



International Union of Soil Sciences

**STATUTES  
of the  
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SOIL SCIENCES  
(October 2024 revision)**

**THE PURPOSE OF THE IUSS**

**A. Name, Objectives and Headquarters of the IUSS**

- A1. The International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) succeeds the International Society of Soil Science (ISSS).
- A2. The objectives of the IUSS are to foster all branches of the soil sciences and their applications, and to give support to soil scientists in the pursuit of their activities.
- A3. The activities of the IUSS include:
- a. Arranging meetings, conferences and the World Congress of Soil Science (WCSS);
  - b. Providing a structure for managing the science of soil sciences;
  - c. Arranging for the publication and distribution of material, relevant to the interests of the IUSS, and its members;
  - d. Establishing and nurturing cooperation with other related national and international organizations, at all levels of the IUSS;
  - e. Arranging for studies in particular fields, such as specific definitions, classifications and databases;
  - f. Establishing prizes or awards to encourage and recognize excellence in the discipline;
  - g. Providing Stimulus Funds for activities and projects to assist the development of soil sciences generally but particularly in regions of the world where lack of resources limit opportunities;
  - h. Representing soil sciences to a wide external audience;
  - i. Taking any other action that will advance soil science.
- A4. The headquarters of the IUSS will be the professional address of the IUSS Secretariat.
- A5. All interpretations of the Statutes by the Council are final. The Council promulgates and amends Bye-laws where this is needed to clarify the Statutes, or to improve the operations of the IUSS.

## **B. Membership**

The classes of membership are as follows:

- B1. National Societies of Soil Science, or alternatively national organizations representing the soil scientists of that country, may join as **Full Members**. Only one organization can join from each country. Where the adhering organization is different from the National Soil Science Society, the National Society must be a part of, or have a formal agreement with, the adhering organization. Regional associations may be formed by a group of countries that do not have a National Soil Science Society, so that the associations may become Full Members. To become a Full Member the agreed upon subscription fees must be paid as prescribed in the Bye-Laws or as negotiated.
- B2. The individual members of a National Soil Science Society that is a Full Member of the IUSS, directly or through an adhering organization will be **Members** of the IUSS. They will pay no direct subscription, because the subscription of the National Society or other adhering organization will be considered to cover them. They will have rights to attend all WCSS and meetings, to receive IUSS publications through their National Societies or Regional Associations, and to vote for Divisional, Commission and Working Group officers.
- B3. Organizations or individuals that wish to support soil science in various ways may become **Supporting Members**. Donors and funding organizations may be included in the IUSS as Supporting Members. The Supporting Members carry no voting rights. They will pay a subscription fee as defined in the Bye-laws.
- B4. The membership of a Full Member will be suspended if subscriptions are more than one (1) year in arrears, unless there are ongoing negotiations with the Budget and Finance Committee. Annual payment for a year of membership is due by the end of that calendar year. If back payments are made, to the satisfaction of the Budget and Finance Committee, the suspension will be withdrawn.
- B5. **Honorary Members** will be elected by Council and must be living at the time of election. They must be scientists of great distinction in Soil Science and have made substantial contributions to the IUSS. Details regarding the election of Honorary Members are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- B6. Life Members are those who have previously taken out Life Membership in ISSS; they will continue as Life Members of IUSS and will receive all due rights and amenities.
- B7. A Member of any status can be expelled on a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council if the member has broken the Statutes of the IUSS, or has brought it into disrepute, or has been persistently in arrears with subscriptions.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF THE IUSS**

### **C. The Council**

- C1. The Council consists of the Executive Committee, one accredited representative from each Full Member, and three elected representatives of the Honorary Members.
- C2. The Council is the supreme body of the IUSS and carries general responsibility for the efficient functioning and the success of the IUSS. The President chairs the Council unless he/she has specifically delegated his/her authority to another member of the President's Committee for that occasion. Fifty (50) percent of the Council members present in a meeting constitute a quorum. The Council must meet every year: in hybrid during the WCSS and for the Inter-Congress meeting and virtually the other years. The President or his/her delegate must report on the activities and decisions of Council to the WCSS.
- C3. Council members representing Full Members must be accredited by the relevant organization to the Secretariat at least one month before a WCSS in writing. They must normally serve from the beginning of one WCSS to the beginning of the next and can be re-accredited for further terms of office. Their method of selection is for the relevant Full Member to decide. A voting card will be issued by the Secretariat to the appropriate adhering Full Member's representative who is accredited to serve as that organization's Council member.
- C4. Each Full Member will have one representative and one vote on Council.
- C5. The Council has the following specific functions, together with its general responsibility for the well-being of the IUSS:
- a. To ratify the country and venue of the WCSS and the Vice-President (Congress). This ratification would be done at the Inter-Congress Meeting of Council, approximately six (6) years before the Congress. The selection of the host country must take place at least six (6) years (and normally eight (8) years) before the date of the WCSS. The selection of the hosts of the WCSS earlier than the normal six (6) years is at the discretion of Council, but this decision must be made no later than six (6) years.
  - b. To approve the Strategic Plan.
  - c. To appoint the Secretariat and Treasurer and if necessary, terminate their appointments.
  - d. To determine the subscriptions fee and charges for all classes of Members (**IUSS Statutes B**) upon recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee.
  - e. To approve the Statues and Bye-Laws for the smooth operation of the IUSS on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
  - f. To discuss and determine changes to the Division/Commission structure of the IUSS, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
  - g. To oversee and approve arrangements for the WCSS and other major meetings.
  - h. To set policy guidelines for the President's Committee and Executive Committee, for action when Council is not in session.

- i. To establish Task Forces and provide terms of reference for them to examine scientific, political, or financial, or administrative issues affecting the IUSS, and to decide action on the basis of their reports.
  - j. To receive the reports of the Secretariat and the audited accounts of the Treasurer, and to take appropriate action.
  - k. To elect Honorary Members.
  - l. To establish and provide terms of reference for the Standing Committees.
  - m. To establish the Electoral Committee that oversees the elections of the IUSS (**IUSS Statutes N**).
  - n. To establish the Presidential Election Committee that oversees the elections of the President and Honorary Members.
  - o. The Council will elect the President-Elect from a list of Candidates submitted by the Standing Committee for Presidential Elections the membership of which must be geographically representative. It is recommended that the list of candidates will consist of at least two people.
- C6. Each Council Member can have only one vote and voting on behalf of other absentee members is not permitted. Council voting is by a secure electronic system considering the 50 % quorum (**IUSS Statutes C2**).

#### **D. The President's Committee**

- D1. The President's Committee is the collective name for the IUSS Senior Officers, i.e., the President, the Past-President, the President-Elect, Vice-President (Congress), and the Treasurer. The President or President-Elect of the IUSS chairs the President's Committee meetings.
- D2. The President-Elect will succeed to the position of President after two (2) years and following a further term-of-office of two (2) years will take the position of Past-President for two years. The President, President-Elect and Past-President are all voting members of the Executive Committee.
- D3. The President's Committee must meet preceding and at the WCSS and Inter-Congress meeting to facilitate the organization of the Executive Committee and Council meetings. Otherwise, the members must remain in regular contact with each other.
- D4. The President-Elect will succeed the President if the latter is incapacitated or resigns or judged unfit to serve by the Council. If the President-Elect succeeds the President, then a new President-Elect will be elected by Council, by electronic ballot. Both will serve for the normal term-of-office of two (2) years plus the remaining term-of-office of the President who steps down,
- D5. The functions of the President's Committee are as follows:

- a. The continuing management of the IUSS, following policy guidelines established by Council.
- b. Oversight of IUSS finances, as managed by the Treasurer in collaboration with the Budget and Finance Committee.
- c. The President's Committee is responsible for the investment policy of the IUSS with the underlying guidance of minimizing risk to the IUSS's funds. It has authority to delegate certain responsibilities to professional experts in various fields when appropriate.
- d. Preparation of Council and Executive Committee business, with the support of the Secretariat.
- e. The production and dissemination of information and publications to members, as managed by the Secretariat.
- f. Continuing contact with ISC, other Unions and organizations.
- g. International representation of the IUSS.

**E. The Secretariat**

- E1. The IUSS administration will be handled by a professional Secretariat, which tasks in its broadest sense include administration and communication and its activities are detailed in the Bye-Laws.

**F. The Executive Committee**

- F1. The Executive Committee will consist of the President's Committee, and the Chairs of the Divisions and Standing Committees of the IUSS. For a specific meeting, the Chair of a Division may delegate his or her Executive Committee authority to one of the Vice-Chairs of their Division, with the concurrence of the IUSS President. The Chairs of the Standing Committees can also delegate their authority to a member of the Committee. Delegation is recommended whenever the Chairs of Divisions or Standing Committees are not able to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee. The decisions of the Executive Committee are taken on the basis of the simple majority of those present.
- F2. The Executive Committee will be responsible for all scientific activities of the IUSS, including oversight of the Divisional structures, the work of Task Forces (**IUSS Statute C5i**), Working Groups, scientific liaison and collaboration, and any other actions required on scientific grounds.
- F3. The Executive Committee must meet in person prior to the WCSS and the Inter-Congress meeting, and during these meetings. In the intervening periods the Executive Committee must meet on a regular basis electronically. The President of the IUSS must chair the

Executive Committee unless he or she has delegated his or her authority to a member of the President's Committee for a specific occasion.

- F4. The Executive Committee must consider all formal proposals for changes in the IUSS structures, and pass them to Council for decision, with their recommendation for action or rejection. All proposals must be sent to the Executive Committee at least three (3) months in advance of the next Council meeting by the Secretariat.
- F5. The Committee for Presidential Elections must review the nominations for Honorary Members and provide an initial screening of nominees for Honorary Membership. This will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval before being circulated to Council for voting at the Inter Congress Meeting.
- F6. The Executive Committee must review all Recommendations/Resolutions at their meetings and pass them to the Council with their recommendation for approval or rejection.
- F7. In case Council cannot meet to deal with urgent business, the Executive Committee will act in its capacity, submitting such action to Council at its next meeting for ratification. The Executive Committee may take needed action by electronic or postal means as needed.

#### **G. The Standing Committees**

- G1. Standing Committees may be established by the Council to oversee areas of its business and to advise it. The President is a member on all Standing Committees.
- G2. Individuals may be appointed, as a member of a Standing Committee, for a maximum of two (2) terms of office. Details regarding the terms of office for Standing Committee members are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- G3. The Chairs of the Standing Committees are selected by the members of each Committee and ratified by the Executive Committee.

#### **H. Task Forces**

- H1. The President or Executive Committee are given the power to appoint Task Force(s) as needed that would deal with specific items and for a specific time. The Task Forces would not be the same as Standing Committees but appointed for a fixed timeframe with a clearly defined agenda.

#### **I. The Divisions**

- I1. The scientific work of the IUSS will be carried out through its Divisions, which are defined by subject area and are arranged to cover the breadth of disciplinary interests in soil science.

12. The IUSS Divisions will be composed of Commissions (**IUSS Statutes J**) and Working Groups (**IUSS Statutes K**). A listing of the currently approved Scientific Structure of the IUSS is provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
13. Each Division must be managed by a Divisional Committee, consisting minimally of the Division Chair, the appointed First Vice-Chair and appointed Second Vice-Chair of the Division, the immediate Past-Chair of the Division, the Chair-Elect of the Division, as well as the Chairs of the Commissions in that Division.
14. The Chair of each Division must be elected from and by the Individual Members of the IUSS (**IUSS Statutes N & IUSS Bye-Laws**). To ensure equitable geographic representation, the Chair of each Division must not come from the country which will host the next WCSS.
15. To ensure proper coordination of the arrangements for the WCSS, the appointed First Vice-Chair and appointed Second Vice-Chair of each Division must be appointed from the country which will host the next WCSS (**IUSS Bye-Laws**).
16. In circumstances of inadequate performance, or inappropriate behaviour, Division Officers (elected or appointed) may be removed by the Executive Committee. Premature vacancies of Division Officers must be filled as per procedures described in **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
17. The Executive Committee may allocate funds to each of the Divisions to support their annual activities. Details regarding the amount of annual funding allocated to Divisions, as well as guidelines for its usage and reporting are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
18. IUSS Divisions may create, refine, and administer, prizes and awards to internationally recognize the distinguished accomplishments of individuals in general or specific aspects of the scope of that Division. Guidelines for the establishment, refinement, and administration, of prizes and awards are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
19. Each Division, through its Chair, must submit an Annual Report of its activities (incorporating those of its Commissions and Working Groups, as well as any relevant Task Forces). Information from this Annual Report may be published in the IUSS Bulletin and/or posted on the IUSS website. Guidelines for submitting Division Annual Reports are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

## **J. The Commissions**

- J1. IUSS Commissions are normally part of one Division but may be a Joint Commission of more than one Division. In the case of a Joint Commission, the Commission Chair would be a member of all the Divisional Committees to which the Commission belongs.
- J2. IUSS Commissions are defined by a specific scope of disciplinary interest within the breath of subject matter covered by their Division(s). A listing of the currently approved Commissions of the IUSS is provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

- J3. Each Commission must be managed by a committee, consisting minimally of a Chair and a Vice-Chair.
- J4. The Chair and Vice-Chair of each Commission must be elected from and by the Members of the IUSS (**IUSS Bye-Laws**).
- J5. In circumstances of inadequate performance, or inappropriate behaviour, Commission Officers may be removed by the Executive Committee. Premature vacancies of Commission Officers must be filled as per procedures described in **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- J6. IUSS Commissions may receive funding, to help financially support its activities, through the Division(s) to which they belong, as well as directly from the IUSS (e.g., through Stimulus Funding).
- J7. IUSS Commissions may create, refine, and administer, prizes and awards to internationally recognize the distinguished accomplishments of individuals in general or specific aspects of the scope of that Commission. Guidelines for the establishment, refinement, and administration, of prizes and awards are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- J8. Each Commission, through its Chair, must submit an Annual Report on its activities. This information will be used by the Division Chair(s) to prepare the Annual Report for their Division(s), which will be published in the IUSS Bulletin and/or posted on the IUSS website. Guidelines for submitting Commission Annual Reports are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

#### **K. The Working Groups**

- K1. IUSS Working Groups are part of one or more of its Division(s) and/or Commission(s). A listing of the currently approved Working Groups of the IUSS is provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- K2. Individual Members with common interests in specific topics, not adequately addressed by IUSS Divisions or Commissions, may propose the establishment of an IUSS Working Group. Procedures for establishing an IUSS Working Group are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- K3. Each Working Group must be managed by a committee, consisting minimally of a Chair and a Vice-Chair.
- K4. Registered Individual Members of a Working Group are responsible for electing their Chair and Vice-Chair as required (**IUSS Statutes N & IUSS Bye-Laws**).
- K5. In circumstances of inadequate performance, or inappropriate behaviour, Working Group Officers may be removed by the Executive Committee. Premature vacancies of Working Group Officers must be filled as per procedures described in **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- K6. Working Groups may receive funding, to help financially support its activities, through the Division(s) to which they belong, as well as directly from the IUSS (e.g., through Stimulus Funding).

- K7. Each Working Group, through its Chair, must submit an Annual Activity Report on its activities. This information will be used by the Division Chair(s) to prepare the Annual Activity Report for their Division(s), which will be published in the IUSS Bulletin and/or posted on the IUSS website. Guidelines for submitting Working Group Annual Activity Reports are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- K8. The activities of each Working Group must be reviewed every year by the Executive Committee.
- K9. IUSS Working Groups will normally exist for a period not exceeding eight (8) years. Procedures for the extension or closure of an IUSS Working Group, or its conversion to a new Commission, are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

#### **L. The Research Forum**

- L1. The membership of the Research Forum will comprise: i) as its Steering Committee, the Past-President (Chair) and the Division Chairs; and ii) as its Advisory Members, the Division Past-Chairs and Vice-Chairs, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Commissions and Working Groups, as well as the President and President-Elect.
- L2. The aims of the Research Forum will include: identification of emerging scientific themes; providing a cross-cutting commentary of the Strategic Plan; contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Plan; identification of cross-cutting issues of the Divisions; communication of key (research) findings done by the Commissions and Working Groups to the scientific community; identification of research activities to be supported by the Stimulus Fund. The activities of the Research Forum are aimed to complement and not replicate, substitute, or overlap those of the other structures of the IUSS, such as the Executive and the Divisional Committees.
- L3. The Research Forum must hold virtual quarterly meetings organised by the IUSS Secretariat with the focus provided from each Division in turn.

#### **OTHER ARTICLES**

##### **M. The World Congress of Soil Science**

- M1. The World Congress of Soil Science (WCSS) is the main event of the IUSS - it is held every four (4) years and covers all aspects of soil science. Every WCSS must open to all Members of the IUSS as well as to non-IUSS participants.
- M2. The selection of the host for a WCSS is the responsibility of the IUSS Council. Details of the bidding procedures and selection process are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- M3. A formal Memorandum of Understanding must be established between the IUSS and the host country Full Member organization(s), and/or the designated organization functioning on behalf of, or in conjunction with, the host country Full Member organization(s), to realize the WCSS. Details regarding the preparation of the MOU and

required elements, including items related to joint financial liability, are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

- M4. The host country Full Member organization(s) must nominate a candidate, normally the chair of the WCSS organizing committee, to serve as IUSS Vice-President (Congress), starting at the closure of the previous WCSS and continuing until the closure of the WCSS to be hosted.
- M5. The commitment to host a WCSS implies and requires that the host country Full Member organization(s), and/or the designated organization functioning on behalf of, or in conjunction with, the host country Full Member organization(s), organize an Inter-Congress Meeting, to be realized approximately two (2) years prior to the WCSS. Details regarding the organization of an Inter-Congress Meeting are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- M6. The IUSS, through its Executive Committee, may loan funds to the WCSS host country Full Member organization(s), and/or the designated organization functioning on behalf of, or in conjunction with, the host country Full Member organization(s), to help cover front-end costs associated with the WCSS. Details of any such loan, including repayment criteria, must be contained in the MOU (**IUSS Statutes M3**).
- M7. The proceedings of the WCSS may be published by the host country Full Member organization(s), using methods agreed to by the IUSS Council.

#### **N. IUSS Elections and Voting Principles**

- N1. The Standing Committee for Presidential Elections is responsible for overseeing and managing the election of Presidents-Elect and of Honorary Members. The composition and duties of the Standing Committee for Presidential Elections are defined in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- N2. The Council must establish an Electoral Committee that will oversee and manage the processes of filling the elected and appointed (i.e., the appointed First Vice-Chair and appointed Second Vice-Chair of each Division, as per **IUSS Statutes I5**) offices of the IUSS Divisions and Commissions. The composition and duties of the Electoral Committee are defined in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- N3. Each Division must establish a Divisional Nomination Committees that will be responsible for considering nominations of candidates for the elected IUSS Division and Commission officer positions, and submitting proposed candidate lists to the Electoral Committee (**IUSS Bye-Laws**). The composition and duties of the Electoral Committee are defined in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- N4. Regular elections for all elected IUSS Divisional and Commission officers must be completed by the end of May in the year of each WCSS. Details regarding regular elections, for all elected IUSS Divisional and Commission officers, as well as the replacement of premature vacancies, are provide in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

- N5. Elections for officers of an IUSS Working Group officers must be held at least once every four (4) years, at pre-organized meeting (virtual or hybrid) of the registered Individual Members of that Working Group (**IUSS Statutes K4**). Details regarding regular elections, for IUSS Working Group officers, as well as the replacement of premature vacancies, are provided in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.
- N6. The election of three (3) representatives of the Honorary Members to serve on Council is done by electronic vote by all Honorary Members. Managed by the IUSS Secretariat, this election must be completed by March 31 in the year of each WCSS. Individuals may serve only one (1) term-of-office as representative of the Honorary Members on the IUSS Council (**IUSS Statutes C1**).
- N7. All IUSS elections are based on the principle of one vote per member, as such the votes of Full Members are not weighted according to the number of Individual Members in the Full Member organization.
- N8. In all IUSS elections, the candidate who receives the largest number of valid votes for a particular position will be deemed the winner.
- N9. National voting by Individual Members will be organized and conducted by their relevant Full Member organization, using procedures established by the Full Member organization. The results of national voting will be officially submitted, by the relevant Full Member, to the IUSS Secretariat as required.

## **O. Finance and Subscriptions**

- O1. The IUSS's funds are in the care of the Treasurer acting in consultation with the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. The Treasurer and Budget and Finance Committee Chair will share legal access to and sign-off authority for all IUSS accounts. Decisions relating to investment funds are the responsibility of the President's Committee (**see also IUSS Bye-Laws**). Budgetary line items proposed annually by the Budget and Finance Committee are approved by the Executive Committee and Council. Annual expenditures are authorized by the Treasurer, acting in consultation with the President and/or Chair of Budget and Finance Committee, for minor sums above set limits and for non-entitlement expense line items.
- O2. An outside auditor must be selected by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer must prepare accounts for each calendar year and send them for audit. The audited accounts must be integrated into a time course report by the Budget and Finance Committee, and this must be published on the IUSS website.
- O3. For Full Members, at entry, the adhering organization from each country must agree with the IUSS on an appropriate category on the standard scale of subscriptions considering the number of members in that country's National Society for Soil Science or adhering organization, the per capita income in that country, and the arrangements made by the adhering organization. The subscription will be due at the beginning of each calendar year. The Executive Committee must review the scale of subscriptions for adhering members before each IUSS WCSS when proposals may be made to Council for its amendment. The Budget and Finance Committee in consultation with the Treasurer must develop the subscription fees as defined in the **IUSS Bye-Laws**.

O4. The Council must set the Individual Member and Sustaining Member subscription fees.

**P. Changes to the Statutes**

P1. Council can only effect changes in these Statutes, on a two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members present at the Council meeting in person or virtually. The proposed changes must have been publicized to the Council Members at least thirty (30) days before the vote.

P2. A new or revised Statute must come into force on a date decided by Council, which must be as soon as possible after the publication of the results of a positive vote.

**Q. Bye-Laws**

Q1. The Council will establish Bye-Laws to cover the detailed interpretations of the Statutes and set rules for Subjects that are not dealt with in the Statutes.

Q2. Changes to the Bye-Laws can be made by a simple majority vote of the Council on a formal motion during the Council meetings in person or virtually.

Q3. A new or revised Bye-Law must come into effect on a date decided by Council, which must be as soon as possible after the publication of the results of a positive vote.