

Guidelines for the Participation of Representatives of Observer Organizations at Meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Subsidiary Bodies¹

(Version: 16 September 2010)

Introduction

1. Meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its subsidiary bodies are convened for negotiations between the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Observers are welcome to attend these meetings, subject to the relevant provisions of the Convention and the rules of procedure.
2. To encourage the effective participation of observers in the process, these guidelines have been prepared by the Secretariat to promote a harmonious atmosphere supportive of an intergovernmental meeting, and to provide a point of reference for all.
3. These guidelines are not exhaustive. They provide information reflecting current practice regarding observers' attendance and participation at Convention meetings. They are in line with those governing observer participation at sessions of other bodies in the United Nations system.

A. Access

4. Only observer representatives whose names have been officially communicated by their organization to the Secretariat and pre-registered will be registered at the venue and receive a badge for Convention meetings.
5. Observer representatives will normally be at least 18 years of age. Younger representatives may be registered at the discretion of the Secretariat.
6. Badges issued at registration must be worn visibly at all times in the meeting venue.
7. Participants shall be prepared to verify their identity upon the request of Secretariat officials or security staff.

¹ These guidelines also apply to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Biosafety Protocol and its subsidiary bodies.

B. Etiquette and safety

8. Observer representatives admitted to Convention meetings shall co-operate with Secretariat officials and security staff, and comply with their requests and instructions regarding access to and conduct within the venue including the use of its facilities.
9. No participant shall harass or threaten any other participant.
10. Interfering with the movement of participants at any time or location within the venue is not permitted.
11. The flags and any officially recognized symbols of the United Nations and of its member States shall not be treated with disrespect.
12. In all cases please respect other participants' social, cultural, religious or other opinions and refrain from personal attacks.

C. Participation

13. The participation of observer representatives in the proceedings of meetings is governed by rules 7 and 29 of the rules of procedure.
14. Observers have a number of ways to participate in the meeting by (a) making short and concise verbal statements upon the invitation of the chair or contact group convenor; (b) holding pre-scheduled side events; (c) holding pre-scheduled press conferences; (d) making available relevant information materials; and (e) setting-up by pre-arrangement displays such as exhibitions and posters.
15. Meetings designated by the chair or contact group convenor as CLOSED are not open to observers.
16. The meeting venue may not be used at any time for unauthorized media actions and publicity events, including demonstrations.

D. Information materials

17. Only Secretariat officials may distribute materials in official conference rooms including those for plenary, working groups and contact groups.
18. Exhibitions may be set up and posters may be displayed only at designated locations, and only by prior pre-arrangement with the Secretariat or the host country focal point². The posting of notices for authorized events does not require prior permission from the Secretariat, provided that they are posted only in designated locations.
19. Documents may be displayed only at designated locations provided they are relevant to the negotiations. Documents for display should be clearly marked with the name of the responsible organization. Space is limited so please be considerate keeping in mind that other organizations will also want to display their materials. All participants are encouraged to join efforts to make CBD meetings greener.

² For contact details please see the information note for participants.

20. Other materials relevant to the negotiations may be distributed at appropriate locations only in consultation with the Secretariat.

E. Use of the United Nations, UNEP, CBD and Meeting emblems or logos

21. Use of the United Nations and UNEP emblems on non-official documents and publications, including publicity material, is expressly prohibited.

22. Use of the CBD and meeting logos may be authorized by the Secretariat.

23. The United Nations flag may not be displayed in meeting rooms, except with the authorization of the UN Secretary-General.

F. Measures

24. Any non-observance of these guidelines would normally be resolved in consultations between the Secretariat and the responsible organizations and individuals. Kindly note that the Secretariat and UN Security reserve the right to take the following measures for non-observance of the above:

- a) Confiscation of the representative's badge;
- b) Removal of the representative from the premises;
- c) Confiscation of unauthorized material;
- d) Any other measure deemed appropriate or necessary, including banning an organization and its representatives from attending future CBD meetings.

25. Please read these guidelines in conjunction with "Use of Cameras and Audio/Video Recording Devices by Participants at Meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity" available on the CBD website.