



# SOCIETAS EUROPAEA HERPETOLOGICA

www.gli.cas.cz/seh

## Statutes of the Societas Europaea Herpetologica (SEH)

### § 1 Name, Place of registration

- 1.1. The name of the association will be the "Societas Europaea Herpetologica" and it is registered with the register of associations ("Vereinsregister").
- 1.2. The financial year will be the calendar year.
- 1.3. The official languages of the association will be German and English.

### § 2 Aims and public utility

- 2.1. The association will exclusively be concerned with aims of public utility in the sense of the section 'Steuerbegünstigte Zwecke' of the German 'Abgabenordnung'. The aims and duties of the association are to support scientific research and nature conservation in the field of herpetology, and the close collaboration among herpetologists, especially those of Europe. This co-operation shall be furthered by Congresses and General Meetings, by Symposia and by the editing of herpetological publications, such as the journal "Amphibia-Reptilia" as well as the online bulletin "Herpetology Notes", and by supporting efforts directed towards the conservation of amphibians and reptiles and of their habitats..
- 2.2. The association will act on a non-profit basis; any benefits can only be used for the aims as set out in these Statutes. Members shall not receive personal financial benefits from the association. No person shall receive funds from the association for goals different from those of the association, or at extraordinarily high levels.

### § 3 Membership

- 3.1. Membership is open to individuals and incorporated organisations.
- 3.2. Membership may be obtained by application in writing or by email to the treasurer. Membership only becomes effective upon receipt of the membership fee. If the Council refuses the application for membership, then the members of the next General Meeting will have to agree by 2/3 majority.
- 3.3. Membership expires on notice of resignation, deletion, exclusion or death.
  - 3.3.1 Notice of resignation can be send to the treasurer at any time, however there will not be any reimbursement of membership fees already paid.
  - 3.3.2 Membership is only valid for the year(s) for which membership fees have been paid. If the membership dues have not been paid within a month after the treasurer has send out the invoices, the membership is automatically terminated. No reminders have to be sent out on behalf of SEH.
  - 3.3.3 The Council can terminate, by majority vote, the membership of any member who repeatedly does not comply with the aims of the association. Any such member has the right to appeal at the next General Meeting, provided such an appeal is made in writing to the SEH secretary within three months of the Council's decision. The previously announced decision of the General Meeting will have to be taken with 2/3 majority and will take effect thirty days after the date of posting of the written notification to the member. Until this time the membership is suspended. A member excluded in this way will have no right to a refund of the membership dues.
- 3.4. Membership dues will be fixed by the Council according to equitable discretion.

### § 4 General Meeting

- 4.1. An Ordinary General Meeting must be convened by the Council every two years in a European country. The agenda and the financial report of the Treasurer will be published at least three months before the meeting. Only members who have paid their annual dues can participate. An Extraordinary General Meeting will be convened if requested by a majority of the Council or, in writing, by 50, or at least one quarter of the members. The reasons for such a request must be stated. Depending on the urgency, every General Meeting will be convened by an announcement in the associations journal "Amphibia-Reptilia", bulletin „Herpetological Notes“ and on the SEH website or via email. If an Extraordinary General Meeting has been held, the following Ordinary General Meeting can be postponed by the Council by a period of up to two years.
- 4.2. Amendments to the agenda must be decided upon by the General Meeting at short notice.
- 4.3. The General Meeting will be empowered to take decisions, irrespective on the number of members present. Unless the Statutes state otherwise (§3.2; §3, 3.3; §8; §9.1) the General Meeting decides by simple majority. An equal number of votes will mean rejection.

- 4.4. The General Meeting will be presided over by the President or his substitute. The meeting may also elect another chairperson.
- 4.5. At every General Meeting, minutes, will be taken and signed by the chairperson of the meeting and the person taking the minutes. The minutes will be announced by publication in "Amphibia-Reptilia", the bulletin „Herpetological Notes“, and on the SEH website.

#### **§ 5 Council**

- 5.1. The Council consists of: President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Vice-Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, and the first two editors of "Amphibia-Reptilia".
- 5.2. The members of the Council will be elected for a period of four years, or re-elected for a period of no more than a further four years for the same council position, with exceptions only as stated in §5.6. Election will be by secret written ballot for each office, and will be carried by a simple majority of the members present at a General Meeting. Members of the Council will be elected for staggered terms, viz., Vice-President, General Secretary, Vice-Treasurer and First Co-Editor of "Amphibia-Reptilia" during one meeting, President, Vice-Secretary, Treasurer and Second Co-Editor of "Amphibia-Reptilia" during the next.
- 5.3. In the sense of Article 26 of the BGB of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Executive Committee is formed by all members of the Council. President and treasurer can represent the association legally and extrajudicially .
- 5.4. The Council will manage the affairs of the association. It will be bound by the decisions of the General Meeting. Council decisions will be voted on by a simple majority of votes. An equal number of votes will mean rejection of the proposal. A quorum is represented by half of the elected members of Council. The Council can also take decisions in between Council Meetings if the absolute majority of all Council members agree to the decision in writing or by email.
- 5.5. Minutes will be taken at all Council meetings and signed by the President of that meeting and the person taking minutes.
- 5.6. In extraordinary cases, the General Meeting can decide upon a prolongation of the office period of Council members by no more than one year, to a maximum of five years, or upon an earlier termination of the office period. This has no consequences on the duration of a possible second office period after re-election. After a period of 4 years following termination, previous council members can be re-elected into council positions different from those they have occupied before.

#### **§ 6 By-laws**

The Council will establish by-laws regulating the affairs of the association. These by-laws require approval of a General Meeting.

#### **§ 7 Financial control**

The General Meeting will elect two Auditors for a period of four years. They will examine the accounts and balances of the association. They may not be members of the Council and will have to present a report at every General Meeting, to be read-out at the meeting and included with the minutes.

#### **§ 8 Changes of the Statutes**

- 8.1. Changes of the Statutes will have to be agreed upon by at least a two-thirds majority of the members present at a General Meeting, provided that the members have been notified of the proposed changes via publication in "Amphibia-Reptilia" and on the SEH website at least three months in advance.
- 8.2. Formal changes of the statutes on behalf of the fiscal authorities or the local court may be enacted by the council.

#### **§ 9 Dissolution of the association**

- 9.1. The association can only be dissolved after a decision taken at a General Meeting called for this specific purpose, by a majority of three-quarters of the members present.
- 9.2. Upon a correct decision of dissolution, the Council is obliged to carry out the dissolution of the association according to article 48 of the BGB of the Federal Republic of Germany, and to settle any outstanding matters. The General Meeting will be entitled to appoint alternative liquidators.
- 9.3. In case of dissolution, or loss of tax exemption under German laws ("steuerbegünstigte Zwecke"), the property of the association will go to a corporate body under public law or another tax-privileged corporation to be used for the advancement of science and research. In such a case, decisions of the use of the property of the association can only be taken upon written agreement of German fiscal authorities.

*The Statutes of the above mentioned association as of September 11, 1979 were registered in the register of associations ("Vereinsregister"), on May 20, 1980, under no. VR 44492.*

*Updated and modified at the 13th Ordinary General Meeting of SEH at Bonn (Germany) on 1 October 2005, during the 15th*

*OGM at in Kusadasi (Turkey) on 30 September 2009, during the 17<sup>th</sup> OGM at Veszprem (Hungary) August 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 , and during the 18<sup>th</sup> OGM in Wroclaw (Poland) September 9<sup>th</sup> 2015.*



# SOCIETAS EUROPAEA HERPETOLOGICA

www.gli.cas.cz/seh

## By-laws of the Societas Europaea Herpetologica

To fulfill the aims of Societas Europaea Herpetologica, as defined in paragraph 2 of the German edition of the Statutes of May 20, 1980, and to achieve its objectives and functions, the Council and General Meeting of the association have passed the following by-laws:

### § 1. Statutes and registration

In legal and other matters, as well as for any financial transactions, the only regulations binding the General Meeting and the Council are the statutory provisions and tax regulations of the Federal Republic of Germany (as long as the registered office remains in the Federal Republic of Germany).

### § 2. Membership

- 2.1. The association consists of ordinary members receiving the journal “Amphibia-Reptilia” in print and via online access or only via online access, according to their membership fee, as well as of members and affiliated members who do not receive access to the journal, and of student members who receive the journal in print and via online access at a reduced membership fee, of corporate members, Life members and honorary members.
- 2.2. Affiliated members are those members who live with a full member. They pay a reduced fee consisting of the membership dues of an ordinary member minus the sum paid by SEH to the publisher.
- 2.3. Corporate members pay the fee of a full member receiving the printed version of “Amphibia-Reptilia” augmented by an amount decided on by the General Meeting.
- 2.4. A Life member may be any ordinary member who supports the objectives and activities of the association by a single payment of not less than 20 times the amount of the annual membership fee of an ordinary member.
- 2.5. Members who have rendered special services to the association and to herpetology may – upon recommendation of the Council – be made honorary members by the General Meeting.

### § 3. Rights and obligations of members

- 3.1. All members have equal rights and obligations.
- 3.2. Members will be entitled to:
  - 3.2.1. participate in the General Meetings and at Congresses and Symposia;
  - 3.2.2. receive the publications of the association covered by the membership fee;
  - 3.2.3. fully explore all possibilities defined in § 2.1 of the Statutes;
  - 3.2.4. attend and vote at all General Meetings;
  - 3.2.5. submit written proposals and applications to the Council, addressed to the General Secretary.
- 3.3. The members shall:
  - 3.3.1. oblige to the objectives of the association and observe the Statutes;
  - 3.3.2. behave in a responsible way towards wildlife, and especially shall refrain from collecting amphibians and/or reptiles in such large quantities as to endanger populations or as to be not in compliance with European or national law, or collect for commercial purposes, since such activities are incompatible with the aims of the association;
  - 3.3.3. pay the annual membership fee by December before the year to be covered; only honorary members will be exempt from this obligatory payment.
- 3.4. Only members who have paid the corresponding annual membership fee (except honorary and Life members) will receive access to the associations journal “Amphibia-Reptilia”, and will be entitled to vote at General Meetings (see § 4.1 of the Statutes).

### § 4. General Meeting, Congress, Symposium

- 4.1. The General Meeting represents the legislative authority of the association.
- 4.2. For voting on important matters by the association, the Ordinary General Meeting must be brought to the notice of all members by the Council, announcing them at least three months before the meeting takes place, observing the stipulations made in § 4.1 of the Statutes.

- 4.3. Extraordinary General Meetings can be convened by the Council, when a majority of the Council or 10% of the members ask for it in writing. Such an Extraordinary General Meeting has to be convened within four months from the date of receipt of such a request by the General Secretary.
- 4.4. The responsibility of the General Meeting will include the following:
- 4.4.1. passing resolutions on the Statutes and Bye-laws;
  - 4.4.2. passing changes of the Statutes and By-laws;
  - 4.4.3. passing resolutions on all motions put to the vote;
  - 4.4.4. election of a Chairperson of the meeting(s) if necessary;
  - 4.4.5. election of Council Members;
  - 4.4.6. decisions about establishing Committees (task forces) and confirms the Chairpersons;
  - 4.4.7. election of Auditors;
  - 4.4.8. passing the progress report of the Council;
  - 4.4.9. passing the Auditor's report and approving the accounts;
  - 4.4.10. passing the progress reports of the Chairpersons of the various Committees;
  - 4.4.11. proposing next meeting venues and deciding upon them;
  - 4.4.12. nominating honorary members;
  - 4.4.13. passing resolutions on the dissolution of the association according to Statutes § 9.1;
  - 4.4.14. passing resolutions concerning threatened habitats or endangered European reptiles and/or amphibians.
- 4.5. The resolutions of the General Meeting will be recorded, and the minutes signed by the Chairperson of the meeting and the person taking minutes.
- 4.6. Members attending Congresses and Symposia will be charged an appropriate fee, and non-members a higher fee, contributing to the costs of the Congress or Symposium. The organizers of the meeting together with the Council will decide upon the respective fees. Honoraria cannot be paid. The organizers will comply with the latest version of the rules for organizing congresses, originally established by the Council 14. November 2010.

## **§ 5. Council**

- 5.1. The Council receives its authority from the General Meeting and will be bound by its resolutions; thereby it is the executive body of the association.
- 5.2. The rules for the election of the Council members are as follows:
- 5.2.1. the modus operandi of the election will be determined at each General meeting. Separate ballots will not have to be used and elections will be conducted by secret combined ballot, unless at least one SEH member requests individual ballots for each person to be elected, or –at the discretion of the Council – in sets of ballots.
  - 5.2.2. any member of the acting Council who is no longer prepared to remain in office must inform the President and the General Secretary of his/her intention to resign in writing or by e-mail, and must ascertain that these have received the message; this can be achieved by sending the message by registered mail, or by receiving a confirmation of receipt by the General Secretary in writing or by e-mail;
  - 5.2.3. members may be candidates themselves or nominate eligible candidates for the various vacant offices in the Council;
  - 5.2.4. each nomination must be accompanied by the written approval of the nominee and his/her curriculum vitae. Each nomination has to be handed in to the editor of “Amphibia-Reptilia” at least 5 days before the editorial deadline of the second volume of the journal in the respective year. Late nominations will not be considered;
  - 5.2.5. a list of candidates should preferably be announced together with the agenda of the meeting and will be accompanied by a very short curriculum vitae of the candidates;
  - 5.2.6. the Council will consist of persons of different nationalities, with no more than two persons from the same country. As the treasurer should be from Germany, as long as the society is registered in Germany, the Council may consist of up to three German members. In particular the co-editors of “Amphibia-Reptilia” should not be from the same country.
  - 5.2.7. at every election the total number of candidates with the same nationality eligible to the Council is 0, 1 or 2, according to whether the numbers of members of the same nationality remaining in the Council is respectively 2, 1 or 0. For the exception see §5.2.6.
  - 5.2.8. the Council can be asked to resign in a written resolution to this effect, signed by not less than 20% of the members. Such a resolution must be sent by registered mail to the General Secretary at least nine months before the General Meeting and must be accompanied by a list of eligible candidates to fill the vacant offices. The resolution must then be voted-upon by the General Meeting.
- 5.3. During the General Meeting the Council will appoint a person in charge of the elections.
- 5.4. The arrangement of General Meetings, Congresses Symposia and the issuing of the serial publications will be the responsibility of the Council.
- 5.5. The Council will inform all members of important matters so that they may play an active part in the activities of the association.

- 5.6. Every two years the Council must give an account of its activities during its term of office to the General Meeting
- 5.7. The President or Vice-President must convene a Council Meeting if so requested by a majority of the Council members and give the reasons for calling such a meeting in writing. The Council will meet at least once a year in order to discuss all matters at hand. The General Secretary must record all resolutions of the Council in an adequate way and record them in the minutes of the meeting.

#### **§ 6. Distribution of offices among the Council members**

- 6.1. The President convenes and presides at the Council Meetings as well as at the General Meetings unless otherwise provided for by the Statutes and/or the By-laws. In consultation with the General Secretary he/she fixes the Agenda of the Council Meetings and General Meetings.
- 6.2. The Vice-President will act for the President in his/her absence and will have all his/her rights and duties.
- 6.3. If the General Secretary is from Germany, he/she will maintain official contact with the legal authorities at the place of registration of the association, as long as the society is registered in Bonn, otherwise this task will be done by the treasurer. He/she will be obliged to notify the authorities immediately of any changes in the Executive Committee (= Council). He/she will attend to the official correspondence of the association, except when it falls within the direct jurisdiction of other Council members. Together with the President he/she will prepare the Council Meetings and General Meetings, fix the Agenda and send out invitations for the Council Meetings. He/she will convene and preside at Council Meetings if both the President and the Vice-President are prevented from doing so. He/she will keep the records and takes the protocol during Council Meetings. He/she will give Council's report to the General Meeting.
- 6.4. The Vice-Secretary will act for the General Secretary in his/her absence and will have all his/her rights and duties. He/she will be in charge of advertising campaigns for and give information about the association, except where this falls within the responsibility of other Council members.
- 6.5. The Treasurer will open suitable petty cash and bank accounts in the name of the association. He/she will be obliged to maintain proper books and keep all vouchers for income and expenditure.
- 6.6. The Vice-Treasurer will act for the Treasurer in his/her absence and will have all his/her rights and duties. He/she will receive applications for membership. He/she is responsible for the announcement of the SEH grant, as well as for the coordination of the distribution and evaluations of the proposals and for the communication with the applicants.
- 6.7. The Co-Editors of "Amphibia-Reptilia" are responsible for issuing the publications of the association. The Co-Editors act independently to a certain degree in order to save time, energy and costs. Manuscripts are submitted via the online submission system directly by the authors and are directed to a specific co-editor. The co-editor can then decide to assign an additional associated editor from the board of associate editors or can directly invite referees to evaluate the submitted manuscript. Associated editors can be suggested by one of the co-editors, but before final designation the council members should be informed. Normally, outstanding scientists with an excellent publication record and writing skills should be nominated for the board of associated editors. Both co-Editors manage the collaboration with the publisher and provide the composition of "Amphibia-Reptilia" issues. The Co-Editors further get support from the members of the advisory editorial board. Associate Editors and Advisory Board members are not part of the Council and have no vote at Council Meetings.
- 6.8. The Council is entitled, in exceptional cases, to distribute the duties of Council members different from what is laid out in §6.1-6.7 of the By-Laws. This can only take place upon unanimous agreement of all Council members, and under the provision that proper bookkeeping and transfer of all necessary documents to new Council members is granted. In any case, legal responsibilities of all Council members remain as laid out in the Statutes and By-Laws.

#### **§ 7. Publications**

- 7.1. The association will, in co-operation with a publisher, publish a scientific journal with the title "Amphibia-Reptilia". The subtitle of the journal will be "Publication of the Societas Europaea Herpetologica". The details concerning this journal are laid down in a contract between the association and the publisher.
- 7.2. The journal is intended for the publication of original scientific articles on herpetology, short notes and book reviews. The editors will refuse papers from those fields that use amphibians and reptiles only as a material for research, but which are not focused on these groups as such and which are not of general interest for specialists of these groups. In addition to these original articles, a limited number of pages are reserved for news of the association.
- 7.3. "Amphibia-Reptilia" publishes papers in English. Each paper will be accompanied by an English abstract and by abstracts in one or two other languages appropriate to the subject matter of the paper. It is possible that in the future additional publications may be issued, e.g. monographs.



7.4. Apart from "Amphibia-Reptilia", the Society publishes an online bulletin for short notes on distribution, ecology, behaviour and conservation of amphibians and reptiles". This bulletin is of open-access format and available from the SEH website. It is managed by several Co-Editors which have no right to vote at Council Meetings.

**§ 8. Committees**

The Council is authorised to set up Committees (Task Forces) for special purposes.

**§ 9. Funds**

9.1. The association will derive its funds from membership fees and donations.

9.2. No person will receive expenses, except when made for the proper functioning of the association. Such expenses will be limited to the amount actually spent. Payment of expenses by the Treasurer will be made on the basis of proper receipts.

**§ 10. Audit**

10.1. The General Meeting will elect two auditors. The auditors may not be re-elected immediately after a four year term of office. They must be appointed to the office in such a way that the term of office of one of them overlaps with that of the other by two years, so that only one new auditor needs be elected at each General Meeting.

10.2. It will be the task of the auditors to examine all receipts and payments by the association and to check whether or not any monies have been spent in excess of the limits set by a General Meeting or by the Council. The auditors are authorised to inspect all relevant files and minutes that the General Secretary has in his/her possession. They also have the right to inspect all relevant papers in the possession of the Treasurer and the Vice-Treasurer.

10.3. The auditors will be obliged to present their report to the General Meeting and subsequently to attach a written copy of it to the minutes of the General Meeting.

**§ 11. Status of Statutes**

In law and in any case of dispute, the only definitive version of the Statutes shall be the German version as deposited at the County Court of Bonn, unless and until the association is registered in another country.

*As accepted by the General Meeting in Vienna on 16 September, 1981. Updated and modified at the 11th Ordinary General Business Meeting of SEH at Zalec (Slovenia) on 15 July 2001, the 13th Ordinary General Meeting of SEH at Bonn (Germany) on 1 October 2005, the 14th Ordinary General Meeting of SEH at Porto, 22 September 2007, during the 17<sup>th</sup> OGM at Veszprem (Hungary) August 24<sup>th</sup> 2013, and during the 18<sup>th</sup> OGM in Wroclaw (Poland) September 9<sup>th</sup> 2015.*