Bylaws

Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS), African Section

Article 1. Name and status
The name of this organization shall be “IAVS-African Section”. It shall be a Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (hereafter IAVS), and consequently these Bylaws are subsidiary to the Statutes and Bylaws of IAVS.

Article 2. Objectives and Activities
The main objectives of the IAVS-African Section include:
(a) developing and advancing research on any aspect of African vegetation;
(b) encouraging vegetation scientists of all specialties and levels of seniority working in Africa to join IAVS and become involved in its activities;
(c) supporting and nurturing young African vegetation scientists;
(d) encouraging and aiding communication among its members;
(e) fostering communication and collaboration between African vegetation scientists and those in other parts of the world;
(f) supporting activities such as symposia and field trips of interest to vegetation scientists that focus on Africa;
(g) creating a platform for uploading and sharing data for the common use of African vegetation scientists.

Article 3. Membership
Membership in the African Section is open to all persons free of charge, and membership in the IAVS is optional. Membership in the African Section is obtained by written application to the African Section Membership Administrator.

Membership can be discontinued at any time by a written statement (electronic or hardcopy) sent to the African Section Membership Administrator that the member no longer wishes to be a member of the African Section.

It is the responsibility of members to provide the Membership Administrator with a functioning e-mail address. Membership is discontinued when no functioning e-mail address is available to either the Membership Administrator or the IAVS Secretary.

Article 4. Business meeting
At least one business meeting shall be held annually in conjunction with a meeting of the Working Group. All members attending may vote in the business meeting. A member may assign a proxy vote for the business meeting to another member by notifying the holder of the proxy and the Membership Administrator. Any one participant may carry one proxy vote.

Article 5. Steering Committee
The Working Group shall have a Steering Committee (SC) with five elected members. The Steering Committee has the power to co-opt one or more members for specific purposes within specific time periods only. The Chair of the SC shall be a member of IAVS. Each SC member shall be elected for a period of three years renewable for another term. Elections shall take place at least two months prior to the business meeting at which the regular three-year term of the SC is ending,
or following a vacancy. At least one month prior to the start of an election, the SC shall appoint a person (who is not running for election) to conduct the election and this person shall announce to the members via e-mail and also receive nominations made by any member by e-mail or in person. Elections take place by means of an electronic ballot over a period of one month. Members may be re-elected for a maximum of one additional term. In the event of a tie, a re-vote will take place for that specific position.

All decisions on behalf of the African Section except those explicitly assigned otherwise are made by the SC with majority.

**Article 6. Duties of the Steering Committee members**

(a) The SC members promote the interests of the African Section, and supervise Working Group operations and scientific activities;
(b) The SC may call upon members of the Working Group or appoint committees to assist with the Working Group affairs;
(c) The Chair presides at the SC and African Section business meetings and also supplies an annual report to IAVS;
(d) The co-chair will support the chair and perform those duties in the Chair’s absence. The co-chair will also be responsible for financial accounting in consultation with the Chair of the African Section where applicable;
(e) The Membership Administrator keeps records of the African Section and its members. Other duties include; setting of meeting agendas, take minutes during meetings and distribute to members’;
(f) The Social Media Officer/ Webmaster will manage and moderate all social media handles approved by the SC of the African Section;
(g) The Event Organizer will organize meetings/ short presentations/ webinars of the African Section. He/ she will also share relevant events and information from other sources/ members.

**Article 7. Finances**
The African Section financial assets shall be held by and managed through the accounts of IAVS.

**Article 8. Amendments**
These Bylaws may be amended by a 3/5 vote of the members participating in the business meeting of the African Section. Proposed amendments must be circulated to the membership by e-mail at least two weeks in advance of the business meeting at which they are voted on.

Changes in the bylaws are contingent on approval by the IAVS Council.