

# Constitution of the GCC Network for Drylands Research & Development (NDRD)

شبكة دول مجلس  
التعاون الخليج  
لدراسات الأراضي القاحلة و التطوير

for the Arabic translation only

The original of the Constitution is in English

## Part I General Regulations

### Article 1 Name, Acronym and Registered Seat

- 1.1. The Network shall bear the name "GCC Network for Drylands Research & Development" with the acronym NDRD and is hereafter referred to as the Network.
- 1.2. The Network will have a seal and stamp. The seal of the Network is round (square), with the following inscription: GCC Network for Drylands Research and Development in English and Arabic. The stamp of the Network is rectangular with the following inscription: GCC Network for Drylands Research and Development (NDRD) in English and Arabic, No..... Date..... Year.....
- 1.3. The registered address of the Network shall be in a GCC member state and is not yet determined. It can be transferred to any other place in the GCC region by a majority decision of the NDRD Council (Board of Directors).

### Article 2 Legal Status and Applicable Laws

- 2.1. The GCC Network for Drylands Research & Development (NDRD) is a professional, non-governmental, non-profit organization and will be established in compliance with the GCC objective to prompt scientific and technical progress in the fields of industry, mining, agriculture, water and animal resources, as well as establishment of scientific research centers.

- 2.2. The Network is an artificial person and is registered in accordance with the laws of the host countries. The Network acts independently in legal dealings with other parties.

### Article 3 Exclusive Founders Rights

- 3.1. To guarantee the continuous cross-cultural humanitarian ideology of NDRD the three undersigned Founder Presidents representing different cultural backgrounds shall have permanent honorary seats on the Executive Committee.
- 3.2. The three Founder Presidents as Honorary Members of the Executive Committee shall have the same attributions and powers as the other members of the NDRD Council.

### Article 4 Duration

The Network is incorporated for an unspecified period

### Article 5 Working Language

The working language of NDRD shall be English.

Explanatory Remark: The predominance of English in the global scientific environment such as international conferences, symposia, online forums, is evident and therefore you must improve your competency to a relatively good level of English to be able to be heard and respected. Nevertheless, there seems to be no progress in this respect whatsoever and the knowledge gap in the Arab world is obvious, especially when it comes to written expression. Yet this dialogue is a

prerequisite in helping to bridge what could certainly be seen as the widening gap between Islam and some of the West's values and assumptions. Furthermore a greater interaction with other nations, cultures, and regions of the world and the GCC countries is certainly needed, because openness, interaction, absorption, revision, criticism and examination cannot but prompt creative knowledge production in Arab societies.

As a Network with a mandate to concern ourselves with issues of sustainable development, we are aware that in general developing countries will be deeply affected by the exploding demand for IT literacy and English language for accessing knowledge on the Internet in the future.

Addition: Official communication with governmental institutions in the GCC member states shall of course be in Arabic, but with a copy in English.

## **Article 6 Nondiscrimination Notice**

NDRD prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation and political beliefs.

## **Article 7 Objectives & Empowerment**

### **7.1. Objectives**

The principal objectives of NDRD shall be:

- (1) to contribute to the advancement of drylands research and sustainable development for the benefit and wellbeing of humanity
- (2) to co-ordinate and develop research in the GCC member states on drylands issues, especially desertification as well as poverty alleviation and to represent the research in this field with the institutions concerned
- (3) to encourage the relations between its members in a general way, to promote the professional exchange and reciprocal information and to encourage the common support between the members, in all activities and transactions
- (4) to organize regional and international collaboration with the other international scientific and professional bodies and promote communication among those engaged in drylands research and sustainable development, especially desertification
- (5) to contribute to drylands conservation and their sustainable use in the GCC
- (6) to promote the dialog between research, development and application oriented activities

### **7.2. Empowerment**

In order to further the attainment of these objectives, NDRD shall be empowered to:

- (1) enhance the quality of environmental programs and strengthen the position of the academic community in the GCC member states by promoting funding for drylands research and education at universities and supporting the advancement of degree-granting environmental development programs
- (2) organize and coordinate activities of mutual interest to drylands research especially within the field of desertification, including international and regional scientific conferences, symposia, seminars, forums, schools and courses, working groups, regional support programs and other information events for the constituent organizations
- (3) facilitate action-oriented collaborations among scientists, educators, policymakers, corporate and civic leaders through NDRD organized events and programs
- (4) establish committees, commissions, working groups and other bodies for purposes within its mandate
- (5) periodically disseminate information about issues of importance for drylands development by publishing material in the field of drylands research, such as proceedings, journals, reference books, reports and data sheets
- (6) develop and disseminate specialized teaching concepts, especially for Arabic countries, incl. nomadic education
- (7) represent the professional interests and views of GCC scientists in the international community
- (8) focus and care for implementation measures to combat desertification, demonstration and application of desirable agricultural techniques, as well as the provision of basic and advanced training - Research should be applicable in view of those social groups within whose domain the impacts of the implementation measures are intended to take place
- (9) assist affected developing countries to achieve appropriate levels of science and technology in the field of drylands research and ensure the implementation of this

applied research through participatory processes  
 Explanatory Remark: The GCC Member States should be committed to support the efforts of other affected developing countries and least developed countries, particularly those in Africa, by providing assistance and promoting the exchange of technology and knowledge.

- (10) provide suitable channels for the exchange of information between nations
- (11) raise public awareness in the GCC about desertification and about related issues such as land degradation, soil erosion, sustainable agricultural practices, food security, local and indigenous farming practices, etc. and the human insecurity related to it
- (12) educating policymakers and the public in the GCC about the value of research to society
- (13) promote the exchange of personnel between organizations working in the field of drylands research
- (14) undertake activities conducive to the general objectives of the Network

## Part II Membership

### Article 8 Membership

#### 1. General

- 1.1. The membership of the Network is composed of regional and international scientific and professional institutions and individuals active in the field of drylands research.
- 1.2. The number of members of the Network is unlimited. The minimum is fixed at three. The first members are the undersigned founders.
- 1.3. The Network has a multi-tier membership structure which shall comprise of the following:  
  
 Full Institutional and Individual Membership open to GCC nationals and the International Affiliate Membership Program (AMP). Individuals who have particularly distinguished themselves in the field of drylands research and those who have contributed to the development or rendered outstanding services to the Network or its purpose may be appointed as Honorary Members by the Executive Committee.

Furthermore for those that are not eligible to any of the above, but which want to promote the general objectives of the Network and/or seek a relationship with NDRD, we offer a non-voting Corporate Membership.

- 1.4. The admission requirements, rights, responsibilities and fees of membership are regulated by the bylaws of the Network. All members have a right to be informed of all the activities of the Network, and to give suggestions for improving these activities or starting new activities.
- 1.5. The membership should represent the interdisciplinary mandate of NDRD. In addition, membership should be drawn from a mix of policy, operations, monitoring & evaluation, teaching, etc., since this mix adds to the richness of discussion.

### Article 9 Membership Structure

#### 9.1. Full Membership

To be eligible, an applicant must be a national of any of the GCC member states.

##### (1) Full Institutional Membership

Institutes, Networks or NGOs established in the GCC member states eligible to Full Membership according to Art. 9.1., whose objectives and activities are oriented towards research and/or training in drylands research and development issues. Scientific networks and NGOs shall be devoted to objectives consistent with those of NDRD. The annual membership fee for Institutional Membership will be USD \$250.

##### (2) Full Individual Membership

Open to any person deemed capable of preparing an acceptable scientific paper on some subject of drylands research. Full Members normally possess a Ph.D. or equivalent. To qualify applicants must submit one paper related to drylands research and / or their sustainable development in English and Arabic. The annual membership for Individual Membership fee will be USD \$50.

##### (3) Full Postgraduate Student Membership

Open to any person Postgraduate Student doing his (her) Ph.D. on an issue related to drylands and deemed capable of preparing

an acceptable scientific paper on some subject of drylands research. To qualify applicants must submit one paper related to drylands research and / or their sustainable development in English and Arabic.

The annual membership fee will be USD \$30.

The papers are peer-reviewed by the Scientific Committee of the NDRD Council and will be presented to our members in English and Arabic through the restricted access area of our website. A selection of the best papers will be published by the end of 2006 in a GCC anthology on Drylands Research.

For new/first time Full Postgraduate Student Members, the dues are USD \$50 for the first two consecutive years.

## 9.2. International Affiliate Membership Program (AMP)

The NDRD Affiliate Membership Program (AMP) is created in order to maximize the participation of the international scientific community in the objectives of NDRD and also to disseminate information about its activities to a much wider audience. Affiliates are therefore organizations / institutions and individuals whose objectives are so closely linked to those of NDRD that a formal connection is desirable for both parties. Affiliate members serve to increase the community and the effectiveness of those actively working in drylands research & development under the GCC umbrella.

The program is open to any person or entity seriously interested in the advancement of drylands research or related fields. Affiliate Members enjoy all the benefits of a Full Membership except that they are not eligible to hold office.

### (1) Affiliate Institutional Membership

Institutes, networks or NGOs not eligible to "Full Membership" according to Art. 9.1., whose objectives and activities are oriented towards research and/or training in drylands research and development issues. Scientific networks and NGOs shall be devoted to objectives consistent with those of NDRD.

Affiliate membership offers a formal institutional connection with NDRD which includes the benefit of working in cooperation with GCC scientists; ongoing contact with the NDRD staff on matters of interest to the scholarly community; and continued involvement in the crucial network of contacts with which NDRD

works. In addition affiliates are invited to attend the NDRD General Assembly and at their own expense. The annual membership fee for Institutional Membership will be USD \$250.

### (2) Affiliate Individual Membership

Open to any person active or interested in drylands research. Affiliate Individual Members normally possess a Ph.D. or equivalent.

The annual membership fee will be USD \$50.

### (3) Affiliate Postgraduate Student Membership

Open to any postgraduate student doing his (her) Ph.D. on an issue related to drylands research and / or their sustainable development.

The annual membership fee will be USD \$30.

For new/first time Affiliate Postgraduate Student Members, the dues are USD \$50 for the first two consecutive years.

## 9.3. Honorary Membership

Persons who have particularly distinguished themselves in the field of drylands research and persons who have contributed to the development or rendered outstanding services to the Network or its purpose may be appointed as honorary members of the Network. There will be no membership dues for Honorary Members.

## 9.4. Corporate Membership

Only academic establishments or academic individuals can become active members of NDRD. Any organization who is not eligible for our Full Membership or International Affiliate Membership Program, but who is generally interested in drylands research and their sustainable development, has a business interest and / or is willing to contribute to the declared mandate of NDRD is eligible for a non-voting Corporate Membership. Corporate members consequently include i.a. environmental consultancies, international organizations, public sector organizations, government agencies, companies, as well as financial institutions.

The annual membership fee for Corporate Members will be USD \$500.

## **Article 10 Membership Application, Payment & Admission**

### **10.1. Application**

Applications should be made online through the appropriate "NDRD Membership Application or Renewal Form" accompanied by an attachment of:

- (1) the required paper related to drylands research and / or their sustainable development in English and Arabic (Full Membership of GCC nationals only)
- (2) evidence of qualification/s (postgraduate-students)
- (3) further particulars in support of the application as may be required by the Executive Committee

### **10.2. Payment**

Applications without payments will not be considered.  
Registration fees may be paid in US dollars online by credit card (Visa / MasterCard) or bank transfer.

### **10.3. Admission**

Applications for membership or renewal of membership shall be submitted to the General Secretary. In the case of any applicant whose character, reputation or conduct might make him an undesirable member, the General Secretary shall refer the application to the Executive Committee for review; which shall decide upon admission by a simple majority of votes. In all other cases, the General Secretary shall have the authority to grant membership.

To safeguard the standards of the Network and the value of membership, applications of Individual and Post-Graduate Full Members and their corresponding papers are considered by the Scientific Committee of the NDRD Council. Applications should be completed fully and accurately since inadequate information will result in a decision being deferred. Council elects successful applicants to membership in March, June, September and December.

## **Article 11 Responsibility (Obligations)**

### **11.1. Membership Fees**

Membership fees for the Full Members, Affiliate Members and Corporate Members, the amount and modalities of payments are proposed by the Council and must be approved by the General Assembly.

- (1) Each Member, except Honorary Members, shall pay an annual membership fee.
- (2) Dues will cover the period from January 1 to December 31. Dues will be payable by January 31 or at the time a new member application is submitted.
- (3) Dues paid to the Network are nonrefundable.

11.2. The members shall be deemed to have acquainted themselves with the Network's Statutes, to agree to adhere to the standards of the Network. All members bring in to the Network the active co-operation with their capacities and their dedication. They must have a demonstrated interest in issues of drylands research and be committed to humanitarian principles.

11.3. Affiliate Members as highly educated members of their respective societies are expected to show a little comprehension for cross-cultural considerations while working together with NDRD in the Gulf.

11.4. Institutional Members shall appoint a representative for duly called meetings of the General Assembly.

## **Article 12 Members Rights & Consensus Building**

### **12.1. General Members Rights**

Each member who has paid his or her subscription fee shall be entitled:

- (1) to attend the annual General Assembly of the Network
- (2) to be informed on all internal issues of the network (minutes of meetings, budget, etc.)
- (3) to get access to the members-only services through the NDRD website including access to a multitude of papers on drylands research in the GCC region

- (4) to receive our quarterly NDRD Newsletter (English/Arabic) will keep you informed of NDRD programs and activities as well as information about important member activities. The names and email addresses for the appropriate contacts are provided within articles, and members are encouraged to volunteer information.
- (5) to get visibility of your institute on the NDRD website and publications: your events, your latest research, your training courses, your institute as a partner of NDRD projects
- (6) to obtain a discount of 25% on the cost of all NDRD publications
- (7) to be entitled to a 30% reduction of registration fees at NDRD-sponsored conferences.
- (8) to get access to online scientific job postings for the Gulf region
- (9) to nominate candidates for holding elected office.

All members, except Corporate Members, have an equal right to vote each disposing of one vote. An authorized representative may represent him. Depending on the size and amount of installed capacity some institutional members may have more than one vote. The details are defined in the internal statutes.

### **12.2. Full Members Rights**

Members shall be entitled to attend the General Assembly and take part in voting; they are eligible to be elected into the NDRD Council.

### **12.3. Affiliated Members Rights**

Affiliated members shall have all of the rights and privileges of full membership except holding elected office

### **12.4. Honorary Members Rights**

Honorary Members shall have all of the rights and privileges of full membership except holding elected office. However, they shall not be obliged to pay the annual membership fee.

### **12.5. Corporate Members Rights**

Corporate Members shall have all of the rights and privileges of full membership except holding elected office and voting.

## **Article 13: Resignation, Removal, Expulsion or Suspension**

### **13.1. Resignation**

Any member may resign at any time by failing to maintain current membership. Other resignations shall be in writing and shall be accepted by the Executive Board

### **13.2. Removal**

An Individual Member may be removed from the Register of Members by decision of the Board of Directors should he or she fail to pay relevant membership fees after two written reminders. The Individual Member may only be removed on expiration of a period stipulated in the second reminder, and only if the second reminder explicitly states that removal will be the penalty for any continued failure to pay. The Member must be informed of any decision to remove her or him.

### **13.3. Expulsion**

If in the opinion of the Board any Individual Member prejudices the interests of NDRD through his or her action or inaction, that Member may be expelled from the Network by decision of the NDRD Council. The decision to exclude the member shall be taken by the Board by a simple majority of votes cast. Before such decision is taken, the Individual Member must be afforded an opportunity by the Board of Directors to reply to the charges either at a hearing or in writing. Thereafter the Board of Directors must send the Individual Member in writing the reasons for its decision.

The Member aggrieved by expulsion may appeal to the General Assembly against the decision of the Council and the decision of the General Assembly shall be final.

### **13.4. Suspension**

The Board may at any time suspend an Individual Member with immediate effect, if this is considered necessary to avoid a threat to NDRD or its reputation by his (her) unprofessional or unethical conduct, or for reasons threatening the safety or security of anyone.

## Part III Governing Bodies & Organization

### Article 14 Structure

The governing bodies of the NDRD shall be:

#### 14.1. The **General Assembly**

14.2. The **NDRD Council** (Board of Directors) consisting of the

- (1) The Executive Committee
- (2) The GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs)

The composition and function of these bodies are defined in Art. 16 and 17 hereafter.

### Article 15 General Assembly

15.1. The General Assembly, to which the NDRD Council is responsible, is the highest governing body of NDRD and shall determine its general policy. It enjoys full powers with the exception of those expressly attributed to other bodies.

15.2. The General Assembly consists of all the members and representatives of the Institutional members. The number of representatives is specified in the bylaws. The General Assembly has a President, a Vice President and a General Secretary.

**15.3. The functions of the General Assembly shall be:**

- (1) to amend the Statutes and Bylaws
- (2) to elect the President and the GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) of the Board
- (3) to decide on the annual membership fees
- (4) to review, accept or reject general recommendations of the Board
- (5) to ratify the creation or dissolution of Special Committees, Commissions and other appropriate bodies recommended by the Board
- (6) to approve the audited accounts of NDRD
- (7) the deliberate dissolution of the network

### 15.4. Decision Making

- (1) Decision of the General Assembly will be reached by a simple majority vote of the members and representatives attending and participating in the voting. The President and the Vice President are ex-officio voting members of the General Assembly. However, decisions concerning the adoption or modification of articles of the Statute and on the winding up of the Network shall require a majority of 80% of voting members, the quorum being one half of all voting members. Voting shall take place by a show of hands unless the General Assembly decides otherwise. Elections for office shall always be by secret ballot.
- (2) Every member shall have one vote.
- (3) Institutional Members vote through their designated representative will count tenfold.
- (4) Voting by proxy shall be permitted. Written letters of proxy must reach the NDRD Secretariat at least 48 hours prior to the General Assembly. (Only members entitled to vote may act as proxy) In addition to those members entitled to vote, the quorum shall include proxy votes.
- (5) The possibility of accepting votes online will be explored; therefore all decisions within the power of the General Assembly may be made by mail by a majority of those voting.

### 15.5. Meetings

- (1) A meeting of the General Assembly is convened by the President at least once every second year, with at least four months notice being given to the members.
- (2) The General Assembly is convened by the President via electronic mail (ordinary mail or fax are outdated and will certainly be too expensive) addressed to each member and will be signed by the General Secretary on behalf of the President.
- (3) By decision of the board or on demand of at least one third of the members of the Network an extraordinary General Assembly can be called at all times.

### 15.6. Minutes

- (1) The decisions taken by the General Assembly shall be written down as minutes and signed by the President and the General Secretary.

- (2) The minutes will be published online where they may be inspected by those wishing to do so.
- (3) Copies will be sent to the members of the Executive Committee and will be available at the next meeting of the General Assembly.

### 15.7. Presidency

The General Assembly shall be presided over by the President of NDRD or, in her or his absence, by either the vice President or one of the Founder Presidents.

## Article 16 The NDRD Council (Board of Directors)

16.1. The NDRD Council (Board of Directors) composed of the Executive Committee, the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) will administer the Network. In case of absence of the President, the Vice President or one of the Founder Presidents executes his function.

16.2. The internal bylaws of the network shall determine the procedures for setting up this Council, for choosing its members and for terminating their membership. The renewal of the mandate of the administrators will be in accordance with the internal statutes.

### 16.3. The functions of the NDRD Council shall be:

- (1) the management of the Network
- (2) choosing the venue for the General Assembly and of conferences, symposia, seminars, forums, schools and courses, as well as organizing these
- (3) nominating a scientific sub-committee for the selection of papers
- (4) appoint other special committees and officers for specific activities of the Network, e.g. supervise the NDRD publications
- (5) the establishment of working groups
- (6) approve the annual budget prepared by the General Secretary
- (7) nominate the General Secretary for appointment by the Executive Committee
- (8) recommend actions to the General Assembly

- (9) confer honors and awards of the Network
- (10) draft revisions to the Statutes and By-Laws
- (11) maintaining relations with affiliated Networks
- (12) raising funds and finding sponsors for the Network
- (13) Reviewing and recommending programs designed to represent the organization to the public, enhance the organization's image, and communicate with the media
- (14) deal with any other item that may be referred to it

### 16.4. Meeting of the Council

- (1) The NDRD Council shall meet at least twice each calendar year
- (2) A quorum for a meeting of the NDRD Council consists of one-half of the voting members.
- (3) Notices shall be sent not less than 2 month before the meeting by email. The notices shall indicate the date, time and place of the meeting.

### 16.5. Representation

The President, the vice president, the General Secretary and the three Founder Presidents represent and commit the Network towards third parties by the joint signature of any two of the afore-mentioned.

### 16.6. Transparency

The work of the NDRD Council shall be conducted with transparency. The minutes shall be available to the members and a report on decisions shall be distributed to them. Closed meetings may be confidential as the Council may decide.

### 16.7. Observers

International organizations/ institutions cooperating with the Network may propose to the President observers on the NDRD Council. The observers can participate in the meetings, but they will not have voting rights. The Board can invite third parties in a consultative capacity.



### 16.8. Secretariat of the Network

The Secretariat assists the General Secretary in administrative, financial and technical activities as needed. The Secretariat is responsible to the Executive Committee through the General Secretary. The personnel of the Secretariat must have the qualifications necessary to undertake their duties, including adequate fluency in written and spoken English. Personnel of the Secretariat are nominated by the General Secretary for approval by the Executive Committee.

The costs of operation of the Secretariat will be borne by the host organization at which the secretariat is located on a basis to be established between the Executive Committee and the organization.

### 16.9. Reserved

## Article 17 Executive Committee

17.1. The Committee shall be made up of six members: the President, the Vice President, the General Secretary and the three Founders with their permanent honorary seats.

### 17.2. Accreditation or Responsibilities

The Committee is the executive body of NDRD. It shall act according to the regulations there of and in compliance with the decision of the General Secretary Assembly.

### 17.3. The functions of the Executive Committee shall be:

- (1) the management of the Network
- (2) to approve applications for membership
- (3) the appointment of honorary members to NDRD
- (4) the exclusion of any member which has failed to fulfill the obligations
- (5) the appointment - directly or via a mandated person - of all agents, employees and members of personnel of the Network and the board also has all right to destitute; it determines their tasks and remuneration
- (6) maintaining relations with international institutions
- (7) deal with any other item that may be referred to it

17.4. The Executive Committee can delegate to a director the daily management of the Network, together with usage of the signature, linked to this task of management. The director is chosen by the board who will determine his power and mandate and eventually his salary or honorarium.

### 17.5. The President and Vice President

- (1) The President shall be elected by the General Assembly.
- (2) The President's term of office is restricted to two years and is not renewable.
- (3) The President may be elected again for another term at a later time.
- (4) The President shall be held responsible for the regular management of NDRD and its development. She/he shall report on its activity. At the end of her term or his term of office the President automatically becomes Vice President and is part of the Executive Committee for a period of another 2 years.
- (5) The President shall preside at meetings of the Executive Committee and shall call all meetings of the NDRD Council and all Special Meetings of the Network.
- (6) The President shall designate the chairman of each of the NDRD working groups
- (7) No person shall be President of the Network unless, at the time of nomination, he (she) has reached that status of a full professor or equivalent. There will be an exception to the rule for the first Vice-President.
- (8) The President or the Executive Committee shall appoint all committees and delegates not otherwise provided for in the constitution.
- (9) The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President, and shall perform any other duties designated by the President.

### 17.6. The General Secretary

- (1) The General Secretary is the principal executive officer of the Network and supervises the financial and administrative affairs of the Network.
- (2) The General Secretary shall be nominated by the NDRD Council with the advice and consent of a simple majority for a period of office of two years and is re-eligible for an unlimited number of terms.
- (3) The General Secretary is responsible to the Executive Committee.

- (4) The General Secretary shall draft the Agenda of Board Meetings and the General Assemblies; record the minutes; co-ordinate the activities of the Network, acting in compliance with the wishes and directives of the Board and in accordance with the Network Statute; submit a report of his/her activities.
- (5) Until these bylaws will be amended, the General Secretary will also function as Treasurer.
- (6) She/he shall keep and regularly update list of Members of the Network; collect annual membership fees; make payments on behalf of the Network; he/she shall manage the Network account, draw up balance sheets and circulate same to Members annually. He/she shall act in compliance with the wishes and directives of the Board and in accordance with the Network Statute.
- (7) The General Secretary as Treasurer shall hold the funds of the Network on deposit in a depository approved by the Executive Board and pay them out on the order of the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall present a financial statement to the Network at its meetings.
- (8) General Secretary is assisted by a Secretariat which may include administrative and technical personnel.

#### 17.7. Vacation of Office

Should the Vice President, or General Secretary or Treasurer vacate their office, volunteers will be solicited to fill the remainder of the term. If there are no volunteers, the President shall appoint someone to fill the term.

#### 17.8. Meetings of the Executive Committee (Board of Directors)

- (1) The board meets as often as necessary by initiative of the President or at the written request of at least two members of the Board.
- (2) The board may give a ruling only if the majority of its members are present or represented, assuring always that a minimum of three members are present. Its decisions are taken with absolute majority of votes; if there is a parity of votes, the vote of the President or of his replacement is preponderant. The votes are consigned under the form of minutes of the meeting, signed by the President and the General Secretary, or in case of absence of the President by the Vice President. In case of absence of the General Secretary, the signature of one of the Founder Presidents can always replace his signature.

### Article 18 GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs)

- 18.1. The Network will have a minimum of 6 representatives one from each of the GCC member states on the NDRD Council.
- 18.2. The representation will be proportional to the number of national members from the country of the representative. To encourage local initiative, there will be a proportional representation to national membership. For the beginning there will be 1 seat for each 100 national members. Those countries that will have more than one MSR on the NDRD Council will need to introduce a territorial division between the representatives and inform the Executive Committee on these responsibilities.
- 18.3. The GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) of the Board shall be elected by the General Assembly from nominations by the Executive Committee for a period of two years. They are only re-eligible once consecutively. They cannot reapply for office before a period of 4 years.
- 18.4. Each GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) shall keep himself (herself) informed as to conditions and activities in his country and as to the needs and desires of the members therein in order that he may faithfully and intelligently represent the true interests of these members.
- 18.5. He (she) shall attend all meetings of the NDRD Council. At least 14 days prior to each biannual meeting of the Board of Directors each GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) is encouraged to file with the General Secretary a written report in English (see Art. 5) on the status of the affairs of the NDRD in his division, together with a statement of his recommendations as to any actions required for the effective administration of the objectives and affairs of NDRD.
- 18.6. The GCC Member States Representatives (MSRs) shall serve NDRD without compensation in any form. This shall not preclude the reimbursement, and NDRD shall reimburse the reasonable and necessary traveling expenses of officers and directors from their homes to the place of meeting of the NDRD Council (Board of Directors) and return to their homes. This section shall not be construed to prevent the employment for agreed compensation, of the General Secretary, eventually the Treasurer, the Founder Presidents or any necessary posting by the Network in other capacities.

- 18.7. Appointed candidates from each GCC member state shall submit their application for nomination to the General Secretary at least three months prior to the date of the General Assembly. They shall attach to their application a curriculum vitae indicating their qualifications and specifying their special commitment to the objectives of NDRD.
- 18.8. To constitute a valid nomination, the original copy of an official nominating petition form as provided by the General Secretary must name a Full Member of NDRD as a candidate for a Member State Representative (MSRs) and must be accompanied by a statement signed by the candidate attesting to his eligibility, willingness to run, and willingness to assume the office if elected. The General Secretary shall immediately acknowledge the receipt of the nomination to the candidate, and shall forward the nominations to the members.
- 18.9. Candidates are free and encouraged by these statutes to campaign to all the members of NDRD including the Affiliate Members to increase their chances to be elected.
- 18.10. The Board should be representative of the various interdisciplinary fields of interest and activities of NDRD: namely soil science, hydrology, climatologists, environmental engineering, development policy, sociology, economics, political science, law, veterinary medicine, etc. Each GCC member state should try to appoint a diversity of candidates from different related fields.

## Article 19 NDRD Scientific Committee

### 19.1. Primary Function

The primary function of the Scientific Committee is as an independent neutral body to ensure that NDRD is initiating, developing and coordinating high quality international scientific research on drylands and sustainable development in the GCC region.

The functions of the Executive Committee shall be:

- (1) To collaborate in the development of scientific activities, review anticipated research projects as well as educational/training activities of the Network
- (2) to provide quality control in regards to thematic planning and preparation of the Networks congress "International

Symposium on Drylands Ecology and Human Security" (ISDEHS) and to ensure a high level of scientific quality of the Conference. (i.e. selection of invited speakers, the selection of contributions to be published and the recommendation of the candidates for awards and recognition)

- (3) to review scientific articles to appear in the publications of the Network or under its name
- (4) to suggest the establishment of Scientific Working Groups concerned with scientific matters
- (5) to offer opinions and independent scientific advice on all materials submitted to it by the Executive Committee or by the President.

### 19.2. Members

The Scientific Committee is composed of scholars with recognized international competence in the areas of social science and humanities, environmental science and natural sciences which represent the scientific disciplines active in drylands research and sustainable development. They have been, for this purpose, specifically invited by the Founder Presidents or the Chair of the Scientific Committee, upon consultation of the Executive Committee. Members of the Scientific Committee must have reached at the time of nomination the status of full professor (North American system) or equivalent (i.e. "habilitation" in Central Europe). The tenure of the Scientific Committee shall normally be for not more than the period between two congresses, but its members may be re-nominated immediately.

- 19.3. The work of the Scientific Committee shall be led by the Chair of the Scientific Committee who shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

## Article 20 NDRD Working Groups and Supporting Committees

- 20.1. The NDRD Working Groups and Supporting Committees shall be groups dedicated to a particular task to meet the objectives of NDRD. They may be a relatively permanent group such as those networks covering the different areas of our "Knowledge Base". Alternatively, a Supporting Committee may be an adhoc group that comes together to organize a particular activity, workshop or event.

20.2. The President shall designate the chairman of each working group. Working Groups shall report to the General Secretary and submit a written report at least 30 days prior to each regular meeting of the Executive Committee. NDRD Working Groups may originate studies in their fields and may generate recommendations to the Board on their own initiative.

20.3. All working groups are expected to produce a final report, organize a workshop or symposium, or otherwise make a significant contribution to advancing understanding of their topic. Their work is intended to be completed in 4 years or less.

**20.4. The establishment of the following Supporting Committees and Working Groups is recommended:**

**(1) Administration & Finance**

To safely ensure the initial operation phase of NDRD, a special effort regarding the financial situation of the network is needed. Obviously the network cannot sustain itself in the beginning through any in Article described funding measures and therefore a special emphasize will based on finding initial sponsors and therefore this working should be responsible for initiating, monitoring and reviewing fundraising efforts. This working group should also be responsible for reviewing and enhancing the first budget and presenting it to the board. Furthermore they should make suggestions to the Board regarding staff management, procedures, and remuneration. Finally the working group should make recommendations to the Board regarding audit and tax matters.

**(2) Publications**

One of the objectives of NDRD is to disseminate Arab knowledge to the global community and to enhance local initiative in publishing. Therefore a special Working Group is needed to promote NDRD publications. This Working Group takes care of the publication of the Network's Journal. A representative may be invited to attend a meeting of the NRDR Council but has no voting right.

**(3) NDRD Conference ISDEHS and General Assembly 2008**

The Committee shall establish and apply guidelines for the first election

**(4) Additional Working Groups**

Other working groups may be appointed by the President for specific purposes and defined duration.

## Part IV Budget & Accounts

### Article 21 Financial Resources

**21.1. The resources of NDRD will consist of:**

- (1) Annual membership fees
- (2) Subventions, contributions and donations
- (3) Proceeds of its activities, such as the income originating from the sale of its publications, organizing conferences, symposia, workshops, consultancy, etc.
- (4) Income from activities carried out by the Network under contracts with other organizations
- (5) Other income in accordance with the intent of our Constitution

Explanatory Remark: The funding for NDRD is expected to come from numerous GCC and international government sources, international organizations, the private sector and foundations. Our future designated funding profile is aimed to be increasingly international in nature with almost the same amount of designated funding coming from international sources as from GCC governments and agencies.

21.2. Funds of the Network shall be under the supervision of the General Secretary. The financial records shall be audited semi-annually by either an Audit Committee or the Executive Board and reported to the membership.

21.3. The annual accounts of the Network as per December 31 may be checked by one independent auditor appointed by the General Assembly.

21.4. The Network arranges financial matters through its own bank accounts. Records of all financial activities of the Network are kept in accordance with good accounting practice and according to the laws and regulations of the host country.

## Article 22 Fund Raising & Sponsoring

- 22.1. Each member of the NDRD Council as stated in Article 16.3. (13) is responsible for raising sufficient funds for the network. The exact amount needed will be defined by the internal statutes.
- 22.2. Reserved
- 22.3. Reserved

## Article 23 Budget

- 23.1. The budget year shall commence on January 1 of each year and shall end on December 31 of each year.
- 23.2. The Board must submit the budget for the coming financial year to the General Assembly for approval during the Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.
- 23.3. A preliminary budget should be prepared by the Founding General Assembly
- 23.4. Staffing:  
Yet to be determined
- 23.5. Reserved
- 23.6. Reserved

## Part V Publications

### Article 24 General

- 24.1. The Executive Committee shall have final responsibility for all publications. A special working group shall be established and thereafter be responsible for periodic evaluation of existing publications and recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning existing publications policy, structure and personnel.
- 24.2. All NDRD publications shall be either bilingual in Arabic and English or available in both languages.

- 24.3. The Network holds the copyright on all articles published in its reports, in its journal and on its website.
- 24.4. The Executive Committee shall entrust the editing of publications to the Publications Committee who will recommend an Editor and Associate Editor(s) to the Executive Committee for appointment.
- 24.5. The Executive Committee may entrust the publications to a publisher in accordance with a special agreement, stressing particularly the right of the Network to remain at all times the owner of the Journal. Publishing in a Publish on Demand (Print on Demand / Books on Demand (BOD) format to **reach large target groups with small-scale printings** should be evaluated, as an environmentally sound and cost efficient solution.
- 24.6. The Executive Committee shall have the right to negotiate changes in, or to terminate, this agreement.

### Article 25 Website

- 25.1. There shall be an official NDRD internet web site maintained by the Network.
- 25.2. The General Secretary management of this official NDRD internet web site shall be in the hands of the General Secretary reporting to the Executive Committee.
- 25.3. The policy of the official NDRD internet web site shall be determined by the NDRD Council.
- 25.4. The production and maintenance of the official website may be outsourced to a web designer.

## **Part VI Additional Clauses**

### **Article 26 Dissolution**

- 26.1. The General Assembly shall have the faculty at any time to decide by an 80% majority of votes on the dissolution of the Network; a quorum of at least 90% of the members entitled to vote shall be required.
- 26.2. A proposal to wind-up the Network has to be made by the President of the Network and the Chairman of the Executive Committee to the General Assembly and must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes of the members participating in the voting
- 26.3. A proposal to wind-up the Network must be in written form and has to be presented to all Institutional members, at least six months in advance of the meeting on which it is to be voted. The reasons for the proposal to wind-up are to be stated in this notice. The proposal is to be submitted to a mail ballot. The ballots, together with the reasons for the proposal to wind-up, must be sent to all members at least two months before the deadline for receipt of the ballots
- 26.4. If the Network is wound-up and all financial obligations are settled, the General Assembly shall donate the remaining assets to an organization having similar aims and purposes.

### **Article 27 Liquidation & Distribution of Assets**

- 27.1. In the event of dissolution and unless the General Assembly appoints other liquidators, liquidation shall be performed by the Board.
- 27.2. After payment of debts, and in accordance with a decision of the General Assembly, any assets shall be assigned to a purpose similar to that pursued by NDRD. Under no circumstances shall assets be distributed among members of the Network.

### **Article 28 Reserved**

## **Part VII Temporary Measures or Provisional Regulations**

### **Article 29 Nomination of the first President**

The first President of the Network shall be nominated by an anonymous "Open Call for Nominations for the NDRD Council" on the Internet by the interested public. The first president is eligible to be re-elected for a second term by the General Assembly in 2008.

### **Article 30 Nomination of the first Board**

The first six country representatives shall be nominated by the Founder Presidents or the President for a period of one year.