

21st March 2001
Constitution of the International Network of
Water-Environment Centres for the Balkans

Article 1: Name and Location

- 1.1 A scientific association known as the International Network of Water-Environment Centres for the Balkans (INWEB) was founded today in Thessaloniki. The association's registered offices will be at the Hydraulics Laboratory, Civil Engineering Department of the Faculty of Engineering of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), from where the Permanent Management and Co-ordination Secretariat (PMCS) will also operate. In the future the registered offices may move to another address within Thessaloniki's city limits.
- 1.2 INWEB is an international non-governmental, non-profit making association concerned with water resources management and environmental issues in the Balkans and other developing countries. The decision to found INWEB was taken at a meeting held in Thessaloniki from 10th-15th October 1999, organised by the Hydraulics Laboratory of the AUTH (head of department: Professor Jacques Ganoulis). Fifty experts, scientists and government officials from 10 Balkan countries attended this meeting in order to examine and discuss transboundary water resource and environmental issues in the Balkans.
- 1.3 INWEB is founded for an unlimited time.

Article 2: Aims and Means

A: Justification for INWEB

The ideas expressed at the meeting in Thessaloniki 10th - 15th October 1999, which resulted in the foundation of INWEB and form its basic goals, are the following:

- 2.1 The rehabilitation and future protection of water resources and the environment is a basic prerequisite to ensure the good health of populations and the economic development of Balkan countries. Any important activity concerning water issues should be regional, multi-disciplinary and aim to protect the environment. It should be in accordance with international laws and treaties, be socially and environmentally sensitive, and include reference to the education and sensitisation of all citizens.
- 2.2 Water resources management is a horizontal discipline related to technical, economic, environmental, legal and social issues.
- 2.3 Water resources problems do not only arise on a national level, but also on wider regional and international levels, because water moves through transboundary rivers, lakes and coastal waters.
- 2.4 Existing disparities between national water resource monitoring systems in the Balkans do not provide the scientific and technical basis for an adequate, cost-effective, integrated planning of water resources in the region.
- 2.5 There is a need for urgent co-ordinated action due to damage to water supply systems by war and years of neglect, and the weaknesses of institutional and administrative

- structures in a multitude of small international water basins, which were created after the collapse of the former Yugoslavia.
- 2.6 Long-term scientific co-operation and co-ordinated efforts should be used to solve existing or potential conflicts on the use of water in the region.
 - 2.7 There is a need to create a reliable and objective information source in the Balkans and an active expert's network in order to support government policy and enhance its effectiveness.
 - 2.8 Globalisation of the economy and new communication and information technologies have created new ways of working based on networking, collaboration, and the ability to anticipate future changes.
 - 2.9 Funding from the European Union and other international organisations may be more easily granted to an international regional co-operative, rather than to individual persons or institutions.

B: INWEB's goals

The objectives of INWEB are to:

- 2.10 **Establish an open international network of communication and shared expertise in the Balkans and other developing countries to:**
 - 2.10.1 Facilitate the exchange of information and expertise in the field of water and the environment.
 - 2.10.2 Promote the services to the region of an international body of recognised experts in water and environmental issues.
- 2.11 **Create and maintain a database on transboundary water and the environment by:**
 - 2.11.1 Developing an inventory of existing transboundary monitoring systems for water resources and the environment.
 - 2.11.2 Using official, validated national data complementary to EUROWATERNET on transboundary water bodies (rivers, lakes and coastal waters).
- 2.12 **Develop training programmes for continued education and skill building to:**
 - 2.12.1 Promote specialisation and professional development in the fields of water resources and the environment.
 - 2.12.2 Contribute to public education in the fields of water and environmental protection.
- 2.13 **Organise scientific meetings, conferences, congresses etc.** for those involved in research, education and other fields relating to water resources management and the protection of the environment in the Balkans.
- 2.14 **Support the work of researchers, those in higher education, and in particular young scientists** in the Balkans through grants, funding of research projects, assigning of doctoral theses and assisting in their publication, improvement of courses, provision of reference and teaching material, promotion of student, teacher and expert exchange for research and educational purposes.
 - 2.15.1 **Draft informative material related to the protection and management of water resources and the environment.**
- 2.16 **To be involved in programmes, activities and co-operations with worthy parties in developing countries, or countries in transition.** Such programmes and international co-operations will be concerned with urgent development aid, the fight against starvation and poverty, and aim to improve the economic and social level of the population as a whole, and in particular that of minorities.

C: Means of achieving INWEB's goals

In order to achieve the above goals INWEB

- 2.17 Will cultivate relationships with authorities and individuals on local, national and international levels, where these may be considered as beneficial in promoting INWEB's goals.
- 2.18 Will submit requests for funding and ensure that any relevant legal or other requirements pertinent to achieving its goals are met, however will not engage in any permanent commercial activities to support itself. As per its 3-year action plan, in order to achieve its goals INWEB welcomes funding from national and international organisations such as the European Union.
- 2.19 Envisages scientists, and scientific institutes and organisations from all Balkan countries joining the association in order to achieve INWEB's goals. The Board of Management (BM) will appoint a local national centre for each country, which will coordinate activities related to the management and protection of water resources and the environment on a national level, using state-of-the-art information and communication technologies.

Article 3: Joining, Leaving and Dismissal of Members

- 3.1 The association is composed of natural persons, unincorporated bodies and legal bodies engaged in activities compatible with the aims of the association.
- 3.2 The membership is unlimited.
- 3.3 The founder members are automatically granted the status of member. Other natural persons, unincorporated bodies and legal bodies must apply for membership.
- 3.4 An application for membership (together with a copy of the constitution and a list of members of the BM) is submitted to the BM via the PMCS. Each application is considered on an individual basis by the BM and if approved by the PMCS may be accepted with a majority vote of at least 2/3 of the BM. If the BM rejects the application, the injured party may appeal to INWEB's General Assembly (GA). If the PMCS agrees and if η προσφυγή προσυπογράφεται by a majority of INWEB's members, whose financial obligations have been settled, a simple majority vote if the GA may reverse the decision.
- 3.5 Applications for membership should mention the activities of the applicant and the name of the empowered representative if the applicant is not a natural person, and state that the applicant agrees to abide by the provisions of the present constitution.
- 3.6 Any INWEB member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to INWEB's BM, on condition that all his/her financial dues are settled.
- 3.7 Any INWEB member may forfeit membership by being dismissed. Only on the recommendation of the PMCS may INWEB's BM consider such a case, and with a majority vote of 2/3, the said BM may decide that the member has acted in a way incompatible with the objectives and constitution of INWEB, or that he/she does not participate in its activities, or show that he/she has not settled his/her financial dues for two consecutive years. The injured party may appeal to INWEB's GA for reversal of this decision. With the agreement of the PMCS, such a case would be decided with a simple majority vote. Any INWEB member who has resigned or been dismissed may re-apply for membership a year later, on the condition that any financial dues have since been settled.

Article 4: Financial Resources

- 4.1 The annual membership fee, which is decided annually by INWEB's GA and paid in EURO.
- 4.2 Donations, allowances and inheritances approved by INWEB's BM.
- 4.3 Funding from natural persons or national or international legal bodies approved by INWEB's BM.
- 4.4 Income derived from organising conferences.
- 4.5 Interests.

Article 5: President and Legal Representation

INWEB's president will act as its legal representative in the courts, government departments and against any third party. If the president is absent or impeded in any way then the vice-president will act as his/her deputy. If the vice-president is absent or impeded in any way then the General Manager of INWEB's PMCS or any other member of the BM appointed by the BM will take his/her place. INWEB's BM will determine how the president may best defend INWEB's rights and interests.

Article 6. INWEB's main Administrative Bodies

INWEB's main administrative bodies are the following:)

- a) The General Assembly (GA)
- b) The Board of Management (BM), in which the Permanent Management and Co-ordinating Secretariat (PMCS) also participates.
- c) The Auditing Committee.

Article 7: INWEB's General Assembly (GA)

- 7.1 INWEB's superior organ is the GA of its members. On condition that financial dues have been met, each member, whether natural person, ένωση προσώπων or legal body, is entitled to one vote at INWEB's GA
- 7.2 Except in cases where this constitution provides otherwise, INWEB's GA possesses the power to take decisions on any matter not decided by the BM in order to achieve the objectives of the association, and in particular for the following:
 - a) The election of the BM και άρση της εμπιστοσύνης προς αυτό το τελευταίο.
 - b) The approval of INWEB's BM's annual report.
 - c) The approval of last year's financial report.
 - d) The approval of next year's financial budget.
 - e) The determination of the annual membership fee, which is paid in EURO, and falls due for renewal every January (any banking costs to be paid by the member concerned).
 - f) The election of INWEB's Auditing Committee
 - g) Amendments to the constitution
 - h) Definition of policies that INWEB's BM will follow.
 - i) The examination and deciding of dismissal cases referred by the BM.
 - j) Dissolution of INWEB

- 7.3 There can be regular and extraordinary meetings of INWEB's GA. On a regular basis a meeting of INWEB's GA is called annually by the president of the BM, and on a date and at a place determined by INWEB's BM. The convening notices shall mention the agenda, place and date of INWEB's GA and shall be forwarded by the PMCS at least one month before the date of the assembly.
- 7.4 Extraordinary meetings of INWEB's GA may be called:
- a) On the recommendation of the PMCS, in cases where a majority of INWEB's BM considers such a meeting to be beneficial.
 - b) On submission of a request to the president by 1/3 of the total number of financially settled members. Such a request should specify the subjects for the agenda. The president must call the meeting within three months of receipt of the request.
- 7.5 Before the main business of INWEB's GA starts, the president must ascertain whether the number of members present together with the number of valid proxy votes (which must be presented in writing in English to the president) constitutes a quorum as defined in this constitution. Proxy authorisations are valid only for the date indicated. No member can represent more than 3 other members of INWEB.
- 7.6 INWEB's regular and extraordinary GAs have a quorum and can discuss and take decisions when, at the time of the meeting, the number of present members and proxies amounts to more than 1/2 of the total number of members who are eligible to vote. If the above quorum does not exist, INWEB's GA will be held at the same place and at the same time the next day. A quorum then exists regardless of the number of present and represented members eligible to vote.
- 7.7 The president of INWEB's GA, who is responsible for overseeing the proceedings of the GA, is elected by a simple majority. The General Secretary of INWEB's PMCS takes the minutes. These two persons form the electoral Committee responsible for organising and overseeing the election of the 5 (five) members of the BM and the Auditing Committee every two years. All members entitled to vote as well as their representatives are also eligible for election. The electoral Committee checks the validity of the votes, counts the votes, announces the results, keeps records of the voting procedures and gives the names of the successful candidates and their deputies.
- 7.8 INWEB's Secretary General approves the minutes of all INWEB's GAs.
- 7.9 The resolutions of INWEB's GA are recorded in a register signed by the president and kept by the Secretary General, who holds it at the disposal of the members at the offices of the PMCS.

Article 8: INWEB's Board of Management (BM).

- 8.1 INWEB's BM has 8 members.
- 8.2 Each BM is in office for a term of two years. There are no restrictions on members of a former BM standing for re-election, except in the case of the president, who is not eligible to be re-elected as president for a fourth consecutive two-year term of office.
- 8.3 INWEB's GA elects 5 (five) of the 8 members of INWEB's BM and 5 (five) deputies from amongst the members of INWEB who are entitled to vote and are citizens of countries belonging to the Council of Europe. The 5 (five) members of INWEB's BM elected by the GA elect with a simple majority from amongst themselves one member as president of the BM and another as vice-president. The vice-president carries out the president's duties in case of his/her impediment or absence. In order to complete the structure of the BM, the above 5 (five) members are joined by the three members of the PMCS (General Manager, Secretary General and Treasurer), who are members of

INWEB entitled to vote, come from the laboratory where INWEB was founded, and are citizens of a country belonging to the Council of Europe.

- 8.4 The PMCS ensures the continuity of INWEB's activities. Its member-officers (General Manager, Secretary General and Treasurer) are elected in the following way. The 5 (five) elected members of INWEB's new BM together with the three members of the PMCS from the retiring BM form an electoral body under the presidency of the newly-elected president of the BM in order to elect the new General Manager of the PMCS following a proposal by the General Manager of the PMCS of the retiring BM. The new General Manager is elected with a simple majority of this electoral body. In case of a tie-vote the president of the BM has the casting vote. If the proposal made by the General Manager of the retiring BM is not accepted by the majority of the members of the electoral body, the General Manager makes a new proposition. This procedure is repeated until the majority of the members of the above-mentioned 8 member electoral body approves his/her proposition. Until such time as the new General Manager is elected, the General Manager of the retiring BM, together with the two other members of the PMCS, remain in office with full rights of responsibility. The newly elected General Manager proposes to the same electoral body two other INWEB members for the positions of Secretary General and Treasurer of the PMCS. If the majority of the members of the electoral body does not accept this proposal, the General Manager makes a new proposal. This procedure is repeated until the majority of the 8-member electoral body approves his/her proposal. In order to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of the BM and of INWEB, the term of office of the three members of the PMCS as members of the BM is extended to the new BM until such time as the above-mentioned proceedings are completed.
- 8.5 The provisional administrative body of the association called INWEB being founded elect the General Manager, Secretary General and Treasurer of INWEB's first BM. These member-offices originate from the hosting laboratory, and will take care to ensure that INWEB functions smoothly and that procedures are properly carried out and any conditions met. These three member-officers of the PMCS together with the other five members elected by the first GA will form INWEB's first BM.
- 8.6 In cases of sudden absence or impediment, a deputy may represent any member of the BM except the president. The deputies' term of office is for two years, as is that of the BM, and any deputy may always be eligible for re-election as a deputy or as a member of the BM. Deputies are elected from amongst those INWEB members who have the right to vote and are citizens of a country belonging to the Council of Europe. When absent or impeded the president is replaced by the vice-president. When absent or impeded the vice-president is replaced by whichever member of the BM received the most votes when elected. His/her place on the BM will be filled by whichever deputy received the most votes when elected. Whichever deputy received the next highest number of votes when elected will substitute if a further member of the BM is absent or impeded, and so forth.
- 8.7 When the BM's term of office is over, the BM will propose to INWEB's GA the names for the next BM. Any member of INWEB entitled to vote may stand as a candidate for the BM.
- 8.8 Members of the BM may forfeit their positions either by resigning or by being dismissed by the GA with a simple majority vote of those members present or legally represented. In whatever way a member of the BM forfeits his/her position, the GA elects a replacement for him/her from amongst INWEB members who have the right to vote and who are citizens of a country belonging to the Council of Europe. The new member's tenure will be as long as the current BM's term of office. If for whatever reason a member-officer of the PMCS resigns or is dismissed, the election of a

replacement is done in the same way as for a replacement member of the BM, as detailed above.

- 8.9 INWEB's BM is responsible for the administration and management of INWEB and for carrying out decisions taken by the GA, reports to the GA and accepts or rejects applications for membership to INWEB.
- 8.10 INWEB's BM holds meetings under the chairmanship of the president at least annually (immediately before its GA) or whenever deemed necessary by the president. Meetings can also take place when requested by at least three members of INWEB's BM. Such meetings shall take place within three months of the date of requisition. The convening notices shall mention the agenda, place and date of the meeting and shall be forwarded at least one month before the date of the meeting by the Secretary General. Items for the agenda must be proposed in writing, and addressed to the General Manager at least five weeks in advance of the meeting concerned.
- 8.11 Any INWEB member may attend meetings of the BM and speak when invited to do so by the president.
- 8.12 The Secretary General of the PMCS carries out secretarial duties on behalf of the BM and takes minutes of its meetings. To indicate their approval of the said minutes all members having attended the meeting sign them.
- 8.13 INWEB's BM may take decisions for all short-term matters concerning INWEB, on condition that they are compatible with INWEB's GA's directives. Decisions are adopted with a majority vote of the members present or represented by their deputies; in the case of a tie vote, the president has the casting vote. Any member of the BM may represent another member at a BM meeting, providing that this has been requested in writing. In this case the member also representing another member has two votes.
- 8.14 A quorum of the BM is defined as 5 members present or represented by their deputies. If the above quorum does not exist, INWEB's BM will meet again at the same place and at the same time the next day. A quorum then exists regardless of the number of present and represented members.
- 8.15 The president is responsible for the functioning of INWEB's BM and initiates and chairs its meetings, invitations to which are forwarded to BM members by the PMCS. He/she advises the General Manager of the PMCS on the composition of the agenda and is responsible for seeing that decisions of INWEB's GA and INWEB's BM are carried out. When the president is impeded or unable to carry out his/her duties the vice-president replaces him/her for such time as this impediment lasts.
- 8.16 The General Manager of the PMCS as a member of the BM is responsible for managing the databank, and in general for co-ordinating the efforts of all INWEB's bodies and members with the aim of achieving INWEB's goals. He/she keeps INWEB's official stamp, and receives and replies to any official correspondence, keeping the president informed at the same time. He/she will liaise with any organisation, natural person or legal body for the promotion, execution and implementation of any kind of programme compatible with INWEB's objectives, and keep the president informed accordingly. He/she accepts suggestions and requests from members and submits them to INWEB's BM. Together with the president, the General Manager is also responsible for preparing the agenda for INWEB's BM meetings and meetings of the GA.
- 8.17 As a member of the BM, the Secretary General is responsible for sending out to members of the BM and the GA, the agenda and convening notices for meetings of INWEB's BM and GA. This happens at least once a year, or whenever deemed necessary by the president. He/she is also responsible for taking minutes at meetings of INWEB's BM and GA.
- 8.18 As a member of the BM, the Treasurer of the PMCS is responsible for the management of INWEB's financial affairs. He/she is responsible for safekeeping the association's

money and other assets. Specifically, he/she deposits and withdraws money from bank accounts, makes out and endorses checks, makes all payments, on condition that they have been previously approved and endorsed by the General Manager, and is responsible for collecting INWEB's subscription dues and other various incomes, issuing receipts accordingly. All money received on behalf of INWEB is handed over to the Treasurer, who deposits it in a bank account designated by the General Manager of the PMCS. He/she keeps INWEB's financial records and together with the General Manager prepares each year estimates of expenditure and revenue for the ensuing year. He/she shall present to each meeting of INWEB's BM a statement on INWEB's financial situation and call a meeting of INWEB's Auditing Committee at least once a year.

- 8.19 If, for whatever reason, a member of INWEB's BM is replaced by another, the old member must update the new member and hand over to him/her any official documents in his/her possession concerning INWEB, so that the new member may successfully carry out his/her duties.
- 8.20 The BM prepares and composes the agenda for the GA, and sends out invitations to all INWEB members. The procedure to be used is the same as that for meetings of the BM, providing that no other article of this constitution states otherwise.
- 8.21 At the beginning of each financial year INWEB's BM submits for approval the following to INWEB's GA:
- A report on the activities of the past year
 - The programme of activities for the current year.
 - The financial report of the past year, approved by INWEB's Auditing Committee
 - The budget for the current year, approved by INWEB's Auditing Committee.

Article 9: Auditing Committee

INWEB's Auditing Committee is comprised of three members elected by INWEB's GA from among the members of the association having the right to vote. It serves for two years. INWEB's Auditing Committee checks how INWEB's BM handles INWEB's finances, and submits a report to INWEB's GA, possibly with recommendations. INWEB's Auditing Committee convenes at least once a year at the initiation of the Treasurer. The financial year ends each year on December 31st.

Article 10: Sub-Committees

In order to achieve INWEB's goals, INWEB's BM may appoint sub-committees, which report directly to the BM. All their activities are reported and on time to INWEB's BM, and are subject to the BM's approval. Members of sub-committees serve on a voluntary basis.

Article 11: Modification of the Constitution

- 11.1 Suggestions for modifying the constitution may come from INWEB's president, from a majority of members of INWEB's BM, or from a majority of members of INWEB's GA
- 11.2 Fifty one percent of the members of INWEB's GA, who are entitled to vote, must be present to decide any modification of the constitution.

- 11.3 Any modification to this constitution needs a majority vote of at least 3/4 of those members of INWEB's GA who have the right to vote and who are present or represented. Modification to articles 1, 11 or 12 is only valid with the approval of at least 4/5 of the members of INWEB's GA
- 11.4 Any modification to this constitution that concerns the PMCS needs a majority vote of at least 3/4 of those members of INWEB's GA who have the right to vote and who are present or represented, and may be considered only when the General Manager of the PMCS agrees in writing to any such suggestion to modify any such relevant part of this constitution.

Article 12: Dissolution

- 12.1 A proposal to dissolve INWEB may come from at least 4/5 of the members of INWEB's GA, or from the General Manager of INWEB's PMCS, who is also a member of the BM. The president must put the proposal in writing to the members of INWEB's GA at least three months before the meeting at which the issue is to be discussed. INWEB can be dissolved after a majority decision of at least 3/4 of the members of INWEB's GA who have the right to vote. At least 51% of INWEB's members who have the right to vote must be present.
- 12.2 Any proposal to dissolve INWEB must include provision for the allocation of INWEB's assets. Any asset remaining after all liabilities have been met will be returned to its original owner, or given to educational or scientific organisations whose activities are compatible with INWEB's objectives.

Article 13: Official Stamp

INWEB has its own stamp showing the association's official name and insignia. The General Manager of the PMCS keeps this at INWEB's offices and is responsible for it.

Article 14: Temporary Administrative Body

- 14.1 From amongst themselves, the founder members appoint a 5 (five) member temporary administrative body for the association known as INWEB, which is being founded. The temporary administrative body appoints three of its members, who must come from the laboratory hosting INWEB, as General Manager, Secretary General and Treasurer of the PMCS
- 14.2 The tenure of the temporary administrative body will be until the election of INWEB's BM by INWEB's first GA, which will be held no later than three months from the day the Greek court recognizes INWEB as an association.

Article 15. Additional Provisions

