



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

CBD/TSC/IAG/2023/1/2
30 May 2023

ENGLISH ONLY

INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP ON TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

First meeting

Montreal, Canada, 14–16 June 2023

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND MODALITIES OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP ON TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation was established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in paragraph 24 of decision 15/8. The purpose of the Group, as described in the terms of reference contained in annex III to the decision, is to provide advice and guidance to the Executive Secretary of the Convention, and to other relevant bodies and stakeholders, on ways and means to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer, capacity-building and development, knowledge management, and the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in line with the three objectives of the Convention.

2. The operational procedures and modalities below provide the set of rules, procedures and working methods that govern or direct the work and proceedings of the Informal Advisory Group. They address issues such as membership, meeting dates and venues, meeting agendas, elections of officers, conduct of business, decision-making, working languages and other procedural matters and organizational arrangements. They are based on the modus operandi adopted in section D of annex III to decision 15/8. The operational procedures and modalities shall apply to all meetings of the Group.

3. The rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, including rules for conducting meetings, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the meetings of the Informal Advisory Group, unless otherwise decided.

4. The work of the Informal Advisory Group shall be guided by the provisions of the Convention and of its Protocols, as well as the decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

II. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND MODALITIES

A. Membership

5. As provided in its terms of reference, the Informal Advisory Group will be composed of experts nominated by Parties, with due regard to equitable regional representation and gender balance, and by indigenous peoples and local communities, the scientific community, and relevant organizations, including those representing women and youth. The number of experts from organizations will not exceed the number of experts nominated by Parties. The membership will reflect a balanced representation of experts on matters regarding the three

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objectives of the Convention. Members will be selected on the basis of the following criteria, as evidenced in their curriculum vitae:

(a) At least five years of working experience on technical and scientific issues related to the implementation of the Convention and/or other relevant international agreements and processes;

(b) Expertise relevant to technical and scientific cooperation, capacity-building and development, and knowledge management and the clearing-house mechanism or similar online information-sharing platforms;

(c) Demonstrated experience with regional or international cooperation processes and programmes related to biodiversity and/or the environment.

6. Members of the Informal Advisory Group will be selected through a formal nomination process based on the aforementioned criteria.

7. The Co-Chairs of the Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity will be invited as ex officio members.

8. The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Informal Advisory Group, may invite additional experts knowledgeable in specific issues or thematic areas to be discussed at relevant meetings of the Group, ensuring a balance of experts on matters related to the Convention.

9. Members of the Informal Advisory Group will serve for a term of two years, with a possibility of renewal for one additional two-year term. At the end of the first term, some of the members will be invited to stay on for another two-year term to ensure the carry-over of institutional memory.

10. If a member of the Informal Advisory Group resigns or is otherwise unable to complete the assigned term of office or to perform his or her functions in the Group, the Party or organization that nominated that member shall nominate a replacement to serve for the remainder of that member's mandate.

11. The Informal Advisory Group members shall not receive any honorarium, fee or other remuneration from the United Nations. However, costs for the participation of members nominated by developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition will be covered, in line with the rules and regulations of the United Nations.

12. The members will serve in their personal capacity and not as representatives of the Government, organization or other entity that nominated them.

13. Each member of the Informal Advisory Group shall, with respect to any matter that is under consideration by the Group, avoid direct or indirect conflicts of interest. Any interest that may constitute a conflict of interest shall be disclosed as soon as possible to the Secretariat, which shall forthwith notify the members of the Group. The members concerned shall not participate in the elaboration and adoption of a recommendation of the Group in relation to such a matter.

B. Dates and notice of meetings

14. The Informal Advisory Group will meet at least once per year, subject to the availability of resources, wherever possible in the margins of other meetings. The frequency of meetings may be adjusted by the members as the need arises.

15. The Secretariat shall notify all members of the Informal Advisory Group of the dates and venue of a meeting at least six weeks before the meeting is due to commence.

16. The provisional agenda shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all members of the Informal Advisory Group at least six weeks before the opening of the meeting, and the supporting documents shall be issued at least three weeks before the opening of the meeting.

17. The provisional agendas, reports of meetings, official documents and any other information documents shall be made available to the public.

C. Election of officers

18. The Informal Advisory Group will elect two co-chairs and a rapporteur to serve for a two-year period.
19. No officer shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.

D. Functions of Co-Chairs

20. The Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Secretariat, shall decide on the dates and duration of the meetings of the Informal Advisory Group.
21. The Co-Chairs, assisted by the Secretariat, shall draft the provisional agenda for each meeting of the Informal Advisory Group and transmit it to the Group no less than six weeks before the opening of the related meeting.
22. In carrying out their functions, the Co-Chairs shall be guided by the best interests of the work of the Informal Advisory Group and shall share equitably between themselves responsibility for chairing meetings of the Group.
23. The Co-Chairs will be responsible for the opening, conduct, adjournment and closing of the meetings of the Informal Advisory Group, including ensuring adherence to the agenda and observance of the agreed rules, procedures and working methods.
24. The Co-Chairs will, with the assistance of the Secretariat, prepare a draft report containing the recommendations adopted at a meeting, for consideration and approval by the Informal Advisory Group.
25. The Co-Chairs may represent the Informal Advisory Group at external meetings and events and report to the Group on those meetings. They may also delegate that function to other members of the Group.

E. Conduct of business

26. The Informal Advisory Group shall meet in closed session unless it decides otherwise.
27. The Secretariat of the Convention will support the work of the Informal Advisory Group, including through the provision of the necessary logistical and secretarial support.
28. The majority of the members (both in person and online) of the Informal Advisory Group shall constitute a quorum.
29. The Informal Advisory Group may meet in person or remotely via electronic means, as appropriate. Electronic means of communication may be used by the members of the Group for the purpose of conducting informal consultations on issues under consideration and decision-making on matters of procedure. Electronic means of communication shall not be used for making decisions on matters of substance.
30. The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Informal Advisory Group, may invite additional experts knowledgeable in specific issues or thematic areas to be discussed at relevant meetings of the Group, ensuring a balance of experts on matters related to the Convention.
31. The Informal Advisory Group may, as appropriate, establish subcommittees to support it in addressing specific issues or thematic areas and co-opt relevant experts to assist.
32. The Informal Advisory Group shall make every effort to reach agreement on all matters of substance by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement has been reached, any decision shall, as a last resort, be taken by a majority of the members present and voting (both in person and online). Where the consensus is not possible, the report shall reflect the views of all members of the Group.

F. Languages

33. The working language of the Informal Advisory Group will be English.

G. Amendments to the operation procedures

34. Amendments to the operational procedures shall be adopted by consensus by the Informal Advisory Group.
