

Bylaws of the IAVS Working Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature (GPN)

Article 1. Name and status

The name of this organization shall be "Working Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature", hereafter Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature (GPN). It shall be a Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS).

Article 2. Purposes

2.1 On behalf of the IAVS as the copyright holder of the International Code of Phytosociological Nomenclature (ICPN), the Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature (GPN) will be in charge of the maintenance, improvement, and proper application of the ICPN.

The main tasks of the GPN are:

- (a) to prepare and implement new editions of the ICPN;
- (b) to engage in the nomenclatural activities that are required by the ICPN;
- (c) to register the names of syntaxa, in priority the new names;
- (d) to register the typifications of names of syntaxa.

2.2 The secondary tasks of the Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature are:

- (a) to inform and advise the community of vegetation scientists about nomenclatural questions;
- (b) to follow methodological developments having direct or indirect implications for the nomenclature of vegetation types;
- (c) to follow the developments of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature for Algae, Fungi and Plants;
- (d) to elaborate bridges between different schools of classifying plant communities.

2.3 As a working group of IAVS, the GPN shares the IAVS goals and supports its activities. The GPN is subject to the Statutes and Bylaws of the IAVS.

Article 3. Membership

3.1 Membership in the GPN is open to all members of IAVS free of charge. The Membership can be obtained by:

- (a) an application (letter or email) to the Secretary of GPN, or
- (b) an explicit specification when joining or renewing the membership to IAVS.

3.2 Membership is discontinued by a written statement (electronic or hardcopy) sent to the Secretary of the GPN that the member does no longer want to be member of the GPN.

It is the responsibility of the members to provide the Secretary with a functioning e-mail address. Discontinuation of the membership in IAVS automatically implies termination of membership in the GPN.

Article 4. Business Meeting

A business meeting of the GPN shall be held annually in conjunction with either the annual IAVS Symposium or the annual meeting of another IAVS Working Group.

Article 5. Structure of the Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature

The GPN comprises three kind of bodies:

- (a) Steering Committee, the executive body of GPN;
- (b) Topic Committees, for performing specific tasks;
- (c) GPN Assembly, in charge of validating the decisions taken by the GPN Committees.

Article 6. The Steering Committee

6.1 The GPN shall have a Steering Committee (SC) composed of seven elected members. SC members shall be elected for four-year renewable terms. Elections shall take place at least two months prior to the business meeting at which the regular four-year term of the SC is ending or following a vacancy. At least one month prior to the start of an election, it shall be announced to the members via e-mail by the Chair of the GPN, who then shall receive nominations made by any member by e-mail or in person.

6.2 All nominees shall provide a biosketch including their nomenclatural activities, and agree to serve if elected. When the nomination period is closed those candidates meeting the formal requirements shall be presented to the members together with their biosketch.

6.3 Elections shall take place by means of an electronic ballot over a period of one month. The seven candidates with the highest number of votes are elected as Members of the SC. In case of ties for the seventh member, a new ballot shall take place among the nominees having an equal number of votes over a period of seven working days.

Article 7. Organisation and Tasks of the Steering Committee

7.1 The SC elects a Chair and a Secretary from its members for a period of four years. Meetings and decisions by the SC can be done either in person or by means of remote communication. All decisions on behalf of the GPN except those explicitly assigned otherwise will be made by the SC with simple majority of votes.

7.2 The duties of the SC are the following:

- (a) The SC promotes the interests of the Working Group, coordinate the activities of the Topic Committees, and supervise the scientific activities of GPN;
- (b) The SC is responsible for the amendments of ICPN and new editions. In that sense, it receives all proposals aimed at improvement and/or modification of the ICPN, prepares amendments to the ICPN, and new editions of the ICPN according to the decisions taken by the GPN Assembly;
- (c) The SC shall appoint Topic Committees to perform specific tasks within the GPN.

7.3 The functions and tasks of the Chair shall be:

- (a) The Chair presides the business meetings of the SC and the GPN;
- (b) The Chair is responsible for production and distribution of the annual report of the GPN activities to IAVS;
- (c) The Chair, at his/her discretion, may call upon members of the GPN to assist with emerging working group affairs;
- (d) If prevented, the Chair may call upon any SC member to deputise him/her in his/her functions.

7.4 The functions and duties of the Secretary are:

- (a) The Secretary keeps records of the Working Group activities, decisions, and members and provides these data to the IAVS Secretary.
- (b) The Secretary is responsible for the organisation of the ballots.
- (c) The Secretary receives the proposals of amendment of ICPN.
- (d) The Secretary may call upon any SC member to assist him/her in his/her functions.

Article 8. Organisation and Tasks of the Topic Committees

8.1 The GPN shall incorporate Topic Committees whose number and size are defined by the SC. There will be basically three permanent Topic Committees. The SC can arrange the tasks of the existing Committees or appoint a new Committee at their discretion in relation to the work to be performed.

8.2 The members of these Topic Committees are appointed by the SC both from its own members and/or from the membership of the GPN. Any other member of the GPN interested in the activities of a Topic Committee can participate as a non-voting member.

8.3 The SC shall appoint one of its members to chair a Topic Committee. The Chair of a Topic Committee shall be responsible for coordinating the activities of that Committee, and for reporting to the SC.

8.4 Committee for Changes and Conservation of Names.

(a) The Committee will receive all proposals concerning the subjective ruling of names according to ICPN, including the names to be inversed (nomina inversa) and modified (nomina mutata), to be declared ambiguous (nomina ambigua) or dubious (nomina dubia), and those to be conserved (nomina conservanda).

(b) The Committee shall make proposals on ruling the cases received.

8.5 Committee for the Registration and Typification of Names.

(a) The Committee will be responsible for the development and implementation of the registration and typification of the names.

(b) The Committee will provide a nomenclatural evaluation of the new names published and of the typifications of the names.

8.6 Committee for Website and Online Database.

(a) The Committee shall make available on the Internet the work produced by the other Committees.

(b) The Committee shall develop and maintain an online forum (discussion list) at facilitating solutions to emerging nomenclatural questions.

Article 9. **Organisation and Tasks of the GPN Assembly**

9.1 The GPN Assembly shall be formed by all the members of the GPN and shall hold the legitimacy of the activities related to phytosociological nomenclature.

9.2 The tasks of the GPN Assembly shall be:

(a) to elect the Steering Committee;

(b) to support the Steering Committee with his members participating in one or more Topic Committees, in particular in helping to solve nomenclatural issues at a regional or national level, or related to specific taxonomic groups (e.g. vascular plants, algae, bryophytes, lichens);

(c) to approve or reject the nomenclatural proposals issued by the Steering Committee and the Committee for Changes and Conservation of Names.

9.3 The GPN Assembly shall take decisions either at a business meeting or by means of electronic ballots, according to the decisions taken by the Steering Committee.

Article 10. **Decisions**

10.1 Excepted for nomenclatural proposals (see Bylaw 10.2) decisions are taken at the majority of votes (abstentions do not count):

(a) decisions taken within the Steering Committee, the Topic Committees and the GPN Assembly;

(b) all proposals submitted to the GPN Assembly by the Steering Committee and the Topic Committees, or through a referendum according to Bylaw 10.3 or an initiative according to Bylaw 10.4.

10.2 The decisions on nomenclatural proposals are taken at the majority within the SC and the Topic Committees, and at a qualified majority within the Assembly. Abstentions do not count.

(a) Decisions issued by the Steering Committee and proposals by the Committee for Changes and Conservation of Names shall be submitted to all the members of the Assembly for acceptance. They shall be overturned by the Assembly with a qualified majority >60% of the votes.

(b) Proposals overturned by the Assembly and proposed on vote a second time through a referendum (see Bylaw 10.3) shall be overturned by the Assembly with a qualified majority >60% of the votes.

(c) Proposals through an initiative (see Bylaw 10.4) shall be accepted by the Assembly with >60% of the votes.

10.3 Referendum. Items and nomenclature proposals from the Steering Committee or a Topic Committee that were rejected by the GPN Assembly can be proposed on vote a second time within a six months delay after the first vote if asked by more than one third of the GPN Assembly (see Bylaws 10.1 and 10.2. for the decisions).

10.4 Initiative. Items and nomenclature proposals outside of the Steering Committee or the Topic Committees can be proposed on vote if they are asked for by more than one third of the GPN Assembly (see Bylaws 10.1 and 10.2. for the decisions).

10.5 (a) Decisions will be made mainly by email ballot among all the members of the concerned body (SC, Topic Committees, GPN Assembly). Ballot involving the GPN Assembly shall extend over a period of one month. For the other bodies, the period is decided within the concerned body.

(b) When decisions are taken during a meeting (business meeting included), a member who cannot participate may delegate his/her vote to another member of the concerned body. For meetings of the GPN Assembly each member may cast up to three proxy votes (i.e. a maximum of four votes per member). Members who delegate their vote for a GPN meeting shall inform the Secretary of SC, and the chair of the body for the other meetings. If fewer than 50% of all the members of the concerned body are represented in person or by proxy, voting shall be by email ballot after all members have been informed about the proposals in question and the arguments for and against.

10.6 All the decisions taken by the GPN Assembly shall be published as soon as possible on the GPN official webpage, as well as valid Referenda and Initiatives. New editions of the ICPN and decisions on changes of names (inversed, modified), on dubious names, ambiguous names, and conserved names shall be published in a scientific journal.

Article 11. Finances

The Working Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature's financial assets shall be held by and managed through the accounts of IAVS.

Article 12. Amendments

These Bylaws will be adopted and may be amended by a majority of votes of the members participating in an electronic ballot extending over one month (see Bylaw 10.1). Changes in the Bylaws are contingent on approval by the IAVS Council.