

**Statutes**

**of the**

**European Legume Hub Association**

**22 November 2021**

The purpose of this document is to describe the background of the European Legume Hub Association (hereafter the Association) and to set out the statutes.

The Association leads the development of the Legume Hub (hereafter the Hub) by providing a structure for its governance by its members who form the Legume Hub Community. The overall aim is to strengthen investment and cooperation in improving the Hub to increase the agronomic and environmental performance of legume-supported cropping systems and value chains. The founding members already have a strong cooperation record, particularly through participation in the Legumes Translated consortium. The Association enables the relevant research and innovation community (The Legume Hub Community) to govern the Hub and participate in its development.

The Hub is a major product of the Legumes Translated project and its consortium. Legumes Translated is a thematic network associated with the Agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP Agri) funded under Horizon 2020. The overall aim of Legumes Translated ([www.legumestranslated.eu](http://www.legumestranslated.eu)) is to support the production and use of legume crops in Europe. 86% of the EU's plant protein deficit is met using imported soya (the equivalent of about 36 million tonnes of soybeans per annum). This is a fundamental challenge to the resilience, acceptance and performance of our agri-food systems. To address this, the Legumes Translated consortium brought developers of legume crops and related value chains together in an EU Framework Programme Thematic Network. The Legume Hub is a major output of the project. It is a web-based knowledge platform about the production of legumes (soybean, pea, lupin, faba bean etc.) and their use as feed and food products in Europe. These crops are also often referred to as 'protein crops'. The concept and development were led by Donal Murphy-Bokern, The Donau Soja Association, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, and Scotland's Rural College. These hold the intellectual property behind the Hub concept and basic functionality. Almost all consortium partners have contributed to the development of the Hub and/or its content. Beyond the consortium partners, the approach develops the Hub's contributors and users as a 'community of practice'. This community guides the further development and operation of the Hub. The Hub:

- is an open platform that publishes documents, images, videos etc. that are freely available to users;
- is a self-publishing platform with peer review for a broad community of all professionals interested in the production and use of legumes;
- provides timely, scientific correct, comprehensive and practical information for practitioners – farmers interested in producing legumes and feeding animals with legumes, processors of legumes for feed and food purposes, and all involved in the related parts of the value chains;
- fosters and supports cross-border knowledge exchange; and
- is a free public service, and the content is available for anybody interested in the information.

Donau Soja (DS) implemented the technical development of the Hub using an external service provider. DS is ready to act as a caretaker to ensure that the Hub continues to be maintained, updated, refreshed, and advertised and that the available information is known by and accessible to the broadest audience possible.

## **§ 1**

### **Name, location and legal nature**

1. The Association is called the "The European Legume Hub Association" (hereafter the Association).
2. Donau Soja GmbH (Wiesingerstraße 6/14, 1010 Vienna Austria) provides the Secretariat and functions as the contact point.
3. The Association is legally informal and in itself has no legal nature. The member organisation that provides the Secretariat is the legal representative of the Association.
4. The lifetime of the Association is unlimited.
5. The Association is open to all who are involved in the improvement of legume-supported cropping systems in Europe.

## **§ 2**

### **Purpose**

6. The overall goal of the Association is the improvement of the agronomic, economic and environmental performance of legume-supported cropping systems in Europe. As part of a protein transition in Europe, the agronomic performance of legume crops must be improved as compared with other cropping options that farmers have. The Association focuses on providing a knowledge platform for all actors in legume-supported value chains, especially farmers. Its cross-sectoral value chain character sets it apart from other associations, for example, scientific societies.
7. The Association is particularly concerned with managing and providing free public access to agronomic and related knowledge through the European Legume Hub. Because this knowledge has a strong public good character (the knowledge is available to all and is non-rival in use), the incentive for private investment is low. Advances, therefore, depend on public intervention and collaboration in pre-competitive work. The Association seeks to develop a coherent approach to this investment and provide a platform for pre-competitive knowledge exchange and collaboration.
8. The Association pursues these aims through a range of specific activities:
  - a. provision of a means by which the Hub is governed by its authors and others with interest in providing scientifically validated and research-based knowledge relevant to the production and use of legumes;
  - b. promotion of the peer recognition of the authors' contribution to the Hub.
  - c. provision of an open platform for the exchange of knowledge and support between scientists, plant breeders and others interested in the improvement of legume production in Europe;

- d. provision of an internet-based knowledge platform that provides easy access to compiled knowledge;
  - e. provision of a voice to its members (scientists, technologists and other knowledge providers, and users) in public debate about the development of legume-supported cropping;
  - f. facilitation of exchange of insights and solutions to challenges that research could address;
  - g. liaison between the members of the Association and public investors in relevant research and innovation, particularly the European Union;
  - h. communication to the public about the work of the Association; and
  - i. support of the collaboration between Association members in obtaining support from public research investors.
9. The Association interacts with its members as a whole and as individuals fostering multiple contacts and exchanges.
10. The Association is not-for-profit. It seeks to advance public interests and benefits and does not seek to generate a financial surplus over time.
11. The Association's resources can be used only to support the work of the Association.

### **§ 3**

#### **Membership**

12. Membership is open to all natural and legal persons and associations of persons that support the Association's purposes, contribute or are interested in improving legume-supported cropping systems in Europe. Each member is a full member.
13. Participants in the Legumes Translated consortium are founding members.
14. Membership expires through:
- a. termination in writing by the member;
  - b. exclusion by decision of the Board in response to activity that seriously harms the work of the Association; or
  - c. the death of the member (in the case of natural persons) or by the dissolution of the member legal entity.
15. Departing or excluded members have no rights to the resources of the Association.
16. Members are obliged to fully meet all contributions expected of them as agreed with each of them within the General Assembly.

## **§ 4**

### **Resources**

17. The Association may resource its activities through:

- a. membership fees;
- b. grants from public bodies through members;
- c. voluntary contributions from members or third parties may be used by the Association as it decides, or may be bound to a specific purpose; and
- d. members' in-kind contributions of time, materials, and other resources.

18. The main resource is the in-kind contribution of resources of members to activities undertaken in the Association.

## **§ 5**

### **The organs of the Association**

19. The Association's organs are:

the General Assembly;

the Board;

and

the Secretariat.

20. The meetings of all organs can be held online. For efficiency, initially, the Board may function as the Editorial Board.

## **§ 6**

### **The General Assembly**

21. All members are members of the General Assembly.
22. The General Assembly is the highest organ of the Association and is responsible for:
  - a. the election of its Chairman;
  - b. the election of the Chairman and other members of the Board;
  - c. the appointment of the Secretariat;
  - d. the approval of the annual report prepared by the Board;
  - e. where relevant, the approval of a report on resources and finances;
  - f. deciding on any changes to the statutes;
  - g. deciding on the Association's programme of work for the coming year;
  - h. setting policy for the operation and content of the Hub;
  - i. establishing a publication policy;
  - j. ensuring that the Hub operates as an effective platform that serves its contributors and other users;
  - k. deciding on the level of membership fees (where relevant);
23. Each member has one vote.
24. Only members have a right to make proposals at the General Assembly.
25. Decisions are made by a simple majority.
26. The representatives of the owners of the intellectual property (IP) behind the Hub (Donal Murphy-Bokern, The Donau Soja Association, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, and Scotland's Rural College) may veto decisions of the General Assembly which they reasonably believe could be detrimental to the ownership, integrity, development, and accessibility of the IP for the purposes of the Association as set out in § 6.
27. The General Assembly meets annually following a written invitation and draft agenda sent to all members by the Secretary at least one month in advance. Members can have additional agenda items added by contacting the Secretary in writing up to two days before the General Assembly.

28. Every correctly called General Assembly is quorate, regardless of the number of members attending starting 15 minutes after its programmed start time.
29. The General Assembly decides on the basis of a simple majority with a show of hands. A tied result is treated as a rejection of the proposal. Abstentions are not considered. A confidential paper-based vote is conducted if one-third of members present request it.
30. The General Assembly meetings are recorded in minutes provided by the Chairman, and these are circulated within one month of the meeting by email. The minutes are considered accepted if no objections are recorded by the Secretary in the month following their circulation. The Chairman is formally responsible for calling the General Assembly and signing off the minutes.
31. The development of the Association into another legal form can only be pursued following a decision of the General Assembly.

## **§ 7**

### **The Board**

32. The Board comprises its Chairman of the General Assembly and at least three other members, all elected annually at the General Assembly. The founding Board comprises the leading partners in the Legumes Translated consortium.
33. The term of office of the Board is the time interval between meetings of the General Assembly.
34. Supported by the Secretariat, the Board is responsible for leading the development of the Association, implementing decisions of the General Assembly, and reporting annually to the General Assembly. The Board's work is conducted within and conditioned by the extent of the work and engagement of the Association's members. The Board also decides on the progression of provisional membership to full membership.
35. The representatives of the owners of the intellectual property (IP) behind The Hub (Donal Murphy-Bokern, The Donau Soja Association, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, and Scotland's Rural College) within the General Assembly may veto decisions of the Board which they reasonably believe could be detrimental to the ownership, integrity, development, and accessibility of the IP for the purposes of the Association as set out in § 6.
36. The Chairman of the Board leads the public representation of the Association. This representation can be delegated to any member on a case-by-case basis.
37. The Board supervises the work of the Secretariat.

## **§ 8**

### **The Secretariat**

38. The member organisation that provides the Secretariat is elected by the General Assembly each year.
39. The Secretariat supports the Board in all practical matters such as maintaining the Hub, organising and recording meetings, communicating with members, maintaining the Association's communication channels and generally facilitating the execution of the Association's plan.

## **§ 9**

### **Resource planning and monitoring**

40. The Board provides a resource plan each year for the following year's work commensurate with the Association's activities and resources and supported by the Secretariat. Proportionate and 'fit-for-purpose' resource and financial accounting mechanisms will be developed as the Association develops.
41. The General Assembly appoints an auditor from its members responsible for reviewing resource plans and controlling the quality of resource and financial accounts.

## **§ 10**

### **Dissolution**

42. The General Assembly can only dissolve the Association with a two-thirds majority required.
43. In the event of dissolution, the Association's resources will be returned to those members who donated them based on a plan provided by the Secretariat.
44. Changes to the statutes are made following a decision of the General Assembly.

## **§ 11**

### **Coming into effect**

45. These statutes come into effect from the date of their endorsement by the Chairman of the Board on behalf of the General Assembly, following the decision of the General Assembly.