

A.9 Regional boundaries

The WVA will not dictate the country membership of a region, or whether a region should or should not exist. The WVA will accept from its members the recognition of regional groupings and membership and will facilitate membership of individual members or groups of members. (EXCOM 24 February 1998)

The difference between these two concepts is that the second concept recognizes that groups of members have the right to determine how they want to be represented.

Background

During the discussions surrounding the 1996-7 restructuring of the WVA it was suggested that groups of countries should determine their membership relationships and that they must come forward and present their cases if they have a need to change to another region or want to produce a new region. This is consistent with the philosophies of the late 20th Century which tend towards enabling people to do as they determine themselves rather than being subject to heavy regulation.

Guidelines

To restrain the potential for proliferation of too many regions, the following guidelines for the development of WVA regions to be recognized will be used.

Geographic

It is difficult to set a minimum number of countries that must be represented within a region. There are two clear examples of regions where there are very few potential members. The north American continent has only three countries - Canada, the United States of America and Mexico; the South Pacific has only Australia and New Zealand because the other island nations are possibly too small to seek membership.

Demographic

A proposal supported by demographic factors can be favourably considered because it provides population statistics on which to base representation.

Cultural

A proposal supported by cultural factors should be favourably received because it means that the people in that region may have much in common and should be of a similar outlook to the way they live and work in the World.

Language

A proposal supported by a common language should be favourably received because it means that the people in that region have a common and easy route for communication between themselves. Language can be a very strong bond amongst nations.

Political

The WVA is a non-political organization and should therefore not encourage politically based affiliations. However when supported by culture and language it will not always be easy to decline an application for regional recognition that does have some political basis.