

From the Minutes of the CILECT GENERAL ASSEMBLY in OAXACA, MEXICO

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5. Regional Associations

In 1990, in Blois, the General Assembly approved a major restructuring of CILECT. The main idea behind the changes was to create a structure that would be more conducive to members participating directly in the activities of the association. For that purpose three key changes were made:

- Regional associations were created to “further the objects and aims of the association within the specific conditions of that region”
- Four areas of programme activities which would benefit most the association were to be selected every two years by the General Assembly. These activities would receive special support in the form of a Project Committee. One Project Chair would be elected for each project and the four chairs would be members of the Executive Council.
- Specific responsibility for a field of activity was allocated to each one of the Vice-Presidents in the Executive Council.

Two General Assemblies and five years after Blois, some members expressed their concern about the relationship between the Executive Council, the regional associations and the Projects.

These members considered giving the regional associations direct representation on the Executive and questioned the presence of the Project chairs on the Executive.

GEECT circulated a proposal for changes in the statutes that would reflect this alternative Executive structure and provide funding for the regional associations.

GEECT Proposal

“We propose that the Statutes and Rules of CILECT be changed in a way to give the Regional Associations the responsibility to carry out the Projects that are now undertaken by the Project Chairs.

At the same time we propose that at least 20% of the CILECT membership fees be allocated to a CILECT Fund for the Regional Associations in order to enable the Regional Associations to carry out an active policy for the benefit of their members. The co-ordinators of the Regional Associations, in agreement with the CILECT Executive, will redistribute the means of this Fund, bearing in mind the scope and quality of the various Projects proposed by the General Assembly, and the possibilities of further funding in the respective Regions.

By doing so, the Project Chairs associated to the CILECT Executive will at the same time represent a Project and a Regional Associations.”

There was a long discussion on the GEECT proposal during which distinctly opposite opinions were expressed.

Jennifer Sabine strongly supported the GEECT proposal and requested that 60% of the fees be returned to the regions.

Reinhard Hauff and Nenad Puhovski expressed their concern about a possible shift inside CILECT towards a region-oriented organisation

Gustavo Montiel added that the regional division of the world by CILECT was arbitrary, suggested that some regions should be developed through TDC and that projects between regions be encouraged.

Martin Loh expressed the concern that if funds were allocated to regions on the basis of the number of schools they represented this would create an undesirable unbalance between the different regions, strengthening the more powerful regions and leaving the others with no resources to initiate projects. This view was supported by Wolfgang Längsfeld.

Rolf Orthel pointed out that the GEECT proposal took special care of this concern by not making the allocation of funds dependent on the number of member schools in the respective regions. He also added that financing the regions should not be detrimental to the association as a whole.

It became clear in the course of the discussion that some form of link between projects and regions both in terms of activities and financing was desirable.

Acknowledging this situation and the concern voiced by GEECT the Executive put forward two resolutions to allow the implementation of suggested changes. Resolution 1 provides a link between the projects and the regions and Resolution 2 takes care of the funding of projects.

5.1. Resolution 1: CILECT Project Chairs and Regional Associations

Acknowledging that members of the Executive Board of GEECT have communicated their concerns about the relationship between projects and regional organisations, the Executive Council of CILECT proposes that the General Assembly adopts the following resolution:

The sole purpose of this resolution is to enhance the relevance, member participation and the effective realisation of projects.

We believe that projects be of the broadest relevance and interest to CILECT members, based on the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number.

The General Assembly recognises the importance of the contributions of CILECT's regional associations to the work of the project chairs and the successful accomplishment of projects.

The General Assembly endorses the goal of the election of project chairs from all of CILECT's regions, whenever possible.

The General Assembly recommends that CILECT's regional associations take responsibility for supporting projects based in their regions.

The General Assembly recommends that project proposals be discussed and developed in consultation with relevant regional associations before being presented to CILECT, though it will remain the right of individual members to present their proposals directly to the Executive Council and the General Assembly.

The General Assembly recommends that members elected Project Chairs be included in the steering body of the regional association to which they belong, in order to maximise collaboration and communication.

The General Assembly recommends that unanticipated Project Chair vacancies be filled in consultation with the regional association.

5.2. Resolution 2: Allocation of Funds for Projects

Acknowledging that members of the Executive Board of GEECT have expressed concern about the method for distribution of financial support for projects, the General Assembly adopts the following resolution:

The General Assembly instructs the Executive to establish a Central Project Fund for the support of Project Chairs and Committees.

Under normal financial circumstances, the project fund should be supported by no less than 20% of CILECT's biennial budget.

Distribution of finance from the project fund will be the responsibility of the Executive Council, in consultation with regional associations that actively support the projects, taking needs and scope of the various projects into consideration.

It became clear in the course of the discussion that some form of link between projects and regions both in terms of activities and financing was desirable.

Acknowledging this situation and the concern voiced by GEECT the Executive put forward two resolutions to allow the implementation of suggested changes. Resolution 1 provides a link between the projects and the regions and Resolution 2 takes care of the funding of projects.

After Resolution 1 and Resolution 2 were circulated, GEECT withdrew their proposal.

Resolution 1 and Resolution 2 were then put to the vote.

<i>Resolution 1 :</i>	Votes	<i>Resolution 2 :</i>	Votes
Yes	24	Yes	27
No	1	No	0
Abstentions	5	Abstentions	6
Blank votes	5	Blank votes	2

Resolution 1 and Resolution 2 were adopted.

7. Finances

7.4. Proposal to examine the feasibility of a differential fee

Rolf Orthel commented that paying the fee was a strong burden for some schools and suggested that a differential fee be introduced which would be calculated on the country's GNP.

Some members pointed out that the financial situation of a school was not necessarily related to the GNP of the country; the problem was rather that some schools cannot afford to be a member of CILECT irrespectively of the country they are in and the GNP of their country.

Brendan Ward warned against the establishment of a two-tier level of membership fee, which would introduce a type of second-class membership status.

Rolf Orthel's proposal to examine how a differential fee can be introduced was put to the vote. The proposal was adopted (22 votes in favour, 2 against, 6 abstentions, 1 blank vote).