



Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee

(as amended at the 65th meeting, Geneva, July 2014)

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 Chair 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 However, the right of any such observer to participate shall be withdrawn if so agreed by the Committee.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 Chair 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 Chair, Vice-Chair and Alternate Vice-Chair from among the regional members.

Rule 14

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

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 Chair or of a simple majority of the members.

Rule 18

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

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 be provided to the Secretariat in one of the working languages and shall normally be provided 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 Chair; and
 - b) provide and distribute printed copies of documents for the meeting to all members and alternate members of the Committee who request them.
2. At least 14 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall, to the extent possible, place on its website in the three working languages all documents mentioned in Rule 20 and paragraph 1.a) of Rule 21 above.
3. 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 Chair 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 Chair 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 Chair, 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 Chair, give way during his/her intervention to allow any other participant to request elucidation on a particular point.
5. The Chair 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 Chair 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 Chair shall call him/her to order without delay.
7. During the course of a debate the Chair 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 Chair 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 Chair 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. The decisions of the Committee shall come into effect upon endorsement of the Executive Summary in which they are contained.

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 Chair.

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 Chair for a decision by postal procedure. The Chair 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.