

Statutes of the Swiss Water Partnership (SWP)

1. Name and Headquarters

Swiss Water Partnership (SWP) is a non-profit Association governed by the present statutes and, secondarily, by articles 60 and seq. of the Swiss Civil Code. It is politically neutral.

The Association's headquarter is located at the residence of the Secretariat.

2. Background

Water is a key resource for human and economic development. National and local governments as well as civil society face the following challenges related to water:

- sustainable and equitable use of water resources
- sustainable provision of universal access to drinking water and sanitation for all citizens
- sustainable and equitable management of ecosystems, including water, food and energy production aspects
- mitigation and adaptation to prevent natural hazards

The challenges are particularly high in developing and transition countries, and in countries in emergency situations. Water shortage is a serious threat in regions that are directly affected by climate change or by competitive demand in the water market.

In order to cope with present and future challenges in the global context of the water sector, a number of European and Asian countries have established national water partnerships. The scope and focus of these water partnerships varies greatly from country to country.

In close collaboration with the water sub-group of the Interdepartmental Sustainable Development Committee (IDANE) of the Swiss Confederation, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, acting through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), has taken the lead in establishing a similar platform in Switzerland, the so-called Swiss Water Partnership.

The present statutes lay out the principles of this partnership, which were developed in a participatory process of all potential stakeholders that were identified by the SDC, in their meetings of 6 September and 23 November 2011.

3. Underlying International Agreements

The Swiss Government's involvement in this process is a direct response to the following international agreements and calls for action that have been signed or supported by Switzerland:

- declaration of access to clean water and sanitation for all as a human right (Conventions and UN Resolution 10967 of 28 July 2010)
- the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly goal 7, approved by the UN General Assembly in September 2000, which commit the international community to reduce by half the proportion of the world's population without sustainable access to clean water supply and sanitation by 2015

- the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002), where the international community undertook to reduce by half the proportion of the world's population without sustainable access to basic sanitation services by 2015, and to develop national plans for integrated and efficient water resource management by 2005; and where it restated that water belongs to humanity and should be protected and equally shared out in order to ensure access to water and sanitation for all
- the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/217 proclaiming the period 2005-2015 the International Decade for Action on 'Water for Life'
- the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 1992.

4. Swiss Context

The establishment of the SWP must be seen in the following context:

Switzerland is a country which is rich in water resources, but still relies on (virtual) water import for its consumption. Switzerland therefore has an interest - taking into account the protection of water resources - and also a mutual obligation to assist countries with less favourable conditions and to address global water challenges.

The Swiss government (national, local), non-governmental organizations (NGO), scientific institutes as well as the private sector have significant know-how in areas related to water resource management and a long record of direct involvement in projects in developing and transition countries in the water sector.

The SWP offers the opportunity to better coordinate the Swiss initiatives and representation of the many Swiss stakeholders in international activities and key conferences. It is an opportunity for the Swiss Government to take advantage of the stakeholders' knowledge and experience to better formulate policies and plan programmes in the water sector.

5. Membership

The active members of the Association are:

- Swiss government agencies (national, cantonal, communal)
- organisations (foundations, associations, research and applied science institutes etc.) and
- companies

with registration in Switzerland. They have a specific interest and know-how in the water sector at the international level.

The individual member of the SWP has no liability or other duty that may be derived from its membership beyond the payment of the membership fee. Only the assets of the Association may be used to meet commitments.

Any government agency, organisation or company with a registered office in Switzerland may become a member of the SWP any time by paying the yearly membership fee. Request for membership shall be addressed to the Steering Board. The General Assembly approves the admission of new members.

Each member has the right to resign by giving written notice of termination to the Steering Board for the end of the financial year. Members may be expelled from the SWP by the General Assembly.

In all cases the membership fees for the current year remain due.

The membership ends automatically if a member does not pay the annual fee six months after it is due.

The members and the organs shall neither directly nor indirectly propose benefits of any nature whatsoever. They shall not accept any such proposals. Any corrupt or illegal behaviour justifies the exclusion of the member or the termination of the activities of the organ.

6. Ressources

In order to cover the cost of the SWP maintenance, the logistical expenses meetings and activities, a yearly membership fee system graded on economic capacity is applied to all members:

- companies with more than 500 collaborators and Federal Offices: 3000 CHF per year
- companies with 20 to 500 collaborators, Non-Profit-Organisations with annual expenses of more than 40 million CHF and Non-Profit-Umbrella-Organisations: 1000 CHF per year
- small companies, consultants, small NPO's and foundations, university institutes, etc.: 500 CHF

The membership fee is paid to the account announced on the SWP website annually before the end of February.

Any accrued interest will clearly be indicated in the accounts and used for the purpose of the SWP.

The mentioned membership fee may be modified by the General Assembly.

Further funds may be contributed by Swiss government agencies, foundations and any other sources, as long as these contributions don't interfere with fund raising efforts of an SWP member. The SWP may also operate on a fee for services basis for and with other members so long as no SWP member objects.

7. Goals and Guiding Principles

The SWP brings together relevant Swiss stakeholders active in the international water sector, with the aim to ensure that the members and their partners abroad contribute in a coordinated and effective way to promote:

- sustainable and equitable use of water resources;
- sustainable provision of universal access to drinking water and sanitation for all citizens;
- sustainable and equitable management of ecosystems, including water, food and energy production aspects;
- mitigation and adaptation to prevent natural hazards;
- Swiss knowhow and experiences in addressing the above-mentioned challenges,

particularly by working together in preparing and implementing major international processes and events.

In its action plans and programmes, the SWP does not cover all aspects of the water issue at all times. Instead, it focuses on the specific strengths and needs of Switzerland and of Swiss stakeholders, including their partners abroad, by adhering to the following guiding principles:

1. The SWP will complement rather than compete with activities of its members where it is feasible and meaningful.
2. The SWP functions in a participatory, flexible and collaborative manner, with no group of stakeholders being given pre-eminence.

8. Scope and Objectives

The SWP attends to all aspects of the global water sector: water resource management (qualitative, quantitative), water supply (urban, rural), sanitation, irrigation, energy production, water for nature and the environment, water and development, the economics of water, and flood and disaster prevention.

It will have the following specific objectives:

1. to promote networking and a dialogue on policy and practical issues in the water sector
2. to collect and exchange information on international initiatives in the water sector
3. to make know-how available to the Swiss Government, which enables it to formulate adequate policies and positions as a member of the international community
4. to achieve a more consistent representation of Switzerland in international discussions and platforms
5. to strengthen Switzerland's profile and position in the international water sector
6. to show solidarity with those in need and to include their know-how, point of view and interests into the SWP deliberations, strategy and action
7. to scout commercial and non-commercial needs for goods, services and innovation
8. to promote Swiss know-how and solutions, technology, business and research in the field of sustainable water management and the sanitation sector worldwide
9. to systematically provide access to knowledge and know-how within the Swiss water community and
10. to learn from each other as well as from partners and competitors of other countries and multilateral organisations.

9. Organs

The organs of the Association are:

- the Secretariat
- the Steering Board
- the General Assembly

Secretariat

By 2012, the SWP will be led by a Steering Board and a Secretariat.

The Secretariat has been appointed and mandated by the SDC based on a tendering process. The mandate will last for three years and may then be renewed. The General Assembly will decide on the modalities. The Secretariat shall be entrusted with the execution of the purposes of the Association and shall represent and act in the name of the Association.

The Secretariat shall:

- organise and implement regular meetings at least 3 times per year to ensure networking and exchange among the members on current issues
- organise and coordinate the presence of the SWP in relevant international water events
- maintain and regularly update a web platform, and provide the other members access to all relevant information that is deemed necessary and useful for achieving of the aims of the SWP

- inform the members immediately of any exceptional situations arising during the cooperation which may endanger its realisation and/or require substantial modification of its aims
- develop a yearly work programme under the guidance of the Steering Board and after consultation with all members, and publish the programme of activities on the SWP website
- manage the SWP budget: keep accurate and up-to-date records and documents in respect of all expenditures incurred with the funds made available by the partners to ensure that all expenditures are in conformity with the provisions of the statutes, work plan and budget. For each disbursement, proper supporting documentation shall be maintained, including original invoices, bills and receipts pertinent to the transaction, and all documents relating to procurement activities
- prepare and publish an annual progress report and a annual financial report with evidence of all expenditures financed with the project budget and
- execute specific tasks commissioned by the Steering Board.

Steering Board

The Steering Board will guide the Secretariat in developing a yearly work programme and will oversee the implementation of the programme by the Secretariat. It will approve the annual report and may establish working groups on specific topics or issues and assign tasks to these groups.

The Steering Board of up to twelve representatives of the different stakeholder groups as well as individual experts (from Switzerland and abroad) is elected by the General Assembly. Elections will take place every three years in a General Assembly or by way of writing.

The Steering Board will constitute itself: appointing a chairperson and a deputy chairperson. It decides on the policy of the SWP and may also commission the Secretariat to execute some tasks. The chairperson and the deputy chairperson represent the Association by their individual signature as far as the Secretariat has not been commissioned for the specific task.

Decisions are made whenever possible in a consensual manner and in agreement with the water sub-group of IDANE. If necessary, decisions are taken by majority vote of the Board members.

The Steering Board will define a way to directly involve the stakeholders abroad in its decision making process, especially the partners of the SWP members in developing and transition countries.

General Assembly

The General Assembly shall have a quorum only when at least 50 percent of the members are present. Ordinary meetings are convened by the Secretariat at least 4 weeks in advance.

The General Assembly is presided by the chairperson or the deputy chairperson.

Decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by a qualified majority of two thirds of the members present. In case of deadlock, the chairperson of the Steering Board shall have the casting vote.

The General Assembly shall:

- approve the admission and expulsion of members
- decide upon the yearly membership fee
- elect the Steering Board
- decide on the modalities of the renewal of the Secretariat

- adopt the financial and progress reports
- adopt the annual workplan
- adopt the annual budget
- decide on any modification of the statutes
- appoint one auditor
- decides on the dissolution of the Association

10. Auditor

The auditor appointed by the General Assembly shall audit the Association's accounts every year.

11. Various provisions

The financial year shall begin on 1st of January and end on 31st of December of each year. The cashier is responsible for the finances of the Association.

In the case of the Association being dissolved, the assets should be allotted to a non-profit organization pursuing goals of public interest similar to those of SWP benefiting from tax exemption. The goods cannot be returned to the founders or members, nor be used to their own profit.

The present Statutes have been approved by the Constituent General Assembly of 27 February 2012 in Berne.

Berne, Date:

Signature:

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Chairperson

Signature:

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Deputy Chairperson