

Rules of the European Maritime Heritage (EMH)

0. Declaration

The EUROPEAN MARITIME HERITAGE (EMH) is an association representing organisations in Europe which are involved with preservation of floating and operated traditional vessels, including private owners of traditional craft as well as maritime museums and other bodies with similar interests.

The prime purpose of the EMH is to represent the interests of owners and organisations which keep traditional European vessels in operation.

The aims of the EMH are:

- a. the encouragement of mutual cooperation between different European organisations and museums involved in keeping maritime heritage alive by the provision of a communication network, advice and assistance when and where possible;
- b. to contribute to the mutual understanding of different maritime cultures and to increase the common knowledge;
- c. to encourage the identification and support of historical links between European regions provided by the waterways as a bridge between cultures;
- d. to encourage the study and resolution of common problems relating to the preservation and operation of traditional craft in Europe;
- e. to work as a common representative and advisory body with institutions and authorities at international level. The independent member organisations undertake jointly to send a national representative for each state to the meetings of the EMH.

The European maritime heritage is characterised by a broad variety of unique regional and national features. Maintaining a common European maritime heritage can only be effective if these characteristics are preserved in their regional context. The activities of the EMH are therefore guided strictly by the principle of subsidiarity. The EMH will principally become active in matters which require coordination on an international scale, where purely national activities appear to be insufficient or when actions of European or global authorities require joint activity for the benefit of the common interest.

Rule 1: Title and Head Office

The informal network launched by the delegates of the first "Common European Maritime Heritage Congress" in Amsterdam in September 1992 has been transferred to a formal umbrella organization under the name "European Maritime Heritage" (EMH).

The Head Office of the EMH is at the address of the Secretary for the time being appointed by the National Members but may be removed at any time to any other suitable place by decision of the Working Group.

Rule 2: Objectives

The objectives of the EMH are:

- a. to form a permanent network and umbrella of private preservation organisations and maritime museums in Europe with a view to promoting the preservation of the European maritime heritage, in particular the floating and operated one.
- b. to represent the common interests of owners, operators and preservation-organisations of traditional vessels to authorities, the European Parliament and other European or global organisations and to inform such authorities on a regular base about issues concerning such traditional vessels.
- c. to take any action on an international level which might be thought to be appropriate or desirable for the protection of the European maritime heritage.

Notwithstanding anything contained in these Constitution it is accepted generally that no action shall be taken by the EMH which might be construed as interfering with the autonomy or freedom of action of any national member organisation. Members of EMH shall seek to avoid making statements on any ethical or political matter at any meeting of the EMH that might give unnecessary or gratuitous offence to any member.

Rule 3: Organisation and structure

3.1 Membership

The EMH consists of organisations in Europe which are involved in the preservation or operation of traditional vessels, of maritime museums and other similar bodies and individuals wishing to support the aims of the EMH.

There are four classes of membership:

- a. **National Members** shall be national umbrella organisations of private owners of traditional craft where such organisations have been appointed by a clear majority of their national traditional ships community to represent them in the EMH. There shall only be one Member to each state. The members have one vote each at all General Assemblies of the EMH and they have prime responsibility for assuring by their contributions the financial viability of the EMH.

- b. **Regional Members** of geographical and political autonomous regions shall be regional umbrella organisations of traditional craft where such organisations have been appointed by a clear majority of their regional traditional ships community to represent them in EMH and where no National Member is available. There can be more Regional Members to each state. The Regional Members of one state have together one vote at all General Assemblies of the EMH and they have prime responsibility for assuring by their contributions the financial viability of the EMH. They have the obligation to organize themselves as soon as possible in National Members.
- c. **Advisory-Members** shall be museums which are involved with European traditional vessels. Advisory Members have one seat each on the Advisory Council. They may elect one representative from their delegates to attend and vote in meetings of the Working Group and General Assembly. The Advisory Members assist to a lesser degree in ensuring the financial viability of the EMH.
- d. **Associate Members** may be:
 - i. Any organisation which owns, operates or represents traditional vessels;
 - ii. Any organisation on a European scale which is concerned with any aspect of European traditional craft;
 - iii. Any organisation supporting the aims and objectives of EMH.

Associate Members may elect one representative from their delegates to attend and vote in meetings of the Working Group and General Assembly. Associate Members are asked to contribute to the finances of the EMH, their contributions being related to the cost of running the information network from which they directly benefit.

3.2 Management Structure

The EMH shall be structured as follows:

- a. The **General Assembly**, attended by all classes of membership. Each National Member has one vote. The representatives of the Advisory Council and the Associated Members also have one vote each. Individual Advisory-Members and Associated Members have the right to speak and to make proposals but not to vote.
- b. The **Advisory Council**, attended by all Advisory Members, each of whom has one vote. Other members have the right to speak and to make proposals but not to vote. The Advisory Council acts as forum for matters of particular interest to museums and similar bodies. It has the right to elect one representative, who also has a vote in the General Assembly and in the Working Group.
- c. The **Working Group**, attended by representatives of the National Members, the Associate Members and the Advisory Members. The Purpose of the Working Group is to support the Executive Committee and to ensure a quick and reliable flow of information between the meetings of the General Assembly. It elects the members of the Executive Committee.

- d. The **Executive Committee**, consisting of at least three persons from at least three different European countries, elected as follows by the Working Group, all of whom are to be confirmed by the General Assembly, and to hold office for a period of three years. Candidates can be proposed by the existing Executive Committee or by any member of whatever status.

The Executive Committee shall appoint a President, Secretary and a Treasurer from its membership. Members of the Executive Committee represent the EMH on the basis of policies agreed by the General Assembly. They maintain steady contact via telecommunications and are to meet in person at least twice annually. They are responsible for keeping all members regularly informed.

- e. **Councils and Groups** may be formed on proposal of the Excom and agreed by the Working Group. Councils and groups prepare the policy for the Excom and communicate their work with Excom only. Councils and Groups can be attended by representatives of all members.

Rule 4: Official language

All meetings and all business of the EMH shall be conducted in the English language.

Rule 5: Applications for Membership

Applications for membership shall be made to the Secretary in writing or by email.

In the application for National Membership, evidence must be given that the applicant is representing the clear majority of the relevant national organisations and owners.

All new memberships must be confirmed by the Working Group, who shall have the right to refuse confirmation without giving reasons for such decision.

Rule 6: Subscriptions

An annual subscription will be levied from all members of whatever status. National Members and Regional Members commit themselves jointly to ensuring the financial viability of the total EMH. Advisory and Associate Members will also contribute but to a lesser degree, covering as a minimum the costs of the information network.

Proposals for the budget and the rates of annual subscriptions will be made by the Executive Committee and will be confirmed by the Working Group.

The subscription shall be in respect of one calendar year and shall be paid to the Treasurer before 31st March annually.

Rule 7: Expulsion

1. Any member whose subscription is more than one year in arrears shall cease to be a member of the EMH. Subject to the approval of the Working Group, this member shall be eligible for re-election upon payment of such arrears of subscription as the Working Group may in the circumstances deem proper.
2. Any member that is not performing in consistency with the kind of its membership can be asked to change its membership by the Excom. Refusal must be accounted for by the Working group.
3. Any member that is not performing in consistency with the ideology of EMH can be expelled by the Congress on proposal of the Working Group.

Rule 8: Delegates

All representatives of members of the EMH of whatever status may attend the General Assembly and other meetings of the EMH.

Rule 9: The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the supreme authority of the EMH.

The General Assembly shall be held every three years at the instigation of the Executive Committee in conjunction with a congress on topics concerning the European maritime heritage.

Members shall be given not less than twelve weeks notice of the time, place and draft agenda. Additional proposals may be tabled by the Executive Committee or by any member by written or emailed notice of the meeting. Later proposals may be accepted if all National Members agree at the commencement of the meeting.

The General Assembly has the following duties:

- a. to confirm the membership of the Executive Committee for a period of three years until the next General Assembly.
- b. to receive, discuss and accept or reject the activity report of the Executive Committee.
- c. to approve financial guidelines sufficient to sustain the proposed activities until the next triennial meeting.
- d. to discuss and to approve basic policies for the work of the Executive Committee between triennial meetings of the General Assembly, following proposals prepared by the Executive Committee.
- e. to discuss any other relevant topic in connection with the European maritime heritage and to issue resolutions thereto as may be appropriate.

- f. to determine any alterations to this Constitution.
- g. to resolve any matter relating to the dissolution of the EMH.

The General Assembly is competent to pass resolutions if a quorum of 75 % of all National Members is present. National Members who are unable to attend a meeting of the General Assembly shall inform the Secretary not later than one week in advance of the meeting and may give a right to vote by proxy on their behalf to another National Member. Such arrangements must be notified in writing or by email to the Secretary at least one week before the meeting.

Every effort shall be made to ensure unanimity in decisions of the General Assembly but where this or a compromise is not possible, a resolution to be valid must be supported by not less than two thirds of the voting members present.

No action shall be taken by EMH in respect of any proposal made at the General Assembly unless such proposal is approved by those present, is covered by the basic policy approved by the General Assembly or is specifically provided for by this Constitution.

The triennial General Assembly shall be held so far as possible in each member country in turn. The National Member of the host country shall provide at his or her expense:

- a. A suitable assembly place for the meeting and the associated congress.
- b. Means for recording the proceedings.
- c. Any other requirements that may be reasonable to ensure the success of the meeting.

Rule 10: Emergency actions

Emergency action may be taken by the Executive Committee if in its opinion such action is necessary in pursuit of the objectives of the EMH, provided that

- a. the Secretary has consulted the Working Group by email, and
- b. a minimum of two thirds of the Working Group has approved the proposed action within two weeks by letter, facsimile or email.

Rule 11: Powers of the Executive Committee

Subject to the above provisions, the Executive Committee shall have entire control of the administration of EMH and shall devise and direct its policy and activities.

The Executive Committee shall prepare a budget annually in accordance with the resolutions and intentions of the last General Assembly.

The Executive Committee shall ensure that accounts recording all receipts and payments by the EMH are properly maintained.

Payments or commitments to payment shall only be made on the authority of a unanimous decision by the Executive Committee and this must be confirmed by email by the Treasurer.

An annual Statement of Accounts shall be prepared by the Treasurer and circulated to all National Members not later than 1st April.

It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary to prepare and to keep the reports and papers of the EMH, to keep a list of all members, to conduct correspondence, to summon and to arrange all meetings and to record the minutes of all such meetings.

The Treasurer shall be responsible to and work under the direction of the Executive Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to demand and receive all subscriptions and monies due to the EMH, to keep proper books of account, to open and maintain appropriate bank accounts, to make all authorised payments and to publish an annual Statement of Accounts.

Rule 12: Alteration of the Constitution

No rule shall be made nor shall any existing rule be altered or rescinded unless with the consent of at least two thirds of the voting members of the General Assembly.

A copy of the new rule or amendment shall be sent to the Secretary not less than three months before the date of the General Assembly Meeting at which it is to be discussed, and the Secretary shall send a copy thereof to each National Member.

Rule 13: Dissolution of the EMH

The EMH may be dissolved at any time by a vote of not less than two-thirds of all National Members at a General Assembly. In these circumstances, the assets, after all debts have been paid, shall be divided between the members of all classes in proportion to their respective subscriptions.