

Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme

24th session of the Intergovernmental Council
(Paris, 30 November-4 December 2020)

PROVISIONAL DRAFT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE of the Intergovernmental Council of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme

Summary

This document contains the Provisional Draft of the Rules of procedure of the Council of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme as of February 2020.

Draft February 2020

PROVISIONAL - Pending revision

IHP Council Rules of Procedure

Approved by the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) Council at its first session and modified in accordance with the amendment of the Council's Statutes by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 21st, 23rd, 28th and 40th sessions. The IHP Council amended article 26 on 'secret ballot' at its 14th session.

An update of the Rules of Procedure was undertaken between the 23rd and the 24th session of the IHP Council, to reflect the Statutes of the IHP Council as revised by the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

Once accepted by the Open-ended Working for the revision of the Rules of Procedure, established by the 1st Extraordinary session of the IHP Council, the present text shall be submitted to the 24th session of the IHP Council for review and adoption.

I. Memberships

(1) The Intergovernmental Council of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (hereinafter the "Council") is composed of 36 Member States of UNESCO, elected by the General Conference in accordance with Article II of the Statutes of the Council.

(2) Each State member of the Council shall notify the Secretariat of UNESCO of the names of the designated representatives as well as of the advisers and experts, to the extent possible at least one month before the beginning of each session.

(3) Each Member State is encouraged to observe, to the extent possible, gender balance among its designated representatives in line with UNESCO's Priority Gender Equality Action Plan, and in line with Article II of the Statutes of the Council, to choose its designated representatives from among those persons who are playing a major part in the implementation of the activities related to the Programme in the said Member States, respecting the intergovernmental nature of the Programme.

II. Sessions

1. Date and Place

(1) The sessions of the Council shall be convened by the Secretariat of the Council in accordance with the instructions of the Bureau of the Council (hereinafter the "the Bureau"). Online and hybrid sessions can be convened if the Council so decides

(2) The Council shall meet in ordinary session once every two years. The dates and location of ordinary sessions shall be communicated to Member States at least two months before the opening of each session, taking into account the UNESCO calendar of events to avoid overlap among meetings within UNESCO, to the extent possible.

(3) The Council may meet in extraordinary session at the request of the Director-General, at the request of the simple majority of its members or by the decision of its Bureau. The Council shall meet in extraordinary sessions for the purposes of electing its Bureau in conformity with Article VI.1 of the Statutes. The dates and location of extraordinary sessions shall be communicated to Member States at least one month before the opening of each session.

III. Agenda

1. Provisional agenda

(1) The provisional agenda of the sessions of the Council shall be prepared by the Secretariat of the Council in consultation with the members of the Bureau.

(2) The provisional agenda of ordinary sessions shall be communicated to the Members of the Council and observers as defined in Article VII of the Statutes at least two months before the opening of each session.

(3) The provisional agenda of ordinary sessions of the Council shall include:

- all items previously decided by the Council;
- all items proposed by Member States of the Council;
- all items proposed by the United Nations or by its agencies;
- all items proposed by the Director-General of UNESCO.

(4) The provisional agenda of extraordinary sessions shall include only those questions for the consideration of which the session has been convened and shall be communicated to the Members of the Council and observers as defined in Article VII of the Statutes at least one month before the opening of each session.

2. Adoption of the agenda

At the beginning of each session, the Council shall adopt the agenda for that session.

3. Amendments, deletions and new items

(1) Members of the Council may propose items for the provisional agenda of ordinary sessions, not later than one month prior to the opening of the session.

(2) The aforementioned timeline also applies to the entities described in article III.1 (3).

(3) The Council may, during a session, add, delete or modify the order of items of the agenda. A majority of two-thirds of the Members of the Council present and voting in the session shall be required for the addition or deletion of items during a session.

4. Resolutions

(1) Each resolution will be examined and adopted under the relevant agenda item.

IV. Bureau Members

1. General considerations

Members of the Bureau shall fulfill their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the “Guidelines on Responsibilities of Representatives of Electoral Groups in Bureaus” as adopted at the 39th session of the General Conference, contained in document [39 C/20](#).

2. Election of Bureau Members

(1) The election of the Bureau shall take place during an extraordinary session of the Council, to be convened by the Director-General as soon as possible after the ordinary session of the General Conference, at which the members of the Council are elected.

(2) The Council shall elect from amongst its Members, a Chairperson, four Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur, on the basis of equitable geographical representation and to the extent possible gender equality. These shall constitute the Council's Bureau.

(3) To promote diversity and inclusivity, voluntary terms limits of two consecutive mandates are recommended for Members of the Bureau.

3. General powers of the chairperson

(1) In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him/her elsewhere by these Rules, the Chairperson shall have the following powers: he/she shall declare the opening and closing of meetings, direct the discussions, ensure the observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. He/she shall rule on points of order and subject to these rules shall control the proceedings and maintenance of order.

(2)

a. If the Chairperson finds it necessary to be absent during a meeting or any part thereof, he/she shall appoint one of the Vice-Chairpersons to take his/her place.

b. If the Chairperson ceases to represent a State member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, the Council shall elect a new Chairperson from the same Regional Group for the unexpired portion of the term of office, if necessary through an electronic consultation.

c. If the newly elected Chairperson also ceases to represent a State member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, he/she shall be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson for the unexpired portion of the term of office based on the French alphabetical order of States members of the Bureau commencing with the country of the Chairperson.

4. Functions of the Rapporteur

(1) In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him/her elsewhere by the present Rules, the Rapporteur shall certify that the Secretariat has accurately recorded the Council's decisions. He/she shall work with the Secretariat to monitor and record Council debates on amendments and ensure that the final report reflects accurately the outcomes of the session.

(2)

a. If the Rapporteur finds it necessary to be absent during a meeting or any part thereof, the Bureau shall appoint one of the Vice-Chairpersons to take his/her place.

b. If the Rapporteur ceases to represent a State member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, the Council shall elect a new Rapporteur from the same Regional Group for the unexpired portion of the term of office, if necessary, through an electronic consultation.

c. If the newly elected Rapporteur also ceases to represent a State member of the Council or is so incapacitated that he/she can no longer hold office, he/she shall be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson for the unexpired portion of the term of office based on the French alphabetical order of States members of the Bureau commencing with the country of the Rapporteur.

5. Functions of the Vice-Chairpersons

If the Chairperson and/or the Rapporteur is/are unable to attend at any session of the Council or Bureau or part thereof, his/her functions shall be exercised by a Vice-Chairperson as per articles IV.3 and IV.4.

V. Observers

(1) Representatives of Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO which are not members of the Council, may participate, as observers, without the right to vote, at all sessions of the Council, and meetings of the Bureau, of its committees and of its working groups.

(2) Water-related Centres and Institutes under the auspices of UNESCO and UNESCO Chairs, the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system, Scientific Unions, and entities with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements, may send observers to the Council sessions, meetings of the Bureau, of its committees and working groups subject to the provisions of the Rules of Procedure.

(3) Further to the aforementioned entities, the Council could consider other actors for the status of observer that it might find appropriate at the time in line with Article VII.3 of the Statutes of the Council.

VI. Committees and working groups

1. Committees

(1) Committees set up by the Council in accordance with Article V.1, of the Statutes of the Council shall meet in accordance with the decisions of the Council or of the Bureau.

(2) These committees shall elect their own chairperson and, if necessary, vice-chairpersons and their own rapporteur.

(3) The present Rules of Procedure shall also apply to meetings of committees unless the Council decides otherwise.

(4) These committees shall function in between the ordinary sessions of the Council, unless the Council decides otherwise, and shall submit a report on the outcomes of their work to the Council.

2. Working groups

(1) Working groups set up by the Council in accordance with Article V.2, of the Statutes of the Council shall meet in accordance with the decisions of the Council or the Bureau.

(2) These working groups shall elect their own chairperson and, if necessary, vice-chairpersons and their own rapporteur.

(3) These working groups shall function in between the ordinary sessions of the Council unless the Council decides otherwise and shall submit a report on the outcomes of their work to the Council.

VII. Secretariat

1. Secretariat

(1) The Director-General shall place at the disposal of the Council such members of the Secretariat of UNESCO as may be necessary as well as other means required for its operation.

(2) The Director-General or his/her representative may make oral as well as written statements to the Council, its committees and working groups and to the Bureau concerning any question under consideration.

VIII. Languages

1. Working languages

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the working languages of the Council.

2. Use of other languages

Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the working languages currently in use for a particular session of the Council or of a Committee on the condition that he/she provides at least one hour before his/her presentation a text for the interpretation of his/her speech translated into at least one of the said working languages.

IX. Reports and documents

1. Reports

(1) The Secretariat shall submit a report on its activities and all other activities of UNESCO in the field of water, as well as on the activities of the Water Family, to ordinary sessions of the Council. This report shall be made available online.

(2) The final report of each Council session shall be sent to all Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO and shall be made available online.

(3) The Secretariat shall submit a report on its activities to Council Member States and Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO, which are not members of the Council in between the ordinary sessions of the Council, which shall be made available online, on an annual basis.

(4) The Council shall submit reports on its activities to each ordinary session of the General Conference of UNESCO, which shall be made available online.

(5) Copies of these reports shall be circulated by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with Article X.1 of the Statutes of the Council.

2. Working Documents

(1) The working documents of each ordinary session of the Council shall, as a rule, be communicated to all Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO one month before the opening of each session in the working languages of the Council as specified in the above-stated rule VIII paragraph 1 and shall be made available online.

(2) Draft resolutions should also preferably be sent and made available online at the same time as the working documents, without excluding the possibility of new resolutions to be introduced during an ordinary Council session.

(3) The working documents of each Bureau meeting shall, as a rule, be communicated to all Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO one month before the opening of each meeting and shall be made available online.

(4) The final report of each Bureau meeting shall be sent to all Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO and shall be made available online.

X. Meetings

1. Quorum

(1) A simple majority of the States which are members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

(2) At meetings of Council Committees a quorum shall be constituted by a simple majority of the States which are members of the Council and which are members of the body in question.

2. Publicity of meetings

All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public unless the Council decides otherwise.

XI. Conduct of business

1. Right to speak

Council Members and observers may address the Council with the authorization of the Chairperson.

2. Order of speeches

(1) The chairperson shall call upon speakers in the order in which they have expressed the desire to speak, starting with the Members of the Council and followed by the observers.

(2) Observers shall not be given the right to speak during the adoption of resolutions and voting.

3. Time limit on speeches

The Council may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker.

4. Points of order

(1) During the discussion on any matter, a Council member may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be forthwith decided by the Chairperson. Any Council Member may appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson, which can only be overruled by a majority of the Council Members present and voting. A Council member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

5. Suspension, adjournment, closure

Any Council member may, at any time, propose the suspension, adjournment or closure of a meeting or of a debate. Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately. The order of priority of such motions shall be as follows:

- (a) suspension of the meeting;
- (b) adjournment of the meeting;
- (c) adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion;
- (d) closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

XII. Voting

1. Voting rights

Each Member State which is a member of the Council shall have one vote.

2. Simple majority

(1) Unless otherwise provided in these rules, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of members present and voting.

(2) For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "members present and voting" means Council Members casting an affirmative or negative vote.

3. Show of hands and roll call

Voting shall normally be by show of hands, except when a Council member requests a roll call and the request is seconded by at least another member of the Council. Names shall be called by alphabetical order in French. The vote and abstention of each member participating in the roll call shall be included in the report.

4. Voting on amendments

(1) When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first.

(2)

a. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Council shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be the furthest removed from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest therefrom, and so on, until all amendments have been put to a vote.

b. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

c. If no amendment is adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form.

(3) A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

5. Secret ballot

(1) All elections shall be decided by secret ballot unless the Council decides otherwise.

(2)

a. Before the voting begins, the Chairperson shall appoint two tellers from amongst the Representatives of Council members present.

b. When the counting of the votes is completed and the tellers have reported to the Chairperson, he/she shall announce the results of the ballot bearing in mind that the voting will be recorded as follows:

- i. From the total number of members of the Council will be deducted:
 - the number of members absent, if any;
 - the number of blank ballots, if any;
 - the number of invalid ballots, if any.
- ii. The remaining number will constitute the number of votes cast.

(3) Those candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes up to the number of seats to be filled shall be declared elected.

(6) If two or more candidates obtain the same number of votes and, as a result, there are still more candidates than seats to be filled, there shall be a second secret ballot restricted to those candidates who obtained the same number of votes. If in the second ballot, two or more candidates obtain the same number of votes, the Chairperson shall decide between them by drawing lots.

6. Equally divided votes

If a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, the proposal shall be registered as rejected.

XIII. Special procedures

1. Consultation and decision-making by correspondence

(1) Consultation on items related to the implementation of the Programme and institutional developments of the Programme may take place utilizing electronic communication and other means of correspondence

(2) Should the approval of the Council be required for measures of exceptional urgency and importance while the Council is not in session, the Chairperson may, by means of the Secretariat, consult the members by correspondence or electronic means. The proposed measures shall be adopted if approved by two-thirds of the members of the Council.

XIV. Amendment

1. Amendment

These Rules of Procedure, except where they reproduce provisions of the Council Statutes, may be amended by a decision of the Council taken by two-thirds of the members present and voting, provided the proposal for amendment has been placed on the agenda.

2. Suspension

Any of these Rules, except where they reproduce provisions of the Council Statutes may be suspended by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Council present and voting.