



**BY-LAW**  
**OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS UNDER THE NAME OF**  
  
International River Civilization and Heritage Association (IRCHA)

**ARTICLE 1**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION**

An Association of Persons is hereby established, of a non-profit nature, governed by the following terms and agreements.

**ARTICLE 2**

**NAME – DISTINCTIVE TITLE – SEAT – DURATION**

The name of the Association is the International River Civilization and Heritage Association, with the abbreviated title “IRCHA”.

The headquarters of the Association is located at Kifisou 13, TK 26442, Patras, Greece.

The Association may change its office place without requiring an amendment to the By-law.

The first Board of Directors will endeavor to ensure that, through the registration of members from around the world, the Association becomes an International Association.

### **ARTICLE 3**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Association is a non-profit organization with the objectives and purposes to include:

Fostering personal and professional connections among scientific personnel worldwide.

The promotion and enhancement of academic and cultural initiatives centered on river-related topics.

The provision of consulting services to local authorities in matters where members have scientific knowledge and expertise.

The provision of guidance and support for the academic and career development of young people engaged in the study of river dynamics.

Collaboration with other scientific and scholarly organizations from various countries.

To fulfill its purposes and objectives, the Association will seek to:

Utilize the resources available to its founding members, including material, technical, experiential, and intellectual capacities.

Recruit and connect experts around the world who wish to become members of the Association.

Hold regular and/or extraordinary public scientific meetings, either at its headquarters or in host cities to provide opportunities for professional exchange and advice.

Organize conferences, symposia, seminars, or other related scientific events, either independently or in cooperation with other scientific institutions in Greece or abroad.

Collaborate with public, social, and scientific bodies, legal entities, and organizations for the execution of research and study programs aimed at fulfilling the Association's scientific mission.

Establish and manage an Association homepage.

Publishes scientific volumes, journals, newsletters, videos, and other forms of printed and electronic informational material.

Establish Working Groups to address specific issues related to the mission of the association.

Award grants, awards, and honors to individuals or legal entities that directly or indirectly contribute to the Association's goals.

Organize international activities such as youth summits, and student or scholar summer camps.

Provide scholarships and funds research funding for young scientists to continue their postgraduate studies and research work (dependent on available funding).

*Specific objectives of the Association include:*

a) Promote research and understanding of the role of rivers in the development of human communities and civilizations at local, regional, and global levels.

b) Promote the protection and sustainability of river civilization and heritage internationally.

c) Promote research and exchange on river civilization and heritage protection among international academic communities.

d) Promote dialogue between academia and social sectors regarding research and protection of river civilizations, as well as advance mutual understanding among different river civilizations globally.

g) Concentrating on addressing environmental issues such as pollution caused by human activities.

h) Designate “World River Civilization Heritage Sites”.

## **ARTICLE 4**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The Association consists of regular and honorary members.

Regular members may be scholars in relevant fields, students, related government officers, enterprise leaders, engineers, cultural heritage practitioners, artists, etc. who are interesting in and committed to research and protection of rivers and river heritage.

The founding members are by default considered regular members of the Association and will comprise the first General Assembly (G.A.) in order to proceed with the election of the first Board of Directors (B.o.D.) of the Association.

All regular members have the rights and obligations consistent with the By-law of the Association. They participate in all scientific activities of the Association, in voting for procedures of administrative decisions during meetings of the

General Assembly, and are required to pay an annual membership fee. Each member has the right to vote on matters presented to the General Assembly and to be offer themselves as candidates for position within the Board of Directors.

Corresponding and Honorary members may be nominated by the Board of Directors and approved by the General Assembly. These include individuals deemed to have excelled in their scientific work and/or have rendered exceptional services to river management and river heritage protection

Honorary members participate in the scientific activities and in the General Assemblies of the Association without voting rights and are not obliged to pay an annual membership fee.

Regular members are admitted upon decision of the Board of Directors, following a completed membership application and payment of Association membership fee.

Members are considered in good standing, if, by the beginning of the regular General Assembly, they have fulfilled all financial obligations up to and including the current year's membership fee.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **EXPULSION OF MEMBERS**

A member ceases to belong to the Association of Persons upon the submission of a free membership fee for the two first years, renewing the membership will depend on paying the membership fee again.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The resources of the Association include:

The annual membership fee, to be decided by the first Board of Directors.

Any income from the publication of proceedings or other scientific material controlled by the Association, as well revenue generated from Association sponsored scientific conferences, symposia, and other events.

Donations and grants, inheritances or bequests upon approval by the General Assembly, as well as extraordinary contributions from members.

The acquisition of real estate or other items of value by the Association must be approved by the General Assembly. The management of the Association's assets may under no circumstances involve participation in profit-making enterprises.

The Association is a non-profit legal entity. During its operation and upon its dissolution, profit distribution to its members is strictly prohibited.

In the event of dissolution of the Association for any reason, its assets shall be donated to an academic, intellectual, or educational institution, as determined by the General Assembly that enacts dissolution.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The administration of the Association shall be exercised by a Board of Directors consisting of seven (7) members, namely: the President, the Vice-President, the General Secretary, the Treasurer, and three (3) at-large members. These members are elected by secret ballot of the General Assembly.

The term of office for members of the Board of Directors is three (3) years. Their services are offered voluntarily and without remuneration. Members of the Board have the right to resign from their position before their completed term by submitting a written resignation to the Board.

Elections for the Board of Directors are held every three (3) years. For this purpose, the President of the outgoing Board convenes a General Assembly at which candidacies are presented.

The first Board of Directors will be appointed by the General Assembly of the founding members and will serve for the first three-year term.

Any eligible member wishing to be elected must submit a written statement of candidacy at least ten (10) days prior to the General Assembly.

The newly elected Board must convene and organize itself within ten (10) days of the election, upon invitation by the member who received the most votes.

The term of the temporary administrative committee appointed by the founding members shall end upon the formation of the first Board of Directors following the approval of the present By-law.

The temporary administrative committee shall convene the first regular General Assembly to elect the permanent Board of Directors within a reasonable time frame.

The temporary administrative committee shall be rendered null and void upon the election of the first Board of Directors.

Any member of the Board of Directors, or the Board in its entirety, may be dismissed by a decision of a regular or extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly at which two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members are present, and which approves a motion for dismissal with no less than a four-fifths (4/5) majority of those present voting for dismissal.

The calling of such an extraordinary General Assembly may be requested in writing by at least one-fifth (1/5) of the Association's members. The Board is then obliged to convene the Assembly within twenty (20) days of the request.

In case of negligence or refusal by the Board to abide by a request to call an extraordinary meeting to deliberate a Board member dismissal, or of the entire Board, an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly may be convened by the one-fifth (1/5) of the general membership within ten (10) days following the expiration of the twenty-day period.

In the event of any Board dismissal, a new extraordinary General Assembly shall be convened within fifteen (15) days to elect a new Board. Until the new Board is formed and assumes its duties, the outgoing Board shall remain responsible for managing the Association affairs.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### **ELECTIONS**

Upon convening a regular meeting of the General Assembly every three years, elections are conducted to elect the regular and alternate members of the BoD.

For the purpose of BoD elections, the General Assembly shall vote upon a three-member electoral committee as proposed by the Association President. The electoral committee shall supervise and conducts the elections and establish a vote-counting protocol.

The election of new regular and alternate BoD members is carried out by secret ballot.

The ballot lists the names of the candidates in alphabetical order and is considered valid when no more than two (2) candidate preferences are indicated

The ballot is placed in an envelope bearing the Association's stamp and is submitted to the Electoral Committee.

The two candidates with the next highest votes become the alternate members.

After voting concludes and the vote-counting protocol is drawn up, the Electoral Committee announces the names of the successful candidates (separately for regular and alternate members) who are then considered elected BoD members.

Elections may also be conducted electronically by the Electoral Committee.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### **AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAW – DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The By-law may be amended by decision of the General Assembly, requiring a quorum of one-half (1/2) of members with voting rights, with any decision requiring formal assent of four-fifths (4/5) majority of those present.

The Association may be dissolved by decision of the General Assembly, requiring a quorum of three-fourths (3/4) of members with voting rights and a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present.

## **ARTICLE 10**

For any organizational or administrative matter not provided for in this By-law, decisions shall be made by the regular General Assembly. For all other matters, provisions of the Civil Code and relevant laws shall apply.

This By-law, consisting of thirteen (10) articles, was discussed, voted on article by article and in its entirety, and approved as presented by the founding members listed below, in a meeting held in the Association headquarters or electronically, and is signed by the following.

**Signing Instructions:**


The signing instructions for this document are as follows. Any member who is unable to sign the present document with a handwritten signature must open the Word file, navigate to the section where their full name will be placed, and add their signature electronically to the right of their corresponding number. The signature may be added using one of the following methods:


- 1) The member may either insert an image of their signature, after first signing on paper and scanning or photographing the signature, by selecting “Insert” from the menu and then “Pictures” and placing the signature in the corresponding signature field (right of their corresponding number),
- 2) or use the Word drawing tool by selecting “Draw” and writing the signature using a mouse or digital pen (right of their corresponding number). Once the signature has been added, the file must be saved and sent as a signed document to the person responsible for collecting the signatures.


FINAL SIGNATURE PAGE

Date: 17 December 2025

Signatures of the Founding Members:

1.  Name: Professor Dr. Ioannis K. Kalavrouziotis

2.  Name: Dr. Hien Thi Nguyen

3.  Name: UNESCO Chair Dr. Petri S. Juuti

4.  Name: Dr. Ahmed Rehema

5.  Name: Dr. David Pietz

6.  Name: Prof. Dr. Xiao Yun. Zheng