

Statutes of the Society for Urban Ecology (SURE)

I. DESIGNATION AND TITLE

Article 1

An international, non-profit-making organization named as the Society for Urban Ecology (SURE) is hereby established with a scientific and educational purpose. The seat of the society is Salzburg city, Austria.

II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Article 2

In order to develop an understanding of the structure and function of urban ecosystems and to advance a balanced interaction between humans and their environments in cities and towns worldwide Society for Urban Ecology (SURE) exists to foster and develop knowledge and implementation of urban ecology worldwide by strengthening contacts and enriching the dialogue between researchers and practitioners, by representing the interests of the academic community within the wider international institutional context and by making the collective expertise of SURE available, where appropriate, in furthering the discussion of urban ecological issues .

Article 3

In pursuit of this goal the SURE seeks to build heritage and intellectual traditions to:

- a. Further and facilitate the exchange of information, experience and ideas within urban ecology , by stimulating discussion and encouraging co-operation between urban ecologists, higher educational institutions within urban ecology, as well as research and other institutions within the field, by amongst other means, the promotion of regular international meetings, and other scientific seminars and workshops for effective exchange of knowledge and use of urban ecology;
- b. Regularly promote the organization of an international congress or seminar of urban ecology in cooperation with individual and/or institutional members of SURE;
- c. Foster and develop the highest standards of urban ecology by amongst other things, providing advice and acting as a forum for sharing experience on course and curriculum development, supporting collaborative developments in teaching and learning and furthering bilateral agreements among the institutional members on educational cooperation;

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- d. Promote interaction between academics and researchers within urban ecology and within the field of ecosystems of cities and towns, thereby furthering the development of a academic community in urban ecology, through, amongst other things, the development of common research agendas and the establishment of collaborative research projects;
- e. Represent the interests of scholarship in urban ecology within higher education systems and enhance the overall standing and the public understanding of urban ecology;
- f. Further interactions between scientists and practitioners within urban ecology and its application.
- g. Stimulate dialogue with international, regional and local bodies, institutions and organizations with interests in urban ecology and with other international organizations furthering urban ecology scholarship;
- h. Publish or by other means produce or distribute knowledge about urban ecology and undertake any appropriate actions, including educational instruction and research activities, to enhance the development and application of urban ecology;
- i. Form working groups to address specific issues or problems in urban ecology;
- j. Promote and support journals for urban ecology and its application;
- k. Establish cooperation with other organizations that have similar objectives and related fields of interest;

III. DEFINITIONS

Article 4

In relation to these statutes the following definition will apply

The discipline of 'urban ecology' shall be deemed to encompass the study of structure, dynamics and functions of urban ecosystems including ecosystem assessment, urban ecosystem management and design in all kinds of cities and towns. It is concerned with the use and development as well as conservation and enhancement of the urban ecosystems and its associated values for the benefit of current and future generations.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

Article 5

Membership of ISSUE does not imply any recognition or accreditation of any educational, research or other programs or activities in which either institutional or individual members are involved.

There shall be three categories of membership as follows:

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a) Regular members

Each person can apply for membership by expression to support the targets of ISSUE. He or she becomes a member after paying the annual fee and by acceptance of the Executive Committee. Students pay a reduced annual fee fixed by the Executive Committee. A reduced fee can also be fixed by the Executive Committee for members from developing countries.

b) Corresponding members

Corresponding members are appointed by the Executive Committee of ISSUE. If they agree to the appointment they acquire the status of corresponding members. The Corresponding membership will be given to honor a person. The corresponding member has not to pay the annual fee.

c) Institutional members

An institutional member shall be any organizational unit dealing with research, education, awareness raising, planning or management relevant for urban ecology. The institution can become member as explained under a). The institution pays an annual fee higher than individual members fixed by the Executive Committee.

Article 6

- a. The Executive Committee of SURE as defined in Articles 14 and 15 shall determine applications for institutional membership.
- b. Applicants may appeal in writing to ISSUE against any decision of the Executive Committee of SURE.

Article 7

- a. Resignation from membership should be notified in writing to the President of SURE.

V. RIGHTS AND DUTIES

Article 8

Members shall have following rights

- a. Regular, corresponding and student members

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- 1) To attend and participate in the business (General Assembly) of SURE.
 - 2) To participate in the activities of SURE.
- b. Institutional members
- 1) To send a voting representative to attend and participate in the business (General Assembly) of SURE.
 - 2) To participate on all regular information from SURE.

Article 9

Members shall have the following duties

- a. To notify the Executive Committee of any changes of circumstances this might affect their membership category.
- b. For institutional members to notify the Executive Committee of the name of their representative who shall act as the contact person for the institution.
- c. For institutional members to notify the Executive Committee of the name of a representative to attend and participate as a voting member in the business of ISSUE.
- d. To pay all fees that the Executive Committee may determine.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

Article 10

The administration and management organs of the Society for Urban Ecology shall be:

- a. The General Assembly comprising individual members and representatives of member institutions.
- b. The Executive Committee.

VII. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 11

- a. The General Assembly shall be the authority of SURE.

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- b. The General Assembly shall discuss matters within urban ecology concerning scholarship, education and awareness raising as well as science and its application in planning and management in relation to the goals and objectives of ISSUE, and determine future activities and actions.
- c. The management and administration of SURE shall be delegated to the Executive Committee but always under the ultimate control of the General Assembly. The Committee shall present a report to the General Assembly.
- d. The functions exclusive to the General Assembly are as follows:
 - 1. Definition of policies, programs and activities of SURE;
 - 2. Election and termination of office of members of the Executive Committee;
 - 3. Establishment and abolition of working groups with specific purposes to further the goals and objectives of SURE;
 - 4. Election of a representative in the council of SURE
- e. Voting at General Assembly meetings is open to all regular, corresponding and student members of ISSUE as well as voting representatives for institutional members or their deputies.

VIII. MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 12

- a. The General Assembly shall meet at least every four years, normally at an Urban Ecology Congress.
- b. The extraordinary General Assembly will take place
 - 1) on board decision or on decision of the General Assembly,
 - 2) because of a justified written application of at least a tenth of the members,
 - 3) on demand of the comptroller or
 - 4) on decision of judicial ordered curator.
- c. The president shall inform the members of the date, time, venue and agenda of the meeting at least four weeks in advance.

Article 13

- a. Attendance and participation in discussions of the General Assembly is open to all categories of members (see article 5).
- b. The General Assembly shall be chaired by the president, or shall elect a chairman from the Executive Committee or the members present.
- c. Resolutions of the General Assembly shall be carried on a simple majority except as otherwise specified in these statutes.
- d. Formal minutes of decisions of the General Assembly shall be kept by the president.

IX. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Article 14

- a. The management and administrative powers of SURE will be in the hands of an elected Executive Committee, by delegation from the General Assembly.
- b. The Executive Committee shall consist of at least 6 regular members, each of whom is dedicated to specific functions. Among these functions, one member should serve as President, one as Secretary-General and one as Treasurer. In addition, at least four supplementary members to the executive committee without in advance given functionality are elected that can replace ordinary members, if they should resign or become unable to serve before the end of a term.
- c. The Duration of the Executive Committee averages four years.
- d. The role of the Executive Committee is to manage the activities and responsibilities of SURE, at all times with reference to the Statutes, actions of the General Assembly so as to maintain the vitality of SURE and effectively represent the interests of SURE and its membership. The Executive Committee is responsible for maintaining membership roles and provide for effective communication with the membership.
- e. The Executive Committee shall recommend membership fees in internationally exchangeable currency to the General Assembly and to the operating budget for SURE. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for income, expenditures, and all financial activities and responsibilities of SURE. The members of the Executive Committee are not personally liable for any financial losses of any SURE activities.
- f. The Executive Committee shall consider potential venues for the coming SURE meetings by calling for proposals and then deciding the location as well as advice on other details of these meetings. The meeting organizers are responsible for all financial aspects of SURE meeting. The Executive Committee fixes this for each SURE meeting in a contractual form.
- g. In addition specific powers can be conferred on one or more members of SURE, particularly the organization of the Urban Ecology Congress.

Article 15

- a. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to set up such working groups or sub-committees as it deems necessary or as requested by the General Assembly. The Executive Committee can also invite established working groups of members and

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- non-members of ISSUE to participate in SURE activities, provided they fulfill the requirements of article 15, b.
- b. Each Working Group shall elect a Representative as soon as possible after establishment of the Working Group or after its affiliation to ISSUE. This Representative must be SURE member and will be responsible for providing an annual written report of Group activities to the Secretary-General. The Representative shall also present oral and written reports to the General Assembly and/or following the termination of the Working Group, or of its affiliation to SURE.
 - c. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a year.

X. Comptrollers

- a. Two comptrollers shall be elected by the general assembly on duration of four years. Reelection is possible. The comptrollers are not allowed to be part of an organ – except the general assembly – whose activity is object of the verification.
- b. The comptrollers' duties are the continuous control of the business of the society and the control of the management of the finances of the society. They have to control it regarding the correctness of the financial statements and according to usage of the financial resources designated by the Statutes.
- c. Transactions between the comptrollers and the society need to be accepted by the General Assembly.

XI. Arbitral Court

- a. The Arbitral Court is responsible for the adjustment of all out of the society relation resulted intestine strives (law governing organizational affairs Austria 2002).
- b. The Arbitral Court exists of three regular members.
- c. The election of the members of the Arbitral Court results as follows: One partie in dispute names one member of the Society to the Executive Committee as arbiter. Under request of the EC within seven days the other party of dispute names within 14 days a member of the society as arbiter. After the agreement of the EC the named arbiters elect within 14 days a third regular member as chairman of the Arbitral Court. In case of equality of votes the nominees are drawn by lot. The members of the Arbitral Court are not allowed to be part of an organ – except the general assembly – whose activity is object of the intestine strife.
- d. The Arbitral Court decides after the grant of both-sided hearings in presence of all members with simple majority. They decide to the best of one's knowledge. The decisions are internally conclusive.

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XII. ELECTIONS

Article 17

Elections shall be held to fill positions for the Executive Committee as needed, following these procedures:

- a. Elections shall be scheduled by the Executive Committee as to ensure an orderly and uninterrupted transition between officers, and to ensure that the nomination committee receive all necessary membership information in due time.
- b. A request for nomination lists shall be distributed to all members by the Secretary-General by publication or by other means at least three month before the scheduled general assembly. A nomination list consists of at least 6 members of whom one should be nominated as president, one as Secretary-General and one as a treasurer. A name of the list, a policy statement for the list, and a position statement describing the function of each nominated person of the list, as well as an additional list of at least three supplementary list nominations, should be delivered, too.
- c. The EC sets up a Nomination Committee of two regular SURE members that shall stimulate the delivery of (if possible) at least two eligible lists of nominations for the election, and take care of the composition of the list, with reference to: considerations of these statutes, needs of each particular office, the international nature of ISSUE, the interdisciplinary character of SURE, and similar criteria likely to affect the vitality of SURE.
- d. A nomination list shall consist of members of SURE in Good Standing and shall be consented to in writing by the signature of all nominees on the list.
- e. Nomination lists can be delivered by mail or personally to the chair of the nomination committee until two hours before the scheduled General Assembly, were the received nomination lists are presented.
- f. The Nomination Committee shall evaluate the material received by each nomination list to ensure that it fulfils the criteria set up for the election to the Executive Committee.
- g. In the event that there is only one list received and accepted by the nomination committee, election of the candidates of the list by acclamation will be indicated by a simple majority of the votes by members at the General Assembly.
- h. Not later than three months after the general assembly all received lists of candidates together with policy statements of the lists should be distributed to all members currently in good standing, a ballot containing the names of the received and confirmed lists. To be valid, ballots must be returned to the Nomination Committee by the end of the last day of the scheduled election, not less than 1 month after the distribution of the election material.

XIII. RESOURCES

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Article 18

The resources of the International Society for the Science of Urban Ecosystems are made up as follows

- a. Contributions from the members according to a scale of membership fees agreed annually by the Executive Committee with reference to eventual recommendations from the General Assembly.
- b. Financial aid from organizations and individuals, notably through grants, sponsorship, patronage or collaboration.
- c. Funds from the organization of meetings and congresses. If SURE supports conferences and workshops, a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) is mandatory before any funding can be transferred to the organizers. A separate MOU is required for each individual event describing the specific agreements between SURE and the individual organizers. In all cases SURE is not liable for any deficit exceeding the original contribution agreed upon in the MOU.
- d. Donations and legacies.
- e. The time given by the members of the Executive Committee and SURE members in an honorary capacity.

XIV. ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET

Article 19

- a. The financial year of SURE shall correspond to the calendar year.
- b. The Treasurer shall be responsible for closing the accounts on the 31st December each year.
- c. The Treasurer shall make a financial report each year for the Executive Committee and in due time before the meeting of the General Assembly, where it should be presented and discussed.
- d. The Treasurers report shall comprise a statement of the accounts of the previous year, a report of the current financial position, and a budget for the forthcoming year.

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XV. MODIFICATION OF STATUTES, DISSOLUTION

Article 20

- a. Any proposal for the modifying the statutes of SURE or of dissolving the General Assembly must emanate from the Executive Committee or from at least half the total number of the present voting members of the General Assembly (simple majority). Each regular member can take over maximal one vote of an absent regular member who expressed this to that member in written form.
- b. The Secretary General must communicate by e-mail to each full member at least 3 month in advance of a voting on any such proposal.
- c. A simple majority of those voting is required for a modifying of the statutes.
- d. A two thirds majority of those voting is required for dissolution of SURE.
- e. A General Assembly shall decide upon the manner of its dissolution and the final settlements of its accounts.