

The Northern Forum

Resolution #114 Northern Form Structure

Background

In an effort to streamline the operations of the Northern Forum and improve communications among all members of the Northern Forum, changes in the Bylaws are needed. These changes will result in cost savings for the Northern Forum and its member regions, especially those members of the Executive Committee. In addition, the changes will provide for a clear Chain of Command and line of authority.

Discussion:

Recommendations of the Executive Director:

- Determine the need to streamline the Chain of Command by eliminating the Management Committee.
 - The functions of the Management Committee are duplicative with those of the Regional Coordinators;
 - This change places the responsibility of the activities of the NF back with the full membership, rather than a small subset;
 - It expands the communication among all member regions and eliminates the perception of a small, elite group making decisions; and
 - It significantly lessens the economic burden and time constraints on the Secretariat, and Associate Secretariats in planning and preparing for multiple Management Committee and Regional Coordinators Committee meetings in one year. Sharply reduces the costs for travel, and allows Secretariat staff to focus on core missions – such as project support and member services.
- Change the Chair of the Regional Coordinators Committee from the Executive Director to the Regional Coordinator from the Chairing Region.
 - This provides a direct line of authority from the Chairman of the Board to the Chairman of the Regional Coordinators Committee; and
 - It keeps the decision-making bodies of the Northern Forum under the Chairmanship of the members.
- The Regional Coordinators Committee should be tasked with:
 - Review the Biennial Work Plans of the Secretariat and Associate Secretariats;
 - Review the progress of approved projects;
 - Provide recommendations to the Board of Governors (or Executive Committee) on the work and performance of the Secretariat, Associate Secretariats and the Executive Director.
 - Encourage the Regional Coordinators to meet 2 times per year, to increase the participation and activities.

- Consider changing the name of the Regional Coordinators to Senior Regional Officials – to more accurately reflect the nature of their position and responsibilities.
- Require that activities that occur under the name or sponsorship of the Northern Forum must be approved by the Executive Director or the Regional Coordinators to ensure that the activity meets the Goals and Objectives of the Northern Forum as identified in the Bylaws, Strategic Plan and Declarations of the Forum.
- Consider placing the operations of the Associate Secretariats under the control of the Secretariat, including commitment of financial resources to operate the Associate Secretariats. This will require adjustments to the operating budget of the NF, and may affect the status of current employees within their government structure.
- Task the Regional Coordinators Committee with a complete review of the Bylaws and the specific authorities of the various Committees. The RCC's should develop specific duties for the various committees and officers of the Northern Forum.

Be it resolved by the Executive Committee of the Northern Forum:

1. **The Management Committee (also known as the Steering Committee) of the Northern Forum is eliminated. Their duties are transferred to the Regional Coordinators Committee.**
2. **The Chairmanship of the Regional Coordinators Committee shall be the Regional Coordinator from the Northern Forum Chairing Region.**
3. **The Regional Coordinators are tasked with additional assignments, as outlined in this resolution.**
4. **Activities conducted under the name or sponsorship of the Northern Forum must be approved by the Executive Director, in writing. Approvals for NF sponsorship shall ensure that the activity meets the Goals and Objectives of the Northern Forum Strategic Plan, and conforms with the Bylaws and Declarations of the Northern Forum. This approval process does not apply to Projects of the Northern Forum which continue to be controlled by specific guidelines in the Bylaws.**

Signed and Approved this 19th day of June, 2005 in Harbin, Heilongjiang, China