
Statutes

of the non-profit organization " World Sturgeon Conservation Society"

(Acronym: WSCS)

§ 1

Name and location

The Society carries the name

World Sturgeon Conservation Society

It is intended, to register the Society at the Amtsgericht Tostedt. After registration the Society carries the addition "e. V." The home office of the Society is located in D-21629 Neu Wulmstorf

§2

Aims and Objectives of the Society

The Society intends to act as an international forum of scientific discussion for all those interested in pertinent issues on sturgeons while at the same time seeking opportunities for close cooperation at international level.

The objectives of the Society are:

a) to foster the conservation of sturgeon species, restoration of sturgeon stocks and their sustainable use world-wide

b) to develop information exchange among all interested in sturgeons. This particularly applies to the following subject areas:

- general biology
- species and habitat protection -stock enhancement
- biological resource management
- fisheries and fisheries-related issues -aquaculture
- cultural and regulatory issues

c) to promote information exchange with regional, national, international, inter-governmental organizations, educational institutions (e.g. universities, scientific institutes) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

- d) To foster and support interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research on all aspects of sturgeons (e.g. biology, management and utilization of sturgeons).
- e) To enhance the cooperation between and among anglers, fishermen, scientists, governmental agencies, local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations.
- f) To inform the public on all aspects of the status and biology of sturgeons, their requirements for effective species protection, and needs for appropriate management. The tools to achieve this objective include the use of adequate and modern publication- and communication means and the organization of International Conferences.

§3

Non-profit status

- 1) The Society focuses exclusively and directly on non-profit aims in agreement with the section of the taxation order granting tax exemptions. It acts selflessly and serves primarily non-profit-oriented purposes. Its financial resources and potential profits will only be used in accordance with the objectives defined in the statutes.
- 2) Members are not permitted to gain profits from the society's funds.
- 3) The Society cannot reimburse any person for costs not serving the aims of the Society or to reimburse any person for rendered services at an unjustifiably high level.

§4

Membership

- 1) Any individual or legal entity who wishes to commit to the objectives of the society can become a member. The Society distinguishes memberships (including students, senior citizens, sponsors, associated or collaborating Societies, public institutions, educational institutions, honorary membership). Student membership (at reduced rate) excludes voting rights in elections and in the general assembly. Membership is independent from race, religion or citizenship.
- 2) To become a member of the Society, a written application has to be submitted with full name and affiliation. The application must clearly state that the applicant fully accepts and intends to work toward the aims and objectives of the Society, and agrees to election procedures requiring use of a mail ballot.
- 3) The Board of Directors decides on the acceptance of a membership application and has the right to refuse the membership if it is suspected that the applicant may not fully support the aims of the Society or in case his/her membership would negatively affect the image of the Society

4) Membership terminates by withdrawal, cancellation, exclusion, termination of a legal entity or death. Withdrawal from membership has to be declared to and received by the Board of Directors in writing at least three months prior to the end of the fiscal year. The board can decide on the cancellation of a membership four months after the second reminder to pay outstanding membership dues has been mailed to the member. The member has to be informed about this cancellation.

5) In the case where a member does not comply with the Statutes of the Society, or in case his/her actions damage the Society and its aims, the board can propose a motion at the General Assembly to terminate the membership. A decision by simple majority can only be taken if this motion is specifically announced in the agenda and the member in question has been provided with an opportunity to comment on this motion. With the termination all membership claims terminate as well (e.g. membership dues, donations). The legal right of the society to collect overdue membership fees does not terminate.

6) Individuals who have rendered outstanding services to the Society can be honored with life membership. Proposals for honorary life membership can be submitted by any member and -after evaluation through a nomination committee -can be announced as honorary life members by the Board of Directors. Honorary life membership is excluded from membership dues.

§5

Membership dues and financial support

1) In order to fulfill the societal aims and objectives, the Society finances its activities through support from membership, donations, grants, and public sources

2) Members pay an annual membership fee

3) The Board of Directors sets the level of the respective membership dues.

4) The level of the membership dues varies with the region in which the member resides and with the type of membership (e.g. students, senior citizens, sponsors, associated or corporative societies, public or educational institutions, companies)

5) Handling costs of bank transfers of membership dues will be the responsibility of the member, paying these dues.

6) For a limited number of members, the membership dues can temporarily be waived by the Board, usually for one calendar year, provided that contributions in kind can be made by the member in question (e.g. provision of certain services for the society). Such exemptions from membership dues can be extended for another year.

§6

The bodies of the Society

The bodies of the society are the Board of Directors and the General Assembly.

§7

The Board of Directors

1) The Board of Directors consists of

- the President
- the Vice-President
- the Treasurer
- the Secretary General
- three additional elected members

At least one of the above must be a German citizen

2) The Society will be legally represented (§ 26, BOB) by the President, the Vice-President and the Treasurer, whereby anyone of the above listed Board members is authorized to represent the Society on her/his own. Otherwise the Board has all other rights to operate the Society except those specific rights of the General Assembly

3) The Board of Directors can delegate specific management tasks to individual voting members for one fiscal year. This has to be announced previously at a General Assembly and must be agreed upon by voting (simple majority). The transfer of these duties can be granted for another year.

4) The Board of Directors will be elected by the membership through secret postal ballot for a period of four years. All members except students have the right to vote and the right to be nominated as a candidate. The Board of Directors proposes at the General Assembly prior to the election at least one candidate for every position listed in §7, item 1. From amongst the participants of the General Assembly additional candidates can be nominated by participants at the General Assembly. The General Assembly approves through vote (simple majority) the list of candidates. Thereafter, the Board of Directors has to inform all voting members in writing on the approved candidates. Simultaneously, the Board of Directors will provide the voting ballots to the members not later than three months prior to the voting deadline. The ballots must be received without signature in a plain envelope at the President's office no later than two weeks before the election date. The plain envelope containing the ballot must be mailed in an envelope with the sender's name and address. The candidate receiving the most votes for a position will be elected. In the event of a tie, the candidate will be selected by drawing. The votes will be tabulated by the President in the presence of two society members. The ballot results, including the number of votes cast, will be announced by the President to Society members.

5) Re-election for an additional full term is possible

6) The Board of Directors remains in office up to six weeks after the election of the new Board and prepares the transfer of business.

7) In the case where a Board member is not able to complete his/her term in office (e.g. illness, death), the remaining Board of Directors can elect -for an interim period until the next election -a voting member of the Society.

8) The Board of Directors

- prepares for the General Assembly and the Agenda thereof -calls the General Assembly
- chairs the General Assembly
- Proposes strategic directions for the WSCS to ensure that the Society's objectives are addressed.
- executes the resolutions of the General Assembly
- decides upon acceptance of membership submissions and deletions
- discusses and sets the membership dues, taking into consideration regional conditions and membership categories (see §4, item I); dues will be listed and announced.
- prepares an annual budget for each fiscal year and is responsible for the bookkeeping -prepares an annual report

9) The Board can develop bylaws

§8

The General Assembly

1) The General Assembly convenes at least once a year and the Board will announce the meeting in writing

2) The General Assembly will be chaired by the President or the Vice-President. In case of absence, another Member of the Board can assume chairmanship.

3) The General Assembly is not open to the public. The Board of Directors can invite guests.

4) The deadline for the invitation to participate in the General Assembly is three months (date of postage).

5) The written invitation contains information on place and time (date, starting hour) as well as the agenda. The invitation will be made available to all members of the Society.

6) Every voting member may ask the Board in writing to include additional agenda items deemed necessary and desirable. The written request has to reach the Board at least two weeks in advance of the meeting (date of receipt). At the beginning of the meeting the chair of the General Assembly will inform the participants about amendments to the agenda.

7) The General Assembly serves as a forum to develop opinions and derive conclusions regarding all matters of the Society, unless these matters are regulated differently by the Statutes or the bylaws or are the duty of another organ of the Society.

8) Every properly announced General Assembly constitutes a quorum regardless of the number of voting members present

9) The General Assembly

-receives the annual report of the Board of Directors on the past fiscal year

-approves -after presentation -the annual report

-proposes and votes on the pre-election listing of candidates for the Board

-decides on changes in the Statutes and the dissolution of the Society

The General Assembly decides by simple majority voting, counting all votes cast. Proposed changes to the Statutes, however, require a 3/4 majority of the valid votes of participating members. The General Assembly decides on dissolution of the Society according to §11, item 3.

10) The minutes of the General Assembly have at least to contain the number of members present and the resolutions of the meeting and have to be signed by a member of the Board and by the rapporteur.

11) An extraordinary General Assembly can be called in the case where

a) the Board of Directors has sound reasons to do so, or

b) one third of the membership requests a meeting in writing. The request has to contain the item of concern. The call for the General Assembly has to be announced in writing to all members at least six weeks (mailing date) in advance of the meeting.

§9

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year is the calendar year

§ 10

Amendments of the Statutes

Any proposal to amend the statutes has to be initiated by the Board of Directors or has to be proposed to the Board by at least 20 voting members from at least three member countries. A decision on the amendments of the Statutes can only be taken by the General Assembly at a 3/4 majority quorum of the valid votes cast by members

§11

Dissolution of the Society

I. The Society will be created for an indefinite period of time

2. A proposal for dissolution of the Society can only be initiated by the Board of Directors or proposed by at least 30 voting members originating from at least four countries in which there are members.

3. A decision on the dissolution of the Society can only be taken with 2/3 majority quorum of all voting members (postal vote possible). If a quorum cannot be reached by this method, a simple majority quorum will decide at the next General Assembly

4. In the case of a deliberate dissolution of the Society or in the event that non-profit status no longer applies, the available assets should be transferred to another non-profit organization that dedicates its efforts to objectives similar to the WSCS. The transfer of assets can only be executed with the agreement of the tax exemption office.