



INTERNATIONAL MIRE CONSERVATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

issue 2000/2, March 2000

The International Mire Conservation Group (IMCG) is an international network of specialists having a particular interest in mire and peatland conservation. The network encompasses a wide spectrum of expertise and interests, from research scientists to consultants, government agency specialists to peatland site managers. It operates largely through e-mail and newsletters, and holds regular workshops and symposia. For more information: consult the IMCG Website: <http://ibs.uel.ac.uk/imcg/>

IMCG has an elected chairman (Richard Lindsay), a Working Group (being a group of people that volunteered to keep the IMCG business going), and a Decision Making Group of 8 (now 7 since Marina Botch's death) elected members from various parts of the world, that has to take decisions between congresses.

Editorial

A new Newsletter 2000/2, already shortly after receiving issue 2000/1. As always, we took the liberty to (sometimes vigorously) edit available texts. Any mistakes and omissions are entirely our responsibility.

This Newsletter is specially meant to inform you on the coming IMCG Lagow meeting in Poland, 24 – 28 March 2000. Next to being a third Classification and Terminology Workshop, this meeting will also discuss the progress of the European Mires Book, the Wise Use Guidelines for Global Mires and Peatlands, and – last but not least – the future work and organisational structure of the IMCG. In this issue, you will find ample information on all these things, including a detailed and extensive draft constitution.

The Working Group wants to involve as many people as possible in these discussions. To guarantee an effective meeting, send all your remarks as soon as possible to the IMCG secretariat.

The next Newsletter 2000/3 is planned to appear in good time for the IMCG Congress in Quebec. Deadline for submitting material is 15th June. Please inform us on anything happening and all relevant books published to report on them in the Newsletter. In the meantime, keep an eye on the IMCG web-site: <http://ibs.uel.ac.uk/imcg/>

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The IMCG Meeting in Lagow, Poland, March 2000

The IMCG meeting in Lagow (24 – 28 March 2000) has the following preliminary programme (M= morning; A= afternoon; E= evening, between brackets: responsible preparation):

Thursday 23 March: arrival

E: Working Group Meeting for Working Group Members; other IMCGers are welcome

Friday 24 March:

M: European Mires Book: identification and discussions of problems

NOON: Official opening of the third IMCG Classification and Terminology Workshop, including a short presentation on IMCG for new people, attending the workshop (Richard Lindsay).

A: Review of the Workshop: summary from former workshops in Greifswald (1998) and Popelna (1999), progress, aims, outlook (Leslaw Wolejko); review and plenary discussions on Terminology (Ron Hofstetter) and Regionality (Michael Steiner/Asbjorn Moen)

E: Workshops on Terminology and Regionality; questions and aims to be identified in afternoon session

Saturday 25 March:

M: Review and plenary discussions on Conservational values (Hans Joosten/Tiemo Timmermann), Plants (Philippe Julve), Animals (Stefan Hotes)

A: Discussion and workshop on Wise Use Guidelines, attended by IPS coordinator Donal Clarke (this will function as a workshop on conservational values) and workshops on Plants and Animals; questions and aims to be identified in the morning session.

E: Entertainment: talks and slides

Sunday 26 March:

M: Excursion

A: IMCG internal stuff (IMCG Working Group)

E: Free discussions

Monday 27 March:

M: Hydrogenesis (Hans Joosten/John Couwenberg) and Multilevel (Richard Lindsay)

A: Workshops on Hydrogenesis and Multilevel; questions and aims to be identified in the morning session

E: Integration: presentation and workshops

Tuesday 28 March:

M: Concluding presentations of topic outcomes and future planning (logframes) + discussions

A: Concluding sessions:

- Integration of classification approaches

- European Mires Book

E: Working Group Meeting and departure

Wednesday 29 March: departure

The meeting will take place in the town of Lagow Lubuski (Lubuskie district), Poland. This small town, whose origin dates back to 13th century is situated 45 km East from Frankfurt /Oder.

For more information and registration contact

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Directly following on this IMCG meeting, Wetlands International organises a meeting of its Central European Peatlands Project on 29 and 30 March at the same location. This meeting will be attended by the national coordinators of this project, advisors involved, and people of Wetlands International. As there is a considerable overlap in the participants of the IMCG and the WI meeting, it was decided to keep both meetings in Lagow.

For more information on the WI meeting contact:

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Agenda IMCG Working Group Meeting on 23 March 2000

On Thursday 23 March 2000, 20:00h an IMCG Working Group Meeting will be held in Lagow, Poland. The meeting is open to all IMCG people. Below is the agenda for this meeting with the responsible person to lead and prepare documents between brackets. These documents can partly be found in this Newsletter, others will be distributed

among WG-members before the meeting.

1. Discussion of draft Constitution (all); the draft constitution can be found in this Newsletter
2. Discussion about future IMCG executive structure (Richard, Asbjørn)
3. Wetlands International proposal that IMCG be given Expert Group status: implications and

- benefits (Richard); for information: see Newsletter 2000/1
4. Offer from IUCN of IMCG appointment to Commission for Ecosystem Management (Richard)
 5. Quebec 2000 - latest update on programme and administration (Richard, Jan)
 6. GAPP - IMCG feedback on the GAPP: see report on STRP Peatlands Working Group in this Newsletter
 7. STRP activities (see also elsewhere this Newsletter) and IMCG representation in STRP (Richard, Andreas)
 8. Telma 2000: outline proposals for future IMCG strategy (Mette, Richard, Tatiana)
 9. Agenda for the IMCG internal meeting in Lagow

- on Sunday afternoon 25 March 2000, in Lagow (Richard)
10. Progress report on IMCG activities, and decisions about next stages:
 - Wise Use Guidelines (Hans)
 - European Mires Book (Hans)
 - Classification & terminology (all)
 - Mire plant lists (Philippe)
 - Newsletter: future production & distribution (Andreas, Hans)

Please contact the secretariat if you have questions, remarks, or proposals regarding this agenda.

A follow-up Working Group Meeting will be held Tuesday 28 March 2000 to evaluate the outcomes of the Lagow workshop.

TELMA 2000

In the late-1960s, a program was established by IUCN and IBP called "Project Telma". The name "telma" came from the Greek telma, meaning both "standing water, pond, marsh, swamp" and "mud used as binder between bricks". Project Telma was the first international programme devoted explicitly to the conservation and wise use of peatland ecosystems. It was initiated in response to concerns that many important sites for peatland research were being damaged or destroyed, and so Telma was designed to "encourage international cooperation in the conservation of peatlands for scientific research and education, and for the protection of their wildlife". Today these same objectives are as relevant as ever, arguable more so. However, there is now an increasing support for mires and peatlands, culminating most recently in the adoption of the Draft Global Action Plan for Peatlands (GAPP) by Ramsar 7th Conference of Parties.

Recalling the earlier initiative of IUCN and IBP, it seems appropriate to pick up where the original

Project Telma left off and take its principles forward into the new millennium with a new programme – Telma 2000.

Telma 2000 can be a long-term strategic plan, identifying priorities and tasks of IMCG, both within and building up the GAPP.

Such a strategic plan could consist of the following parts:

- Inventory / analysis: what is the current and future situation with respect to mires and peatlands, both in policy and in praxis, and what is the current status of IMCG as an organisation
- Evaluation: what do these things mean for priorities for mire conservation, and what consequences might this have for the IMCG organisation
- Action plan: what are we going to do about it in practise. What can we do where, when, and how and how should it be organised.

In Lagow, we will have a first brainstorm session on Telma 2000.

Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) Peatlands Working Group

by Jack Rieley

The Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Ramsar Convention is charged with advising the Conference of the Parties (COP), the Standing Committee (SC), and the Bureau (secretariat) on technical issues of importance for the implementation of the Convention. This is a brief update on the terms of reference and activities of the Peatlands Working Group and associated organisations since the 9th STRP meeting in September 1999.

The *principal responsibility* of the Peatlands WG is to facilitate evaluation of the Global Action Plan for Peatlands (GAPP) as delegated to STRP by the 7th

Congress of Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP7) in Recommendation 7.1 and annex:

"...INVITES the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel and Ramsar International Organization Partners to assist Contracting Parties in evaluating this Action Plan, once completed, with regard to development of:

- i) additional guidelines for designation of peatlands as Ramsar sites;
- ii) further national and regional sustainable development, wise use and management guidelines for peatlands;

- iii) initiatives to transfer peatland development and restoration technology to developing nations and countries with economies in transition; and
- iv) standardized and globally applicable classification of peatland types and their ecological characteristics."

"...2.2 Ramsar Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), the Ramsar Bureau, IPS and IMCG and other interested Partners should review the extent and quality of peatland survey around the world and identify those areas in need of further inventory."

The *Terms of Reference* of the Peatlands Working Group, defined at the STRP meeting held in September 1999, are as follows:

1. Co-ordinate comments from STRP, International Organisation Partners (IOPs), and any interested Contracting Parties (CPs) into the further development of draft Global Action Plan for Peatlands (see Recommendation 7.1) by end October 1999.
2. Finalize the Global Action Plan for Peatlands (GAPP) at the GAPP Discussion Group meeting in Freising, Germany (30 November – 1 December 1999) prior to urgent transmission to the 24th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee for endorsement (alterations to the present draft version will be highlighted in bold). Refer to Decision SC24-8 of the 24th meeting of the Standing Committee.
3. Use the Freising meeting to review progress and set out requirements to make substantive headway within each of the eight 'opportunities' outlined in the GAPP and report findings to the 9th STRP meeting (June 2000).

And in particular:

4. With the support of interested Contracting Parties, develop guidelines for the designation of peatlands as Ramsar sites drawing on workshop discussions at Freising (November 1999) and Quebec (August 2000) and comments from the STRP. Guidelines should be developed by June 2001 for consideration by the Standing Committee later that year, and adoption by COP8 in 2002.
5. Work with the Inventory Working Group to develop procedures for the identification and review of peatland inventory. In close conjunction with the Wetlands International 'GROWI – 2' project, a project concept should be devised for consideration and endorsement at the 9th STRP meeting (June 2000).

Members of the STRP Peatlands Working Group

IMCG (Rob Stoneman), Co-Lead, IPS (Jack Rieley), Co-Lead, Wetlands International (Nick Davidson), Co-Lead, WWF (Chris Tydeman), GWEN to be available for advice (Toré Söderqvist).

Activities and Events since the STRP Meeting in September 1999

The size of the Peatlands WG has shrunk in size with

the resignation of Rob Stoneman of IMCG owing to pressure of work and the elevation of Nick Davidson of Wetlands International to DGS of Ramsar. That only leaves myself (Jack Rieley, IPS) as the residual co-lead in the meantime. I understand that both IMCG and WI are in the process of selecting replacements but presumably these will not be ratified until the next STRP meeting in early July 2000.

Under the circumstances I am taking the initiative to steer forward evaluation of the GAPP and addressing the various tasks allocated to the Peatlands Working Group.

Items (1) and (2) of the Terms of Reference have been addressed successfully. After the last STRP meeting Ramsar CPs, IOPs and other interested parties were contacted for comments and feedback relating to Recommendation 7.1 of COP7. This information was incorporated into the business of the Freising meeting and presented to the Ramsar Standing Committee on 2 December 1999 (see previous IMCG Newsletter). The Standing Committee (SC) accepted the document for further study by the STRP and the SC with a view to bringing it for formal consideration by Ramsar COP8 in Spain in 2002.

The evaluation of the revised GAPP is the responsibility of STRP and the Peatlands Working Group. The revised GAPP will be distributed to CPs, IOPs, and other interested parties, including the expert groups that were involved in its formulation, for comment and suggestion. This feedback is required by the end of May 2000 so that it can be incorporated into the evaluation report that will be presented to the STRP meeting in early July 2000 and the Millennium Wetlands Event in August 2000.

Apart from comments on the content and structure of the GAPP feedback is also urgently required on the 8 'opportunities' that are presented in the plan. These will form the key issues around which the GAPP will eventually be implemented. They are:

- a) Knowledge of global peatland resources
- b) Peatland education and awareness
- c) Policy, management guidelines and administrative implements
- d) Wise use of peatlands
- e) Research networks and centres of excellence
- f) Institutional capacity
- g) International co-operation
- h) Implementation strategy

These are all very important issues and/or actions that require input from a wide range of experts. I am only a co-ordinator/facilitator of this process and it is essential I have as much assistance as possible. I am making a plea, therefore, for peatland experts to volunteer to assist in evaluating and detailing the particular problems and requirements of these 'opportunities'. Please let me have your names and Email addresses together with which opportunity (ies) you wish to help with. I would expect that 3-4 people for each would be enough at this stage.

Finally, the Peatlands WG also has remits for two

further important tasks that need to be addressed during this year. The first is the development of guidelines for the designation of peatlands as Ramsar Sites. The Freising discussions should play an important role in this process, especially the wise use guidelines but someone has to take this task on board. Are there any volunteers? The second is to work with the Wetlands Inventory Working Group to develop procedures for the identification and review of peatland inventory. In this respect, and in close conjunction with the Wetlands International 'GROW1-2 Project, to devise a project concept to be considered and endorsed at the 9th STRP Meeting that will be held in July 2000. I know there are several groups working on peatland inventories and it is important that they collaborate in order to optimise their activities. I would very much welcome hearing from them and also from Wetlands International and the lead of the STRP Inventory WG in order to co-ordinate action.

To summarise, the various actions and deadlines for the next year or so that embrace activities of the Peatlands WG of the STRP are:

- GAPP consultation and feedback - deadline 31 May 2000
- Experts to advise and comment on the 8 'opportunities' - NOW

- Inventory WG collaboration on peatlands inventory - NOW
- Wetlands International collaboration on peatlands inventory - NOW
- Other organisation collaboration on peatlands inventory - NOW
- STRP meeting - July 2000
- Millennium Wetlands Event, Quebec - 6-9 August 2000

Time is short and much needs to be done so please take action/volunteer NOW.

Many thanks in anticipation!

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The full text of the revised GAPP can be found in the previous IMCG Newsletter.

Music of the Mires – a perspective on mire biodiversity

by Richard Lindsay (with considerable help from Richard Hubbard)

It is still very common to be told that bogs are low-diversity systems, particularly because they have "so few species". Yet we all know that the structures found on bogs - the microrelief and the microtopo patterns - can generate incredible complexity, and then the distribution of species (limited in number though they may be) within these patterns provides further diversity. This got me thinking, and the next time someone tells you that bogs have low diversity, try this:

How many notes (very approximately) of the musical scale would appear in an average orchestral piece? If one excludes oriental microtones and is crassly Eurocentric, the answer is surely the 'eight white notes and the five black ones' to create the basic pattern. The lowest notes that we can hear that an organ produces are about 20-30Hz, and most people can't hear much above 16KHz, while nearly all hi-fi audio (gramophone, cd) cuts out at 20kHz. That gives about ten octaves. So say $(8 + 5) \times 10 = 130$ notes, for Dunstable to Schnittke (and Zappa, eds). Perhaps you'd like to add (multiply by) seven for a fairly standard range of note values, from breve to hemidemisemiquaver. Say 1000. Then, there's the range of time signatures: that gives quite a range of combinations. Even so, the raw components are fairly limited. Like biological systems, the REAL variability arises from the elementary fact that there is absolutely no limit (other than the listening span of a conscious audience) to how these elements are combined, which is why European musical invention seems to have dried up long before the possibilities were exhausted!

I am fairly sure that the number of notes used is less than the number of species "typical" of mires – and mires are considered to have extremely low biodiversity yet we have this incredibly rich tapestry of musical heritage. In other words, we should not look simply at how many individual components we have, but rather at the way in which they can be assembled.....

Relevant facts:

- Number of „plant species recorded from bogs“ for UK peat bogs = approx. 130 (Wheeler, B.D. & Shaw, S.C. 1995. *Restoration of Damaged Peatlands – With Particular Reference to Lowland Raised Bogs Affected by Peat Extraction*. HMSO, London.)
- Number of „typical mire species“ in Philippe Julve's *Holarctic Mire Species List* = approx. 1400 (Philippe Julve's Web-Site: <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/philippe.julve/>)

IMCG European Mires Book

Progress on the European Mires Book is promising. An overview of the present (27 February) state of the art is given in the table below. For most of the European countries we have found competent authors. Exceptions still are: Azerbedjan, parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina (for which we only have authors for Southern Herzegovina), Hungary, Luxembourg (but we expect that to be covered by the Belgian authors), Macedonia, and Moldova. For most of these countries we have approached possible authors, but had no confirmation yet. Anyone who has ideas on how to cover these countries, please contact as soon

Country	contribution promise	draft received
Albania	+	
Armenia	+	
Austria	+	
Azerbeidjan		
Belarus	+	
Belgium	+	
Bosnia-Herzegovina	partly	
Bulgaria	+	+
Croatia	+	
Czech Republic	+	
Denmark	+	
Estonia	+	+
Finland	+	
France	+	
Georgia	+	+
Germany	+	
Greece	+	+
Hungary		
Ireland	+	
Italy	+	
Latvia	+	
Liechtenstein	+	+

as possible! Andorra will be treated by the authors of the spanish and french chapters.

Eight draft chapters, most of suprisingly good quality, have been received until now. Many more are expected before the Lagow meeting, as authors have promised to send them in the coming weeks. During the Lagow meeting we will discuss major common problems and fine tuning issues on the basis of the available drafts. A substantial part of the country chapter authors will attend in Lagow (from over 15 countries as far as we know now).

Country	contribution promise	draft received
Iceland	+	
Lithuania	+	
Luxemburg		
Macedonia		
Malta	+	
Moldova		
Netherlands	+	
Norway	+	
Poland	+	+
Portugal	+	
Romania	+	
Russia	+	
Serbia	+	
Slovakia	+	+
Slovenia	+	
Spain	+	+
Sweden	+	
Switzerland	+	
Turkey	+	
Ukraine	+	
United Kingdom	+	
total	38 of 43	8

Regional News

Rospuda Wetlands threatened

Currently in the northeastern region of Poland, a road known as Via Baltica is the main route for large freight trucks traveling to and from Lithuania and the other Baltic countries. Via Baltica runs through the center of the Polish city of Augustow, population 30,000.

To alleviate pressure from large vehicles in the city center, local authorities want to construct a bypass for Via Baltica around Augustow. From several choices, authorities have decided on a route that cuts through

the Rospuda wetlands and planned construction to take place during summer 1999. If built, the road will destroy the immensely valuable wetlands area. There are viable alternatives to the destructive bypass that is planned by local authorities. One option, 3 km longer but more environmentally benign because of location, has been refuted on the reason that it would be outrageously more expensive. Another option is a short bridge, to which scientists have given their approval, that would span a small portion of the area and solve the bypass problem in only 250-300 meters. The decision made by local authorities *can*

still change because of the diversified planning that takes place at different levels of government.

The Polish environmental non-government organization Workshop for All Beings (Pracownia na rzecz wszystkich istot) is mounting a large-scale campaign to protect Rospuda wetlands, prevent the destructive road-building, and encourage one of the safer alternatives. Please support our efforts.

Workshop for All Beings is requesting citizens' assistance in the form of letters of protest to support our new campaign to stop an urgent wetlands threat here in Poland. The organization is also requesting assistance from the media in publicizing this important wetlands issue. All input to our campaign adds much credibility and highlights widespread awareness and protest to the road-building.

Scientists assign the same ecological value to the Rospuda wetlands as the wetlands of the nearby Biebrza National Park. In fact, prior to and in contradiction to the plans for additional road-building, there has been a plan to establish a Rospuda wetlands nature reserve. Rospuda wetlands are among the most valuable wetlands in Poland, and the ECONET project has named Rospuda as a site of international ecological significance. Large mammals that inhabit Rospuda include elk, deer, fox, wild boar, beaver, and otter. Species of birds include the northern hobby, buzzard, bittern, crake, black stork, crane, and snipe. If road-building takes place, the Rospuda wetlands will be drained and as a result the musk orchid will be eradicated. The musk orchid is only found at a few locations in Europe, in Poland only in the Rospuda wetlands.

On behalf of IMCG a protest letter has been sent to the Polish minister of Environment.

For more information write to:

"Movement for Earth"

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Transboundary Protected Wetland in the Balkans

Prespa, Greece - WWF, the conservation organization, has welcomed the creation of the first transboundary protected area in the Balkans as an important step for freshwater conservation. The new Prespa Park was officially announced on World Wetlands Day (2 February 2000) by Albania, Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The new agreement to create the Prespa Park was recognised as a Gift to the Earth by WWF. Gifts to the Earth are significant, new commitments to help preserve the natural world. The agreement is the result of efforts led by WWF-Greece and the Society for the Protection of Prespa with the support of the local community.

"This tri-national cooperation is a milestone for conservation," said Richard Holland, Director of WWF's Living Waters Campaign. "It comes at a time

when the world's freshwater resources and its rivers, lakes and underground sources, are severely threatened by land conversion for agriculture, housing and industrial use." The two Prespa lakes are among the oldest in Europe and are renowned for their natural beauty and variety of species including populations of rare waterbirds. It is the only place in the entire European Union where the dalmatian and white pelicans breed together. The new reserve, shared by Albania, Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, covers an area of 55,830 hectares.

"This visionary move on the part of the three governments is the first important step towards securing a sustainable future for the people and nature of this region," said Demetres Karavellas, Director of WWF-Greece. "WWF-Greece is committed to supporting this effort and participating in the implementation and management of the protected area." One of the targets of WWF's Living Waters Campaign is to help save the world's wetlands and ultimately dwindling freshwater. The announcement by the Balkan countries not only contributes to conservation in Europe, but addresses a growing concern worldwide about threatened freshwater sources. Actions such as those in the Balkans could help save what is left and serve as a call for other countries to follow suit.

The Society for the Protection of Prespa was awarded the Wetland Conservation Award 1999 by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

For further information:

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EU Council Regulations for TACIS Successor entered into force

On 21 January 2000, the regulations of the new EU assistance programme for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No.

99/2000) entered into force. The programme has a budget of EUR 3 138 million, will last until the end of the year 2006 and succeed the TACIS Programme.

It stresses the importance of integrating environmental aspects into economic assistance projects and reserves a higher proportion of the funds for investment financing, e.g. for environmental infrastructure. Cross-border and multi-country programmes in the environmental field are also encouraged. New elements of the programme are the trend to concentrate on fewer areas of cooperation, the preference for larger projects, and a limited competition for EU funds among partner countries. Another new element is the support of partnerships for institution building between EU and NIS (public as well as private) organizations. New projects will

be defined jointly by the European Commission and beneficiaries in the partner countries and openly tendered (except for service contracts below EUR 200 000).

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/01_00/ip_00_66.htm
(press release)
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg1a/nis/reg_99/draft/index.htm (draft text)

New and recent Journals/Newsletters/Books/Reports

Westlake D.F., J. Kvet & A. Szczepanski (1998). The Production Ecology of Wetlands. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 588p. (USD 130)

Concentrating on wetlands of lakes, rivers, and fens, this book assesses the ways in which wetland plants interact with microbes and animals through detritus, grazing, and creation of micro-habitats. Chapters include: general ecology of wetlands, primary production in wetlands, further fate of organic matter in wetlands, the role of decomposers in wetlands, the role of animals and animal communities in wetlands, mineral economy and cycling of minerals in wetlands, micro-climatic conditions and water economy of wetland vegetation, and the management of wetlands.

Trepel M. (2000) Quantifizierung der Stoffdynamik von Ökosystemen auf Niedermoorböden mit dem Modellsystem WASMOD. Ecosys - Beiträge zu Ökosystemforschung Suppl. Bd. 29: 1-140

In this thesis the impact of land use (land use type, -intensity, and drainage depth) on the nitrogen dynamics of minerotrophic peatsoils is analysed and quantified on different spatiotemporal scales with the dynamic modelling system WASMOD. The simulation results clearly indicate that nitrogen losses are controlled mainly by the factors drainage depth, land use intensity, especially the amount of fertilizer,

and the wheather conditions. Applying the modelsystem to two peatlands in NW-Germany, the effects of different land use scenarios were calculated.

For more information write to:

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Karofeld E. (1999). Formation and Development of Microtopography on Estonian Raised Bogs. Tallinn Pedagogical University Dissertations on Natural Sciences 2: 1-21.

This thesis focusses on bog hollows, mud bottoms, pools, and man made shell craters. From 1982-1999, various approaches from several hundred metres long transects to millimetre scale measurements in mud bottoms were used to study different features and processes on 7 estonian bogs. Aspects studied include origin, spatio-temporal dynamics, methane fluxes, and factors influencing these. Developmental pathways between different bog microforms are also discussed.

For more information write to

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UPCOMING EVENTS

3rd IMCG Classification and Terminology Workshop.

24-28 March 2000, Lagow, Poland

See elsewhere in this Newsletter. For all technical and scientific information contact

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Biodiversity of Boreal Nature and its Conservation - II International Symposium of the Nature Reserve Friendship

16 - 19 October, 2000, Kuhmo, Finland and Kostamus, Russia

The Research Centre of Friendship Park, Natural Heritage Services of Pohjanmaa-Kainuu Region of the Forest and Park Service and Kostamus State Nature Reserve will arrange a symposium covering research, nature conservation awareness, assessment of the state of nature conservation and ecotourism with support from the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

Special emphasis is directed on biodiversity of forests, mires, and watercourses in the boreal

coniferous zone in different biogeographical scales, and its conservation, as well as land use effects. Scientists, nature conservation authorities and organisations are cordially invited to participate the symposium to present lectures and posters on the above mentioned topics. The language in the scientific sessions of the symposium is English. In other sessions, English-Russian interpretation is available.

There will be no registration fee, and accommodation at low costs is available in nearby hotels and hostels (approximately 120-200 FIM in double rooms per night). For a limited number of participants, financial support is available to cover a part of the traveling and accommodation expenses.

The second circular with more detailed information, and a call for papers will be sent to those who have indicated interest in taking part in the symposium. To be included in the mailing list, please send a preliminary registration with your full contact information to:

Kainuu Regional Environment Centre
Research Centre of Friendship Park
Lenttiirantie 342
FIN-88900 Kuhmo
Finland
Fax +358-8-6530 444
e-mail: pirkko.huotari@vyh.fi

The role of known emissions to the atmosphere in determining the conservation management options for precipitation-fed wetlands.

17-19 April 2000, University of Sheffield,

This seminar presents and examines the scientific evidence from which statutory regulations can be developed. It will be of particular benefit to policy makers and implementers and provide a direction for the funding of future research. In addition, it will enable us to understand better the relationship between conservation objectives and the management of wetlands.

For more information write to:

Ms. J. Young,
Department of Animal & Plant Sciences,
University of Sheffield,
Sheffield, S10 2TN. UK
e-mail: j.young@sheffield.ac.uk

Québec 2000 Millennium Wetland Event

6-12 August 2000, Quebec, Canada

For further info, email: cqvb@cqvb.qc.ca

See also: <http://www.cqvb.qc.ca/wetland2000/>

If you know of anyone who would also like to receive the newsletter, of anyone who wonders why he or she is not receiving the newsletter anymore, of anyone who has moved and has since not received the newsletter, then let them please contact the secretariat with up-to-date address-information. Also if you have the slightest doubt the secretariat does not have your most up-to-date address, telephone- or fax-number, e-mail address, or anything else contact them.

On the Draft Constitution of the IMCG

by Richard Lindsay

At the end of this Newsletter you will find a proposal for a formal Constitution for the IMCG. The proposal has been put together following discussion with, and helpful comments from, IMCG Board Members. Several things need to be said about this proposed document.

1. The document is based on the Constitution of the Wader Study Group - a long-established and successful network of people working for the conservation of wading birds. Some of you may know or even be members of the WSG. It operates in a very similar way to the IMCG, and is indeed already an Expert Group for Wetlands International - a role which IMCG has also been invited to undertake (see Newsletter 2000/1).
2. The Constitution proposed here is very much an all-embracing one, providing a framework within which the IMCG can expand its activities without needing constantly to tinker with the Constitution. It would be able to go from the relatively simple, largely un-funded projects of the present time into much larger, properly-funded projects without any Constitutional amendment. This could be important for an organisation which proposes to meet and discuss Constitutional matters only once every two years.
3. Although the proposed document looks rather daunting, in fact it contains little that IMCG is not already doing. It is possible to adopt this document and continue much as before - but I would emphasise again that it also gives us the Constitutional procedures to cope with more sophisticated and complicated issues as the organisation develops.
4. It would have been possible to produce a smaller document and offer this as an alternative. Nevertheless, I believe it is better that we all start with a single comprehensive document and then, if we want to remove parts, we can do that following discussion to produce a document

which contains just those parts which we feel are relevant to us. However, reading through it, I do feel that every section provides something of value, if not now, then possibly in the future.

5. There are certain things NOT contained within the document. These are some administrative issues which are particular to our current circumstances and may not be entirely relevant in later years. I therefore propose that these be attached to the Constitution as „Administrative Notes“. These could be changed with the agreement of the Executive Board, rather than having to wait until the next General Assembly. However, people may feel that they should be enshrined in the Constitution. If so, please tell us. I have placed these „Administrative Notes“ at the end of the Constitution. Please read them.
6. It is proposed that we begin substantive discussions about the Constitutional wording at the Lagow Workshop in March. There will then be a period of further discussion between Lagow and Quebec. We hope that by the IMCG Congress in Quebec, we will have a final proposal for a Constitution on which people are then prepared to vote during the Congress. If we don't approve it in Quebec, we will have to wait another two years before we have another chance. Consequently, I would ask you please to take an active part in the Constitutional discussions prior to Quebec. We do not want to find that people have saved up all their fundamental concerns about the IMCG Constitutional proposals to air them on the day of the Quebec Congress.

Finally, many thanks to the Wader Study Group, in particular David Stroud and the recently-elevated Nick Davidson (see the Ramsar Home-Page) for their generosity in providing details of their constitution as well as much useful advice, and to members of the IMCG Working Group for their valuable comments. Now it's up to you - the members.....

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CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MIRE CONSERVATION GROUP INSTRUMENT OF ASSOCIATION

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

NAME AND DOMICILE

Article 1

- 1.1. The name of the Society shall be: INTERNATIONAL MIRE CONSERVATION GROUP (IMCG) and its domicile shall be: [?????] in France (F).

OBJECTS

Article 2

- 1.1. The Society's objectives ("the objects") are to provide and maintain a network of specialists who:

- a. internationally promote, encourage and, where appropriate, co-ordinate the conservation of mires and related systems at all scales; and
- b. internationally enhance the exchange of information and experience relating to mires and factors affecting them.

DURATION

Article 3

- 1.1. The Society shall exist indefinitely.

MEMBERSHIP

Article 4

- 4.1. The Society shall have ordinary members, supporters, benefactors and honorary members. In these Articles and in any regulations adopted or decisions made pursuant to these Articles, the terms “member”, “members” and “membership” shall refer to the ordinary and the honorary members, and those with supporter status, unless there is an express indication or obvious implied intent to the contrary.
- 4.2. Ordinary members are those individuals who wish to take an active part in the activities of the IMCG. They are expected to become, or already be, positively involved in one way or another with activities that coincide with the goals of the IMCG.
- 4.3. Supporters are individuals who do not wish to be an Ordinary Member of IMCG, but who nevertheless wish to support the goals of the IMCG and be kept informed of events, activities and progress.
- 4.4. Benefactors are individuals or organisations that wish to provide significant support to the work of the IMCG. Acknowledged benefactors may use their status for commercial or publicity purposes.
- 4.5. Ordinary Members and Supporters shall be those individuals who have requested membership or supporter status from the Executive Committee and have been admitted to the Society as such.
- 4.6. If the Executive Committee denies admission, the General Assembly may overrule this decision and admit the person concerned. Membership shall be available to any natural or legal person that is interested in the Society’s work.
- 4.7. Honorary members shall be those members who have been nominated as such by the Executive Committee by reason of their exceptional merits to the Society; and who have been granted the status of honorary member by the General Assembly; and who have accepted this status.

Article 5

- 5.1. Membership and supporter status shall be personal and therefore non-transferable.

Article 6

- 5.1. Membership shall end:
 - a. by the death of a member
 - b. by cancellation by the member
 - c. by cancellation by the Society
 - d. by expulsion.
- 6.2. Members may only cancel their membership effective at the end of a financial year. This cancellation must be in writing and at least four weeks’ notice must be given. Nevertheless, membership may be immediately terminated by cancellation:
 - a. Where it would be unreasonable to require continuation of membership.
 - b. Where the rights of members have been limited or their obligations have been increased. This cancellation must be within one month of the time when the decision limiting such rights or increasing such obligations has been communicated to the member, or the time when the member learned of such decision. If, however, the decision concerns a change in financial rights or obligations, membership may be cancelled effective at the end of the year following the year in which the cancellation is made.
 - c. Where the Society has been converted into another legal form, or has merged with another body. This cancellation must be within one month after this decision of conversion or merger was communicated to the member concerned. If a cancellation is not within the applicable term, the membership will continue until the end of the Society’s year following the year in which the cancellation was made.
- 6.3. The Society may only cancel a membership effective at the end of a financial year. This cancellation shall be by the Executive Committee. It shall be in writing and at least four weeks’ notice shall be given. The Society may only cancel a membership where it would be unreasonable to require the Society to continue the membership concerned.
- 6.4. If a cancellation is not within the applicable term, the membership will continue until the end of the Society’s year following the year in which the cancellation was made.
- 6.5. A member may only be expelled from the Society where the member has violated these Articles, or the regulations or decisions of the Society. A member will, for example, violate these Articles, regulations or decisions where, after a reminder, the member fails promptly to pay annual dues. A member will also violate these Articles, regulations or decisions where the member unreasonably acts in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Society.

- 6.6. Expulsion shall be by decision of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall inform the member of such decision promptly and shall state reasons for the decision. The member concerned may appeal to the General Assembly within one month of receipt of the notice of the Executive Committee's decision.
- 6.7. During the term of appeal and pending appeal, the member shall be suspended.
- 6.8. The General Assembly may decide to expel a member by a decision to that effect, taken by a majority of at least two-thirds of the votes cast.
- 6.9. Where a membership ends in the course of the Society's year, the member shall still owe the annual dues for that entire year.
- 6.10. The Executive Committee may suspend a member who violates these Articles or regulations or decisions of the Society or unreasonably acts in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Society. The Executive Committee shall determine how long the suspension shall last, but no suspension shall last longer than six (6) months. The suspension may be appealed to the General Assembly. The provisions of article 6.6 regarding "appeal" shall apply.
- 6.11. Before the Executive Committee makes any decision to expel a member or cancel a membership, the member concerned shall have an opportunity to make comments before the Executive Committee. At the hearing where the member makes these comments, the member may be assisted by counsel.

BENEFACTORS

Article 7

- 7.1. Benefactors shall be admitted as such by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may revoke the status of benefactor by a written statement of termination.
- 7.2. Benefactor payments are negotiated between the Benefactor and the Executive Committee.

FUNDS

Article 8

- 8.1. The Society's funds shall consist of the annual dues of the Ordinary Members and Supporters, Benefactor donations, testamentary dispositions, legacies, gifts and other revenues.
- 8.2. Each Ordinary Member and Supporter shall owe annual dues. The amount of these dues shall be set by the General Assembly. Honorary members shall be exempted from annual dues, unless the General Assembly expressly stipulates that the honorary members shall owe annual dues as described above. The amounts owed annually must be paid through bank draft into a bank account to be determined by the Executive Committee.
- 8.3. The Society's funds must be spent in conformity with the Society's purpose.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and the IMCG BOARD

Article 9

- 9.1. The Executive Committee shall consist of at least ten and no more than fifteen Ordinary Members. The chairman, general secretary and treasurer and two further Board Members shall be elected by the Ordinary Members. The chairman, general secretary, treasurer and the two appointed Board Members shall together comprise the IMCG Board and be responsible for day-to-day management. The remaining members of the Executive Committee are the Decision-Making Committee.
- 9.2. The IMCG Board, in addition to having responsibility for day-to-day management, will put forward any significant proposals to the remainder of the Executive Board who, in their capacity as Decision-Making Committee, will approve or reject the proposals put forward by the IMCG Board.
- 9.3. The members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed from among the members of the Society. Nominations for election to the Executive Committee must be made by Ordinary Members of the Society in writing and must be in the hands of the secretary of the Executive Committee at least 14 days before the biennial General Assembly meeting. Each nomination must be proposed and seconded by two fully-paid up Ordinary Members and accompanied by a signed statement of willingness to stand for election by the nominated person. Should nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot.
- 9.4. The Executive Committee may in addition appoint not more than 7 co-opted members but so that no-one may be appointed as a co-opted member if, as a result, more than one third of the members of the Executive Committee would be co-opted members. Each appointment of a co-opted member shall be made at a special meeting of the Executive Meeting under Article 10.3.a. and shall take effect from the end of that meeting, unless the appointment is to fill a place which has not then been vacated, in which case the appointment shall run from the date when the post becomes vacant.
- 9.5. The General Assembly may suspend or dismiss members of the Executive Committee at any time, but must state reasons for such suspension or dismissal. The General Assembly may suspend or dismiss a member of the Executive Committee only by a majority vote of two-thirds of the votes cast. A member of the Executive Committee may also be suspended or dismissed in the following instances:
 - a. if the member is unable to continue in office by reason of a mental or physical condition.
 - b. if the member has been declared bankrupt or has been granted a suspension of payment.
 - c. if the member has been absent without statement of reason at all of the meetings of the Executive Committee

or the members for a period of one year.

- 9.6. Any suspension of a member of the Executive Committee shall end where the General Assembly does not decide to dismiss the suspended member at the next General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly. The suspended member shall be allowed an opportunity to explain his or her actions before the General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly and may be assisted by counsel on that occasion.
- 9.7. Members of the Executive Committee shall normally be appointed for a period of no more than three terms. In this context, "one term" shall be a period between two consecutive biennial General Assembly meetings. The members of the Executive Committee shall step down in conformity with a schedule set by the Executive Committee. Any member of the Executive Committee who steps down in conformity with the schedule shall be eligible for immediate re-appointment. The term in office of members of the Executive Committee shall begin immediately after the meeting at which they are appointed. If, however, an appointment is made for an Executive Committee position which is filled at the time of the appointment, then the term in office of the member so appointed shall begin as soon as that position is vacant.
- 9.8. Existing vacancies shall be filled as soon as possible. However, the Executive Committee shall retain its decision-making authority even where it does not have its full number of members
- 9.9. Members of the Executive Committee must:
 - a. have reached the age of eighteen years, and
 - b. have signed a statement accepting the Executive Committee position and declaring intent to act in the interest of the Society.
- 9.10. A member of the Executive Committee may resign from that position at any time, but only if at least three members of the Executive Committee will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect.
- 9.11. No member of the Executive Committee may at any time make any claim on the capital or property of the Society, or derive profit through the exploitation of the Society's property.
- 9.12. As an exception to Article 9.10, a member of the Executive Committee may receive compensation where the member or a company run at the member's expense has certain knowledge or skills that the member has used to benefit the Society at the Executive Committee's request. However, the following conditions must be satisfied:
 - a. The majority of the Executive Committee may in no case benefit from this rule, and
 - b. The member of the Executive Committee who asserts an entitlement to compensation may not participate in the Executive Committee meeting at which the Executive Committee decides whether the compensation will be awarded and, if the compensation is awarded, what its amount will be.
- 9.13. Each member of the Executive Committee may receive compensation for the performance of activities for the Society, provided that the conditions of Article 11.1a and 11.1b, are met.

Article 10

- 10.1. The Executive Committee shall be charged with the governance of the Society. The Executive Committee delegates tasks and powers to the IMCG Board, but retains the right to revoke such delegation.
- 10.2 a. The Executive Committee shall represent the Society.
b. Members of the IMCG Board shall also have power to represent the Society.
- 10.3 a. The IMCG Board shall meet together at least twice annually. The Executive Committee will meet biennially. All members of the Executive Committee will, however, remain in regular contact by ensuring that all relevant correspondence is copied to all members of the Executive Committee.
b. Whereas the IMCG Board has the authority to make day-to-day decisions on behalf of the Executive Committee, the Board must put proposals for more significant decisions before the Decision-Making Committee. This will be done at least 21 days before such decisions must be made. Members of the Decision-Making Committee must lodge any objections within this period. If no objections are received from a member of the Decision-Making Committee by the end of this period, it will be taken that the member has no objections and that the proposal has the approval of that member. If comments result in a split decision within the Decision-Making Committee, the chairman will consult with all Executive Committee members and, taking into account all such consultations and representations, will make the final decision.
c. The Executive Committee shall also meet where the chairman, the IMCG Board, or at least two members of the Executive Committee request a meeting. A meeting of the Executive Committee shall be called by a written notice to all members of the Executive Committee. The notice shall state the date, location and time of the meeting, and shall be given at least 30 days in advance of the day on which the meeting shall be held. The notice shall announce what subjects shall be discussed at the meeting. However, if the meeting is called to appoint an additional member of the Executive Committee as referred to in Article 9, section 3, the notice must be given to all members of the Executive Committee at least 60 days in advance of the day on which the meeting is held.
d. A valid decision at the Executive Committee meeting can be made only where at least one-third of the members of the Executive Committee is present.
- 10.4. The chairman shall act as chairman at meetings of the Board and the Executive Committee. If the chairman is absent from any meeting, the members of the Executive Committee present shall choose one of their number to

be chairman of the meeting before any other business is transacted.

- 10.5. Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members of the Board (in the case of a Board Meeting) or Executive Committee (in the case of an Executive Committee Meeting) present and voting on the question but in the case of equality of votes the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- 10.6. The Board and Executive Committee shall keep minutes, in files kept for the purpose, of the proceedings at meetings of the Board or the Executive Committee and any subcommittee.
- 10.7. The Executive Committee has authority to make decisions to enter into agreements to acquire, transfer title to, or encumber registered property as “registered property” as defined under French law. The Executive Committee also has authority to enter into agreements whereby the Society
 - a. is obligated as a guarantor or jointly and severally liable debtor, or
 - b. guarantees the debt of a third party, or
 - c. provides security for the debt of another.

Article 11

- 11.1. In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise the Executive Committee may exercise the following powers:
 - a. power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the Executive Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities;
 - b. power subject to any consents required by law to borrow money and then charge all or any part of the property of the Society with repayment of the money so borrowed;
 - c. power to employ such staff (who shall not be members of the Executive Committee) as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objects and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation for staff and their dependants;
 - d. power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
 - e. power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects;
 - f. power to hold workshops, seminars and conferences solely, or in conjunction with other similar organisations in furtherance of the objects;
 - g. power to commission research in support of the objects and to publish the results of such research;
 - h. power to appoint and constitute such advisory and sub committees as the Executive Committee may think fit;
 - i. power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.
- 11.2. The Executive Committee may grant a power of attorney to one or more members of the Board, or Executive Committee or to other persons. This power of attorney shall be an authorisation to represent the Society within the limits of the power of attorney.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 12

- 12.1. The General Assembly shall be open to any member not suspended and to anyone who has been invited by the Executive Committee or the General Assembly. A suspended member may enter the General Assembly meeting at which the decision to suspend will be discussed, and may speak at that meeting on the subject of the suspension.
- 12.2. The Ordinary Members described above shall be entitled to vote in the General Assembly. Supporters will not have the right to vote. Each Ordinary Member so described shall have one vote. Each member who is entitled to vote may grant a power of attorney in writing to another member who is entitled to vote to the effect that the second member may cast the vote of the first member. No member entitled to vote may have a power of attorney for more than two persons.
- 12.3. A unanimous decision by all those entitled to vote in the General Assembly shall have the effect of a decision of the General Assembly, even if those entitled to vote are not convened in the General Assembly when that decision is made. However, this decision shall only have the effect of a decision of the General Assembly if the Executive Committee is notified in advance.
- 12.4. The chairman shall decide in what manner the votes in the General Assembly shall be held.
- 12.5. All decisions shall be by absolute majority of the votes cast, unless a larger majority is required by statute or these Articles. In the event of a tie, the vote of the chairman shall be decisive. In the event of a tie regarding the election of a person, lots shall be cast by secret ballot. In the event that there is an election involving more than two persons and no one person obtains an absolute majority, there shall be a second ballot between the two persons who obtained the highest number of votes in the first ballot. If necessary, intermediate ballots may be held.

Article 13

- 13.1. The chairman shall preside over the meetings of the General Assembly. If the chairman is absent, the members of the Executive Committee present shall choose one of their number to be chairman of the meeting. They shall make this choice before any other business is transacted. If no members of the Executive Committee are present, the General Assembly shall determine who shall preside over the meeting.

- 13.2. The chairman shall decide when a decision has been made by the General Assembly. This decision by the chairman, made at a General Assembly meeting, shall be final. The chairman shall also decide what the substance of a decision is, to the extent that the decision concerns a proposal that has not been expressed in writing.
- 13.3. The general secretary or a person designated by the Executive Committee shall take minutes of business transacted at General Assembly meetings. These minutes shall be adopted in the same or the next General Assembly meeting, and shall be signed by the chairman and general secretary of that meeting.

Article 14

- 14.1. The Society's financial year shall be the calendar year. At least one General Assembly meeting shall be held every two years. This meeting must be held within six months of the end of the financial year, but the General Assembly may extend this term. In this General Assembly meeting, the Executive Committee shall present its biennial report on the state of affairs in the Society and on its policy. The Executive Committee shall submit the balance sheet and the statement of profit and loss to the General Assembly with explanatory notes. These documents shall be signed by the members of the Executive Committee. If the signature of any member of the Executive Committee is absent, this absence shall be noted and its reason stated.
- 14.2. If a statement by an accountant as described in [French Civil Law] is not presented to the General Assembly regarding the accuracy of the documents referred to in Article 14.1, the General Assembly shall annually appoint an auditing committee of at least two members who are not part of the Executive Committee.
- 14.3. The Executive Committee shall send the documents referred to in Section 1 to the auditing committee at least one month in advance of the day of the General Assembly meeting at which the documents will be discussed. The auditing committee shall examine the documents and present its findings to the General Assembly.
- 14.4. The Executive Committee must submit to the auditing committee any information requested by the auditing committee for its inquiry. The Executive Committee must also, upon request, present the cash in hand and all securities, and permit a review of the books and documents of the Society.
- 14.5. If the auditing committee believes that this inquiry requires special accounting expertise, the auditing committee may hire an expert to assist it at the Society's expense.

Article 15

- 15.1. In addition to the General Assembly meeting referred to in the previous article, the Executive Committee may convene General Assembly meetings as frequently as it considers needful.
- 15.2. Every General Assembly meeting shall be called by the Executive Committee. The general secretary shall give at least four months' notice of the General Assembly meeting to all the members of the Society, though such notice will normally be six months or more. The notice shall specify the time, place and general nature of the business of the meeting. Outline approval for the location and general time of each biennial General Assembly will normally be given by decision of the preceeding General Assembly.
- 15.3. Where at least one-tenth of the members eligible to vote so request in writing, the Executive Committee must convene a General Assembly meeting no later than three months after the submission of the request. If the request is not honoured within three months after the submission of the request, the persons making the request may convene a General Assembly meeting personally. In this event, these persons may designate persons who are not members of the Executive Committee to preside over the meeting and take minutes.
- 15.4. Where the General Assembly meeting has not been called by written notice, the General Assembly may nevertheless make decisions that are legally binding. For the decisions to be legally binding, there must be present at the meeting at least a number of persons entitled to vote equal to half of the number of votes that may be cast in a meeting where all members are present. Also, for a decision to be legally binding there must be no objection by a member or by the Executive Committee against making decisions. Where the General Assembly meeting is called within a shorter term than the required term, the General Assembly may nevertheless make decisions that are legally binding. However, the decisions shall not be legally binding if a number of those present equal to those entitled to cast one-tenth of the votes in that meeting shall object. The provisions of this section shall also apply to decision-making by the General Assembly meetings regarding subjects that are not listed on the agenda.

AMENDMENT OF THESE ARTICLES

Article 16

- 16.1. These Articles may only be amended by decision of the General Assembly. The notice convening a General Assembly meeting at which such a decision will be discussed must state that amendment of the Articles will be proposed at that meeting.
- 16.2. Anyone convening a General Assembly meeting for the purpose of discussing a proposal to amend the Articles must make a verbatim copy of that proposal available for review by the members at a suitable location at least thirty days in advance of the day of the meeting.
- 16.3. An amendment of the Articles may only be adopted by a majority in the General Assembly of at least two-thirds of votes cast.
- 16.4. The amendment to the Articles shall not take effect until after a notarial instrument of the amendment has been drawn up. Any member of the Executive Committee is authorised to execute the notarial instrument of the

amendment of the Articles.

- 16.5. The provisions of sections 1 and 2 of this Article shall not apply where all those entitled to vote are present or represented in a General Assembly meeting and the decision to amend the Articles is unanimous.
- 16.6. The members of the Executive Committee must file a certified copy of the instrument of amendment of the Articles, and a full text of the entire Articles as amended, at the Register of Societies maintained by the Chamber of Commerce.

DISSOLUTION AND LIQUIDATION

Article 17

- 17.1. If the Executive Committee considers it necessary or advisable to dissolve the Society, it must convene a special members' meeting. The provisions of Article 16, sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 shall apply.
- 17.2. At the meeting described in section 1, the General Assembly shall decide how any funds shall be used. Funds shall be used in conformity with the purpose of the Society as far as possible.
- 17.3. Liquidation shall be by the Executive Committee.
- 17.4. Subsequent to liquidation, the Society shall continue to exist to the extent that such existence is needed for the liquidation of the assets of the Society. During the liquidation, the provisions of the Articles shall remain in force as far as possible. In documents and announcements issued by the Society, the words "in liquidation" shall be added to the Society's name.
- 17.5. The Society shall cease to exist when no known assets exist, as judged by the Society itself and by its liquidator(s). The liquidator(s) shall enter an item in the register indicated in section 6 of Article 16, to the effect that the Society has ceased to exist.
- 17.6. The books and documents of the dissolved Society must be stored for twenty years from the end of the liquidation. The liquidators shall designate a person for the storage.

REGULATIONS

Article 18

- 18.1. The Executive Committee and the General Assembly may adopt and amend one or more regulations, whether internal regulations or otherwise. These regulations may cover subjects not covered or not covered completely by these Articles.
- 18.2. No regulation may contain any clause that violates statutory law or these Articles.
- 18.3. The provisions of Article 16 sections 1, 2 and 5 shall apply to decisions to adopt or amend a regulation.

Article 19

- 19.1. The Executive Committee may create committees comprising three or more members of the Society. Such committees may perform inquiries and other activities designated by the Executive Committee. The committees may be created for such a period of time as the Executive Committee may consider necessary or advisable. The committees must give an accounting at least once annually to the Executive Committee.

Article 20

- 20.1. Any notice required to be served on any member of the Society shall be in writing and shall be served by the general secretary or the Executive Committee on any member either personally or by sending it through the post (prepaid) addressed to such member at his or her last known address, and any such letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 21 days of posting.

Administrative Notes

1. For the present, the IMCG Working Group Members (the Board) have been selected in order to minimise travel costs and have thus been deliberately selected from Europe. Should adequate funding become available subsequently, this may no longer be a constraint and thus it seems best not to incorporate such an arrangement within the Constitution.
 2. In contrast, the members of the Decision-Making Group were deliberately chosen to reflect the geographical spread of IMCG's involvement. It may be felt a good thing to continue this principle into the Executive Board, in which case there may need to be some conditions to this effect laid down within the relevant Article.
 3. No particular sum is defined within the Constitution. This is to provide flexibility from year to year. Part of the discussions about the Constitution should, however, focus on the prices to be charged for the annual fee.
 4. No specific details are provided about the accounting procedures, nor in what form the IMCG Bank Account should be held. These would need to be resolved and agreed.
 5. An important part of the Constitution allows the IMCG to employ someone - perhaps as a paid Secretariat, who would report to the officially-elected Secretary. Having attempted to run an unpaid Secretariat for some years, I would not take this requirement lightly - if IMCG is to become much more active it will NEED to employ someone at least on a part-time basis. The Constitution provides for this.
-