



STATUTES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE MAR-RRN

Edited:
Revised by:

**REEF RESTORATION NETWORK OF THE MESOAMERICAN REEF SYSTEM
(MEXICO, BELIZE, GUATEMALA, AND HONDURAS)**

STATUTES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE MAR-RRN

Purpose/Objectives of this document:

1. The objective of the Bylaws is to function as a frame of reference to establish internal and external governance, formal incorporation of interested partners, their operation, administration and functional structure of the Reef Restoration Network of the Mesoamerican Reef System, hereinafter the RRN- MAR.
2. The purpose is to formalize and strengthen the establishment of the MAR-RRN, fostering the exchange of technical and scientific information, good practices, planning and results on the reinforcement of restoration and conservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems in the MAR region among the concerned parties. Promoting, in this way, the development of capacities in the region of both the MAR-RRN and its members.

Definitions

For the purposes of these Bylaws, it shall be understood as:

1. **The MAR-RRN:** To the group of people and entities (governmental, non-governmental, academic, cooperation and financing organizations, private sector and individuals) mainly from the region of the Mesoamerican Reef System that comprise the countries of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras that have subscribed the present document, and with the possibility of the participation of other countries that need to subscribe.
2. **The Assembly:** Comprised by the members of the MAR-RRN who attend ordinary meetings. It is the governance mechanism that approves the initiatives proposed by the Executive Committee.
3. **Bylaws:** Document that describes the operating framework of the MAR-RRN.
4. **The Members:** People who represent government agencies, academia, non-governmental, cooperation and financing organizations, the private sector and individuals from the countries of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, as well as international entities, experts and professionals in the field of restoration and conservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems. Who have and/or collaborate in a coral reef restoration and conservation project, and at least once a year, contribute with information regarding the database, reports of restoration activities and conservation of coral reefs, and/or with other documents related to the activities of the MAR-RRN.
5. **The Executive Committee:** It is the governance mechanism of the MAR-RRN. It is the body that will make decisions based on the recommendations of the Assembly and will look for mechanisms, both financial and technical, to be able to carry out decision-making; taking into account the existing and potential limitations (financial, geographical, technical) for its execution. The Executive Committee is comprised by:
 - 5.1. **Committee Chairman:** He or she will be an active member of the MAR-RRN. At the same time, will take the position of National Representative and will be elected in the Assembly. Must be an expert in coral reef restoration and conservation issues. Proactive and capable of technical and scientific leadership, and strategic vision. Will be in charge of the effective coordination between the members of the Committee and of proposing actions to comply with the agreements emanating from and by the Assembly.

- 5.2. **National Representative before the Committee:** Can be any active member of the MAR-RRN located in each country. Will be in charge of the creation and monitoring of the National Restoration Plan, which will be based on the Regional Restoration Plan. He will be elected by the Assembly, and may be an expert or professional on coral reef conservation and restoration issues. Proactive with technical and scientific leadership capacity in his or her country.
- 5.3. **Donors Representative:** Will be invited by the Executive Committee to support it in the operation, administration and functioning of the MAR-RRN. Will be in charge of a member of international cooperation and/or private donor, and/or the host cooperators of the MAR-RRN for the two years of operation of the elected Executive Committee. At the discretion of the Committee, more donor representatives may be invited.
- 5.4. **Alternates:** They will be approved by the General Assembly based on the recommendations of the full members. Each full member must recommend at least two potential alternates, who must be active members of the MAR-RRN.
6. **Communications coordinator:** Will be in charge of carrying out the activities outlined in the MAR-RRN communication strategy, the maintenance, operation and updating of the website (www.coralmar.org), as well as any other action that allows the exchange of information, email lists, training, forums, publications, social networks and virtual library, among others.
7. **Work Groups:** Work groups may be organized by country or region to address specific issues. The result or products of these work groups will be shared within the communication strategy.
8. **The MAR:** Mesoamerican Reef System.

Mission

The MAR-RRN facilitates collaboration and capacity building to restore the structure and function of coral reefs and associated ecosystems in the region.

Vision

The MAR-RRN is the main source of information on the issue of marine ecosystem restoration and is the regional platform to coordinate and develop the innovative scientific and technical capacity of its member organizations.

General Objective of the MAR-RRN

Exchange of knowledge, experiences, best practices and methodologies in the restoration of reefs and associated ecosystems (sea grasses, mangroves, beach vegetation and beaches) among experts, professionals, technicians, scientists, governmental and non-governmental organizations, from the four countries of the region of the MAR and other associated/subscribed countries.

Specific Objectives of The MAR-RRN:

1. Strengthen reef restoration in the MAR region, using a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach.
2. Position the network as the regional advisory body for the restoration of the marine ecosystem.
3. Develop a model for the self-sufficiency of the MAR-RRN in two years.
4. Maintain a bilingual platform that communicates restoration efforts in the MAR with partners and other interested entities.
5. Maintain and update the bilingual website to exchange information and communication between the members of the MAR-RRN

Structure of theMAR-RRN:

1. **Assembly**
2. **Executive Committee**
3. **Communications coordinator**
4. **Work Groups**

Structure Functions of the MAR-RRN:

Assembly: The Assembly is the body that defines the strategic orientation of the operation of the Network. It requires half plus one of the members of the MAR-RRN to meet. Decisions will be made by a simple majority of the members present at the biannual meeting. The Assembly will be convened by the president of the MAR-RRN, after discussion and approval of the members of the Executive Committee.

Assignments of the members during the General Assembly are:

1. Elect the members of the Executive Committee
2. Elect the Chairman of the MAR-RRN from among the members of the Assembly by vote.
3. Meet and elect new members of the MAR-RRN
4. Decide on the additional positions that are considered necessary to strengthen the MAR-RRN and elect the representatives of these positions.
5. Set the date and place of meetings of the General Assembly
6. Present situations that they consider relevant to discuss within the General Assembly
7. Decide the number of activity members to participate in the MAR-RRN.
8. Decide on the mechanism for adherence to the MAR-RRN
9. For government agencies, decide on the mechanism for appointing their representatives to the MAR-RRN.
10. Strengthen the Committees and Working Groups derived from the MAR-RRN;

Executive Committee Roles

Chairperson: Is in charge of proposing actions based on the agreements emanated from the Assembly in the Biennial Meeting(s) of the MAR-RRN, maintaining communication with the National Representatives, convene ordinary and/or extraordinary working meetings, propose the venues, dates and support in the logistical preparations of the biennial meetings, as well as communicating the actions of the MAR-RRN. Will work in direct coordination with the Donors' Representative and with external cooperation, and with the rest of the members of the Executive Committee, in the procurement of funds and in the review and preparation of proposals to modify the Bylaws. Will analyze and propose the adherence or exclusion of a member of the MAR-RRN.

National Representative: Is in charge of supporting the national partners to comply with the agreements emanated from the Assembly at the MAR-RRN Biennial Meeting(s); maintain communication with the Chairperson and National Representatives at the request of the Chairperson; convene ordinary and/or extraordinary work meetings with the members of the MAR-RRN in the country that coordinates; recommend the venues, dates, and work on the logistical preparations for the biennial meetings in conjunction with the Chairperson; as well as communicating the actions of the MAR-RRN. Additionally, will work in direct coordination with the Donors' Representative, and with the rest of the members of the Executive Committee, in the procurement of funds, in the review and elaboration of proposals to modify the Bylaws in coordination with the Chairperson. Will analyze and propose the adherence or exclusion of a member of the Network and other tasks that the Chairperson assigns him/her.

Among other functions, the National Representative shall:

1. Ensure the formulation, execution, evaluation, and monitoring of the biannual operative plan of the MAR-RRN in the MAR, through meetings and emails in conjunction with the Network Coordinator.
2. Participate in the Specific end of year evaluation meeting, checkpoints meetings to make sure that activities and objectives outlined each year are being completed every semester.

Representative of the Donors: Their function is to support the coordination of the organization of the biennial meeting(s) of the MAR-RRN; support fundraising; maintain and promote communication with all members of the Network; propose general and specific projects and lines of action; directly support the Chairperson in decision-making in conjunction with the National Representatives; ensure communication between the Coordinator of the MAR-RRN, and the members of the Executive Committee; as well as other tasks assigned by the Chairperson.

Alternates: They will be approved by the General Assembly based on the recommendations of the members. Each member must recommend at least two potential alternates, who must be members of the MAR-RRN.

MAR-RRN Roles

1. **The MAR-RRN:** The group of people and entities (governmental, non-governmental, academic, cooperation and financing organizations, private sector and individuals) mainly from the region of the Mesoamerican Reef Region that comprise the countries of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras that have subscribed the present document, and with the possibility of the participation of other countries that need to subscribe.
2. **The Assembly:** Comprised by the members of the MAR-RRN who attend ordinary meetings. It is the governance mechanism that approves the initiatives proposed by the Executive Committee.
3. **Bylaws:** Document that describes the operating framework of the MAR-RRN.
4. **The Members:** People who represent government agencies, academia, non-governmental, cooperation and financing organizations, the private sector and individuals from the countries of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, as well as international entities, experts and professionals in the field of restoration and conservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems. Who have and/or collaborate in a coral reef restoration and conservation project, and at least once a year, contribute with information regarding the database, reports of restoration activities and conservation of coral reefs, and/or with other documents related to the activities of the MAR-RRN.
5. **The Executive Committee:** It is the governance mechanism of the MAR-RRN. It is the body that will make decisions based on the recommendations of the Assembly and will look for mechanisms, both financial and technical, to be able to carry out decision-making; taking into account the existing and potential limitations (financial, geographical, technical) for its execution. The Executive Committee is comprised by :
 - 5.1. The Chairperson
 - 5.2. A National Representative for each country (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras), one of whom is also elected as Chairperson.
 - 5.3. A Representative for the Donors
 - 5.4. The Network Coordinator
 - 5.5. All of the above positions must be fulfilled by a person living and working in those respective countries.
6. **The MAR:** Mesoamerican Reef Region.

Electoral Process for the MAR-RRN Executive Committee

This section hereby describes the process for nomination and electing of National Representatives and Chairperson of the MAR-RRN Executive Committee.

Validity Period of Positions

The national representative positions have a validity of 2 years, with the possibility of re-election if agreed by the country or General Assembly.

Nomination Process

The nomination process for National Representative will take place prior to the Biennial Meeting. Members from each country will meet at either a virtual or in-person meeting, convened by the MAR-RRN Coordinator. Any active member may nominate themselves or another active member for the role. Each nominee must have the support of at least 2 nominators to be considered officially nominated. Nominees must be present at the Biennial meeting and must fulfill all requirements as noted above.

Voting Process

Members, including nominees, present at the meeting and during the nomination process will be able to vote for their preferred candidate by a simple raising of the hand or in writing. Votes will be counted immediately by the MAR-RRN Coordinator to determine which candidates have a simple majority of votes, in other words, half of the present active members plus one. In the event of a tie, a second round of voting will be held. In the event of a second tie, the candidate will be elected by chance.

In the case that the elected candidate can not fulfill their nomination, the runner-up will be elected to the position in the Executive Committee.

Election of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee

The Presidency of the Executive Committee will be held on a rotating basis. The following is the order which has been agreed upon:

1. Mexico
2. Guatemala
3. Honduras
4. Belize

If the chosen Chairperson is unable to carry out the role, the Chair will be given to the next country in line.

Executive Committee Transition

Starting from the first of the next month after the ending of the Biennial meeting, the new Executive Committee will take over their new roles and responsibilities. For a period of a month, the outgoing, and incoming Executive Committees will overlap to ensure a smooth transition of information, projects, and any

pending items. The MAR-RRN Coordinator will facilitate the transition by making all documents, and information available to the incoming Executive Committee.

Special Situations

1. In case a member of the Executive Committee wishes to resign, they must write a letter to the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, letting them know the date of their last day as representative.
2. The Executive Committee must then inform the General Assembly and hold elections for a new representative.

Responsibilities of the MAR-RRN Executive Committee

The members of the Executive Committee will be responsible for:

1. Participating in the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings
2. Follow up on the agreements of the General Assembly
3. Evaluate applications of new members.
 - 3.1. The applicant must fill out a membership application form, which will be created by the Executive Committee
 - 3.2. The applicant must be endorsed by an active member of The MAR-RRN.
 - 3.3. The admission of new members will be ratified during the corresponding General Assembly
4. Promote the preparation of financing proposals for the activities of the MAR-RRN, including fundraising for the network. Which will help to finance biannual meetings, the website, other meetings or events of the network, the Coordinator role, etc.
 - 4.1. All national representatives could apply to funding with their organizations, support the fundraising process by looking for grants, reviewing proposals, offering matching funds and fundraise for reef restoration projects.
 - 4.2. The National Representatives could have a workgroup/team looking for opportunities to fundraise for the Network. In addition, there could be another workgroup/team looking for opportunities to share with the members that benefit their projects.
5. Support the processes of collaboration and institutional strengthening within the framework of the MAR-RRN;
 - 5.1. Create connections between institutions.
 - 5.2. Share information about opportunities for capacity building through the websites and newsletter with the members of the network, through the Network's Coordinator.
6. Review and approve the work plan and the annual budget prepared by the Network Coordinator.
7. Reply to any and all emails sent by the Network Coordinator, Members of the Network, or any other related communications pertaining to the MAR-RRN.
8. Review and provide feedback about any and all external consultancies products, as required.
9. Review and provide feedback about any and all products presented by the Network Coordinator.
10. Attend any and all Executive Committee meetings.
 - 10.1. If a National Representative cannot attend a meeting due to force majeure (travel, illness, etc.), they must excuse themselves from it in advance (if it is a General assembly, at least a 2-week notice must be given) by sending a letter/email addressed to the Executive Committee Chairperson. The National Representatives will be given the option of attending in an in-person and/or virtual capacity, thus, flexibility and consideration will be given always,

- 10.2. Members who do not attend 3 consecutive meetings without an excuse, will be removed from the Committee and replaced by the alternate.
- 10.3. After missing 2 meetings, the National Representative will be issued a warning by the Chairperson, letting them know that removal action is impending, and requesting a formal explanation or notification as to why they have not been in attendance. If the National Representative continues to be absent, the Chairperson will issue a removal letter.
- 10.4. In case of not being able to attend for justifiable reasons, the alternate must attend and may make decisions on behalf of the full member.
11. Respond in a timely way (1 week) to emails and communications sent to/and by the members of the Executive Committee.
12. Country representatives must communicate effectively with the network members in each country and support the Network Coordinator in any communication strategies as devised per year.

Alternates

As an option, each committee member can send and have an Alternate to attend meetings or events. The Alternate cannot vote or make decisions, but can share the point of view of the National Representative. This Alternate can be chosen at the discretion of the National Representative.

Membership Criteria for MAR-RRN

For the purposes of these Bylaws, Members of the MAR-RRN are understood to be individuals which are a professional or expert in matters of restoration and/or conservation of coral reefs, attached or not to governmental, academic or research institutions, of civil society, and private companies committed to the environment. **The categories for participating within the MAR-RRN Network include 1) Members; 2) Strategic Partners.**

1. To be considered a **Member** the following requirements must be met:

1. Have knowledge and/or interest in the areas of ecology or biology of coral reefs and/or associated ecosystems, marine biodiversity and protected species, management of marine protected areas, connectivity, pollution, oceanography, climate change and/or governance, among others.
2. Have interest, knowledge and/or experience in restoration and conservation of coral reefs and/or associated ecosystems.
3. Share information, at least once a year or whenever the Network requests, about their organization and its projects in support of restoration, conservation and/or monitoring in the MAR, following the appropriate channels as stipulated in the Protocol for the Exchange of Information
4. Others defined by the MAR-RRN Executive Committee.
 - a. Application process (have an application form):
 - i. Basic information
 - ii. training/knowledge credentials
 - iii. experience
 - iv. letter of recommendation
 - v. permits (proof of) or agreement with someone with permits
 - b. have a letter of recommendation from an active member that will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and determine if accepted

Members will be able to access the following:

1. Access to webinars taught by experts.
2. Access to the MAR-RRN directory of contacts to collaborate, share and/or exchange information on projects for the restoration and conservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems.
3. Attend MAR-RRN meetings in person or virtually.
4. Participate in the decision-making of the assembly during the biennial meetings of the MAR-RRN. Members that did not participated in the meeting previous to the assembly can't vote
5. Active members will be able to access capacity building through training and exchanges, courses, webinars, among others.

Functions of MAR-RRN Members

1. Participate in the selection of specific actions promoted by the Executive Committee, the National Representative and the work groups.
2. Participate in Biennial Meetings, ordinary or extraordinary, at the request of the Executive Committee.
3. Collaborate in the tasks of the Work Groups and/or the MAR-RRN.
4. Provide Feedback to the MAR-RRN, the website and the newsletter through the RRI Coordination, the MAR-RRN Coordination and the Executive Committee.
5. If members choose to attend in person and there is no funding, members will do their best to pay their participation costs in the General Assembly and other meetings, in case there are not enough funds to cover the participation of all members.
6. MAR-RRN information should not be shared without prior notice to the RRI coordination, the MAR-RRN Coordination and the Executive Committee.
7. Members will act in an ethical and responsible way in accordance with the principles of creation of the MAR-RRN. Any non-compliance will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly.

Rights and Obligations of MAR-RRN Members:

Rights:

1. Members will have the right to elect the members of the Executive Committee.
2. The members of the MAR-RRN will have the right to be elected as part of the Executive Committee and for the Chair of the MAR-RRN
3. members will have the right to create work groups.
4. All members will have the right to join work groups.
5. All members may apply or participate in opportunities for courses, workshops or training etc. to strengthen the restoration and conservation activities of coral reefs and associated ecosystems organized, promoted, belonging to the MAR RRN

Obligations:

Members should contribute with the following:

1. Provide basic information about their organization, their projects related to the restoration and/or conservation of coral reefs and/or associated ecosystems in the MAR.

2. Share communication material, photographs, videos, infographics, leaflets, scientific articles, among others to be shared through the website www.coralmar.org and social networks of the MAR-RRN.
3. They may prepare proposals to participate in projects for the restoration and conservation of coral reefs and/or associated ecosystems, and to include components to maintain the network when possible in the MAR,.
4. Members should share information on webinars, courses, training opportunities and presentation or talks on restoration and/or conservation of coral reefs and/or associated ecosystems. Members may also request to present relevant information at meetings, or develop activities with other members and share with the network.
5. Maintain contact with the MAR-RRN Coordination and the Executive Committee at least once a year via email to update information.

Strategic Partners will be considered those individuals, organizations, or institutions who are currently working in coral restoration, or involved in restoration practices, conservation, or general interest in the subjects outside the MAR region, and can collaborate, exchange information and provide funding or other resources helpful to the MAR-RRN members.

- a. Strategic partners do not have the right to vote

Technical Committees and Work Groups:

The Technical Committees and Work Groups will be created as the need arises to create them. The Executive Committee will have all the power to create the work groups without ratification by the General Assembly. The General Assembly has the power to suggest the creation of technical committees and national and regional working groups.

Validity Period of Positions:

The positions or responsibilities have a validity period of 2 years with the possibility of being re-elected.

Financial Resources

The financial resources collected and/or contributed for the operation of The MAR-RRN must be administered by the Fund (or donor body) that has representation before the Executive Committee. The management of funds will be coordinated with the President of the RR-SAM and the host member fund.

Meetings

The MAR-RRN will meet regularly every two years through Biennial Meetings, which will be organized by a local entity, appointed by the Executive Committee, which is an active member of The MAR-RRN and has the capacity and experience to manage funds in a transparent way.

Conditions to carry out the meetings of the General Assembly:

1. The ordinary meetings of The MAR-RRN will be held in one of the countries of the MAR region.
2. The meeting venues will be itinerant and rotating, every two years.
3. The Executive Committee and the selected organization will create the budget, plan the meeting, prepare the agenda and define the list of participants.
4. The Executive Committee will raise the funds to hold the meetings.

Disclosure and Confidentiality of Information

1. All the documents generated by The MAR-RRN will be available through the official website (www.coralmar.org), guaranteeing wide access to all members.
2. The information generated and contained in the database will be accessible only to active members.
3. The disclosure of the information must have the formal approval of the institutions or people who produced the information.

MAR-RRN languages

The official languages of the MAR-RRN are Spanish and English and all the documentation generated will be transcribed in both languages, as well as all other documents generated in ordinary and extraordinary sessions.

Withdrawal

- The members can withdraw from the MAR-RRN when they request it, for which they will give notice 30 days in advance, by means of a signed letter, addressed to the Executive Committee.
- If the member is part of the Executive Committee or Work Group, must announce his or her withdrawal with 60 days in advance.
- In the event that the member is part of a Work Group, in addition to announcing his or her withdrawal, must also propose a member to replace him or her.

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