

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

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Sixty-second meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 23-27 July 2012

Administrative matters

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

1. The Annex to this document, presented by the Secretariat, contains the current Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee, for information.

Documents for meetings

2. Rule 21, paragraph 1, requires the Secretariat, at least 45 days before each meeting of the Committee, to:
  - a) *place on its website, in the language in which they have been received, all documents submitted by any Party, or submitted by an observer at the request of the Chairman; and*
  - b) *distribute printed documents for the meeting to the members and alternate members of the Committee.*
3. In the Rules of Procedure of the Animals and Plants Committees, there is a similar rule regarding the distribution of documents for their meetings.
4. Considering that there are frequently more than 40 agenda items for a meeting, several of them with many sub-items, and that documents can be 12 pages long (occasionally much more), it can be expected that there will be around 500 pages of working documents for each meeting. As there are 35 members and alternate members of the Standing Committee, it can also be expected that the total number of copies to be made will be roughly 9,000, bearing in mind that the Secretariat uses two-sided printing. The production and distribution of all these copies carries financial costs in terms of staff time, printing costs, paper and postage, in addition to the environmental costs.
5. However, whenever the Secretariat has asked the members and alternate members whether they needed to receive printed documents, the majority have replied that they would print them from the CITES website.
6. Taking account that the working documents for meetings of the Standing Committee are all placed on the CITES website as soon as they become available, while recognizing that, for some Parties, access to the Internet may not be good and that printing documents may be a strain on resources, the Secretariat would like to propose an amendment to the Rules of Procedure to make better use of resources. The aim would be to inform all members and alternate members of the Standing Committee of the availability of the documents, and then to provide copies to all Parties that request them.
7. For purposes of comparison, the Secretariat sought information on the practices of other multilateral environmental agreements. All those who responded indicated that they no longer provided documents on paper, as follows.
  - a) **Convention on Biological Diversity:** The Secretariat stated that they no longer send printed copies of documents in advance of meetings although one set of documents per delegation is provided at the meeting venue.

- b) Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals: The Secretariat indicated that the normal practice is not to send printed copies of documents for Standing Committee members. For meetings of the Conference of the Parties, pre-session documents have been provided exclusively online since 2005.
- c) Ramsar Convention on Wetlands: The Secretariat reports that, for several years, it has not provided printed copies of documents for its Standing Committee meetings, except on request. They can be downloaded from the Internet. The same approach will be taken for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- d) Basel / Rotterdam / Stockholm Conventions (dealing with hazardous chemicals and wastes): The Secretariat reports that it no longer provides printed documents for convention meetings.
- e) Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer: The Ozone Secretariat reports that all of its meetings are now paperless, the next one being from 23 to 27 July 2012 in Bangkok.

Visitors at meetings

- 8. There have been visitors at most meetings of the Standing Committee over the past several years. In the majority of cases, these have been students, spouses of registered participants and staff of non-governmental organizations who did not register in time to participate as observers. They sit at the back of the room and, of course, do not participate in discussions. In some cases, they wished only to attend a side-event.
- 9. The basis for allowing visitors to attend is in Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, which specifies that all plenary sessions and sessions of Committees I and II are open to the public unless they are closed by a decision of a simple majority. As this matter is not covered by the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee, the Rules of the Conference apply *mutatis mutandis*, in accordance with Rule 33 of the Standing Committee.
- 10. Although the attendance of visitors at meetings of the Standing Committee has been trouble free, there have been occasional issues in meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees, where visitors have sought to participate in working groups and, on one occasion a visitor sat on the delegation of the organization that he claimed to be representing and actively participated in the debate.
- 11. As the Standing Committee is the senior committee, and sets the example, the Secretariat is seeking confirmation that the attendance of visitors is acceptable. If such attendance should be exceptional, then criteria should be established by the Standing Committee.

Recommendations

- 12. Regarding documents for meetings, the Secretariat recommends the adoption of the amendment to Rule 21, paragraph 1, shown below.

Current text with proposed amendments	Proposed new text incorporating amendments
1. At least 45 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall:	1. At least 45 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall:
a) place on its website, in the language in which they have been received, all documents submitted by any Party, or submitted by an observer at the request of the Chairman; and	a) place on its website, in the language in which they have been received, all documents submitted by any Party, or submitted by an observer at the request of the Chairman; and
b) <del>provide distribute</del> printed <del>copies of</del> documents for the meeting to <del>all the</del> members and alternate members <del>who request them</del> of the Committee.	b) provide printed copies of documents for the meeting to all members and alternate members who request them.

13. Regarding the attendance of visitors at meetings, the Secretariat seeks the confirmation of the Standing Committee that it is acceptable to allow visitors, or guidance on the approach that it should follow.

## Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee

(as amended at the 58th meeting, Geneva, July 2009)

### Representation and attendance

#### Rule 1

Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee by a Representative and an Alternate Representative. Each member shall also designate a person with whom communications regarding the work of the Committee should be conducted between meetings of the Committee and an alternate.

#### Rule 2

If a regional member is not represented at a meeting, its alternate member shall be entitled to represent the region.

#### Rule 3

The Representative shall exercise the voting right of a member or alternate member. In his/her absence, the Alternate Representative shall act in his/her place. Only members or alternate members representing the six regions shall have the right to vote, except in the case of a tie vote when the Depositary Government shall have the right to vote to break the tie.

#### Rule 4

Parties not members of the Committee shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee by observers who shall have the right to participate but not to vote.

#### Rule 5

The United Nations, its Specialized Agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not a Party to the Convention may be represented at meetings by observers who shall have the right to participate in meetings of the Committee but not to vote.

#### Rule 6

1. The Chairman may invite any person to attend a meeting of the Committee as an observer and may invite any body or agency to be represented at a meeting of the Committee by observers provided that any such person, body or agency is technically qualified in protection, conservation or management of wild fauna and flora. Such observers shall have the right to participate only during the discussion of specific agenda items determined by the Committee, but not to vote. However, the right of any such observer to participate shall be withdrawn if so agreed by the Committee.
2.
  - a) Any body or agency wishing to participate in a meeting of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 1 shall submit a request to the Secretariat at least 30 days before the meeting, or in the case of an emergency meeting at least seven days prior to that meeting.
  - b) Any such request from a body or agency shall be accompanied by:
    - i) relevant information with regard to its technical qualifications;
    - ii) the name/s of the observer/s who have been authorized to represent it at the meeting; and
    - iii) proof of the approval of the State in which the national non-governmental body or agency is located or in which the international non-governmental body or agency is headquartered.
  - c) The Secretariat shall forward each request received and relevant information to the Chairman and the members of the Committee for approval.

## **Credentials**

### Rule 7

The Representative or, in his/her absence, the Alternate Representative of a member shall, before exercising the voting rights of the member at a meeting, have been granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority enabling him or her to represent the member at the meeting.

### Rule 8

Any observer representing a State or an intergovernmental organization in a meeting, shall have been granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority enabling him or her to represent the State or organization.

### Rule 9

The credentials required under Rules 7 and 8 shall be presented to the Secretariat of the Convention, together with a translation into one of the working languages if they are not in one of those languages.

### Rule 10

The Secretariat shall review the credentials and report to the Committee at the earliest opportunity, and shall provide a list of the credentials received in accordance with Rules 7 and 8, and draw attention to any potential problems.

### Rule 11

On the basis of the report of the Secretariat, the Committee shall decide whether to accept the credentials presented and whether any of them requires further review by members of the Committee. In the latter case, a Credentials Committee of not more than three Representatives of members, or their Alternates, shall examine the credentials requiring further review and shall report thereon at the meeting. Credentials in the form of a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Minister responsible or the Director of the Management Authority or a *note verbale* from a permanent mission may be accepted. Verifiable copies of credentials may also be accepted. Credentials shall however not be accepted if they have been signed by the person whom they accredit. Credentials may be valid for more than one meeting if this is specified in the text thereof.

### Rule 12

Pending a decision on their credentials, representatives of members and observers referred to in Rule 8 may participate provisionally in the meeting. The right to participate in the meeting shall not extend to persons whose credentials the Standing Committee has decided are unacceptable.

## **Officers**

### Rule 13

Following each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the regional members of the Committee shall elect its Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Alternate Vice-Chairman from among the regional members.

### Rule 14

The Chairman shall preside at meetings of the Committee, approve the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat and maintain liaison with other CITES committees between meetings of the Committee. He/she shall represent the Committee and the Parties as required within the limits of the Committee's mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be entrusted to him/her by the Committee.

### Rule 15

The Vice-Chairman and the Alternate Vice-Chairman shall assist the Chairman in his/her functions, and shall act on his/her behalf at meetings in the absence of the Chairman.

## Rule 16

The Secretariat of the Convention shall service and act as secretary for meetings of the Committee. However, in the event of a closed session, the meeting shall provide for its own rapporteur, if needed.

## **Meetings**

### Rule 17

Meetings of the Committee shall be called at the request of the Chairman or of a simple majority of the members.

### Rule 18

The time and place of meetings shall be determined by the Chairman.

### Rule 19

Notice of meetings shall normally be given by the Secretariat at least 75 days, and in case of emergency meetings at least 14 days, in advance of the meeting.

### Rule 20

Documents to be considered at a meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the meeting where they are to be discussed, and should not be longer than 12 pages.

### Rule 21

1. At least 45 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall:
  - a) place on its website, in the language in which they have been received, all documents submitted by any Party, or submitted by an observer at the request of the Chairman; and
  - b) distribute printed documents for the meeting to the members and alternate members of the Committee.
2. When the Secretariat believes that a Party may be directly affected by any discussion of a document to be considered by the Committee, it shall alert the Party concerned and inform it where the document may be viewed on the CITES website. It shall provide printed documents to all Parties that request them.

### Rule 22

A quorum for a meeting shall consist of Representatives or Alternate Representatives of seven regional members or alternate regional members from at least four regions. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.

### Rule 23

1. The right to speak shall extend to all participants whose credentials are under consideration or have been accepted, and to observers who have been admitted to the meeting in accordance with Rule 4, 5 or 6, as well as to the Secretariat.
2. The Chairman shall, as a general rule, call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak and shall give precedence to the members of the Committee. Amongst observers, precedence shall be given to representatives of Parties, non-Party States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, in this order. However the Chairman may depart from this general rule and call on speakers in the order that he/she judges appropriate to ensure the timely progress of the debate.
3. Participants shall speak only if called upon by the Chairman, who may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

4. A speaker shall not be interrupted except on a point of order. He/she may, however, with the permission of the Chairman, give way during his/her intervention to allow any other participant to request elucidation on a particular point.
5. The Chairman of a committee or working group may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusion arrived at by that committee or working group.
6. The Committee may, on a proposal by the Chairman or by a Representative, limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times the members of a delegation or the observers may speak on any question. When the debate is subject to such limits, and a speaker has spoken for his/her allotted time, the Chairman shall call him/her to order without delay.
7. During the course of a debate the Chairman may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. He/she may, however, accord the right of reply to any participant if an intervention delivered after he/she has declared the list closed makes this desirable.

#### Rule 24

Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested by the Chairman or by Representatives or Alternate Representatives of regional members or alternate regional members from two regions.

#### Rule 25

In the case of a vote, the decision of the Committee shall be taken by a simple majority of the regional members or alternate regional members voting. In the case of a tie, the motion shall be considered as rejected unless the tie is broken by the vote of the Depositary Government.

#### Rule 26

At the request of the Chairman or of any Representative or Alternate Representative the Committee shall decide by a vote whether the discussion of any particular subject shall be held in closed session; any such vote shall be decided by a simple majority. Parties represented at the meeting by observers shall be entitled to be represented at closed sessions.

#### Rule 27

A concise executive summary of the decisions of the Committee shall be prepared by the Secretary for endorsement by the Committee before the closure of the meeting. However the executive summary of the last day of each meeting shall be sent by email to the members for endorsement after the meeting.

#### Rule 28

A summary record of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretary and sent to the Parties represented at the meeting within 40 days. This shall be presented in the order of the agenda and comprise three parts for each agenda item: a short statement indicating the main points of the discussion; the text indicating the decision that was made, as it appears in the executive summary; and the text of any statement provided by the representative of any Party that was read into the record during the meeting. The Secretary shall take into account the comments received within 20 days of the circulation and shall communicate the final summary record to all Parties after it is approved by the Chairman.

#### Rule 29

1. The working languages of the meetings of the Committee shall be English, French and Spanish and no working document may be discussed at a meeting unless it has been made available in accordance with Rules 20 and 21 in these languages.
2. Documents arising out of the discussion of the foregoing may be discussed provided that copies have been circulated no later than during the session preceding the session at which they are to be discussed.

## **Communication procedure**

### Rule 30

Any member may submit a proposal to the Chairman for a decision by postal procedure. The Chairman shall send the proposal to the Secretariat for communication to the members, who shall comment within 40 days of the communication of the proposal; any comments received by the Secretariat within this time limit shall also be so communicated to the members.

### Rule 31

If no objection from a regional member to a proposal is received by the Secretariat within 25 days of the date when the results of the consultation on the proposal were communicated to the members, the proposal shall be considered as adopted, and notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.

### Rule 32

If any regional member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be put to a vote. The proposal shall be considered as decided by a simple majority of the regional members. If no majority is achieved, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **Final provisions**

### Rule 33

In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure currently in effect for meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

### Rule 34

These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Committee, and shall remain valid for each of its meetings unless amended by decision of the Committee.