The Association has the characteristics of a non-profit organization and is established in Venice, Italy. The title Non-Profit Organization (acronym NPO), might be used whenever the Association is quoted to disseminate its activities and projects.

The Association can create a number of “regional branches” located in different continents worldwide. The Members’ Assembly approves all regional branches. They are established in relation to different water challenges which are relevant at regional and continental level. Each regional branch can be coordinated by a member of the Association, as designated by the Members’ Assembly.

Article 2 - Aims and Principles

The Association is non-profit. The distribution, even the indirect distribution, of whatever profits and operating surpluses, funds and reserves to founders, associates, workers and collaborators, directors and other members of the Association bodies, is prohibited, even in case of membership withdrawal. The Association has cultural, educational, informative, and social aims. The Association will develop public and non-profit activities by strengthening and coordinating the educational capacities of all its members to disseminate lessons learned and new perceptions on more sustainable water uses worldwide.

The Association promotes more responsible uses of water and its careful preservation, considering both tangible and intangible hydraulic heritage, as preserved by its water museums members, and in cooperation with different institutions, international organizations, NGOs and associations. It also promotes research programs with universities and research centers.

The Association aims to create synergies in particular among UNESCO and different water museums “to improve water management via communication and education activities”, as stated in the UNESCO-IHP Resolution n.XXIII-5, which was endorsed in June 2018 by the Intergovernmental

Council of UNESCO-IHP (International Hydrological Programme). In line with this Resolution, titled “Global Network of Water Museums and UNESCO-IHP in support of water sustainability education and water awareness efforts”, the Association is active to disseminate “water related knowledge to a worldwide audience through exhibitions, art performances, educational and public awareness raising activities, web platforms, publications and other communication efforts”.

The Association aims to contribute towards public ‘water awareness’ and to consolidate ethical principles for a more sustainable management of water, including the environment and the waterscapes. Building a critical awareness to change individual and collective behaviors, attitudes and perceptions, must be achieved through a well-balanced match between past and present water knowledge - that is between traditional knowledge systems, and contemporary hydraulic management approaches. Only by re-connecting past and present approaches of water management it is possible to establish a new “anthropology of water”.

Today a “New Water Culture” is needed to inspire new interdisciplinary approaches and holistic visions to face the global water crisis, in order to bring out the intrinsic values of history, memory and sense of place related to water. In any case, the Association pursues the purpose above independently from UNESCO.

The Manifesto - or Ethical Chart - of the Global Network stresses the urgent need of establishing such a new culture of water, as follows. The quality of water - the source of all life and indispensable to every living being - is of increasingly poor quality worldwide. In addition to a quantitative drought, the world also faces today a qualitative drought, that can trigger conflicts between different users within and among regions and countries. In many cases, the peaceful use of this common resource becomes impossible. The evolution of such conflicts depends on cultural factors, given the different perceptions of water’s “value” in various ethnic and social contexts. Solving these conflicts requires more than a technical and political intervention. Based on the principle of peaceful sharing of water, new transdisciplinary approaches and a new holistic vision have to be promoted widely through water museums and their educational activities, in order to consolidate a “New Water Culture” and the implementation of SDGs in line with UNESCO-IHP’s Resolution XXIII-5.

In this perspective, the Association aims to increase the water awareness of each individual and to stimulate in an ethical perspective new thoughts for a more far-sighted government of the environment and the landscape. The Association is aimed at stimulating new critical awareness to change bad individual and collective habits, also through a more careful consideration of the so-called “traditional knowledge” which has been handed down through generations, thus integrating the inherited knowledge systems with the current technocratic models of water management.

Only by re-connecting the water management knowledge of our inherited past with the current knowledge it is possible to build a "new anthropology of water". The global water crisis can be tackled and overcome if the intrinsic values of history, memory and "sense of place" linked to water and its landscapes are emphasized and disseminated through new interdisciplinary approaches and a new holistic vision.

Therefore, the Association declares its intent to:

- Promote and disseminate the values of peace, solidarity and the common sharing of water involving different water museums at global level
- Create new emotional bonds with water at individual level, to inspire a fundamental respect towards this crucial source of life
- Disseminate through the Network the ‘water lessons learned’ from the past to a broad range of communities and people of all age groups, in order to reconnect perceptions of each individual towards our water heritage, both natural and cultural, tangible and intangible
- Promote education for a more responsible use of water and develop, thus, preventive action to protect water resources from any pollution, in line with UNESCO Resolution XXIII-5

- Support the conservation and valorization of both natural and cultural hydraulic heritage, considering that our inherited water culture is crucial to inspire new approaches and new strategies for more prudent and far-sighted use of this resource
- Stimulate interaction among universities, research centres, water science centres, institutes and water museums in order to transfer research findings into visual displays and cross borders exhibitions
- Study and promote the “water worlds” of riverine communities and the water wisdom of indigenous people in order to include and visualize them in water museums, thus stimulating new perceptions and habits of young people towards water
- Disseminate best practices and innovative projects on integrated water management among museums and at all levels, encouraging and supporting the creation of new water museums all over the world, as well as of museum networks at regional and global level, to strengthen the implementation of UNESCO-IHP Resolution XXIII-5.

Article 3 - Instrumental activities

To achieve its aims, the Association will:

- Undertake and promote all appropriate actions to consolidate the Global Network of Water Museums at world scale in line with UNESCO-IHP Resolution XXIII-5
- Organize exhibitions, training activities, events, seminars, conferences, and campaigns aimed at deepening aspects related to the environment and a new water culture, in cooperation with different water museums at local and international level and with UNESCO
- Lead research studies, educational activities and initiatives of various kinds, including proposals and projects to create new water museums worldwide
- Promote publications and projects on issues related to water values and civilizations as an instrument for peace, and to support the dissemination of new management models and more sustainable water uses
- Promote and stimulate agreements of cooperation with water museums and cultural and scientific international institutions to disseminate a New Water Culture
- Participate to projects and international calls for proposals in order to collect the financial resources aimed at supporting regional networks of water museums worldwide
- Acquire, lease/rent real estate properties for achieving its institutional purposes and in view of supporting the opening of new water museums worldwide
- Manage and conduct limited commercial activities which may be instrumental to the Association’s aims and objectives, whenever necessary and in line with the Italian legislation for non-profit associations
- Implement all activities necessary to achieve its statutory objectives, including training courses, counselling, organizing educational trips and field visits.

The Association will carry out all activities related to its institutional objectives and all supplementary activities to the extent permitted by the Italian law for non-profit associations.

The definition of “indicators of performance”, in line with UNESCO-IHP auspices, will be settled by specific internal regulations (art.17).

TITLE II - BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

Article 4 – Bodies of the Association

The bodies of the Association are:

- The Members’ Assembly
- The Management Board

- The President
- The Executive Director, or CEO (Chief Executive Officer)
- The Advisory Committee
- The Internal Auditor, if nominated

Article 5 –The Members’ Assembly

Any water museum, institution, university, region, province, municipality or NGO can apply to become formal member of the Global Network. Applications to join the Association shall be made via formal manifestations of interest, with a motivation letter. Support letters from respective National IHP Committees are also recommended, whenever possible, in the application process, taking into account the formal relation of the Association with the UNESCO-IHP Secretariat in Paris.

New memberships are subject to the Management Board approval; they will be effective only if in compliance with the payment of the annual contribution.

Association’s members meet regularly in the Members’ Assembly, through teleconference or face to face. Each member takes part to the Assembly with its own representative or with a delegate. The Members’ Assembly is by definition a democratic assembly where all members have the same right to vote. Any member can be nominated in the bodies of the Association.

The Members’ Assembly convenes for meetings upon invitation of the President at least once a year, when the financial statements of the previous year are approved. The convocation is sent to all members via email with a detailed Agenda at least ten (10) days before the scheduled meeting. The Assembly is valid whatever the number of attending members. Decisions are taken by the majority (>50%) of the present members.

The Members’ Assembly:

- Elect the members of the Management Board
- May elect the President of the Management Board
- Approve the financial statements of the previous year and the budget of the following year
- Discuss activities and projects of the Association, concerning their implementation and possible improvements
- Decide the annual financial contributions of all members
- Approve the internal Regulations of the Association, the modifications of this Charter and the possible extinction of the Association and the devolution of its capitals, as detailed in art. 20 and 21.

Article 6 – Types of Membership

Public and private bodies, single individuals and associations, legally registered or not, which share the aims of the Association, can apply as formal members of the Global Network. Members are of three types or categories:

1. Ordinary Members
2. Associate Members
3. Affiliated Members

Each category of membership contributes with different annual fees to the network activities, as settled by the Members’ Assembly. Annual contributions are settled for all members in different proportions, according to their financial capacity and the criteria approved periodically by the Members’ Assembly.

Also the use of Network’s logo, eventually combined with the one of UNESCO-IHP, is settled for the different types of memberships through internal Regulations (art. 17), in order to provide specific guidelines to each type of membership and case by case.

Ordinary membership pertains to museums, eco-museums and interpretation centers which fulfill the specific “Criteria for Membership” settled by specific internal Regulation (art.17).

Associate Members are typically universities, research centres, foundations, regions, provinces, municipalities, NGOs, and other institutions which are legally registered and which manage any form of hydraulic heritage, tangible or intangible, or which develop research activities about water heritage, or support any dissemination and promotional activity related to it. Associate Members have the same rights and obligations as Ordinary Members.

Affiliated Members includes typically non-registered organizations, associations and water related communities, but also individuals such as water professionals, artists and researchers who have a special interest towards water awareness and heritage activities promoted by the Association. Also Affiliated Members have the same rights and obligations as the previous categories, though their specific juridical nature may prevent them to act and perform in a similar manner.

Article 7 – Termination of Membership and Exclusion

Members have the right to withdraw from the Association by communicating the intention to terminate the membership by email. The termination shall become effective after six (6) months from the date when the withdrawal has been communicated. The receding member shall pay at any rate the annual fee of the year when the termination becomes effective.

Withdrawing and excluded members will not be entitled to a refund of annual contributions paid already, nor can claim any right to the Association patrimony.

Members can be excluded when they are in the conditions of incompatibility, for non-compliance behaviors with the Charter and its internal regulations, and for performing acts and actions that damage the Association's capital or reputation. The exclusion is approved by the Members' Assembly with the majority of votes of the present members (>50%).

Article 8 – The Management Board

The Management Board is nominated by the Members' Assembly. Individual appointments are made by the majority votes (> 50%) of the present members. Nominations shall take into account the principles of gender and nationality balance, according to the relative number of members per continent and per country. Once nominated, the Board in turn appoints the President, if not already nominated by the Members' Assembly, the CEO, the Advisory Committee, and eventually one or more Vice Presidents, to reflect the geographical representativeness of the Global Network, and one or more internal Steering Groups (SGs), as settled by internal regulations (art.17).

The Board is composed by a minimum of seven (7) to a maximum of eleven (11) members and lasts for two financial years. At least 2/3 of the board members are elected by the Ordinary members (art.6). Board members serve for two (2) financial years and can be reconfirmed for two (2) more mandates, taking into account the basic principle of rotation. The positions of the Board members are voluntary. Any reimbursement of expenses incurred for duties of individual members has to be approved by the Board.

In case the majority of Board members ceases its mandate, the entire Board finishes its functions and a new one has to be nominated by the Members' Assembly.

Article 9 - Meetings and Convocations

The Management Board meetings are valid if at least one-third of the Board members are attending. Decisions are taken by majority vote (> 50%) of present members, not counting abstentions. With an equal number of votes, the vote of the President or, if absent, the Vice president, counts double.

Meetings are chaired by the President or, in case of absence, by the Vice President or by a Chairman nominated by present members. The present members also nominate a person to write the records of the meeting. Records are archived in chronological order on a special Register, according to Italian law, and signed by the CEO and the President, or in its absence by the Chairman.

The Management Board will be convened by the President with a detailed Agenda and by notice delivered via e-mail at least ten (10) days before the scheduled meeting. Meetings take place with the presence of physical persons or through teleconference; they are valid provided that all Board

members have the documents to be discussed during the meeting, and that participants can interact in real time with the discussion.

Article 10 – Powers of the Management Board

The Management Board is responsible for initiating, proposing, executing and controlling all activities of the Association. The Management Board meets to:

- Nominate the President, if she/he is not nominated already by the Members' Assembly, one or more Vice Presidents, the CEO, the members of the Advisory Committee and one or more internal Steering Groups (SGs)
- Prepare the financial statements of the year and the budget of the following year
- Prepare internal Regulations of the Association (art.17)
- Prepare the agreements of institutional cooperation with other museums and institutions
- Approve the annual Work Plan and develop medium and long term strategic plans for the Network
- Decide the salary of staff members according to the time devoted to specific projects and activities of the Association
- Nominate internal Steering Groups (SGs), if any, and internal ad hoc committees, which may include professionals and consultants from outside the Members, the Management Board and the Advisory Committee

During its mandate, the Board can also appoint external observers to represent international organizations such as UNESCO. Observers take part to the meetings of the Management Board or the Advisory Committee without the right to vote. The Board, when appropriate, can also invite to its meetings one or more members of the Advisory Committee, of the Steering Groups or any other professional and consultant with no right to vote.

Members of the Management Board forfeit when they are in conditions of incompatibility for non-compliance behaviors with the Charter or with internal regulations, or for performance of actions that damage the Association's capital or reputation. The exclusion is approved by the Management Board by secret vote and by the majority of all members.

Article 11 - The President

The President is the legal representative of the Association. The President is appointed by the Management Board with the majority of votes (> 50%) of present members, unless she/he is not nominated already by the Members' Assembly. The duration of President's mandate is two (2) financial years, and may be renewed for two (2) more mandates, although the basic principle of rotation has to be taken into account.

The President:

- Has the power to sign contracts, agreements and all formal acts of the Association, as decided by the Board
- Ensures the Association's proper administration and observance of its Charter
- Convenes and chairs the Members' Assembly and the Management Board, and is active to implement all decisions approved by the Board
- Represents the Association for public relations and in all its official initiatives
- Develops and maintains relationships with international organizations, public authorities and administrations
- Adopts in case of needs and emergency any appropriate measure, which will be reviewed and confirmed by the Board

One or more Vice Presidents can be appointed by the Management Board in the same way as the President. The Vice President acts for the President, with equal powers, in case of his/her absence or impediment.

Article 12 - The Executive Director or CEO (Chief Executive Officer)

The Management Board appoints among its members the Executive Director, or CEO, to execute, manage and monitor the implementation of the Association activities. The CEO is responsible for the daily and ordinary management of the Association, and for the correct implementation of projects and initiatives approved by the Management Board.

The CEO maintains relations with the bank of the Association, monitors its financial flows, and suggests to the Board the names of professionals and consultants who may be contracted to guarantee a smooth project implementation.

The nature of CEO's remuneration is determined by the Board according to its activities performed to implement specific projects. In the frame of ongoing projects and activities, also the CEO can decide the payment of costs and determine the stipend of external experts up to a limit fixed by the Board through specific internal regulations.

The CEO is appointed for two (2) years and has the power to sign contracts, agreements and all formal acts of the Association. The CEO can be removed from its position due to actions that damage the Association's reputation or its capital.

The CEO:

- Like the President, has the power to sign contracts, agreements and all formal acts of the Association, as decided by the Board
- Coordinates and organizes all activities and projects of the Global Network
- Prepares the annual reports with the activities undertaken by the Association during the year and the Work Plan of the following year
- Creates synergies with museums and institutions at all levels
- Promotes the communication activities of the Association, also by taking part to international conferences and seminars
- Prepares and develops the annual Work Plan of the network, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, as approved by the Management Board
- Monitors and coordinates the activities of professionals, consultants, and researchers who might be appointed for specific projects and initiatives
- Keeps good relations among the Association and all its members, and with other institutions and organizations.

The CEO facilitates the meetings of the Management Board with right to vote and the meetings of the Members' Assembly. In case of CEO's absence or impediment, its role can be taken by any other member designated by the Management Board among its components. To implement specific activities, the CEO can also be supported by any necessary staff designated by the Management Board.

Art. 13 - Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is the Association advisory body which incorporates the eminent expertise of professionals from different disciplines, including (but not limited to) Education, SDG's and Water Sciences. The Advisory Committee advises the Board on the implementation of Network's projects and activities.

The Committee is made up of a maximum of twelve (12) members, who are appointed individually by the Management Board for one or more mandates. Terms of membership last two (2) financial years. Members can be appointed two (2) more times to guarantee the continuity of specific projects and initiatives.

The Committee can meet face to face, or via tele-conference. The convocation procedure is the same of the Management Board. The Committee can also meet on its own initiative, in order to address and formulate proposals to the Board. The decisions taken by the Advisory Committee are valid with the vote of the majority of present members (> 50%). With an equal number of votes, the vote of the Coordinator, or the Committee's Chairperson, counts double.

Individual applications to the Advisory Committee can be made by any category of membership (art. 6), or by external experts supported by members. A Coordinator of the Committee may be appointed internally to facilitate the preparation and coordination of meetings, and to make direct reporting to the Board. In alternative, the coordination can be made by any other designated member of the Committee.

Upon request of the Management Board or the President, the Committee will:

- Examine, develop and recommend strategies and programs aimed at consolidating the Global Network, implementing project activities and/or disseminating their results
- Identify specific sectors of interest and research investigation, and suggest ideas for developing new projects and activities of the Association.
- Concur to create specific internal Steering Groups (SGs), combining the different expertise of Network's members
- Contribute to define the general and sectoral communication strategies of the Association
- Take part to the meetings of the Management Board, with its Coordinator or any representative of the Scientific Committee, without the right to vote.

Article 14 – Financial contributions of members, Donations and Sponsorships

Association members are of three types (art.6). They contribute to the running of the Global Network with different annual rates, according to their geographical location, the typology of membership and their presumed financial capacity, as settled by the Members' Assembly through specific criteria. In addition to the financial contribution, which is due every year, members can support the Association with further donations.

The Association is entitled to receive gifts and donations originating from private legacies. It might also receive financial support from private and public sponsors. Case by case and project by project, the Board will settle how the sponsors can use the logo of the Global Network for communication activities, also considering UNESCO-IHP regulations and disclaimers, whenever the use of UNESCO logo is foreseen.

Receding sponsors, supporters and members will not be entitled to any refund of the contributions paid, nor can claim any right to the Association patrimony.

Article 15 - The Internal auditor

The Management Board may appoint among its member an Internal Auditor to monitor and oversee the Association's financial flows and management. The Auditor reports to the Board on budget issues to the Board. Its possible remuneration is approved by the Board.

TITLE III - FINAL RULES

Article 16 – Financial Statements and Budgets

The financial year of the Association begins on January 1st and concludes on December 31st of each year. The Members' Assembly approves the Financial Statements of the year, as well as the Budget of the following year at the last scheduled meeting of each financial year.

Article 17 – Internal Regulations and Bylaws

The Members' Assembly approves, when necessary, internal regulations and bylaws to implement articles and rules contained in this Charter with additional rules. Regulations are prepared by the Management Board.

Article 18 – Records

The records of meetings reporting the decisions taken by the Members' Assembly and by the Management Board are recorded chronologically in a special Register, in line with Italian legislation. Records are signed by the President or the Chairman and the CEO. Minutes are in English, in line with European legislation. They are translated into Italian when necessary.

Article 19 – Incomes and Revenues

Incomes and revenues of the Association consist of:

- Financial contributions of its members (annual membership fees), as settled by the Members' Assembly
- Donations or voluntary contributions of any kind made by individuals, legal entities, public and private bodies and foundations, to support specific projects of the Association
- Incomes deriving from institutional activities of the Association
- Incomes deriving from the patrimony and properties owned by the Association

All financial resources, including incomes, donations and any financial surplus, shall be used to reach the statutory goals of the Association and to implement its projects. The Association can also manage funds and properties received by third parties, including contributions allocated by national and international institutions and organizations, regional and national authorities, private companies, or by single individuals.

The patrimony of the Association may be supplemented with legacies or donations made by individuals and companies which share the goals of the Global Network, and which are willing to contribute to their full achievement.

The direct or indirect distribution of any financial surplus of the Association is strictly forbidden, unless they are directed towards other water museums, non-profit organizations and associations which are active in Less Income Countries. Such distributions to be solely in furtherance of WAMU-NET's objectives.

Article 20 – Amendments to the Charter

The Members' Assembly can amend this Charter with the favorable vote of the qualified majority (> 2/3) of the members who are present to the meeting.

Art 21 – Extinction of the Association

The duration of the Association has no limits. The Association, however, will cease to exist if its purposes becomes impossible, if its capital is insufficient to implement activities, or in cases falling under art. 27 and 28 of the Italian Civil Code.

The Members' Assembly can decide the extinction of the Association with the favorable vote of the qualified majority (> 2/3) of all its members. In case of extinction, the Association patrimony and capitals shall be donated to other non-profit organizations or associations with similar objectives of public utility, or to water museums which are active in Less Income Countries. Such distributions to be solely in furtherance of WAMU-NET's objectives.

Art 22 – Final Rules

For all details that are not present in this Charter, the Italian current legislation will be considered, also to solve disputes and claims among the members and the bodies of the Association.