

# **Rules of procedure for meetings of the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund**

## **I. Purposes**

### **Rule 1**

The present rules of procedure shall apply to any meeting of the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund.

### **Rule 2**

The rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity shall apply mutatis mutandis to any meeting of the Steering Committee, except for rules 16 to 20 (on representation and credentials) and except where otherwise provided in the present rules of procedure, decision [16/2](#) of the Conference of the Parties or, when the Steering Committee directs the operations of the fund, the terms of reference of the Cali Fund.

## **II. Definitions**

### **Rule 3**

For the purposes of the present rules of procedure:

- (a) “Alternate” means the alternates referred to in rule 15 of the present rules of procedure;
- (b) “Co-Chair” means the Co-Chair of the Steering Committee provided for in rule 12 of the present rules of procedure;
- (c) “Member” means a member of the Steering Committee, as referenced in decision [16/2](#), annex, enclosure IV, paragraphs 3 and 5 (a);
- (d) “Observer” means an observer of the Steering Committee, as referenced in decision [16/2](#), annex, enclosure IV, paragraphs 3 and 5 (b);
- (e) “Secretariat” means the Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund, as established in paragraph 28 of the annex to decision [16/2](#) and fulfilling the functions detailed in enclosure V to the annex to the decision [16/2](#);
- (f) “Steering Committee” means the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund, as established in paragraph 28 of the annex to decision 16/2 and fulfilling the functions detailed in enclosure IV to the annex to decision 16/2.

## **III. Dates and notice of meetings, publication of documents**

### **Rule 4**

The Steering Committee meetings will be held in person or online, as necessary. At least one in-person and one online meeting are expected to be held annually. Remote participation during in-person meetings is not envisioned, except in exceptional circumstances when attendance is beyond the participant’s control and the alternate is not able to attend, as decided by the Co-Chairs.

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**Rule 5**

The Steering Committee, in consultation with the Secretariat, will decide on the dates and duration of the meetings of the Committee.

**Rule 6**

The Secretariat will notify all members and observers of the dates and venue of a meeting as soon as possible and at least five weeks in advance in the case of an online meeting and at least ten weeks in advance in the case of an in-person meeting.

**Rule 7**

The Secretariat will provide logistical and technical assistance, such as arranging for meeting venues (for in-person meetings) or platforms (for online meetings) and managing invitations. The Secretariat will make every effort to ensure full and effective participation by all members.

**Rule 8**

(a) The provisional agenda for a meeting will be prepared by the Secretariat with the input of the Co-Chairs and the members, and will include items arising from the functions of the Steering Committee, as specified in section 1 of enclosure IV to the annex to decision [16/2](#), and other related matters.

(b) The Secretariat will circulate the resulting provisional agenda, together with supporting documents, to the members and observers at least three weeks before the opening of the meeting, to the extent possible.

**Rule 9**

The Secretariat will make every effort to prepare the draft minutes of the meeting, within 5 working days of the end of a meeting of the Steering Committee, and circulate them to all members for adoption by email. If no comments are received within 5 working days of the e-mail in which the minutes are circulated, the minutes will be considered adopted. If comments are received within the time frame, the Co-Chairs, with the support of the Secretariat, will address the comments and, as necessary, circulate revised minutes by email for adoption.

**Rule 10**

(a) Meeting documents and minutes will be made publicly available. Such documents will not contain confidential information.

(b) The Steering Committee or any others involved in its deliberations will protect confidential information.

**IV. Members and observers****Rule 11**

<sup>1</sup>[(a) After the initial two-year terms, members, observers and alternates will serve for a period of four years, this being a full term. Following the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention:

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<sup>1</sup> The text of rule 11 will be submitted to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its seventeenth meeting, for approval, and will thereafter be integrated into the rules of procedure.

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(i) Five members from Parties, one from each region, will be selected to serve for half a term, and ten members from Parties will be selected to serve for a full term;

(ii) Three members from indigenous peoples and local communities will be selected to serve for half a term and four members from indigenous peoples and local communities will be selected to serve for a full term;

(iii) Three observers, one from each category set out in decision 16/2, annex, enclosure IV, paragraph 5(b), will be selected to serve for half a term and three observers will be selected to serve for a full term.

Each time thereafter, members and observers will be selected to serve for a full term.

(b) Terms will begin on 1 April of the year following an ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties and end on 31 March two or four years thereafter, as applicable.

(c) When a member, observer or alternate is unable to complete the assigned term, a representative from the same Party or group shall be put forward as a potential replacement for that member, observer or alternate for the remainder of the term. This replacement candidate will be considered in consultation with their regional group or organization, as appropriate, and may be selected by it as a replacement or alternate, taking into account gender balance and relevant technical expertise of the candidate.

(d) No member, observer or alternate may serve for more than two consecutive terms.]

## **V. Officers**

### **Rule 12**

(a) The Steering Committee will have two co-chairs: one from among the members from Parties on the Committee and one from among the United Nations entities on the Committee.

(b) The Co-Chair from among the members from Parties will be designated by the Steering Committee.

(c) A representative of the Secretariat of the Convention will serve as Co-Chair on behalf of the United Nations entities on the Committee.

(d) The Co-Chair from among the United Nations entities will be responsible for signing all fund transfer requests and project documents, on the basis of the decisions taken by the Steering Committee.

## **VI. Additional representatives from United Nations entities**

### **Rule 13**

(a) Representatives from the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of the United Nations Development Programme attend meetings of the Steering Committee as ex officio and non-decision-making participants.

(b) The United Nations Environment Programme may send an expert, to meetings of the Steering Committee in an advisory capacity.

## **VII. Conduct of business**

### **Rule 14**

Two thirds of the members will constitute a quorum.

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**Rule 15**

(a) In case one or more members or observers is unable to participate in a meeting of the Steering Committee, the designated alternate from that region, sociocultural region or category of observer will be invited to participate in the place of the member or observer.

(b) Any alternate participating as a substitute for a member who is not present will be entitled to the full rights of participation of that member.

**Rule 16**

Decisions are made by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the Co-Chairs will facilitate decisions by creating consensus through consultations with the members.

**Rule 17**

The Steering Committee may take decisions by email. The fact that a decision on a specific matter will be taken by email can be agreed upon during a meeting of the Committee or may be requested by a member and agreed to by the Co-Chairs between meetings.

**Rule 18**

All members, observers and alternates will act in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Guidelines for the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund.

**Rule 19**

In exceptional circumstances, the Steering Committee may meet in a closed session of members only

**Rule 20**

The Steering Committee may invite relevant experts to participate in the meetings or parts thereof. Such experts will act in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Guidelines for the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund.

**VIII. Language****Rule 21**

The working language of the Steering Committee will be English.

**IX. Amendments to the rules of procedure****Rule 22**

(a) Amendments to the present rules of procedure may be proposed by any member or by the Secretariat.

(b) Any proposal for an amendment to the rules of procedure by a member must be submitted in writing to the Secretariat at least four weeks before the opening of the meeting at which the proposal is to be considered.

(c) The Secretariat will circulate any proposal for amendment to the rules of procedure as part of the documentation for the meeting at which the proposal is to be considered.

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**Rule 23**

Amendments to the present rules of procedure are adopted by consensus by the Steering Committee.

**X. Application of the rules of procedure****Rule 24**

The present rules of procedure are without prejudice to any future decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

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