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INTRODUCTION

The Association ICCA Consortium (hereafter 'ICCA Consortium' or 'Association') is a non-profit association registered under the Swiss Civil Code. Its membership is comprised of Members (organisations) and Honorary members (individuals). The ICCA Consortium’s mission is to promote appropriate recognition and support for territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities (abbreviated as “ICCAs—territories of life”) at local, national and international levels.

The present document in part replaces what were formerly known as the Operational Guidelines (2019). It focuses on matters related to the ICCA Consortium’s membership and consists of two parts: (1) the Membership Policy; and (2) the Membership Procedures.1 It is supplementary to and supports implementation of the Association’s Statutes (2021). It complements and should be read alongside other organisational documents such as the Strategic Plan (June 2017), Governance Procedures (2021), Gender Policy (October 2018), Policy on Defending Territories of Life and their Defenders (October 2018) and others that may be developed in the future.

After it was drafted by the Membership Committee and underwent a consultation period with the full membership, the current version of this document was approved by the 17th General Assembly on 10 June 2021.

1 Until 2020, the de facto membership policy was integrated into the Operational Guidelines. In 2019, the General Assembly tasked the Membership Committee with reviewing and revising the membership policy to make it more relevant to the current realities of the Consortium. This document is the product of their work.
PART ONE: MEMBERSHIP POLICY

1. DEFINITION OF THE MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Members

Members are organisations that share the mission of the ICCA Consortium and have committed to and experience with upholding it, regardless of whether they are legally and/or formally recognised by state governments. In order to acknowledge the rich diversity and composition of the membership, the Members are generally recognised as one of the following:  

- Indigenous peoples and local communities who are bona fide custodians of territories of life;  
- Indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ organisations, federations, networks and movements concerned with territories of life and operating at any level;  
- Civil society and non-governmental organisations, networks with mixed composition and non-governmental research institutions specifically concerned with territories of life and working primarily at local, national and/or regional levels; or  
- Civil society and non-governmental organisations, networks with mixed composition and non-governmental research institutions specifically concerned with territories of life on a global scale or operating at the international level only.

For-profit corporations, governmental and explicitly partisan entities are excluded from the membership. One possible exception is grassroots community enterprises and other social or solidarity enterprises that are explicitly intended to fund community-determined priorities in support of territories of life. This will be considered and determined on a case-by-case basis by the Membership Committee.

1.2 Honorary members

Honorary members are individuals who share the mission of the ICCA Consortium and have direct experience with and demonstrated high commitment to upholding it. Guidance on who is eligible to become an Honorary member includes, but is not limited to:

- Members of Indigenous peoples and local communities who are bona fide custodians of territories of life and/or have direct experience with ICCA-related initiatives; and  
- Activists, movement leaders, practitioners, scholars, researchers, communicators and others with demonstrated concerns, expertise and initiative to uphold and strengthen ICCAs—territories of life and have them appropriately recognised and supported in society.

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2 Identifying these groupings is by no means aims to divide or create a hierarchy within the membership, but rather to make more visible its diverse composition.  
3 More emphasis is placed on the composition and leadership of the organisations rather than the nature of their legal registration. For example, an organisation that is led by and primarily composed of Indigenous peoples might self-identify as an Indigenous organisation but might be registered as a non-governmental organisation because of lack of other options in their jurisdiction.  
4 This includes groups that are a combination of (a) Indigenous peoples’ and local community organisations and (b) civil society and non-governmental organisations.
2. Strengthening our Membership

2.1 Members
The ICCA Consortium membership is diverse and inclusive of organisations that support its mission. That said, given that the mission and core of the association concerns Indigenous peoples and local communities and their territories and areas, the ICCA Consortium is particularly inclined to welcome Indigenous peoples and local communities that are bona fide custodians of ICCAs—territories of life as well as their organisations, networks, federations and movements operating at the sub-national, national, regional and/or international levels.

2.2 Honorary members
As with Member organisations, the ICCA Consortium is diverse and inclusive of individual Honorary members who support its mission. That said, given the mission and focus of the association and the desire to strengthen representation of certain identities and groups, the ICCA Consortium especially encourages the nomination of individuals from Indigenous peoples and local communities, a diversity of genders5 and youth6.

2.3 Positive attributes of Members and Honorary members
The ICCA Consortium shall consider positive attributes of potential Members and Honorary members on the basis of the following:

- Extent of involvement with territories of life or Indigenous peoples and local communities who are custodians of territories of life (centrality in their mission, dedication, length of time, results);
- Quality of the relationship with Indigenous peoples and local communities in the geographic areas in which the organisations or individuals work (according to the communities themselves);
- Social and ecological implications of the activities, including both those directly related to territories of life and those in other areas that affect them such as national or international policies, laws and institutions;
- Integrity and alignment of sources of funding and partnerships from which they benefit with the mission and interests of the ICCA Consortium;
- Potential benefits that the organisation or individual may bring to territories of life and the association; and
- Location and scale of existence, organisational priorities and thematic areas of work.

5 In accordance with its Gender Policy (2018), the ICCA Consortium is committed to gender equality and equity and the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence. It recognises a diversity of genders, including those who identify as non-binary and gender non-conforming.
6 In January 2020, the ICCA Consortium established “Youth for Territories of Life” (“the Youth Group”) in order to strengthen youth representation and engagement as well as intergenerational relations in the association.
3. CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

3.1 Minimum requirements of Members and Honorary members

Members and Honorary members are aligned with and work toward achieving the mission of the ICCA Consortium (as defined in the Statutes (2021), Article 3) to the best of their ability:

“The Association ICCA Consortium is established to promote the appropriate recognition of, and support to, indigenous peoples’ and community conserved areas and territories (ICCAS—territories of life) at local, national and international levels.

This purpose is set in the context of the broader vision of conserving biodiversity and ecological functions, nurturing the sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing of indigenous peoples and local communities, and implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples—including self-determination and the full respect of their cultural diversity and collective and individual rights and responsibilities.”

Members and Honorary members must take an active role in the life of the ICCA Consortium and conduct themselves in a respectful, flexible and understanding way with the rest of the ICCA Consortium membership, Council and Secretariat.

All Members and Honorary members have a responsibility to understand and uphold the ICCA Consortium’s Statutes (2021), Governance Procedures (2021), Membership Policy and Procedures (2021), policies on defending territories of life and their defenders (2018) and gender (2018) and other organisational policies or procedures that may be developed hereafter. These documents continue to be open for suggestions and comments and will be regularly reviewed and updated as needed.

3.2 Collective commitment

The ICCA Consortium’s Members and Honorary members stand and act together for dignity, respect, solidarity, diversity, pluralism, interculturalism, intergenerational and interspecies relations, equity and justice. Indigenous cosmovisions, wisdom, knowledge and leadership are of particular importance.

The ICCA Consortium has a collective commitment not only to respect and uphold these principles and values for the common good, but also to reject and discourage behaviours that run counter to them and that may prejudice the Consortium’s mission.

Such behaviours, which could lead to refusing a Member application or Honorary member nomination or to the warning, suspension or termination of membership, include but are not limited to:

- Intentional or unintentional harm or promotion of harm to other individuals or groups;
- Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex or sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, nationality, political affiliation, class or other status;
- Allegations or evidence of human rights or environmental violations;

7 In the pursuit of self-determination and peace, it is understood that in some unfortunate situations, Indigenous peoples and local communities may be forced to defend themselves and their territories of life against violent aggressions, for example, from military or paramilitary groups.
• Allegations or evidence of actions that damage or undermine ICCAs—territories of life and/or the ICCA Consortium;
• Misrepresentation of the ICCA Consortium in forums or public spaces, including any form of discrimination or assertion of partisan political views⁸;
• Use of the ICCA Consortium's name in developing initiatives, projects or fundraising proposals for an organisation or individual without notifying and discussing with the Council and Secretariat sufficiently in advance; and/or
• Dishonesty in communications with the ICCA Consortium such as declaration of in-kind contributions.

3.3 Reasons for requesting dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension and termination of membership

Reasons for requesting dialogue or mediation, issuing a warning or suspending or terminating membership (both Members and Honorary members) may include but are not limited to the following:

• Behaviours that may prejudice the ICCA Consortium’s mission and/or run counter to its collective commitment (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2 above)⁹;
• Apparent lack of commitment to or alignment with the mission of the ICCA Consortium;
• Lack of satisfactory response to the triennial membership review without good reason;
• Sustained lack of involvement in or demonstrated contributions to the work of the ICCA Consortium, understood as failing to meet the conditions to be in good standing for three or more consecutive years; and/or
• Sustained non-responsiveness to direct communications from the ICCA Consortium’s Council, Membership Committee and/or Secretariat.

Members and Honorary members may also voluntarily terminate their own membership.

The Membership Committee will request and review all relevant information and act in accordance with the Membership Procedures (Part II of the present document).

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⁸ The ICCA Consortium is a non-partisan association and does not endorse any specific political parties or politicians in any jurisdiction. Organisations and individuals in the ICCA Consortium’s membership are free to express political opinions and affiliations in their personal capacities but cannot do so as Members and Honorary members per se or as representatives of the ICCA Consortium.

⁹ If an organisation or individual that is currently in the membership or has applied or been nominated to join the membership has a material change to their approach, work, affiliations or otherwise that could violate the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct (for example, if they are contracted by or agree to collaborate with an institution whose policies and/or practices are inimical to Indigenous peoples and local communities and territories of life or that could have clear conflicts of interest), they have a responsibility to proactively disclose this change and explain if/how they are retaining their integrity and commitment to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct. This can be communicated orally or in writing to the Membership Committee. The relevant procedures under Part II of the present document (Section 2.6 for Members and Section 3.6 for Honorary members) may be initiated as appropriate.
PART TWO: MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES

1. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee is chaired by and composed of members of the ICCA Consortium’s Council. The chair of the Membership Committee is normally nominated and elected by the General Assembly for that position specifically, whereas the other members of the Committee are designated by the Council from existing Council members. As per the Statutes (2021), Council members are approved by the General Assembly.

The Membership Committee is accountable to the ICCA Consortium’s Council and General Assembly and obliged to uphold the Consortium’s mission and ethical code of conduct. The Committee conducts itself in a fair and impartial manner and maintains confidentiality in the case of controversial matters.

The Committee meets at least three times per year, electronically or in person. Other members of the ICCA Consortium’s Executive Committee (as defined by the Governance Procedures, 2021) are invited to attend ex officio whenever desired or requested. When deemed necessary for their deliberations, the Committee may also solicit and take into consideration additional views of other members of Council or other Members and Honorary members in good standing.

Under the leadership of its Chair and with administrative and technical support from the ICCA Consortium’s Secretariat, the Membership Committee has the following responsibilities:

- Strive to maintain a membership that is as strong, active and collaborative as possible.
- Elaborate, review and improve the Membership Policy and Procedures, with guidance and inputs from the Council and broader membership, as appropriate.
- Advise upon and oversee all membership-related aspects of the ICCA Consortium’s strategy and operations.
- Oversee the membership intake round two times per year, generally in February/March and September/October unless decided otherwise. This involves:
  - Reviewing and updating the Member application and Honorary member nomination forms as needed;
  - Receiving and conducting preliminary assessments of all membership applications and nominations;
  - Inviting the current membership to comment during a 30-day period on applications and nominations preliminarily approved;
  - Receiving, compiling and following up on any comments from the membership in this period, including requesting more information or seeking the advice of others as needed;
  - Informing the applicants and nominees at the end of each round of the current membership’s decision and provide supporting information as necessary.
- Welcome, orient and support new Members and Honorary members to get involved in the work of the ICCA Consortium.
- Maintain an up-to-date membership database with due consideration for digital security and privacy of personal information.
- Provide regular updates to the Council and Executive Committee and produce an annual membership report for the General Assembly.
• Oversee the triennial membership review(s), which aim(s) to better understand and update relevant information about the membership with a view to continual improvement of the ICCA Consortium and membership engagement.

• Manage requests for dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension and termination of membership in cases of potential violation of the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct, which may include considering the conduct/activities of existing Members and Honorary members when necessary. Confidentiality and discretion should be exercised where appropriate and the Membership Committee or the organisation or individual concerned may request the involvement of the Ombudsperson (as defined by the Governance Procedures, 2021) in particularly challenging situations.

2. MEMBERS

Refer to the Membership Policy (Part I of the present document) for more details about the definition and composition of Members.

2.1 Rights of Members

Members have the right to participate in the ICCA Consortium’s activities and decision-making processes in accordance with the Statutes (2021), Governance Procedures (2021) and other organisational policies and procedures.

Members’ representatives have the right to be nominated as members of the Council or appointed to an ad hoc Committee of the Council.

Members have the right to offer to host a regional coordination team and their representatives can apply for any open calls for applications for positions in the Secretariat, as long as there is no conflict of interest with simultaneous representation in the Council.

Members have the right to be informed regularly about the life of the association by the Council and Secretariat, and to timely responses to requests for information about a specific decision, event, area of work or other relevant matter.

Members have the right to recommend potential new Members or nominate potential new Honorary members.

Members have the right to regularly receive and share information about opportunities for relevant initiatives and activities, funding, partnerships, etc.

Members have the right to air grievances and engage in conflict resolution procedures.

2.2 Responsibilities of Members

i. General responsibilities

Members uphold the code of ethical conduct and contribute to achieving the ICCA Consortium’s mission.
Members are encouraged to be involved in the life and work of the ICCA Consortium wherever possible, and to communicate proactively with others in the membership and with relevant members of the Council and Secretariat, especially at the national and regional levels.

Members are encouraged to suggest and possibly lead new areas of work.

Members are invited to share their experience and knowledge within the Consortium.

Members are expected to be in good standing and to participate constructively in General Assemblies and related preparations, including contributing to consensus-based decisions.

**ii. Conditions for a Member to be in good standing**

Members are required to be in good standing in order to participate in each General Assembly.

A Member in good standing fulfils both of the following conditions:

1) Completes the triennial membership review in a timely and satisfactory manner. Exceptions include:
   - A Member facing extenuating circumstances at the time of the membership review such as a sustained threat to their territory of life or a major organisational change may be excused at that time but should respond within one year; and/or
   - Organisations that become Members in the three-year period between membership reviews only need to complete the next one.

2) Contributes and communicates at least one form of voluntary collective action in support of the ICCA Consortium’s mission (‘in-kind contribution’) each calendar year or between General Assemblies, whichever comes first. Each Member is encouraged to communicate this action to the Secretariat at any time of year but must be communicated or otherwise confirmed at least two weeks before a General Assembly in order to participate in that Assembly.

Examples of collective action contributions include but are not limited to:

- Completing the triennial membership review in a timely and satisfactory manner, if it is the year of the review;
- For Indigenous peoples and local communities who are *bona fide* custodians of an ICCA—territory of life, caring for that territory or area and sustaining or self-strengthening related community processes (such as major ceremonies or festivals, community educational programmes, collective defence against destructive industries, etc.);
- Multimedia documentation and/or communication about the situation of an ICCA—territory of life and related activities, preferably shared on the ICCA Consortium’s online

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10 From when the ICCA Consortium was legally registered in 2010 to 2020, Members were required to pay a membership fee in cash or in-kind in order to be in good standing. In 2020, the Membership Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee and Council, decided to reframe it around in-kind contributions only. This was approved by the 16th General Assembly and incorporated into the revised [*Statutes*](2021). This approach is more in line with the ethos of the association as it underscores the central importance and multiple values of collective action and voluntary contributions that are not valued in monetary terms.

11 These examples are not exhaustive; innovations and creativity in the context of each region are encouraged. Identification and communication of collective action contributions should be an exchange between each Member and the ICCA Consortium Secretariat (generally the relevant Regional Coordinator or regional coordination team) and an opportunity for mutual learning and support.
platforms (such as a written article, an audio recording, a radio or podcast interview, a photo essay or photo story, a short film, an interactive map, an op-ed or article in mainstream media, etc.);

- A representative serving as a member of the ICCA Consortium’s Council or a regional governing body (council or otherwise);
- A representative serving as a Regional Coordinator or the organisation as a whole serving as a regional coordination team in the ICCA Consortium’s Secretariat;
- Contributing significantly to the elaboration or review of one or more of the ICCA Consortium’s organisational documents;
- Contributing significantly to the organisation or hosting of a major ICCA Consortium event such as a General Assembly or regional assembly or self-funding participation in the same;
- Contributing significantly to one or more of the ICCA Consortium’s thematic or cross-cutting areas of work or initiatives (including documenting, sustaining and defending territories of life, youth and intergenerational relations, gender equality, etc.);
- Contributing significantly to the development, adoption and/or implementation of policies and laws (at any level) relevant for territories of life;
- Leading or contributing significantly to a joint fundraising proposal with the ICCA Consortium that is directly related to ICCAs—territories of life;
- Supporting networking and peer learning and exchange between Members and/or custodians of territories of life;
- Supporting Indigenous peoples and local communities in their self-determined advocacy priorities for ICCAs—territories of life (such as legal recognition or defence);
- Organising or self-funding participation in other events related to territories of life (such as presenting at a workshop or conference or participating in an event on behalf of the ICCA Consortium, subject to prior agreement with the Secretariat);
- Supporting the successful applications of new Members; and/or
- Successfully nominating a Member or Honorary member for appropriate forms of recognition and support related to their work on ICCAs—territories of life (such as awards or fellowships).

2.3 Participation of Members in the General Assembly

Refer to the Statutes (2021) and Governance Procedures (2021) for more details about General Assemblies.

In accordance with the Statutes (2021), “[t]he General Assembly is the highest authority and governing body of the ICCA Consortium and is composed of all Members in good standing” (Article 7). “The General Assembly decisions are taken by consensus, building upon the advice of all Members and Honorary members willing to contribute constructively. Failing that, decisions are valid only when approved by a supermajority of two-thirds of Members in good standing present, voting by proxy or participating via electronic means” (Article 9).

Thus, Members have the right to contribute constructively to consensus-based decisions at General Assemblies. If it is not possible to make a consensus-based decision at a General Assembly, only Members in good standing present may participate in the subsequent vote. If a Member is not contributing constructively to deliberations or if they are actively undermining
the proceedings or violating the code of ethical conduct, the chair of the General Assembly may ask them to excuse themselves or may remove them if necessary.

The Secretariat must strive to make the General Assembly as accessible as possible to the membership, whether in person and/or online. The ICCA Consortium has no obligation to provide financial support for in-person participation, but will prioritise available funds for participation of Members representing Indigenous peoples and local communities who are custodians of territories of life and their organisations, and local and national civil society support organisations.

2.4 Becoming a Member of the ICCA Consortium

As noted in Section 1 of the Membership Procedures, the Membership Committee oversees two membership intake rounds per year, generally in February/March and September/October unless decided otherwise.

Each membership intake round consists of five main steps, which are illustrated and detailed below.

Step 1: Submission of application

The initial application differs depending on the type of organisation:

Figure 1: Overview of the process to apply for and be accepted as a Member of the ICCA Consortium.
(a) If the applicant directly represents a specific Indigenous nation/people or local community, they must address a letter to the Chair of the Membership Committee in one of the main working languages of the ICCA Consortium (English, French and Spanish) that communicates what their community does in relation to ICCAs—territories of life and why they would like to become a Member of the ICCA Consortium. It should be authorised and signed or thumb-printed by the head of the community organisation or customary institution.

(b) If the applicant does not directly represent a specific Indigenous nation/people or local community, they must send: (i) a completed membership application form (available in the “join the ICCA Consortium” webpage); (ii) a letter authorised by the head of the organisation and addressed to the Chair of the Membership Committee in one of the main working languages of the ICCA Consortium that communicates what their organisation does in relation to ICCAs—territories of life and why they would like to become a Member; and (iii) a recommendation letter from an existing Member or Honorary member in good standing that is familiar with their work and can attest to their integrity and alignment with the Consortium’s mission and values.

A complete application must be sent to the Chair of the Membership Committee by the stated deadline of each round, which is communicated via the ICCA Consortium’s membership list and website and is generally in February/March and September/October unless decided otherwise.

**Step 2: Confirmation that basic requirements are met**

Upon receipt of each application and/or after the relevant deadline, the Chair of the Membership Committee checks that each application is complete and meets the requirements and basic positive attributes of a Member organisation. If not, the Chair or Secretariat support person of the Membership Committee inquires with the applicant and requests further information as needed. If further information is required, the applicant should respond in a timely manner otherwise their application might be included instead in the next membership intake round.

**Step 3: Initial ‘due diligence’ check**

If the application is from a local, national or regional organisation, the relevant Regional Coordinator or regional coordination team: (i) reviews the application; (ii) asks any necessary follow-up questions to ensure the applicant is sufficiently aligned with the ICCA Consortium, including consulting with existing Members and Honorary members in the country or region as needed as part of the ongoing regionalisation process; and (iii) informs the Membership Committee of their views, including any potential issues.

If the applicant is from an organisation operating at the global/international level, the relevant person in the global Secretariat: (i) reviews the application; (ii) asks any necessary follow-up questions to ensure the applicant is sufficiently aligned with the ICCA Consortium, including consulting with existing Members and Honorary members operating at the global/international level as needed; and (iii) informs the Membership Committee of their views, including any potential issues.

**Step 4: Assessment by the entire current membership**

The Chair of the Membership Committee circulates all of the applications that meet the basic requirements and ‘due diligence’ check to all existing Members and Honorary members via the ICCA Consortium’s “Key Information” mailing list, preferably within 2-4 weeks of the application deadline. The Chair asks the membership to review these
applications and raise any concerns or objections with supporting information within 30 days.

Concerns or objections should focus on whether the applicant meets the definition and positive attributes of a Member as per the Membership Policy or has demonstrated behaviours that run counter to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct.

Refer to Section 3 of the Membership Policy (Part I of the present document) for the code of ethical conduct.

Step 5: Decision about the Member application

(a) If no Member or Honorary member raises a concern or objection with the Chair of the Membership Committee within the 30-day period, the Member application is considered approved. New Members receive a welcome letter with membership information within 2-4 weeks and they are immediately considered part of the ICCA Consortium membership.

(b) If any current Member or Honorary member raises a concern or objection during the 30-day review period, the Membership Committee carries out further consultations and information gathering as needed to clarify the situation, including with the applicant organisation, ensuring proper documentation of the process and deliberations. In particularly complex cases, the Membership Committee may meet online to discuss it in a confidential manner. The Committee may also ask the rest of the Council, the Council of Elders and/or the Ombudsperson for their advice.

- The Membership Committee reviews the further information gathered in a fair and impartial manner and makes a decision by consensus on whether to accept or reject the Member application in accordance with the Membership Policy.
- If the Committee decides to reject the application, the applicant and the Member or Honorary member that provided a recommendation letter (if applicable) will be notified in writing and confidentially along with a brief explanation of the reason(s) why. The Committee’s decision is final and not subject to appeal.
- If the Membership Committee cannot reach a consensus decision about the application, they may defer the decision to the next round and request more information or assistance from the rest of the Council and/or Ombudsperson in order to make an informed decision.
- The Membership Committee informs the applicant of the final decision, which is not subject to appeal.
- An organisation whose membership application is rejected may apply again but only after at least two years from the date of the decision and with sufficient documentation of meaningful changes made to address the reasons for the rejection. They may do this a maximum of two times.

2.5 Voluntary termination of membership

A Member has the right to voluntarily terminate its membership at any time. Members are encouraged to communicate with the Membership Committee or Secretariat before doing so in case the reasons are due to concerns or misunderstandings that can be resolved amicably. A Member can terminate their membership by writing a letter authorised by the head of the organisation and addressed to the President of the ICCA Consortium and the Chair of the Membership Committee, stating the reason(s) for their decision.
If the Member submits this letter without prior communication, the Membership Committee and/or Secretariat may contact them to seek clarifications and an amicable resolution where appropriate. Otherwise, the termination is effective immediately upon confirmation by the Membership Committee, which will also inform the Council and Secretariat accordingly.

2.6 Responding to potential violations of the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct

If a Member or a representative of a Member behaves in a way that runs counter to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct, the Membership Committee may request a dialogue or mediation, issue a warning, suspend the Member temporarily or directly terminate their membership, depending on the nature and seriousness of the issue.

Refer to Section 3 of the Membership Policy (Part I of the present document) for the code of ethical conduct.

The Membership Committee is responsible for considering complaints, alleged violations of the code of ethical conduct and requests for dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination of Members and ensuring proper documentation of the process and deliberations. The Committee may involve the Ombudsperson, the rest of the Council or the Council of Elders if needed. In any discussions about the complaint raised, all parties involved shall engage with each other openly and with discretion and compassion, respect requests for confidentiality or anonymity (particularly of aggrieved parties) and strive to address the issue fairly and constructively.

i. Definition of responses

The ICCA Consortium may issue the following responses:

- A **request for dialogue or mediation** is the first level of response to complaints about a Member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that should be possible or are desirable to resolve through direct dialogue and/or mediation between the parties concerned. The parties concerned should agree on a trusted third party within the ICCA Consortium (such as an Indigenous elder, a community leader or a member of the Council or Council of Elders) to facilitate the dialogue or mediation.

- A **warning** is the second level of response to complaints about a Member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that should be possible to address but the aggrieved party does not wish to engage in direct dialogue or mediation. A notification of warning identifies in writing the concerns and suggested steps required to address them after consultation.
with the parties concerned. Continuation or worsening of the same or similar behaviour without concerted efforts to address it may lead to a suspension or direct termination.

- **Suspension** of membership is the third level of response to complaints about a Member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that are serious enough to temporarily remove the organisation from the membership but where there is some expectation or hope that the issues can still be addressed. Notification of a temporary suspension identifies in writing the concerns and suggested steps required to address them after consultation with the parties concerned. The membership is suspended until the concerns are sufficiently addressed and the organisation does not enjoy the rights of a Member in the meantime. Failure to address the issues may lead to direct termination.

- **Termination** of membership is the fourth and highest level of response to concerns raised about a Member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that are serious enough to remove the organisation permanently from the membership, i.e., where there is a grave violation of the code of ethical conduct and irreversible harm caused.

**ii. Procedures for responses**

1. **Submission of a complaint or request for a dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination**
2. **Assessment by the initial point of contact and Membership Committee**
3. **Decision about the required response**
4. **Informing the Member in question**
5. **Follow-up actions**

Figure 3: Overview of procedures for responding to complaints or alleged violations of the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct.

**Step 1: Submission of a complaint or request for a dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination**

Any of the following parties may raise a complaint about a Member’s behaviour and may directly request a dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination: other Members; Honorary members; members of the Council or Council of Elders; members of the Secretariat; or funders, partners or collaborators.
Such a complaint or request may be submitted in writing to the ICCA Consortium’s Ombudsperson, the relevant person in the Secretariat (such as a Regional Coordinator) and/or the Chair of the Membership Committee. The complaint or request should provide all necessary information, including a chronology of events, available evidence and documentation, actions taken to date and clear explanation of the reasons for the complaint or request with reference to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct (see Section 3 of the Membership Policy).

Throughout the process, those involved on behalf of the ICCA Consortium will strive to maintain discretion and confidentiality of the aggrieved person or organisation unless otherwise required for safety, security or legal reasons.

Step 2: Assessment by the initial point of contact and Membership Committee

Whoever first receives the concern or request (the Ombudsperson, the relevant person in the Secretariat and/or the Chair of the Membership Committee) will conduct an initial check of its veracity and legitimacy, including discussions with the parties concerned about actual or potential responses and desired outcomes, and then forward it to the Membership Committee.

The Membership Committee considers all available information and may request further information or consultations, including with the relevant regional representative in the (global) Council and/or the regional Council, if applicable. In particularly complex cases, the Membership Committee may ask the rest of the Council, the Council of Elders and/or the Ombudsperson for their advice.

Given the potential complexity and sensitivity of these situations, no specific timeline is required but all parties involved are expected and encouraged to respond in a timely and constructive manner.

Step 3: Decision about the required response

The Membership Committee makes a decision by consensus about how best to respond based on all available information, including from all parties directly involved, and after careful deliberation. Possible decisions include: (i) requesting dialogue or mediation between the parties concerned; (ii) issuing a warning; (iii) suspending the membership; or (iv) terminating the membership. The Committee may also decide that the complaint or request is unfounded and should be dismissed.

In particularly complex cases or if the Membership Committee cannot agree by consensus on the appropriate response, the Committee may request the Council as a whole to consider and make a decision on the matter while respecting confidentiality of the aggrieved parties.

Step 4: Informing the Member in question

The Chair of the Membership Committee will inform the Member in question and other involved parties of their decision in writing. The Membership Committee will also inform the Council and relevant members of the Secretariat.

The Member should confirm receipt of the decision and their intention to appropriately address the complaint, if applicable.

Step 5: Follow-up actions
(a) In the case of a request for dialogue or mediation, the Member in question is responsible for sufficiently addressing the complaint and communicating their actions to the Membership Committee. If the complaint cannot be resolved through dialogue or mediation or if the situation has worsened, it can be escalated to a warning, suspension or termination, depending on its nature and severity.

(b) In the case of a warning, the Member in question is responsible for sufficiently addressing the complaint and steps set out in the warning letter and communicating their actions to the Membership Committee. If they continue to exhibit the same or similar behaviour or if the situation worsens because of their actions, the Membership Committee may decide to suspend or even terminate their membership.

(c) In the case of a suspension, the Membership Committee may decide to reinstate the organisation’s membership if they receive: (i) a letter from the original complainant confirming that they are satisfied with the concerned organisation’s response; and (ii) a letter signed by the head of the suspended organisation addressed to the Chair of the Membership Committee within one year of the date of suspension with the following information:
   - Details of how they addressed the issue(s) that led to their suspension and what they learned from the process;
   - Clear statement of why they want to reactivate their membership;
   - Details of how the organisation is supporting and promoting territories of life and the work of the ICCA Consortium; and
   - Updated contact details where relevant.

If more than two years have passed since the suspension with no communication from the suspended organisation, the Membership Committee will terminate the membership fully.

(d) In the case of a termination, the organisation may not apply for membership again for at least two years after the date of termination. If they do so, they must include a description of actions taken to address the earlier issues in addition to the complete membership procedure in effect at that time. This application would follow the usual process outlined in Section 2.4 of the Membership Procedures, with the addition of the Membership Committee’s consideration of the required description of actions taken.

3. **HONORARY MEMBERS**

Refer to the Membership Policy (Part I of the present document) for the definition of Honorary members.

3.1 **Rights of Honorary members**

Honorary members have the right to participate in the ICCA Consortium’s activities and decision-making processes in accordance with the Statutes (2021), Governance Procedures (2021) and other organisational policies and procedures.
Honorary members have the right to be nominated as members of Council or appointed to an ad hoc Committee of the Council.

Honorary members have the right to be a Regional Coordinator or part of a regional coordination team and to apply for any open calls for applications for positions in the Secretariat, as long as there is no conflict of interest with simultaneous representation in the Council.

Honorary members have the right to be informed regularly about the life of the association by the Council and Secretariat, and to timely responses to requests for information about a specific decision, event, area of work or other relevant matter.

Honorary members have the right to recommend potential new Members or nominate potential new Honorary members.

Honorary members have the right to regularly receive and share information about opportunities for relevant initiatives and activities, funding, partnerships, etc.

Honorary Members have the right to air grievances and engage in conflict resolution procedures.

3.2 Responsibilities of Honorary members

i. General responsibilities

Honorary members uphold the code of ethical conduct and contribute to achieving the ICCA Consortium’s mission.

Honorary members are encouraged to be involved in the life and work of the ICCA Consortium wherever possible, and to communicate proactively with others in the membership and with relevant members of the Council and Secretariat, especially at the national and regional levels.

Honorary members are encouraged to suggest and contribute to new areas of work.

Honorary members are invited to share their experience and knowledge within the Consortium.

Honorary members must be in good standing to retain their membership.

Honorary members are encouraged to participate constructively in General Assemblies and related preparations, including contributing to consensus-building.

ii. Conditions for an Honorary member to be in good standing

Honorary members are required to be in good standing in order to retain their membership.

An Honorary member in good standing fulfils both of the following conditions:

1) Completes the triennial membership review in a timely and satisfactory manner.

   Exceptions include:
   - An Honorary member facing extenuating circumstances at the time of the membership review may be excused at that time but should respond within one year; and/or
   - Individuals that become Honorary members in the three-year period between membership reviews only need to complete the next one.

2) Contributes and communicates at least one form of voluntary collective action in support of the ICCA Consortium’s mission (‘in-kind contribution’) in the intervening period
between triennial membership reviews. Each Honorary member is encouraged to communicate this action to the Secretariat at any time of year but must be communicated or otherwise confirmed at least by the end of each triennial membership review.

Examples of collective action contributions include but are not limited to:\(^{12}\):

- For members of Indigenous peoples and local communities who are *bona fide* custodians of an ICCA—territory of life, caring for that territory or area and contributing to related community processes (such as major ceremonies or festivals, community educational programmes, collective defence against destructive industries, etc.);
- Multimedia documentation and/or communication about the situation of an ICCA—territory of life and related activities, preferably shared on the ICCA Consortium's online platforms (such as a written article, an audio recording, a radio or podcast interview, a photo essay or photo story, a short film, an interactive map, an op-ed or article in mainstream media, etc.);
- Serving as a member of the ICCA Consortium's Council or a regional governing body (council or otherwise);
- Serving as a Regional Coordinator in the ICCA Consortium's Secretariat;
- Contributing significantly to the elaboration or review of one or more of the ICCA Consortium's organisational documents;
- Contributing significantly to the organisation or hosting of a major ICCA Consortium event such as a General Assembly or regional assembly or self-funding participation in the same;
- Contributing significantly to one or more of the ICCA Consortium's thematic or cross-cutting areas of work or initiatives (including documenting, sustaining and defending territories of life, youth and intergenerational relations, gender equality, etc.);
- Contributing significantly to the development, adoption and/or implementation of policies and laws (at any level) relevant for territories of life;
- Leading or contributing significantly to a joint fundraising proposal with the ICCA Consortium that is directly related to ICCAs—territories of life;
- Supporting networking and peer learning and exchange between Members and/or custodians of territories of life;
- Supporting Indigenous peoples and local communities in their self-determined advocacy priorities for ICCAs—territories of life (such as legal recognition or defence);
- Organising or self-funding participation in other events related to territories of life (such as presenting at a workshop or conference or participating in an event on behalf of the ICCA Consortium, subject to prior agreement with the Secretariat); and/or
- Successfully nominating a Member or Honorary member for appropriate forms of recognition and support related to their work on ICCAs—territories of life (such as awards or fellowships).

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\(^{12}\) These examples are not exhaustive; innovations and creativity in the context of each region are encouraged. Identification and communication of collective action contributions should be an exchange between each Honorary member and the ICCA Consortium Secretariat (generally the relevant Regional Coordinator or regional coordination team) and an opportunity for mutual learning and support.
### 3.3 Participation of Honorary members in the General Assembly

Refer to the [Statutes (2021)](#) and [Governance Procedures (2021)](#) for more details about General Assemblies.

In accordance with the Statutes (2021), “[t]he General Assembly is the highest authority and governing body of the ICCA Consortium and is composed of all Members in good standing” (Article 7). “The General Assembly decisions are taken by consensus, building upon the advice of all Members and Honorary members willing to contribute constructively. Failing that, decisions are valid only when approved by a supermajority of two-thirds of Members in good standing present, voting by proxy or participating via electronic means” (Article 9).

Thus, Honorary members have the right to contribute constructively to building consensus for decisions taken at General Assemblies. If it is not possible to make a decision at a General Assembly by consensus of the Members and Honorary members present, Honorary members may not participate in the subsequent vote and must respect the ultimate decision of Members. If an Honorary member is not contributing constructively to deliberations or if they are actively undermining the proceedings or violating the code of ethical conduct, the chair of the General Assembly may ask them to excuse themselves or may remove them if necessary.

The Secretariat must strive to make the General Assembly as accessible as possible to the membership, whether in person and/or online. The ICCA Consortium has no obligation to provide financial support for in-person participation of Honorary members, but will endeavour to support the participation of Honorary members who are in or nominated for a position in the Council.

### 3.4 Becoming an Honorary member

Visit the webpage “[Join the ICCA Consortium](#)” for the latest information, forms and contact details in three languages.

As noted in Section 1 of the Membership Procedures, the Membership Committee oversees two membership intake rounds per year, generally in February/March and September/October unless decided otherwise. The process for Honorary member nominations is similar to that of Member applications, as detailed in Section 2.4.

Each membership intake round consists of five main steps, which are illustrated and detailed below.
Step 1: Submission of nomination

Existing ICCA Consortium Members and Honorary members in good standing can decide to nominate an individual as an Honorary member. The nominator, who should be familiar enough with the individual and their work to be able to attest to their integrity and alignment with the Consortium’s mission and values, must send a message explaining the reasons for the nomination to the Chair of the Membership Committee with a copy to the relevant person in the Secretariat (such as a Regional Coordinator). The Secretariat then informs the nominated individual and invites them to complete the Honorary member nomination form and explicitly consent to being nominated and welcomed into the membership if their nomination is accepted.

A complete nomination form in one of the main working languages of the ICCA Consortium (English, French and Spanish) must be sent to the Chair of the Membership Committee by the stated deadline of each round, which is communicated via the ICCA Consortium’s membership list and website and is generally in February/March and September/October unless decided otherwise.

Step 2: Confirmation that basic requirements are met

Upon receipt of each nomination and/or after the relevant deadline, the Chair of the Membership Committee checks that each nomination is complete and meets the requirements and basic positive attributes of an Honorary member. If not, the Chair or Secretariat support person of the Membership Committee inquires with the nominee and requests further information as needed. If further information is required, the nominee should respond in a timely manner otherwise their nomination might be included instead in the next membership intake round.

Step 3: Initial ‘due diligence’ check
The relevant person in the Secretariat (either at the regional or global level, depending on the nominee’s focus): (i) reviews the nomination carefully; (ii) asks any necessary follow-up questions to ensure the nominee is sufficiently aligned with the ICCA Consortium, including consulting with existing Members and Honorary members in the country or region as needed as part of the ongoing regionalisation process; and (iii) informs the Membership Committee of their views, including any potential issues.

**Step 4: Assessment by the entire current membership**

The Chair of the Membership Committee circulates all of the nominations that meet the basic requirements and ‘due diligence’ check to all existing Members and Honorary members via the ICCA Consortium’s “Key Information” mailing list, preferably within 2-4 weeks of the nomination deadline. The Chair asks the membership to review these nominations and raise any concerns or objections with supporting information within 30 days.

Concerns or objections should focus on whether the nominee meets the definition and positive attributes of an Honorary member as per the Membership Policy or has demonstrated behaviours that run counter to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct.

Refer to Section 3 of the Membership Policy (Part I of the present document) for the code of ethical conduct.

**Step 5: Decision about the Honorary member nomination**

(a) If no Member or Honorary member raises a concern or objection with the Chair of the Membership Committee within the 30-day period, the Honorary member nomination is considered approved. New Honorary members receive a welcome letter with membership information within 2-4 weeks and they are immediately considered part of the ICCA Consortium membership.

(b) If any current Member or Honorary member raises a concern or objection during the 30-day review period, the Membership Committee carries out further consultations and information gathering as needed to clarify the situation, including with the nominee, ensuring proper documentation of the process and deliberations. In particularly complex cases, the Membership Committee may meet online to discuss it in a confidential manner. The Committee may also ask the rest of the Council, the Council of Elders and/or the Ombudsperson for their advice.

- The Membership Committee reviews the further information gathered in a fair and impartial manner and makes a decision by consensus on whether to accept or reject the nomination in accordance with the Membership Policy.
- If the Committee decides to reject the nomination, the nominee and the Member or Honorary member who nominated them will be notified in writing and confidentially along with a brief explanation of the reason(s) why. The Committee’s decision is final and not subject to appeal.
- If the Membership Committee cannot reach a consensus decision about the nomination, they may defer the decision to the next round and request more information or assistance from the rest of the Council and/or Ombudsperson in order to make an informed decision.
The Membership Committee informs the nominee of the final decision, which is not subject to appeal.

An individual whose membership nomination is rejected may be nominated again but only after at least two years from the date of the decision and with sufficient documentation of meaningful changes made to address the reasons for the rejection. This may happen a maximum of two times.

### 3.5 Voluntary termination of membership

An Honorary member has the right to voluntarily terminate their membership at any time. They are encouraged to communicate with the Membership Committee or Secretariat before doing so in case the reasons are due to concerns or misunderstandings that can be resolved amicably. An Honorary member can terminate their membership by writing a letter to the President of the ICCA Consortium and the Chair of the Membership Committee, stating the reason(s) for their decision.

If the Honorary member submits this letter without prior communication, the Membership Committee and/or Secretariat may contact them to seek clarifications and an amicable resolution where appropriate. Otherwise, the termination is effective immediately upon confirmation by the Membership Committee, which will also inform the Council and Secretariat accordingly.

### 3.6 Responding to potential violations of the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct

If an Honorary member behaves in a way that runs counter to the ICCA Consortium’s code of ethical conduct, the Membership Committee may request a dialogue or mediation, issue a warning, suspend the Honorary member temporarily or directly terminate their membership, depending on the nature and seriousness of the issue.

Refer to Section 3 of the Membership Policy (Part 1 of the present document) for the code of ethical conduct.

The Membership Committee is responsible for considering complaints, alleged violations of the code of ethical conduct and requests for dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination of Honorary members and ensuring proper documentation of the process and deliberations. The Committee may involve the Ombudsperson, the rest of the Council or the Council of Elders if needed. In any discussions about the complaint raised, all parties involved shall engage with each other openly and with discretion and compassion, respect requests for confidentiality or anonymity (particularly of aggrieved parties) and strive to address the issue fairly and constructively.
i. Definition of responses

The ICCA Consortium may issue the following responses:

- A **request for dialogue or mediation** is the first level of response to complaints about an Honorary member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that should be possible or are desirable to resolve through direct dialogue and/or mediation between the parties concerned. The parties concerned should agree on a trusted third party within the ICCA Consortium (such as an Indigenous elder, a community leader or a member of the Council or Council of Elders) to facilitate the dialogue or mediation.

- A **warning** is the second level of response to complaints about an Honorary member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that should be possible to address but the aggrieved party does not wish to engage in direct dialogue or mediation. A notification of warning identifies in writing the concerns and suggested steps required to address them after consultation with the parties concerned. Continuation or worsening of the same or similar behaviour without concerted efforts to address it may lead to a suspension or direct termination.

- **Suspension** of membership is the third level of response to complaints about an Honorary member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that are serious enough to temporarily remove the individual from the membership but where there is some expectation or hope that the issues can still be addressed. Notification of a temporary suspension identifies in writing the concerns and suggested steps required to address them after consultation with the parties concerned. The membership is suspended until the concerns are sufficiently addressed and the organisation does not enjoy the rights of an Honorary member in the meantime. Failure to address the issues may lead to direct termination.

- **Termination** of membership is the fourth and highest level of response to concerns raised about an Honorary member’s behaviour. It is intended for situations that are serious enough to remove the individual permanently from the membership, i.e., where there is a grave violation of the code of ethical conduct and irreversible harm caused.
ii. Procedures for responses

Figure 6: Overview of procedures for responding to complaints or alleged violations of the ICCA Consortium's code of ethical conduct.

**Step 1: Submission of a complaint or request for a dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination**

Any of the following parties may raise a complaint about an Honorary member's behaviour and may directly request a dialogue or mediation, warning, suspension or termination: Members; other Honorary members; members of the Council or Council of Elders; members of the Secretariat; or funders, partners or collaborators.

Such a complaint or request may be submitted in writing to the ICCA Consortium's Ombudsperson, the relevant person in the Secretariat (such as a Regional Coordinator) and/or the Chair of the Membership Committee. The complaint or request should provide all necessary information, including a chronology of events, available evidence and documentation, actions taken to date and clear explanation of the reasons for the complaint or request with reference to the ICCA Consortium's code of ethical conduct (see Section 3 of the Membership Policy).

Throughout the process, those involved on behalf of the ICCA Consortium will strive to maintain discretion and confidentiality of the aggrieved person or organisation unless otherwise required for safety, security or legal reasons.

**Step 2: Assessment by the initial point of contact and Membership Committee**

Whoever first receives the concern or request (the Ombudsperson, the relevant person in the Secretariat and/or the Chair of the Membership Committee) will conduct an initial check of its veracity and legitimacy, including discussions with the parties concerned about actual or potential responses and desired outcomes, and then forward it to the Membership Committee.
The Membership Committee considers all available information and may request further information or consultations, including with the relevant regional representative in the (global) Council and/or the regional Council, if applicable. In particularly complex cases, the Membership Committee may ask the rest of the Council, the Council of Elders and/or the Ombudsperson for their advice.

Given the potential complexity and sensitivity of these situations, no specific timeline is required but all parties involved are expected and encouraged to respond in a timely and constructive manner.

**Step 3: Decision about the required response**

The Membership Committee makes a decision by consensus about how best to respond based on all available information and after careful deliberation. Possible decisions include: (i) requesting dialogue or mediation between the parties concerned; (ii) issuing a warning; (iii) suspending the membership; or (iv) terminating the membership. The Committee may also decide that the complaint or request is unfounded and should be dismissed.

In particularly complex cases or if the Membership Committee cannot agree by consensus on the appropriate response, the Committee may request the Council as a whole to consider and make a decision on the matter while respecting confidentiality of the aggrieved parties.

**Step 4: Informing the Honorary member in question**

The Chair of the Membership Committee will inform the Honorary member in question and other involved parties of their decision in writing. The Membership Committee will also inform the Council and relevant members of the Secretariat.

The Honorary member should confirm receipt of the decision and their intention to appropriately address the complaint, if applicable.

**Step 5: Follow-up actions**

(a) In the case of a request for dialogue or mediation, the Honorary member in question is responsible for sufficiently addressing the complaint and communicating their actions to the Membership Committee. If the complaint cannot be resolved through dialogue or mediation or if the situation has worsened, it can be escalated to a warning, suspension or termination, depending on its nature and severity.

(b) In the case of a warning, the Honorary member in question is responsible for sufficiently addressing the complaint and steps set out in the warning letter and communicating their actions to the Membership Committee. If they continue to exhibit the same or similar behaviour or if the situation worsens because of their actions, the Membership Committee may decide to suspend or even terminate their membership.

(c) In the case of a suspension, the Membership Committee may decide to reinstate the individual's membership if they receive: (i) a letter from the original complainant confirming that they are satisfied with the concerned individual’s response; and (ii) a letter signed by the suspended Honorary member addressed to the Chair of the Membership Committee within one year of the date of suspension with the following information:

- Details of how they addressed the issue(s) that led to their suspension and what they learned from the process;
o Clear statement of why they want to reactivate their membership;
o Details of how they are supporting and promoting territories of life and the work of the ICCA Consortium; and
o Updated contact details where relevant.

If more than two years have passed since the suspension with no communication from the suspended individual, the Membership Committee will terminate the membership fully.

(d) In the case of a termination, the individual may not be nominated again for at least two years after the date of termination. If they are, they must include a description of actions taken to address the earlier issues in addition to the complete membership procedure in effect at that time. This nomination would follow the usual process outlined in Section 3.4 of the Membership Procedures, with the addition of the Membership Committee's consideration of the required description of actions taken

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