Bylaws of The International Association for Vegetation Science

Bylaw 1. Members

1.1 To qualify to vote in an election, hold a seat on the Member’s Council (hereafter, the Council) or obtain benefits restricted to members, a person must have paid the designated annual membership dues for the current year or the previous year, unless exempt from payment. Persons exempt from payment include honorary members, persons who perform specific services for the Association as designated by Council, and those awarded exemption by the Global Sponsorship Committee.

Bylaw 2. Council

2.1 Council elections shall be held at four-year intervals.

2.2 Prior to each election, the Governing Board shall appoint a Nominations Committee consisting of at least two members of the Governing Board and at least one other member of Council. The Nominations Committee shall solicit and receive nominations of members for election to Council. The Committee shall select from the nominations received between 80 and 120 persons as candidates for Council. Any person nominated by at least 2% of the membership shall be placed on the ballot, provided that at least 80 of the maximum of 120 candidates are selected by the Nominations Committee. If more than 40 additional candidates are proposed by 2% or more of the membership, the top 40 shall be selected for the ballot based on the number of nominations received. All nominees placed on the ballot for election to the Council must agree to serve if elected and must provide brief biographical material if requested by the Nominations Committee.

2.3 The Nominations Committee shall encourage geographic, gender and disciplinary diversity among the candidates for the Council.

2.4 Elections of Council members shall be timed so that Association members have at least two weeks in which to cast their votes and so that the election is completed at least one month prior to the annual Symposium of the Association, unless there is no Symposium that year, in which case the elections must be completed by May 1.

2.5 Terms of elected Council members shall commence with the completion of the Symposium following the election, unless there is no Symposium that year in which case the terms shall commence June 1. The newly elected Council shall meet during the annual Symposium of the year of their election to elect the Governing Board for the subsequent four years.

2.6 The Secretary shall notify Council Members of the date, place, and agenda of Council meetings at least two weeks prior to the Council meeting.

2.7 In addition to elected and ex officio members, Council must invite the following members as associate, non-voting Council Members:

a. Organizers of the Symposia of the Association during the coming three years;

b. Chief Editors of the scientific journals of the Association;

c. Honorary members.

d. Representatives of Regional Sections and Working Groups not otherwise represented on the Council.

2.8 Decisions of the Council shall be made on the basis of a simple majority of votes.
2.9 A Council member who cannot participate in a meeting may delegate his or her vote to another member of the Council. Each Council member may cast at most three proxy votes. If fewer than 25 members of the Council are represented in person or by proxy, voting shall be by email ballot after all members have been informed about the proposals in question and the arguments for and against.

2.10 In the case of meetings conducted by remote communication, formal voting will take place over a two-week period. The Governing Board shall count and record the votes.

**Bylaw 3. Officers**

3.1 The Nominations Committee (see 2.2) shall prepare a list of at least seven members to be nominees for election as members of the Governing Board. The Nominations Committee shall have solicited nominations from the full, newly-elected Council membership, and all persons receiving at least 5 such nominations shall be included in the list of nominees.

3.2 Election of officers shall be held at a meeting of the newly-elected Council immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Council in the year of the election. Nominees shall include those proposed by the Nominations Committee and any proposed by participants in the meeting of the newly-elected Council. All candidates must have agreed to serve if elected.

3.3 The Council shall first elect from among the nominees the President and the Secretary, and then the five Vice Presidents. The terms of office of the new officers shall commence immediately following the Annual Meeting of Council at which they are elected. If there is no Annual Meeting that year, the Council shall conduct nominations and elections using electronic communication with the new Governing Board being elected no later than August 1, at which time the new officers shall commence their terms.

3.4 Governing Board members are expected to collaboratively lead the Association and direct its major activities.

3.5 The President chairs the Governing Board, the Council and the General Assembly. The President is the primary spokesperson for the Association and is expected to interact as needed with other societies, government officials and the public on behalf of the Association.

3.6 The Secretary is responsible for maintaining records and archives of the Association, financial management of the Association, and preparation of the *Bulletin* at annual or more frequent intervals.

3.7 The Vice Presidents serve on the Governing Board and perform other leadership tasks as assigned collectively by the Governing Board.

**Bylaw 4. Business and Finance**

4.1 The Council shall annually review the financial report submitted by the Governing Board and adopt a budget for the Association.

4.2 The Governing Board may enter into financial relationships with one or more individuals, firms, or other professional organizations to manage routine business of the Association. Council, as part of the annual budget adoption or its revision, must approve any recurring fees for such services.
Bylaw 5. Standing Committees

5.1 Standing committees are appointed by the President in consultation with the other members of the Governing Board. All standing committee Chairs report to the Governing Board. The Chair of each Committee shall prepare an annual report for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Council. Financial support for Standing Committees may be included in the annual budget approved by the Council.

5.2 The Awards Committee shall be responsible for administering the Awards Program of the Association (except for the Editors’ Award) and for proposing to the Governing Board scientists to receive Association awards.

5.3 The Global Sponsorship Committee shall be responsible for facilitating greater participation in the Association by vegetation scientists facing financial and/or linguistic challenges. The Committee shall select beneficiaries of activities supported by the Global Fund or may delegate this responsibility where appropriate. The Committee shall also be responsible for reviewing applications for waiver of membership fees and applications for free digital access to the journals of the Association and for administering the IAVS Travel Awards programme.

5.4 The Meetings Committee shall coordinate the Symposia of the Association and associated excursions. It shall evaluate proposals to host the meeting, advise the local organizing committees, work to assure conformance with the established guidelines, and serve as an intermediary between the meeting organizers and the Governing Board. The Committee shall be responsible for revision and updating of the “Guidelines for organizers of the Annual IAVS Symposia” and the “Guidelines for organizers of IAVS Excursions.”

5.5 The Membership Committee shall serve to promote better services for members and shall work to promote increased membership in the Association. The Committees’ activities shall include but not be limited to solicitation of input from members and potential members, assessment of member services and benefits, and review of the content of the Association website.

5.6 The Publications Committee shall oversee the publications of the Association. The Chair of the Committee shall be the Publications Officer and shall be one of the Vice Presidents. The Chair shall be responsible for interactions with the Chief Editors and with the publisher. The Committee shall review and approve proposals from the Chief Editors for major changes in the structure and content of the journals, and shall be responsible for a recurring 4-year review of the Chief Editors. The Committee shall advise the Council on reappointment of Chief Editors and evaluate candidates to fill vacancies among the Chief Editors. The Chief Editors shall select from among themselves a representative to serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Committee, except during evaluations of Chief Editors.

5.7 The Ethics Committee oversees the implementation of the Code of Professional Ethics for the International Association for Vegetation Science.

5.8 The Website & Social Media Special Committee reviews the general structure and content of the Association website, updates links to other websites, and develops ideas about how to use new social media for communication in the Association.

Bylaw 6. Special Committees

6.1 Special Committees may be established by the President as needed, but a committee shall not continue past the term of the President that appointed it. Each Special Committee Chair shall submit a report on the Committee’s work to the Council at its Annual Meeting. Financial support for a Special Committee shall be included in the annual budget.

6.2 A Special Committee may be created for the purpose of producing a special report for the Association. The report of the Committee is expected to be a statement by the Committee for possible publication and not necessarily a statement of the Association.
**Bylaw 7. Awards**

7.1 The Association shall recognize exemplary contributions to vegetation science by presenting awards. These awards shall include but not be limited to the following (see 7.2-7.6).

7.2 The Honorary Member Award is presented to recognize senior vegetation scientists who are past or present members of the Association for their extraordinary and sustained contributions to the Association or to the advancement of Vegetation Science. New honorary members shall be honored at the Symposium and be invited (but not required) to make a presentation at that meeting. Honorary members of the Association are exempt from payment of dues. No more than one award shall be given per year.

7.3 The Alexander von Humboldt Medal is presented to honor scientists who have contributed greatly to the intellectual development and advancement of vegetation science. This award shall be given no more frequently than once every year. Recipients shall be honored at the Symposium and invited (but not required) to make a presentation at that meeting.

7.4 The Young Scientist Oral Presentation Award is given annually for the best oral presentation at the Symposium by an individual who is a candidate for a degree or has completed a degree within the three years prior to July 1 of the year of the meeting.

7.5 The Young Scientist Poster Award is given annually for the best poster presentation at the Symposium by an individual who is a candidate for a degree or has completed a degree within the three years prior to July 1 of the year of the meeting.

7.6 Editors' Award. Each year the Chief Editors shall select an exemplary paper or papers published in each of the scientific journals of the Association. The authors of these papers shall be honored with the Editor’s Award, which shall be announced in the journal in which the selected paper was published.

**Bylaw 8. Global Fund**

8.1 The Association maintains a fund called the "IAVS Global Fund" exclusively for supporting participation in the Association by vegetation scientists from low-income and middle-income countries. Types of activities for support will be decided by the Governing Board or Council, and selection of beneficiaries shall be the responsibility of the Global Sponsorship Committee unless otherwise directed by the Governing Board.

**Bylaw 9. Meetings, Symposia and Excursions**

9.1 Symposia of the Association shall be held approximately annually. The Governing Board shall select the venues for the annual symposia. Organization of a Symposium should be conducted as a collaboration between the Association (as represented by the Meetings Committee) and the Local Organizing Committee. The Meetings Committee shall keep the Governing Board informed of all major decisions and shall consult the Governing Board when appropriate.

9.2 IAVS may organize additional meeting as deemed appropriate by the Governing Board, subject to budgetary approval by the Council.

9.3 Symposia of the Association and the associated excursions shall typically be self-supporting, based on revenue from sponsors and the fees paid by the participants, except as indicated in 9.4.

9.4 The IAVS Governing Board may offer monetary advances, but the financial solvency of a Symposium is the responsibility of the local organizers. The Governing Board may allocate
Association funds to support a meeting, but in the case of a surplus those funds shall to the extent possible be repaid to the Association. In all cases a final accounting report shall be submitted to the IAVS Secretary within six months of the completion of the Symposium, and in the event that IAVS contributed a financial advance any positive balance shall be equally shared between the local organizing committee and IAVS.

9.5 Members of the Association should pay a substantially lower meeting fee than non-members.

9.6 As IAVS cannot and will not assume responsibility for legal liability regarding the conduct of the Symposium or associated excursions. Organizers must arrange for liability insurance as appropriate for the venue.

9.7 Excursions are expected to be a core component of the annual Symposium. When this is not possible, alternative excursions may be arranged.

9.8 Organizers of Symposia are expected to conform to the “Guidelines for organizers of IAVS annual Symposia” and the “Guidelines for organizers of IAVS Excursions” maintained by the IAVS Meetings Committee.

9.9 The Association may maintain and require use of centralized facilities for registration of participants in Symposia, distribution of programs for Symposia, and other dissemination of information about and collection of fees for Symposia.

**Bylaw 10. Publications**

10.1 The Association shall publish the *Bulletin*, scientific journals, and other publications consistent with the objectives of the Association (Statues, Article 2). The Association shall be the owner of these publications and shall retain copyright, though component rights may be shared.

10.2 The scientific journals of the Association shall be ‘Journal of Vegetation Science’ and ‘Applied Vegetation Science’.

10.3 Each of the Association’s journals shall be edited by from one to four Chief Editors. The Chief Editors may appoint Associate Editors to assist them. The Chief Editors shall be appointed by the Governing Council to renewable four-year terms. The Publications Committee shall review Chief Editors prior to reappointment.

10.4 The Association shall maintain a website. The website shall contain at least general information, critical historical records, and a directory of those members wishing to be listed.

**Bylaw 11. Sections and Working Groups**

11.1 Any group of fifteen or more members of the Association may petition for the establishment of a regional Section or a disciplinary Working Group as defined in Article 8 of the Statutes. The petition must specify the proposed general scope of the Section or Working Group and its proposed plan of organization. Any person of any class of membership in the Association may become a member of any Section or Working Group. Each Section and Working Group may arrange meetings, either in connection with meetings of the whole Association or separately, may arrange field trips, and may otherwise conduct its own affairs, so long as it does not encroach upon the activities of the Association, or other Sections and Working Groups, and its activities conform to Association norms and policies.

11.2 Each Section and Working Group shall elect a Chair (or Co-chairs) and other officers, whose duties, terms of office, and manner of election are determined by that Section or Working Group.
Each Section and Working Group shall select from among its elected officers one individual who is a member of IAVS to serve as the official representative of the officers of the Group or Section to IAVS. This person may be, but is not required to be, the same person as is appointed to represent the Group or Section on Council as specified in IAVS Statutes 4.2.b. The Bylaws of the Section or Working Group and future amendments are subject to the approval of the Governing Council of the Association.

**Bylaw 12. Affiliations**

12.1 The Association may be affiliated with relevant International Associations and Unions, as shall be decided by the Governing Council.

*Approved by Council -- June 21, 2011 (with changes approved by Council -- July 24, 2012, and on June 28, 2022)*