

COMOS POLICY ON NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

Version:/...../2018

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Approved by:

1. INTRODUCTION:

The National Scientific Committees (NSCs) represent the different domains within COMOS India's field of Cultural Heritage conservation and preservation. Each committee is expected to gather, study and disseminate knowledge regarding the principles, techniques and policies pertaining to heritage protection in the country and internationally. All work done by the NSC needs to be ratified by the Executive Committee.

1.1. Status of NSC:

NSC's are not independent bodies and are legally and financially responsible to the Executive Committee, of COMOS as per the provisions of the national law, any breach of the same shall be subject to legal and disciplinary actions.

- i. The working and operation of the National Scientific Committees must be in accordance with the rules of COMOS as outlined in its Memorandum of Association and SOPGs, ICOMOS Statutes, Rules of Procedure and Ethical Principles.
- ii. National Scientific Committees shall be convened by the COMOS Executive Committee, at least once a year in consultation with the Scientific Counsellor.
- iii. Annual publication/dissemination of the work done by the NSC on the ICOMOS INDIA Website, the Scientific Counsellor should be responsible for the same.

1.2. Role of National Scientific Counsellor

The COMOS Executive Committee shall appoint a National Scientific Counsellor for monitoring the activities and programs of the National Scientific Committees. Any COMOS member having experience of minimum 10 years (in practice, academia or related field contributing to heritage management practices) and having been a member of COMOS for at least three consecutive years shall be considered for the post of the National Scientific Counsellor based on the call for application from within the Membership. The Counsellor shall ensure coordination, information

exchange and conflict resolution amongst the NSCs. The Counsellor will be directly accountable and report to the COMOS Executive Committee.

The Counsellor will be assisted by the Secretariat of COMOS. The responsibilities of the Scientific Counsellor shall be as outlined below:

- i. Maintain updated NSC member lists and the details of the Coordinator/s from the NSCs;
- ii. Receive announcements of NSC meetings from the respective Coordinators and approve date of the meeting after consulting annual calendar of events of COMOS;
- iii. Receive minutes of meetings from the respective Coordinators and compile same for the Annual Report;
- iv. Receive Annual Plans and Schedules from the respective NSCs Coordinators and review the same;
- v. Provide recommendations on NSC annual plans to Executive Committee for approval;
- vi. Receive and review 6 monthly reports from Coordinators;
- vii. Prepare annual calendar of activities in consultation with NSC and Executive Committee;

1.3. Role of NSC Coordinator:

Each NSC would elect from within its voting members a coordinator. The coordinator shall ensure coordination, information exchange and conflict resolution amongst the members of the NSC. The Coordinator will be directly accountable and report to the National Scientific Counsellor.

- i. The NSC Coordinator will be elected for a term period of 2 years in the beginning of every year in January. No member can be a coordinator for more than 2 terms for the same NSC.
- ii. The NSC Coordinator shall hold only a single portfolio at a time, should the Coordinator be elected to another position, he/she would need to step down and hand the position to another member for the remainder of the term till the next cycle of elections are held. Alternatively the NSC members may collectively decide to appoint an interim coordinator.
- iii. In the event the NSC Coordinator is likely to be out of the country for a considerable length of time (more than four months), he/she shall step down and follow the same process as mentioned in ii.
- iv. If the NSC Coordinator gets elected to another position on the ISC, he/shall follow the same procedure as ii.

The role of the Coordinator shall be as outlined below:

- i. He/she shall maintain updated NSC member lists and their details;
- ii. Conduct and convene regular meetings within the members of the NSC;
- iii. Compile the minutes of meetings and share with the National Scientific Counsellor;
- iv. Prepare Annual Plans and Schedules in keeping with the Strategic Vision of COMOS;
- v. Prepare monthly and annual reports of their activities and submit to the National Scientific Counsellor;
- vi. Prepare annual calendar of activities in keeping with their Strategic Vision in consultation with National Scientific Counsellor;
- vii. Be responsible for preparing budgets and receiving and managing funds received for any activities.

2. FORMING A NSC:

Potential NSCs are encouraged to consider the objectives, membership requirements and related issues presented in the overall COMOS Policies and Guidelines Manual. NSCs will not necessarily be governed by the same requirements as ISCs, but similar considerations will guide whether or not the Executive Committee will decide to endorse the formation of a new NSC. COMOS members who wish to form a new NSC should discuss the proposal with members of Executive Committee. COMOS members who propose to form a NSC must submit to the Executive Committee a 'National Scientific Committee Statement'. The statement provides the Executive Committee with the information necessary for the EX Com to form a view as to whether or not the NSC shall receive COMOS endorsement. Consideration should also be given to whether or not the formation of the new NSC is consistent with the current COMOS India's Strategic Plan. For any new NSC to be formed it is required that a working group be constituted on the subject and only after review of the outcome after a year should the NSC be created.

A member of India may send a proposal to establish a new National Scientific Committee to COMOS Executive Committee. The proposal must include a rationale and justification for the committee. The proponent must also demonstrate expertise/experience in the domain proposed. The proposal will be evaluated and if approved by the Executive Committee, the NSC will be established.

The Executive Committee may establish and/or dissolve National Scientific Committee/s in consultation with the National Scientific Counsellor. Minimum 8 members must subscribe for the establishment and continuance of the NSC. If mandatory requirements are not met the NSC may be considered dormant till such time the mandatory requirements are complied with.

3. MEMBERSHIP:

No member can be refused admission to an NSC.

Each member of the NSC must continue to be members of that NSC for minimum 2 years in cycles of 2 years before changing over to a new NSC subject. The same must be informed to the coordinator and the counsellor com.

3.1 Code of conduct for NSC Counsellor/Coordinator:

All members of the COMOS Executive Committee and its Associated Committees are bound by this Code of Conduct. (Ref ICOMOS India Policy on Code of Conduct) The NSC Coordinator and NSC Counsellor shall follow the following principles

1. Act ethically with honesty and integrity;
2. Exercise due care, diligence and skill;
3. Act in good faith in the best interest of COMOS;
4. Act fairly and impartially;
5. Use information appropriately;
6. Comply with the governance rules of COMOS and the ethical principles.

3.2 Code of Conduct for Members of NSC

1. Members of COMOS shall abide with the obligations set out in the ICOMOS Statutes and Ethical Principles, non-compliance by members shall be reviewed by COMOS and if required by the International Scientific Committees or the Bureau of ICOMOS, which may lead to sanctions
2. In all matters related to the workings of COMOS, the members shall maintain the confidentiality of information and refrain from any kind of activity that could undermine the interests of COMOS
3. Members of COMOS are to refrain from projecting themselves as "consultants/experts/advisors/employees" to COMOS or ICOMOS India or ICOMOS International. If any member is found to malpractice or falsehood, his/her membership would be revoked immediately.
4. The intellectual contribution of COMOS Members in any of the activities of COMOS would be duly acknowledged. However the intellectual property rights for work would rest with COMOS and not with the individual member. In case, an individual member or members have contributed, then they would be duly acknowledged by COMOS
5. All members involved in policy/scientific work with COMOS and its scientific committees are required to disclose to COMOS any professional, contractual or voluntary work done on the subject of the policy/scientific work in question to avoid any conflict of interest and duplication of work.
6. COMOS members must avoid being judges in their own cause: when they are involved in work concerning a specific site and also participating in advisory or

decision-making bodies of local or national authorities, they must not take part in any decisions relating to that site.

7. COMOS is a non-profit society and therefore each member is required to contribute to its activities on voluntary pro bono basis.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

No officer bearers, members of the Executive Committee, National Scientific Counsellor, Coordinators of NSC or Working Groups as well as any employees nor others acting for or on behalf of COMOS shall engage in any activity which is in conflict with, or appears to be in conflict with, the interest of COMOS.

4.1 Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest exists when a covered person (as defined below) proposes to act on any issue, matter, or transaction in which COMOS has an interest, and the covered person may have an interest separate from COMOS that may compromise or appear to compromise the covered person's judgment in the performance of his or her duties, create actual or apparent impropriety, create negative publicity and or have a potential loss or harm to COMOS, including but not limited to, loss of confidence in COMOS monetary loss, or erosion of employee and volunteer morale. A conflict of interest also exists in situations in which there is an appearance that a covered person is utilizing inside information that is proprietary to COMOS for his or her personal benefit, is acting in his or her own interest rather than the best interest of COMOS, has the ability to exercise undue influence over COMOS decisions, or is receiving favorable treatment by COMOS because of his or her status as a covered person.

4.2 Covered Person: A covered person includes officer bearers, members of the Executive Committee, National Scientific Counsellor, Coordinators of NSC or Working Groups as well as any employees or others acting for or on behalf of COMOS and close relatives thereof.

- i. **Close Relative.** A close relative includes a spouse, partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, first cousin, corresponding in-law or step relation, or any person who shares living quarters under circumstances that closely resemble a marital relationship or who is financially dependent upon the office bearer or employee.
- ii. **Inside Information.** Inside information includes any material information that is identified as confidential and proprietary, pertaining to the business and affairs of COMOS, whether related to a specific transaction or to matters pertaining to

COMOS interests, activities, and policies. When a potential conflict occurs, it shall be addressed as follows:

4.3 Members of the Executive Committee, National Scientific Counsellor, Coordinators of NSC and Working Groups:

Members of the Executive Committee, National Scientific Counsellor and Coordinators of NSC and Working Groups will follow the following procedure to resolve potential conflicts of interest regarding their duties as members of the Committee.

When a potential conflict of interest occurs on behalf of a coordinator/ NSC Counsellor/ Executive Committee Member , the interested person, in advance of initiating the activity giving rise to the conflict, shall inform the Executive Committee of the details of the potential conflict for the purpose of causing the Executive Committee to determine whether such a conflict of interest exists to the degree that the individual director should be excused from the Executive Committee or Associated Committees during debate and voting on matters relating to the conflict. At the appropriate time, the Executive Committee, having been informed of the potential conflict of interest, may question the director concerning the identified special interest. After the Executive Committee determines it has all of the necessary information, the Executive Committee will then conduct debate on the issue as needed and vote to determine whether the circumstances described amount to a conflict of interest of sufficient degree to bar the interested person from debate and vote on the particular matter affected by the special interest. The coordinator/ NSC Counsellor/ Executive Committee Member identified as having a potential conflict of interest shall not participate in the debate or vote of the Board on the existence of a conflict and may be excluded during such debate or vote by vote of a majority of the Executive Committee. A majority vote of the Executive Committee is required to bar the member. The minutes of the meeting of the Board shall reflect the disclosure of the potential conflict of interest, the Board's decision regarding the conflict, and the presence or absence of the interested person during the debate on the issue of whether a conflict exists and during any action by the Executive Committee following the vote regarding the existence of a conflict.

4.4 Others acting for or on behalf of COMOS:

When a potential conflict of interest occurs involving an individual acting for or on behalf of COMOS the individual, in advance of the activity giving rise to the conflict, shall inform the President of the details of the potential conflict. The President, in consultation with Executive Committee, shall evaluate the circumstances disclosed by the individual and conduct further inquiry as the President deems necessary for

the purpose of determining whether a conflict of interest exists to the degree that the individual should be excused from and directed not to participate in matters relating to the special interest disclosed by the individual. The President will respond to the individual in writing setting forth the facts surrounding the special interest, the President's determination regarding the existence of a conflict of interest and, if necessary, instructions to the individual restricting the individual's duties in matters relating to the special interest. A copy of the letter will be provided to the members of the Executive Committee. A third party view can also be solicited by the President or the Ex Com to resolve the said matter.

1. The intellectual contribution of COMOS Members in any of the activities of COMOS would be duly acknowledged in all activities. However the intellectual property rights for work would rest with COMOS and not with the individual member. In case, an individual member or members have contributed, then they would be duly acknowledged by COMOS. Work done as part of COMOS NSCs requires to be presented in all forums as collective work and cannot be projected as individual research work.
2. All members involved in policy/scientific work with COMOS and its scientific committees are required to disclose COMOS any professional, contractual or voluntary work done on the subject of the policy/scientific work in question to avoid any conflict of interest and duplication of work.
3. COMOS members must avoid being judges in their own cause: when they are involved in work concerning a specific site and also participating in advisory or decision-making bodies of local or national authorities, they must not take part in any decisions relating to that site.

5. NSC MEETINGS:

- i. National Scientific Committees shall be convened by the COMOS Executive Committee, at least once a year in consultation with the Scientific Counsellor. The NSC must meet at least on quarterly basis. A total of 55% of members is required to establish a quorum for the meeting. Outstation members may participate through Skype or through conference call.
- ii. Minutes of the Meeting must be submitted to the National Scientific Counsellor who will forward to the Executive Committee. In addition, a half yearly report must be submitted to the Executive Committee by the Coordinators. Milestones of the NSCs as listed in the annual plans will be reviewed by the Executive Committee through the half yearly reports.

6. ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS:

The activities and projects of NSCs will ensure the sharing and dissemination of knowledge and information among its members and with other COMOS members, particularly affiliated NSCs and working groups. Possible activities or projects should conform to the COMOS Policy on Programs and Activities.

COMOS encourage collaboration and co-operation among NSCs, such as taking on joint activities and projects. Possible activities or projects include, but are not limited to:

- research
- policy development;
- publications, periodicals and newsletters (both real and virtual);
- videos;
- public advocacy;
- training;
- conferences and workshops;
- professional exchanges;
- technical cooperation;
- identification of future areas of research; etc.

Clear procedures would be laid out for applying, selecting and evaluating the projects under NSC. The procedures shall specify what kind of projects are acceptable as per the mandate of COMOS, how to apply, how to demonstrate the impact of the project and criteria for assessment of the applications. A template for submitting applications will be made available to the members. ***Each NSC needs to preferably involve at least one Institutional Member/Partnership in at least one activity of the NSC.***

They will at no point, be involved with projects and programs with which members are individually associated, COMOS Projects being worked upon by members, or any such situation of conflict of interest, cannot be a part of the NSC agenda.

7. FUNDING:

NSCs will be required to be self-funding. . Small grants for particular NSC activities may be available from COMOS. Applications for funding or grants from other sources can only be made by the Ex Com on behalf of the NSC. The NSC should provide the case for the funding application to the Ex Com, allowing sufficient time for the Ex Com to understand the funding application and make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the funding application.

7.1 Payments for National Scientific Committee Activities:

All activities undertaken by the NSCs that involve funding by COMOS shall be governed by the following rules:

- i. NSC activities/events would be reimbursed by the Executive Committee as per actuals on the production of legitimate bills by the NSC Coordinator and approved by the National Scientific Counsellor. The Treasurer will verify the same make the payment.
- ii. All Payments will be made based on the budget approved at least a month in advance by the NSC Counsellor and Executive Committee for the project/activity before initiating the project. Any deviation from the budget needs to be explained by the NSC Coordinator and approved by National Scientific Counsellor up to a variation of +- 5% only.
- iii. All payments will be made by cheque as COMOS does not subscribe to the facility of NEFT/RTGS. The payments would be made in the name of the NSC Coordinator on the production and verification of the bills.
- iv. No honorariums would be paid by the Ex Com to any member of the NSC or the Coordinator; only actual expenses would be reimbursed.
- v. As per prevailing IT regulations the upper limit for cash payments (petty cash) shall be to maximum of Rs.5,000 for the project for which NSC Coordinator will authenticate the expense and produce bills for the same.
- vi. There would be a minimum period of 15 days for processing the bills.
- vii. NSC Coordinator and National Scientific Counsellor must approve the deliverable (for its fulfilment as per quality and standard of the COMOS and as per terms of contract).
- viii. National Scientific Counsellor must inform Executive Committee about the progress of work and satisfactory output of the activities along with the copy of the report/output for comments by the Executive Committee from time to time.
- ix. Executive Committee's view must be considered and incorporated in the report/output before making the next stage payment.

8. PUBLICATION & COMMUNICATIONS:

8.1 Logo usage for NSC Activity:

The NSC Coordinator shall write to the Ex Com with copy to National Scientific Counsellor for seeking permission to use the COMOS logo for NSC activities on a case to case basis. The use of the Logo will strictly be in compliance to the COMOS Policy on Logo Usage.

8.2 Communication:

The NSC must establish methods and protocols for communicating with its own members, COMOS members generally, and other stakeholders. For Example:
Circulating the minutes of meetings and workshops through the official COMOS email ID allocated to the NSC, establishing an electronic forum, preparing a regular e-newsletter, regular updates on COMOS website, webpage (and subpages if necessary) within the COMOS website, Publishing a brochure on a specific topic related to the NSC .

9. REPORTING REQUIREMENT:

Each NSC will keep the COMOS Executive Committee updated quarterly through the NSC Counsellor on the NSC's status and activities, even if the update is "nothing new to report". The information will be summarised by the ISC/NSC Coordinator for each quarterly meeting of the COMOS Ex COM. The NSC Counsellor will facilitate annual reports to the Ex Com, describing the activities of the NSC for the previous 12 months.. In addition, each National Scientific Committee Statement will be reviewed at least every 3 years and shall be re-submitted for the approval of the Ex Com.

10. DISSOLUTION /REVIVAL OF NSC:

NSCs getting less than 8 members shall be called as Dormant NSC. Notice shall be sent by NSC counsellor to Dormant NSCs to be revived and active. Inactive NSC will continue to be in dormant stage till the new membership cycle. During this period of Dormancy, they shall be eligible for working on collaborative basis with other NSC, but shall not be eligible for getting funds from COMOS.

In case of inactivity with adequate membership, on the complaint of members of the NSC or non-holding of the quarterly meetings as stipulated, Scientific counsellor shall make efforts to revive the inactive NSC and make it active by way restructuring or otherwise, and in case, that is not possible the executive committee may at the suggestion of the Scientific counsellor, dissolve the NSC. Members of the dissolved NSCs may join other NSCs at the start of the new cycle of membership.