

Excerpts from

Guidelines for Broad-basing and Strengthening of ICID National Committees (Formulated by Peter Lee - Javad Farhoudi Committee in 2000)

Introduction

Each National Committee may be constituted in the manner desired by that country, but it is recommended that, as far as possible, the National Committee is “broad-based” so that it represents fully the disciplines and institutions engaged in irrigation, drainage and flood protection activities.

The process of broad-basing is a continuous one, reflecting the evolution of the technical expertise and institutions involved in irrigation, drainage and flood protection. Feedback on this process and the issues it raises is important to ICID’s understanding and sharing of the knowledge so gained. National Committees are therefore enjoined to transmit to ICID a copy of their constitution (and any related documents such as by-laws) as these are created and from time to time modified (article 4.3). If necessary, translation from the national language into one of the official languages of ICID is requested. The ICID is provided with both a Constitution and By-laws.

Objectives

The fundamental objectives of a National Committee indicated in Article 4 of the ICID’s Constitution are: (a) To act as a focus for interest in irrigation, drainage and flood protection, and in particular, represent fully the country’s disciplines and institutions interested in the Commission; (b) To promote the objects of the Commission in stimulating the means to manage water for sustainable agriculture; and (c) To arrange the collaboration of the interested disciplines and institutions in the manner best suited to the circumstances of each country.

Responsibilities of National Committees

The primary responsibility of the National Committee is to implement the objectives. However, the constitution may refer to particular responsibilities, which may usefully include: (a) Responsibility for the sole representation of the country in the Commission, and nominations to the various work bodies and of ICID Office Bearers; (b)

Raising interest and support in the country in the objects of the Commission; and (c) Responsibility for payment of the country’s annual subscription to the Commission.

Organisation of National Committees

Broad representation of disciplines and institutions is best accommodated by having a two-tier structure comprising:

- A general body or assembly which is inclusive and open to membership by individuals in their own right or as representatives of government and non-government organisations; and
- An executive committee or governing body able to carry out the responsibilities of the National Committee.

Membership

National Committees that are broad-based are usually open to application for membership from: (a) individuals, including farmers and individual consultants; (b) companies and private organisations (Corporate Members); and (c) institutions such as research organisations, technical, scientific and academic bodies; and (d) government departments.

Explicit provision may be made also for regional representation, especially where the country has a federal system of government. Also, membership by young professionals and students may be encouraged by special provision.

Appointment of the Executive Committee

National have a provision for the appointment of the executive committee or governing body and fix the terms and conditions of : (a) members elected by a General Meeting, (b) members nominated by specific affiliated institutions and government departments, and (c) officers of the committee who comprise - the Chairman and other officers appointed from the executive committee and non-voting unctionaries such as the secretary;

The constitution should specify how the Chairman and other officers are to be elected. The executive committee is responsible for the implementation of the responsibilities of the National Committee. The executive committee is also responsible for all official correspondence with the Commission, usually through the Chairman or Secretary.

Reporting and Audit

It is common practice for its business to be subject to external audit or independent supervision.

Whatever the formal requirements, the executive committee should have an appropriate level of reporting to the general membership.

General Meetings

This is the formal meeting of the general body, which the constitution will specify and mention : (a) the minimum frequency, usually once per year; (b) the minimum notice required to call such a meeting, and the means of notification; and (c) the quorum or minimum number of attendees for such a meeting.

Activities

Activities mentioned in the constitution depend on circumstances and the available resources, but typically they could include: (a) providing representation of the National Committee in the deliberations of the Commission; (b) providing nominations for appointment to ICID work bodies and office-bearer positions, in accordance with the ICID Constitution and By-laws; (c) ensuring active

participation in the meetings and activities of ICID work bodies and in ICID technical sessions; (d) holding the National Committee's own technical meetings nationally or regionally, perhaps with a minimum number specified per year; (e) organising technical visits and/or study tours; (f) maintaining a website and/or publishing a newsletter or magazine; (g) distributing ICID publications and news material, especially the Journal; (h) maintain the list of Journal subscribers (both those provided free and paid for at the concession rate subscription for National Committee members, and therefore entitling the individuals to access to electronic files through the Journal website); (i) encouraging technical contribution to the Journal and ICID technical sessions, including where required, appropriate vetting of papers; (j) sponsoring (not necessarily financially) projects such as collection of data, publication of reports, the identification of research or training needs, translation of ICID publications etc, which from time to time may be deemed appropriate by the Committee, or are requested through ICID; and (k) from time to time, hosting and organising ICID Technical Sessions and Council Meetings.

In addition, several National Committees are able to maintain a library (or provide members with access to the library of an affiliate organisation) and produce publications on a regular basis, although this depends on individual circumstance.

