

Bylaws of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group

– Version of 11 July 2015 –

(Accepted on 30 September 2011 by the general membership of the EDGG in an electronic ballot [44 yes; 0 no]; modified on 10 May 2012 through decision of the EDGG Executive Committee [6 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions]; modified on 27 April 2015 through decision of the EDGG Executive Committee [5 yes; 1 no; 0 abstentions]; modified on 11 July 2015 by the general membership of the EDGG in an electronic ballot [Change the name to Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (EDGG) : 132 yes, 27 no; Change the name to European/Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference (EDGC) 109 yes, 50 no]; modified on 11 July 2015 through decision of the EDGG Executive Committee [7 yes; 0 no; 1 abstentions])

Article 1. Name, Affiliation

1. This Group shall be known as the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (hereafter EDGG).
2. EDGG is a Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (hereafter IAVS), and consequently these Bylaws are subsidiary to the Statutes and Bylaws of IAVS.

Article 2. Objectives, Activities, Facilities

1. The objectives of the EDGG shall be to:
 - a. develop and advance research on any aspect (vegetation, flora, fauna, soils, etc.) of Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands (i.e. steppes, dry, mesic, wet, acidic, calcareous, rocky, saline, coastal and alpine grasslands),
 - b. promote education on Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands,
 - c. promote the publication of research results on Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands,
 - d. facilitate scientific and personal communication among scientists who are interested in Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands,
 - e. promote appropriate application of research in Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands for the good of society, particularly in environmental management and public decision making, and
 - f. promote policies and legislation towards protection, proper management, and restoration of Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands.
2. These objectives may be achieved by the following activities:
 - a. organization, promotion and administration of scientific meetings, research expeditions, and field trips,
 - b. establishment of Regional or Topical Subgroups, or Special Committees,
 - c. publication, editing and distribution of journals, special features, articles, books, data resources, and other media dealing with Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands,

d. encouragement and facilitation of communication between grassland scientists and policymakers at all levels of government, as well as with private and public organizations,

e. provision of awards, grants, scholarships and other financial assistance to charitable organizations, societies, associations, companies or persons that advance the objectives of the EDGG, and

f. other mechanisms, provided they are consistent with the stated objectives of the EDGG.

3. To achieve its aims, the EDGG provides four major facilities for information exchange among dry grassland researchers and conservationists:

a. the Bulletin of the EDGG,

b. the EDGG mailing list,

c. the EDGG homepage,

d. the Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences, organized annually in different places throughout the Palaearctic realm.

Article 3. Membership and Fees

1. Membership of the EDGG is open to all natural persons who are interested in Palaearctic natural and semi-natural grasslands and who are willing to support the objectives of EDGG.

2. Membership of the EDGG is free of charge, and membership of the IAVS is optional.

3. Membership is obtained by

a. written application to the EDGG Membership Administrator,

b. registration for participation in a conference, expedition or fieldtrip of the EDGG, or

c. authorship in an EDGG-edited publication or Special Feature.

4. Membership can be terminated by any member and at any time by means of a written request addressed to the Membership Administrator.

5. It is the responsibility of members to provide the Membership Administrator with a functioning e-mail address. Membership is terminated when no functioning e-mail address is available to the Membership Administrator.

Article 4. Executive Committee

1. Responsibilities.

- a. The Executive Committee shall be the primary governing body of the EDGG.
- b. The Executive Committee represents the EDGG and shall be in charge of the daily affairs of the EDGG.
- c. The Executive Committee exerts authority in any matter not allocated to other organs by the Bylaws.
- d. The Executive Committee will have the following main responsibilities:
 - i. Publication of the Bulletin of the EDGG;
 - ii. Maintenance of the EDGG homepage;
 - iii. Organisation of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences in cooperation with the Local Organising Committees;
 - iv. Organisation of General Assemblies and of elections to the Executive Committee as well as conducting electronic ballots of the General Membership as required;
 - v. Internal communication with members and Subgroups and coordination of all EDGG activities;
 - vi. External communication with IAVS, other organisations, institutions and individuals

2. Election

- a. The Executive Committee shall regularly consist of seven members.
- b. The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for terms of two years. Membership automatically terminates at the time of the General Assembly, which is held in uneven years. Members of the Executive Committee may be re-elected. The new Executive Committee takes over its duties before the General Assembly.
- c. Prior to the election, the General Membership shall be invited to provide nominations of candidates for the Executive Committee during a period of at least two weeks. Any EDGG member may be nominated as a candidate for the Executive Committee by any member of the EDGG, including himself/herself.
- d. Only those nominees who agree to take the seat if elected will be accepted and listed as candidates.
- e. The elections will be conducted via electronic forms among all members. The duration of the election period will be at least two weeks. In the election, each member can vote for up to seven candidates.

f. Those seven candidates with the highest number of votes are elected. In the case of a tie on the seventh position, all candidates with the same number of votes are elected. In order to improve geographic representativeness, the one member based in Europe (in a physical-geographical sense) and the one based outside Europe with the highest number of votes shall be elected even if they are not among the seven with the overall highest number of votes.

3. Termination of Membership

a. A Member of the Executive Committee can resign from his/her position at any time.

b. A Member of the Executive Committee can be dismissed by a majority vote of a Qualified General Assembly (i.e. an Assembly of at least 40 EDGG members from at least 10 different countries) or in an electronic ballot among the General Membership.

c. In case of resignation or dismissal, the remaining Executive Committee members may appoint a replacement to fill any such vacant positions until the following General Assembly.

4. Assignment of Responsibilities

a. The Executive Committee designates from its membership one Officer for each of the six required functions:

i. Representative to the IAVS, who must be a member of the IAVS.

ii. Membership Administrator who maintains the membership list and is responsible for general communication with the members.

iii. Secretary-General, who prepares and archives all official documents of the EDGG, such as the Bylaws and minutes of meetings of the General Assembly and Executive Committee, as well as the results of elections and ballots and make these available to the general membership.

iv. Editor-in-Chief of the Bulletin of the EDGG, who is in charge of the everyday business of the Bulletin of the EDGG.

v. Editor-in-Chief of the EDGG homepage, who is in charge of the everyday business of the EDGG homepage.

vi. Meetings Coordinator, who collects ideas for future venues of Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferencess, communicates with potential meeting hosts, and supports the Local Organising Committees as the representative of the Executive Committee.

b. The Executive Committee may also designate Deputy Officers for each of the six required functions, as well as Officers for other responsibilities.

c. A member of the Executive Committee may hold more than one of the named functions.

d. The Executive Committee will keep the membership informed regarding the responsibilities of its Officers. The Executive Committee may reorganize the arrangement of these responsibilities at any time.

5. Representation and Decisions

a. Each member of the Executive Committee is entitled to publicize activities of the EDGG to members and non-members. At the IAVS, the EDGG is represented by the IAVS Representative or his/her Deputy.

b. All decisions of the Executive Committee are taken by the whole Executive Committee unless they belong to the specific responsibilities of a certain Officer. Also, fundamental decisions regarding the Bulletin of the EDGG, the EDGG homepage and the Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences are to be made by the whole Executive Committee. The majority of the Executive Committee can overrule any individual decision of one of its Officers.

c. Decisions by the Executive Committee are made by a simple majority of its members (not votes), except in issues which require a three-quarter majority in accordance with these Bylaws.

d. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be held in person, by remote communication or by a combination of these.

6. Reporting.

Each year during the General Assembly, the Executive Committee shall present an annual report of its activities since the previous General Assembly and those planned for the future. A copy of this report shall be submitted to the Secretary of IAVS.

Article 5. General Assembly

1. The Executive Committee shall organize General Assemblies on an annual basis, to be held in conjunction with the Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences.

2. During the General Assembly, the membership shall receive the annual reports of the Executive Committee.

3. Any member of the EDGG may raise an issue or appeal a Decision of the Executive Committee by proposing the matter for consideration by the General Assembly. Members may, by submission of a petition signed by at least ten members of the EDGG, request that an item proposed by a member of the EDGG during the General Assembly meeting be voted on by the General Assembly.

4. If at least 40 EDGG members from at least 10 different countries are represented in a General Assembly and no country represents more than one third of these members (Qualified General Assembly), its decisions are binding over the Executive Committee; otherwise they are recommendations that can be overruled by the majority of the Executive Committee.

5. The Executive Committee shall approve the minutes, and the Secretary-General shall distribute them in the Bulletin of the EDGG.

Article 6. Decisions by General Membership

1. If required by either the General Assembly or the Executive Committee, final decisions on important issues can be delegated for resolution by an electronic ballot of the General Membership of EDGG.

Article 7. Regional or Topical Subgroups and Special Committees

1. Members of the EDGG may organize Regional or Topical Subgroups. The establishment, reorganization and renaming of such Subgroups needs to be approved either by the Executive Committee, General Assembly or by an electronic ballot of the General Membership

2. Subgroups can be dissolved by a three-quarter vote of the Executive Committee or by a simple majority of either a Qualified General Assembly or an electronic ballot of the General Membership.

3. The Executive Committee can appoint Special Committees that support its work within specific fields. Special Committees consist of one or more members from the Executive Committee and any number of ordinary EDGG members. Their terms of duty terminate with that of the Executive Committee that appointed them or by dissolution through the Executive Committee.

4. The Executive Committee shall appoint Teams of Editors for EDGG Special Features in scientific journals and for other publications, jointly with the respective Editor(s)-in-Chief.

Article 8. Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences

1. Each potential future Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference (venue, date, topic, excursions) has to be presented and discussed in at least one General Assembly prior to a decision. After such a presentation, a Qualified General Assembly can decide (a) to accept the proposal; (b) to delegate the decision to the Executive Committee; or (c) if the presentation is at least two years prior to the proposed meeting, postpone the decision to the subsequent General Assembly

2. All fundamental issues not decided by the General Assembly after such a presentation (because the General Assembly was not qualified, because it delegated them or left them open) are decided by a majority decision of the Executive Committee.

3. For each Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference, the Executive Committee shall appoint a Local Organising Committee consisting of one or more persons proposed by the meetings host(s) plus the Meetings Coordinator or his/her Deputy.

4. All fundamental decisions regarding a Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference are made by the Local Organising Committee jointly with the Executive Committee. This particularly applies to financial issues such as fees, applications for financial support and the use of financial surpluses.

Article 9. Modification of the Bylaws

The Bylaws can be modified by

- a. a majority vote of the General Membership in an electronic ballot, or
- b. a majority vote of a Qualified General Assembly, or
- c. through a vote by three quarters of all Executive Committee members.

Article 10. Status as IAVS Working Group

The status of being a Working Group of the IAVS can be terminated at any time by a

- a. two-third vote of a Qualified General Assembly or a majority vote of an electronic ballot among the EDGG General Membership, or
- b. decision of the IAVS Council.

Article 11. General Prohibitions and Finances

1. The General Prohibitions stated in Article 12 of the IAVS Statutes apply to the EDGG.
2. If the EDGG is to handle its own financial assets, this must be done through the accounts of the IAVS. The EDGG Executive Committee shall arrange with the IAVS Governing Board that ensures that such money is exclusively used according to the intentions of the EDGG.

Article 12. Dissolution

A decision on the dissolution of the EDGG can only be made by a majority of votes in an electronic ballot among the General Membership.