



Articles of Association

(The German version has priority)

in the version dated June 01, 1991,
amended on December 01, 1995,
amended on February 26, 2004,
amended on June 03, 2023.

§1 Name and seat

(1) The name of the association is "Ecological Tourism in Europe - Linking Tourism and Conservation e.V.", - Association for Sustainable Tourism (abbreviated to Ö.T.E. - LT&C). It has its seat in Bonn and is entered in the register of associations.

(2) Ö.T.E. - LT&C is independent of political parties, ideologies, denominations and ethics. It resolutely opposes racist, anti-constitutional and xenophobic endeavors and other discriminatory or inhumane practices. It pays attention to social, gender and intergenerational justice.

§2 Aim and tasks

(1) The association pursues exclusively and directly charitable purposes within the meaning of the section "tax-privileged purposes" of the currently valid tax code. § 52

(2) The association advocates sustainable tourism in Germany, Europe and worldwide. It supports the objectives of national strategies and international agreements in the areas of sustainability, biodiversity and tourism. It aims to achieve a balance between the protection of nature, its components and its budget and the social requirements of employees and residents in tourism regions in relation to tourism demands. To this end, the Association shall in particular work with tour operators, protected areas, tourist communities, marketing organizations, accommodation providers and tourists.

(3) The purpose of the Association shall be achieved in particular by

1. promoting activities in the areas of sustainable tourism
2. profiling good applied examples of how sustainable tourism supports nature conservation and environmental protection
3. information, education and training initiatives
4. advising stakeholders in tourism and nature conservation
5. consumer advice in the field of sustainable tourism
6. public relations work, dissemination of information on sustainable tourism

7. participation in planning procedures for tourism projects and in legislative undertakings.

§3 Selflessness

(1) The association is a non-profit organization. It does not primarily pursue its own economic purposes.

(2) The Association's funds may only be used for the purposes set out in the Articles of Association. Members shall not receive any benefits from the Association's funds.

(3) The funds required for the realization of the purposes of the Association shall be raised in particular through contributions from members and donations.

§4 Membership

(1) Natural persons, registered associations and legal entities that pursue and support the purposes and tasks of the Ö.T.E. - LT&C may become members of the association.

(2) Associate members are registered associations and other legal entities that pursue the purposes and tasks of the Ö.T.E. - LT&C, support the content of its work, but are unable or unwilling to acquire full membership.

(3) Any natural or legal person who financially supports the objectives and the association can become a supporting member of the association. (§ 2).

(4) The application for admission to the Association shall be made in writing. Membership shall commence upon receipt of the first annual membership fee. The fees are due on January 1 for the financial year that has begun or upon acceptance as a member. The Board of Directors may refuse admission within three months of payment. The person concerned must be notified in writing and the amount paid must be refunded.

(5) The refusal of admission to the association can be contested by the person concerned within one month. The General Meeting shall make the final decision on the appeal.

(6) The resignation of a member is only possible at the end of a calendar year. It shall be effected by written declaration to the Executive Board and subject to a notice period of eight weeks to the end of the calendar year.

§5 Termination of membership

(1) Membership expires upon death, resignation or expulsion, in the case of legal entities also upon their dissolution.

(2) Membership expires if the member is in arrears with their membership fee for more than one year and after receiving a reminder.

§6 Rights and duties of the members

(1) Membership entitles the holder to exercise voting rights and to submit motions at the General Meeting and to vote in written and digital elections and ballots.

(2) Each member has one vote.

(3) Supporting and associate members do not have the right to vote, but have the right to speak at the General Assembly and at digital meetings. Associate members also have the right to submit motions.

§7 Organs of the association

The bodies of the Association are

- a) the General Meeting,
- b) the Board of Directors.

§8 General meeting

(1) The General Meeting shall be convened once a year by the Executive Board.

(2) The General Meeting may be held as a face-to-face meeting or as a virtual General Meeting (online procedure in a secure communication room). A combination of an in-person meeting and a virtual meeting is also possible. A virtual general meeting on the dissolution of the association is not permitted.

(3) The General Meeting shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

(4) The invitation shall be issued in writing with a notice period of at least six weeks, stating the agenda.

(5) The annual accounts, the annual report and the audit report shall be submitted to the General Meeting of Members for a resolution on the approval and discharge of the Board of Directors. It shall appoint two auditors, who may not be members of the Executive Board, to audit the accounts and the annual financial statements and to report on the results to the General Meeting.

(6) The General Meeting elects

- The Executive Board
- The auditors

and decides, among other things, on

- the discharge of the Executive Board,
- the association's budget,
- amendments to the Articles of Association,
- the determination of membership fees, and
- an action program.

(7) Motions from members and associate members must be received by the Executive Board in writing at least four weeks before the General Assembly.

(8) The General Assembly passes its resolutions by a majority of the votes cast, unless the law or the Articles of Association stipulate a different majority.

(9) The election of the members of the Executive Board and the auditors shall be by secret ballot if at least one member so requests.

(10) Extraordinary general meetings shall be convened by the Executive Board if the interests of the Association so require or if 1/3 of all members of the Association request such a meeting in writing, stating the items on the agenda. The extraordinary general meeting must be held within ten weeks of receipt of the request.

§9 Executive Board

(1) The Executive Board consists of:

1. the chairperson and two deputies. They form the Executive Board in accordance with § 26 BGB and are each authorized to represent the organization alone.
2. up to five further members.

(2) The members of the Executive Board are elected for a term of three years. The Executive Board shall remain in office until the election of a new Executive Board. Re-election is possible. Members of the Executive Board can be voted out of office before the end of their regular term of office by a vote of no confidence at the General Meeting with 2/3 of the votes cast. New members of the Executive Board must be elected at this General Meeting. If a member of the Executive Board resigns before the end of the term of office, the Executive Board may appoint a new Board member with voting rights on an interim basis for the period until the next General Meeting.

(3) Board meetings are convened by the Chairperson or, if he/she is unable to do so, by one of the deputies in writing or by e-mail with three weeks' notice and notification of the agenda. The Executive Board is quorate if at least half of the members of the Executive Board are present. In the event of a tie, the vote of the chairperson of the Board meeting shall be decisive. The Executive Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

(4) The Executive Board is responsible for all matters of the Association, unless they are expressly assigned to the General Meeting by these Articles of Association.

(5) Resolutions of the Executive Board may also be passed outside of meetings verbally, by telephone, in writing or by other means of communication such as e-mail or by means of telephone or video conferencing if all members of the Executive Board agree to this resolution. The resolutions passed must be documented immediately and signed by the chairperson or one of the deputies.

(6) The Executive Board is authorized to set up specialist committees consisting of members of the Association and, if necessary, external experts. The Executive Board shall decide on the composition of the specialist committees and the number of their members. The Executive Board is obliged to inform the members about the formation, purpose and composition of specialist committees. Established specialist committees must be confirmed by the General Meeting. They may be formed for no longer than the duration of the remaining term of office of the Executive Board, unless the General Meeting decides otherwise.

§10 Fees, reimbursement of expenses, employment of employees

(1) The Executive Board may receive an expense allowance for its activities. Expense allowances for members of the Executive Board must be approved by the General Meeting.

(2) Members of the Association who regularly work for the Association on a large scale and whose work is of particular importance to the Association may receive an expense allowance for their work that is appropriate to the amount of time spent on this work. In the context of special or temporary projects of the Association, members of the Association may receive remuneration for their work.

(3) In order to ensure the implementation of projects financed by third parties, the Association may employ external specialists, members and members of the Executive Board on a temporary basis and/or on a fee or work contract basis.

§11 Data protection

(1) The Association stores, processes and uses personal data of its members, supporting members and associated members for membership administration, the delivery of Association publications and the pursuit of its purposes. It may also commission third parties to do so, provided that a contract for commissioned data processing exists.

(2) Insofar as the requirements described in the statutory provisions on data protection are met, every member has the right to information, to rectification, to data portability, to erasure, to restriction of processing, to object and to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority.

§12 Amendments to the Articles of Association

(1) Amendments to the Articles of Association require a 2/3 majority of the voting members present at the General Meeting.

§13 Dissolution of the Association and Use of the Assets

(1) The dissolution of the Association can only be resolved by a General Meeting convened specifically for this purpose and only with a majority of three quarters of the valid votes cast. The General Meeting convened for the purpose of dissolving the Association shall constitute a quorum if it has been convened two months in advance, stating the purpose of the meeting.

(2) If the Association is dissolved or if tax-privileged purposes cease to exist, the assets shall be transferred to the umbrella organization of German Nature, Animal and Environmental Protection Organization (DNR), which shall use them directly and exclusively for charitable purposes.

§14 Entry into force of these Articles of Association

These articles of association were adopted at the General Meeting of the E.T.E on June 3rd 2023 and shall enter into force the same day. They replace the previously valid version of the Articles of Association dated February 26th 2004.