International Palaeontological Association

PROPOSED REVISION OF CONSTITUTION

(Effective December X 2026)

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STATUTES

The IPA was founded in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., in July 1933 during the 16th Session of the International Geological Congress under the name of International Palaeontological Union (IPU). The first constitution was published in the *Journal of Paleontology* in 1938. [Case, C.C., C.O. Dunbar, H. V. Howe, and B.F. Howell. 1938. International Palaeontological Union. *Journal of Paleontology*, **12**:303-304.]

A revised constitution of IPU was adopted in London, England on 17 July 1958 during the l5th Session of the International Zoological Congress.

The new name International Palaeontological Association and a new constitution were adopted on 25 August 1972 during the 24th Session of the International Geological Congress in

Montreal, Canada. This constitution was published in *Lethaia* in 1973. [Westermann, G.E.G., 1973. New constitution for the International Palaeontological Association. *Lethaia,* **6**:91-99].

Revisions of the Montreal constitution were adopted on 9 August 1984 during the 27th Session of the International Geological Congress in Moscow, USSR. [Walliser, Otto H. 1986. Revised Constitution for the International Palaeontological Association. *Lethaia*, **19**:187-191.]

Further revisions were approved 8 July 2002 at the IPA General Assembly held at MacQuarie University during the First International Palaeontological Congress 2002, in Sydney, Australia. These revisions were published on the IPA web site [http://ipa.geo.ku.edu] and in the IPC 2002 Program (pp. 40-41).

Additional revisions were approved 20 June 2006 at the IPA General Assembly during the Second International Palaeontological Congress 2006 in Beijing, China. The revised constitution was published on the IPA web site [http://ipa.geo.ku.edu].

Further revisions were approved on X December 2026 at the IPA General Assembly during the Seventh International Palaeontological Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. The revised constitution has since been published (15 December 2026) on the IPA web site [http://www.ipa-assoc.com/].

ARTICLE I. NAME

(1) The name of the organization is the International Palaeontological Association (IPA).

(2) The IPA, because of its interdisciplinary character, is affiliated with both the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS).

(3) The present Constitution of IPA is laid down in these Statutes and By-Laws and is effective from the date of adoption according to procedures specified below.

(4) The Association is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America.

ARTICLE II. AIM

(1) The purpose of IPA is to promote and coordinate international cooperation among all disciplines and subdisciplines of palaeontology and stratigraphy, including those that overlap with geology, biology and anthropology; and to encourage integration/synthesis of all palaeontological knowledge. To achieve these objectives, IPA embraces a diverse research community. Seeking to overcome discrimination of every kind, IPA promotes the engagement and professional advancement of palaeontologists in all walks and stages of life. It also encourages constructive collaboration between professional palaeontologists and other enthusiasts. IPA requires participants in all scientific meetings and/or other activities that it may sponsor to adhere to the highest standards of personal, scientific and professional integrity.

(2) The IPA activities shall include:

(a) Organization of International Palaeontological Congresses and sponsorship of other palaeontological meetings, especially in association with other international congresses;

(b) Collaboration with the officers responsible for programmes of international congresses to ensure that items of palaeontological interest are included;

(c) Cooperation in the publication of international journals devoted to palaeontology;

(d) Encouragement and incorporation of International Research Groups within special fields of palaeontology, such as by the organization of symposia, the publication of proceedings, and by such other means as shall be decided;

(e) Cooperation with other international organizations having interests allied to palaeontology;

(f) Representation in IUGS and IUBS on behalf of its Corporate Member societies;

(g) Encouragement of the development of PaleoParks that may be sponsored by IPA;

(h) Any other activities considered appropriate by the IPA Executive Committee and Council.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

(1) IPA accepts as members any individual palaeontologist or corporate body that subscribes to its aims.

(2) Individual Membership. There are three classes of individual membership:

(a) Ordinary Members who pay dues directly to IPA

(b) Ordinary Student Members who pay dues directly to IPA

(c) Affiliated Ordinary Members, who are current members or student members of any organization that is a current, dues-paying Corporate Member of IPA. These members pay no individual dues to IPA.

(3) Corporate Membership is open to national, regional, and disciplinary palaeontological societies and sections of societies; as well as to other scientific societies, agencies, institutions, organizations, working groups, and informal associations that support the aims of IPA. Corporate Members pay annual dues to IPA.

(4) The terms, dues, responsibilities and privileges of all categories of membership shall be reviewed from time to time by the Executive Committee as laid down in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION

(1) The affairs of the IPA shall be administered by the General Assembly and on behalf of the General Assembly by the Council through the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(1) The General Assembly is the highest authority of the IPA.

(2) All Individual Members and Delegates of Corporate Members (one delegate per member) are eligible to attend the General Assembly, to participate in discussions, to make nominations and to vote in elections and on other motions.

(3) Meetings of the General Assembly are Ordinary or Special:

(a) Ordinary meetings shall normally be held during each International Palaeontological Congress, at intervals of approximately four years.

(b) Special meetings may be convened at the discretion of the Executive Committee to coincide with a session of any other international congresses.

(c) Notice convening any Special Meeting of the General Assembly shall be published on the IPA web site at least six months before it is to be held.

(d) Special Meetings must be convened by the Secretary-General within twelve months of the receipt of a request in writing from a two-thirds majority of the Council.

(4) The President of IPA (or one of the Vice-Presidents acting as deputy) shall take the chair at all business meetings of the General Assembly.

(5) The Secretary-General of IPA (or a deputy) shall act as secretary at such meetings.

(6) The Transactions of an Ordinary General Assembly shall include the following items taken in succession:

(a) Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous General Assembly;

(b) Reports from Officers of the Executive Committee;

(c) Reports of activities of Committees and International Research Groups;

(d) Presentation of and voting on amendments to the Statutes, if any;

(e) Elections of officers;

(f) Solicitation of proposals for potential sites of the next International Palaeontological Congress;

(g) Other business.

(7) All reports shall be presented in writing to members of the Assembly. They shall be open to questions and discussion.

(8) Voting Procedures

(a) All Individual Members and Delegates of Corporate Members (one delegate per member) are entitled to vote at meetings of the General Assembly.

(b) If the election of any Officer of IPA is contested by multiple nominees, that vote shall be by written ballot.

(c) If requested by at least one third of the members present, voting on other business shall be by written ballot.

(d Decisions of the General Assembly shall be by simple majority of Members attending and voting, except for those on amendments of Statutes or on the dissolution of the IPA, which shall be transacted as determined by Article XII.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

(1) The Officers of IPA shall be as follows: President, six Vice-Presidents, Secretary-General, Treasurer, and two Councilors-at-Large.

(2) Officers must be subscribing Ordinary or Affilated Ordinary Members of IPA.

(3) To reflect the international scope of IPA, nominees for election as officers shall be chosen from several different countries.

(4) President's Term of Office

(a) The President shall take office immediately following the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

(b) The President shall hold office from the time of election until the election of a successor at the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(c) No person may hold office as President for two successive terms.

(d) If the office of President becomes vacant through death or resignation, one of the Vice-Presidents shall be elected by the Council to fill the remainder of the term of office.

(5) Other Officers' Terms of Office

(a) All Officers shall hold office from the end of one Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly until the end of the next Ordinary Meeting.

(b) If any office becomes vacant through death or resignation, the Council has authority to elect a successor, who will hold office until the end of the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(c) The Vice-Presidents may hold office for no more than two successive terms.

(d) The Secretary-General and Treasurer may hold office for further successive terms.

(6) Procedure for nominations for election of officers

(a) A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President to select a slate of names for coming vacancies and to present that slate in writing to the General Assembly for election.

(b) The Nominating Committee shall consist of six members: the Secretary-General (who shall act as chair but have no vote), two members of the Council, and three members of the IPA who are not members of Council.

(c) The Nominating Committee shall invite Corporate and Individual Members to suggest names for nomination to office and shall consider all suggestions.

(d) The Nominating Committee shall consider geography and socio-cultural diversity as well as other qualifications for office, in order that the slate of candidates shall reflect the broad social, international and disciplinary scope of IPA.

(e) Additional nominations for any office may be made by any Member of IPA, provided each nomination is supported by at least five other Members, is made in writing, and is received by the Secretary-General before the opening of the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly. Such nominations must include evidence that the nominee is eligible and willing to accept office if elected.

ARTICLE VII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(1) The Executive Committee shall consist of four Officers as follows: President, Secretary-General, Treasurer and Past-President.

(2) The term of office of the Executive Committee is from the end of one meeting of the Ordinary General Assembly until the end of the next meeting.

(3) The Executive Committee shall conduct the ongoing business of the IPA, communicating by post, by meeting together, or via electronic media.

(4) On substantive matters of policy, the Executive Committee shall consult with the Council.

(6) Decisions of the Executive Committee shall be made by simple majority.

(7) The Executive Committee shall prepare the Annual Report summarizing IPA activities for the year.

(8) The Secretary-General shall submit the Annual Report to the IPA Council, to IUGS and IUBS, and it shall be published on the IPA web site.

(9) A record of decisions and transactions shall be kept for the IPA Archives.

ARTICLE VIII. THE COUNCIL

(1) The Council shall include the following Officers and Delegates:

(a) The President, Secretary-General and Treasurer.

(b) The six Vice Presidents, representing the diversity and international scope of IPA, one of whom shall be appointed by the President as Deputy President, to chair the Council when the President is not in attendance.

(c) The immediate Past President.

(d) The immediate Past Secretary-General.

(e) The immediate Past Treasurer.

(f) Two Councilors-at-large, representing the international scope of IPA.

(g) One Delegate appointed by each Corporate Member.

(h) One Delegate appointed by the Organizing Committee of the next International Palaeontological Congress.

(i) One Delegate each, nominated by the Editor, of any international palaeontological journal adopted as a formal publication outlet for IPA.

(j) Any Ad Hoc Delegate, appointed by the Executive Committee, who has been charged with responsibility to carry out a specific task on behalf of the IPA, such as representation on an international scientific planning body.

(k) If the position of any Delegate to the Council becomes vacant through death or resignation, the Executive Committee has authority to appoint a successor, who will hold office until the end of the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(l) Delegates must be Ordinary or Affiliated Ordinary Members of IPA.

(2) Terms of office

(a) The term of office of the Council is from the end of one Ordinary Meeting until the end of the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(b) Councilors and delegates serve for the term of the Council.

(c) Ad Hoc Delegates serve for an indefinite term to be determined by the Executive Committee, as appropriate for the specified task.

(d) Councilors and Delegates are eligible for reelection or reappointment.

(4) Responsibilities of Council:

(a) The Council represents the General Assembly during intervals between successive Ordinary Meetings of the General Assembly.

(b) The Council will advise and assist the Executive Committee in implementing the aims of IPA as laid down in Article II.

(c) Collectively and individually, the Council will seek out opportunities to further the aims of the IPA and bring them to the attention of the Executive Committee, suggesting a plan of action where appropriate.

(d) The Council will collect information and offer advice relevant to specific issues, as requested by the Executive Committee.

(e) The Council will decide by simple majority vote any matters referred to it by the Executive Committee.

(f) Any member of the Council may ask the Secretary-General to add an item to the agenda for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

(g) The Council has the authority to establish, on a temporary basis, any special commission it may wish to charge with a defined task. The Chairman of such a special commission must be a member of the Council.

(h) Vice Presidents, Councilors and Delegates of the Council may be appointed by the Executive Committee to represent IPA in specific contexts and activities, such as the planning of palaeontological programs at regional and international meetings, or participation in international committees and planning groups.

(i) Vice Presidents, Councilors and Delegates of the Council may be appointed by the Executive Committee to assist with specified tasks on behalf of the IPA.

(5) The President, or the Deputy Vice President with concurrence of two members of the Executive Committee, may convene and chair the Council.

(6) The Council may conduct its business by post, by meetings, or via electronic media.

(7) A record of all decisions and transactions shall be kept and forwarded to the Secretary-General for the IPA Archives and for summarization in the Annual Reports.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCES

(1) Membership fees and durations shall be recommended by the Executive Committee, approved by the Council, and published on the IPA web site.

(2) IPA is empowered to request and receive additional funds from organizations or individuals to further its aims as laid down in Article II.

(3) The funds of IPA shall be held in custody by the Treasurer.

(4) Funds shall be deposited in banks or financial accounts in the name of IPA and shall be readily available for the activities of IPA. At least one such account shall be opened in the country in which the Treasurer resides. Additional accounts may be opened in other countries.

(7) The Treasurer is empowered to disburse IPA funds in any way that the Executive Committee may decide, to further the aims of IPA as stated in Article II.

(8) The Treasurer, the President, and the Secretary-General shall each have the signature of IPA's bank or other accounts.

(9) The accounts of IPA shall be balanced as of 31st December each year.

(10) The Executive Committee is responsible for appointing two auditors who are not members of Council to audit each year the accounts of IPA. The report of the two auditors shall be recorded together with the Treasurer's Report.

ARTICLE X. DOMICILE

The legal domicile of IPA shall be the place where the Treasurer conducts his or her business.

ARTICLE XI. REPRESENTATION

(1) The official representative of IPA is the President or any member of the Council appointed by the President to act as deputy.

(2) All contracts involving IPA shall be signed by the President and the Secretary-General, acting on behalf of the Association.

ARTICLE XII.
AMENDMENTS, AFFILIATION, DISSOLUTION

(1) Amendments

(a) Statutes of IPA can be amended only by an Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(b) Amendments may be proposed by the Executive Committee, by the Council, or by a group of at least twenty Members of IPA.

(c) Proposals for amendments must be received in writing by the Secretary-General at least six months before the next Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly, who shall, not later than three months before the General Assembly, publish them on the IPA web site.

(d) Proposed amendments may be debated and modified on the floor by majority vote at an Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(e) Amendments shall take effect on ratification by a two-thirds majority vote at an Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(2) Affiliation and Dissolution

(a) Proposals for the affiliation or the dissolution of IPA must be received by the President and Secretary-General at least six months before the General Assembly, who shall, no later than three months before the General Assembly, publish them on the IPA web site.

(b) The affiliation or dissolution of IPA shall take effect on ratification by a two-thirds majority vote of Members present and voting at an Ordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

(c) Upon the winding up and dissolution of this association, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes and which has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(d) No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever inure to or for the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be empowered to pay reasonable reimbursements of expenses incurred in conjunction with services rendered to IPA and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the exempt purposes for which is was formed.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the association shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an association exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 of the United States of America.

ARTICLE XIII. LANGUAGE

(1) The official language of IPA is English.

(2) The IPA web site is the official medium for communication of information about IPA's activities to Members and to the world community of palaeontologists.

(a) The Executive Committee has authority to determine the site and contents of the web site and to appoint or hire a web master.

(3) The Executive Committee of IPA, with concurrence of the Council, may designate one or more international palaeontological journals (print or electronic) as formal publication outlets.

(a) The IPA journals will publish announcements and news articles submitted by the Executive Committee concerning IPA activities.

(4) The permanent repository for IPA records is the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

(a) The Executive Committee is responsible for depositing these materials, according to procedures specified by the Smithsonian Institution Archivist.

BY-LAWS

(1) The IPA web site [http://www.ipa-assoc.com/] is the official medium for communication of information to Members and to the world community of palaeontologists.

(2) The Journal *Lethaia*, first published in 1968, was soon after adopted, by arrangement with the Lethaia Foundation, as an official publication of the International Palaeontological Association and the International Commission on Stratigraphy. The journal is now published on-line only, open-access, and free of all charges to its authors and to its readers.

(3) Membership dues are to be maintained at levels low enough to be affordable to both Corporate and Individual Members. After being fixed for over 20 years, dues were increased in 2025 to the levels specified here. These current fees reflect the principles on which they had long been established. Henceforth, these fees may be adjusted by the Executive Committee, with the consent of the Council, and without need for a further change in the By-Laws, as may be necessary to sustain the activities of the Association.

(a) Corporate Members: Corporate Members pay annual dues at a minimum level of US $20.00 for each 100 members of the society or organization. Annual dues are payable on January 1 of each year.

(b) Individual Ordinary Members pay annual dues of USA $10.00 on-line or directly to the Treasurer. To save costs of invoicing, currency exchange, etc., it is recommended that dues be paid in advance for five or more years at one time.

(c) Individual Ordinary Student Members pay annual dues of USA $5.00 on-line or directly to the Treasurer.

(d) Affiliated Ordinary Members, being current members or student members of any organization that is a current, dues-paying Corporate Member of IPA are not required to pay individual dues to IPA.

(e) Life Members may pay a one-time fee of US $100, and no further renewal is necessary.

(4) Amendment. These By-Laws may be amended by a majority of the Council, provided that the proposed amendments have been circulated to the Council at least three months before a vote is taken.