

F.E.C.O.F • European Federation of Municipal Forest Owners

Articles of Association

(including the amendments of 17 March 2000)

Article 1

Name and headquarters

(1) The European Federation of Municipal Forest Owners (FECOF) is the basis of a union of organisations that exist in the countries of Europe and represent concerns relating to municipal and other community-owned forests.

(2) The FECOF is headquartered at Hôtel du Département, Place du Quartier Blanc, Strasbourg.

(3) The law applicable to the headquarters of the FECOF applies.

Article 2

Tasks

(1) The FECOF shall facilitate collaboration between its member organisations in relation to the European Community, in particular with regard to the following areas that concern local authorities in terms of their forest ownership and their assets:

a) forestry policy in Europe;

b) spatial planning and municipal development in relation to municipal and other community-owned forests;

c) the key functions that forests fulfil for ecology and the environment;

d) economic, trade and transport issues that arise from managing and selling forestry products and from developing and setting up processing industries;

e) European Community funding for municipal and other community-owned forests;

f) problems concerning forest conservation and new types of forest damage.

(2) The FECOF shall work to improve the public's awareness of the environmental, economic and social importance of municipal and other community-owned forests.

(3) The FECOF shall encourage members to share their experiences of managing municipal forests, including processing forestry products, and of the legislation in the various countries.

(4) To fulfil its tasks, the FECOF uses the appropriate means to appeal to the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, other European authorities and the public. It aims to maintain good relationships with representatives of private and state-owned forests.

(5) The FECOF does not represent the interests of any political party.

Article 3

Membership

(1) FECOF members are representatives of community-owned forests.

(2) As a rule, each country is represented by one member. However, exceptions are possible depending on a country's specific circumstances. Members of the same nationality organise their rights and obligations among themselves.

(3) The founding members of the FECOF are:

- for France: La Fédération Nationale des Communes Forestières de France;

- for Germany: the Bundesvereinigung der Kommunalen Spitzenverbände der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, the Deutscher Städtetag, the Deutscher Landkreistag and the Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund; to exercise the Bundesvereinigung's membership rights, its joint forestry commission supplies the number of delegates required in line with Article 5.

(4) Other members are admitted via a unanimous decision by the Board, or else by a majority decision of two-thirds of the delegates in the General Assembly.

(5) Natural or legal persons can join the FECOF as associate members. These members are:

- active associates if they pay a fee;

- observers if they do not.

Members organise the appointment of associate members themselves. Candidates from countries that are not represented by an FECOF member will be reviewed by the Board, which will decide on their admission.

(6) If a member wishes to leave the FECOF, it must submit written notice of this. The notice must reach the FECOF office ten months before the end of a calendar year. By unanimous decision of the Board or by a majority vote of two-thirds of the General Assembly, a member can be excluded from the FECOF with effect from the end of a calendar year if the requirements for membership are no longer met, if the member is contravening the goals set out in these Articles of Association, or if its right to represent its country is in doubt. When a member leaves under the conditions set out in the first sentence of this paragraph, its financial obligations for the following calendar year remain at the level of the membership fees set out in the budget.

Article 4

The Board

(1) The FECOF is led by a Board that is elected by the General Assembly and serves for five years.

(2) Members of the Board can be re-elected.

Article 5

The General Assembly

(1) The members are represented in the General Assembly by delegates and, if the delegates are prevented from attending, by their deputies. Members decide on the number of delegates based on their total number of votes. They then appoint the delegates and their deputies and can replace them at any time by informing the President of the FECOF of this in writing.

(2) Each member has at least one vote. The number of votes is based on the area covered by community-owned forest in the country in question and according to the following table:

from 1	to 200,000 ha:	1 vote
from 200,000	to 400,000 ha:	2 votes
from 400,000	to 600,000 ha:	3 votes
from 600,000	to 800,000 ha:	4 votes
from 800,000	to 1,000,000 ha:	5 votes
from 1,000,000	to 1,200,000 ha:	6 votes
from 1,200,000	to 1,400,000 ha:	7 votes
from 1,400,000	to 1,600,000 ha:	8 votes
from 1,600,000	to 1,800,000 ha:	9 votes
above 1,800,000 ha:		10 votes

(3) Active associate members have advisory votes. The number of votes is determined by Article 5(2). If an advisory member is not a forest owner, the Board will decide on the number of votes. The appointment of representatives of active associate members is organised by the members within the framework of their number of votes. If the associate member is absent, the Board will organise the appointments.

(4) Delegates of members who represent countries that are not part of the European Union have no voting rights in votes that specifically concern European Union affairs.

(5) The President or, if he/she is prevented from doing so, his/her deputy, must call a General Assembly in writing at least once a year, giving at least four weeks' notice and providing notification of the agenda. A General Assembly can be called at any time at the request of one-quarter of the members, who must specify the topics to be discussed.

(6) The General Assembly has a quorum when more than one-quarter of the delegates are present or represented. With the exception of changes to the Articles of Association and the dissolution of the FECOF, decisions are made with a simple majority. Applications are rejected in the event of a tie.

(7) The General Assembly handles the following affairs in particular:

1. policy matters;
2. the annual reports produced by the President and his/her secretary and approved by the Board;
3. the election of the President and the other members of the Board;
4. adoption of the budget prepared by the Board, including the employment plan and the level of membership fees;
5. appointment of two auditors or an auditing body;
6. approval of the actions of the Board;
7. decisions regarding changes to the Articles of Association and the dissolution of the FECOF;

8. the selection, made prior to the Board elections that are held every three years, of the member who will take over the presidency.

Article 6

Composition and tasks of the Board

(1) The Board comprises the President, a first and a second Vice-President, additional Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, the General Secretary, and other members. The General Assembly decides on the number of additional Vice-Presidents and other members at the start of each electoral term.

(2) The members of the Board are elected from among the delegates and their deputies in separate secret ballots, starting with the President.

(3) The Board meets at least twice a year. Meetings are called by the President, who also sets the agenda. Invitations must be sent at least four weeks prior to the meeting. Meetings can be convened immediately at the request of at least one-third of the members of the Board.

(4) The Board has a quorum when at least half of its members are present. Unless otherwise provided for in these Articles of Association, decisions are made by a simple majority. In urgent cases, decisions can be reached in writing with a majority of two-thirds of Board members set out in Paragraph 1.

(5) The Board is responsible for the following tasks:

1. setting the time, place and agenda for the General Assembly, as well as preparing it and the decisions to be made;
2. implementing the General Assembly's decisions, unless the Articles of Association assign these to the President;
3. reaching decisions in place of the General Assembly in cases of extreme urgency; the members must be informed of this immediately;
4. appointing and dismissing staff.

(6) On matters that go beyond forestry interests, the FECOF Board works with the competent European committee that represents municipal interests.

Article 7

The President

(1) The President represents the FECOF.

(2) The President leads the FECOF in accordance with the decisions reached by the General Assembly and the Board.

(3) The President convenes the General Assembly and the Board, and leads the meetings.

(4) If the President is unavailable, the first Vice-President will take his/her place; if the first Vice-President is unavailable, the second Vice-President will represent the President.

(5) As a rule, a new President is appointed from among the members every five years upon the election of a new Board.

Article 8

FECOF Office

(1) The FECOF maintains an Office, which is located in the same place as the current General Secretary. The General Secretary runs the Office independently. Additional staff can, on the basis of the budget, be appointed and dismissed by decision of the Board.

(2) The Office is overseen by the President.

(3) In particular, the Office is responsible for the following:

1. handling day-to-day office tasks;
2. providing the President and the Board with support in preparing the Board meetings and the General Assembly, and with implementing the decisions reached by these bodies;
3. conducting internal and external public relations work.

Article 9

FECOF financing

(1) The FECOF gets the financial resources it needs to carry out its tasks, and in particular to maintain the Office, from the fees payable by its members. The budget sets out the level of the membership fees in euros. The level of the fees depends on the number of delegates. The fees payable by members and active associate members are calculated according to the number of votes they have. The basic fee per vote is reduced by half for associate members.

(2) The Treasurer is solely responsible for managing the financial affairs of the FECOF. This includes, in particular:

1. drawing up drafts for the budget in good time;
2. managing cash transactions.

(3) The financial administration is overseen by the President. The budget, accounting and application of funds are governed by the relevant instructions.

Article 10

Changes to the Articles of Association and dissolution of the FECOF

(1) Changes to the Articles of Association require a majority of three-quarters of the delegates in the General Assembly.

(2) The dissolution of the FECOF requires a majority of three-quarters of the delegates.

(3) The funds held by the FECOF at the time of its dissolution are to be paid out to its full members in proportion to the fees they have paid in the past.

Article 11

Rules of procedure

Rules of procedure agreed by the General Assembly govern the particulars of the FECOF's business activities that are not regulated by the Articles of Association.

Article 12

Financial year

The financial year is the calendar year.

Article 13
Commencement

The present Articles of Association replace the version of 16 November 1990 with effect from 17 March 2000.