



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2025/005

Geneva, 13 January 2025

CONCERNING:

MEASURES TO ENHANCE MEETING EFFICIENCY AT SC78

1. This Notification has been prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee (SC) to inform participants about measures for the upcoming 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78), scheduled to take place in Geneva from 3 to 8 February 2025.
2. In recent years, the agendas of the SC meetings have grown significantly in scope and complexity. With 87 agenda items, SC78 has the second largest agenda among recent SC meetings. Effective time management is critical for both participants and the Secretariat.
3. To address this challenge, the Secretariat has extended SC78 by one day, allowing for a total of 12 three-hour sessions. In addition, drawing on lessons learned, and feedback received from previous meetings, the SC Chair has requested the Secretariat to implement several measures—some on a trial basis—to facilitate the smooth progression of discussions and to allocate time for all agenda items to be discussed.
4. This Notification provides a brief guide outlining what to expect at SC78. Your cooperation is very much appreciated to ensure a productive and efficient meeting.
 - a) **Shorter introduction of documents:** The Secretariat will limit its oral introduction to one minute, focusing only on recommendations. Exceptions will be made for cases where due to recent developments a longer introduction is needed to support the SC's deliberations. Participants are strongly encouraged to prepare for the shorter transitions between agenda items and to review the annotated agenda (which will be made available as an information document) in advance of the meeting. Parties introducing their documents are kindly asked to adopt a similar approach.
 - b) **Intervention time limits:** To ensure efficient discussions, interventions must be concise and focus on the essential points. Speaking time will generally be limited to three minutes for SC members and to two minutes for observer Parties and observer organizations. A timer will be used from the start of the meeting, and the Chair may decide to turn off the speaker's microphone once the allocated time has elapsed. Exceptions to this rule will apply to Parties subject to compliance measures. Additional time limits and other intervention restrictions may be imposed at the discretion of the Chair, if necessary.

To adhere to the time limits without compromising clarity, participants may wish to consider the following:

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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CITES Secretariat
Palais des Nations
Avenue de la Paix 8-14
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

cites.org

- Avoid unnecessary formalities, such as congratulating or thanking the Chair and others, and express alignment with previous interventions succinctly without repetition.
 - SC members are strongly encouraged to consult with Parties within their regions to coordinate their interventions.
 - Observer Parties and observer organizations are encouraged to collaborate with others and deliver consolidated interventions whenever feasible.
 - Participants may read simple, concise edits from the floor provided they remain within the allotted time limit. Complex or lengthy editorial suggestions should be submitted in writing as information documents to ensure clarity and efficient discussion. The Secretariat encourages Parties to focus their edits on substantive (rather than stylistic) changes to draft resolutions, decisions, or other texts.
 - Avoid speaking faster to fit within the time limit, as this disrupts the interpretation and may require the intervention to be repeated. It would assist the interpreters if interventions are submitted beforehand, by sending an email to info@cites.org with the agenda item number and title in the subject line.
 - Ensure clear audio by speaking directly into the microphone without any obstructions, such as laptops, in the way.
- c) **Consolidated agenda item on AC/PC:** Document SC78 Doc. 6 on *Report of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees* consolidates the outcomes from the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC27), the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC33), and their joint session (Geneva, July 2024). This new approach aims to streamline discussions by presenting a single document containing issues relevant to the SC from multiple agenda items. The SC Chair will go through the annexes to the document one by one and open the floor for any substantive edits to the recommendations proposed by the Animals and Plants Committees. Parties are encouraged again to focus on substantive changes only.
- d) **Impromptu changes to the working programme:** The SC Chair may decide to adjust the sequence of agenda items on the spot for the current or following session/day, considering factors such as the flow of discussions, remaining time, and others. As a result, some agenda items may be taken up earlier or later than indicated in the working programme. Parties are kindly requested to be prepared to discuss the agenda items as they arise.
5. Lastly, the Secretariat would like to remind the SC78 participants of the below items which are not related to enhancing time management but have emerged as recent challenges:
- a) **Nameplates:** Several nameplates have been reported missing after recent Committee meetings, possibly taken as souvenirs. Participants are kindly requested to leave nameplates in the meeting venue as replacing them involves additional costs and work for the Secretariat. If a nameplate is missing, the Party or organization may be asked to cover the cost of its replacement.
- b) **Travel and health insurance:** The Secretariat reminds participants, including sponsored participants, to purchase comprehensive travel and health insurance covering both travel days and the meeting duration, with careful consideration to pre-existing conditions. Please do not travel if you are unwell. Neither the Secretariat nor the host country provides individual coverage or assumes responsibility for medical expenses.