

**RULES OF PROCEDURE**  
**OF THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT**  
**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

*(embodying amendments and additions adopted by the Environment Assembly  
and previously the Governing Council up to May 2016)*

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## Introduction

1. The General Assembly, by [resolution 2997 \(XXVII\) of 15 December 1972](#), established the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.
2. The [Governing Council adopted its rules of procedure](#) by [decision 19 \(II\) of 11 March 1974](#), which were subsequently amended by [decision 9/1 of 26 May 1981](#) to include Arabic as one of the official and working languages of the Governing Council.
3. The Governing Council further amended its rules of procedure, by [decision 14/4 of 18 June 1987](#), to hold a regular session of the Governing Council every two years instead of once a year.
4. The General Assembly, by [resolution 67/213 of 21 December 2012](#), decided to establish universal membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Governing Council, at its twenty-seventh session constituting the first universal session adopted its new rules of procedure by [decision 27/1 of 22 February 2013](#).
5. The General Assembly, by [resolution 67/251 of 13 March 2013](#), decided to change the designation of the “Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme” to the “United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme”. Consequently, the designation “Governing Council” was replaced by “United Nations Environment Assembly” throughout the text of the rules of procedure.
6. The United Nations Environment Assembly, by [resolution 1/2 of 27 June 2014](#), amended its rules of procedure
  - (a) To take into account the dates of meetings of other relevant bodies, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, when setting the date for a regular session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (rule 2);
  - (b) To rename “Chairman” of subsidiary organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly as “Chairpersons” and to replace “international non-governmental organizations” with “non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders” in the context of the Executive Director’s communication on the date of the first meeting of each session (rule 7);
  - (c) To change the title of section IV from “Officers” to the “United Nations Environment Assembly Bureau”;
  - (d) To increase the number of Vice-Presidents from three to eight, while ensuring that each of the five regions is represented by two members in the Bureau (rule 18);
  - (e) To add a new rule on “Replacement of a Bureau member,” which reads:
    1. During the session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, if a Bureau member, except the President, is unable to permanently carry out any of her or his functions, the Assembly may elect an alternate upon appointment by a member State or by the regional group to which that member belongs.
    2. During the intersessional period, if a Bureau member resigns or is unable to exercise functions, the member State or the regional group to which that member belongs shall nominate a replacement for the remainder of the term. The Executive Director shall immediately upon receipt of the nomination inform all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the nomination in writing. If within one month no objections are received in writing, the nominee is elected. If a member State objects, the nominee is elected if a majority of member States responding support the nominee.
  - (f) To have copies of proposals and amendments circulated to the members in all the official languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly (rule 43):
  - (g) To change the title of section VIII from “Sessional Committees, Working Parties and Subsidiary Organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly” to “Sessional or Intersessional Committees, Working Parties and Subsidiary Organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly”;
  - (h) To establish intersessional committees in addition to sessional committees, working parties and subsidiary organs as may be necessary (rule 59);
  - (i) To include “declarations” to the list of documents adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs that shall be made available in the languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly and distributed (rule 64);

(j) To add that the public meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly, its sessions committees and working parties and subsidiary organs shall be broadcast to the wider public through electronic means (rule 66).

(k) To add a new paragraph in rule 68, which reads:

A regional economic integration organization may participate in the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Assembly with the same modalities as those applicable to its participation in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly.

7. The United Nations Environment Assembly, by [resolution 2/1 of 27 May 2016](#), further amended its rules of procedure to elect its Bureau members at the final meeting of a regular session (rule 18), with their terms of office commencing at the closure of the session at which they are elected until the closure of the next regular session (rule 20).

8. The present edition of the rules of procedure embodies amendments and additions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly and previously the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme up to May 2016.

ADVANCE

# **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

## **I. SESSIONS**

### **Regular sessions**

#### Rule 1

The United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally hold one regular session every two years.

### **Date of opening of regular sessions**

#### Rule 2

1. Each regular session of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be held, subject to the provisions of rule 3, at a date fixed by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its previous session in such a way, if practicable, as to enable the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to consider the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly in the same year.

2. When the date for the session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in a given year is being set, the dates of meetings of other relevant bodies, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, should be taken into account.

#### Rule 3

Five members of the United Nations Environment Assembly or the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme may request an alteration of the date of a regular session. In either case, the Executive Director shall forthwith communicate the request to the other members of the United Nations Environment Assembly, together with appropriate observations, including financial implications, if any. If within twenty-one days of the inquiry a majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly explicitly concurs in the request, the Executive Director shall convene the United Nations Environment Assembly accordingly.

### **Place of regular sessions**

#### Rule 4

Regular sessions shall be held at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme, unless otherwise decided by the United Nations Environment Assembly at a previous session.

## **Special sessions**

### **Rule 5**

1. Special sessions shall be held pursuant to a decision taken by the United Nations Environment Assembly at a regular session, or at the request of:
  - (a) A majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
  - (b) The General Assembly;
  - (c) The Economic and Social Council.
2. Special sessions may also be requested by:
  - (a) Five States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, whether or not they are members of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
  - (b) The President of the United Nations Environment Assembly with the concurrence of the other members of the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly and in consultation with the Executive Director.
3. In such cases, the Executive Director shall immediately inform all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the request, as well as of the approximate costs and relevant administrative considerations, and shall inquire whether they concur in it. If within twenty-one days of the inquiry a majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly explicitly concurs in the request, the Executive Director shall convene a special session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

## **Date of opening of special sessions**

### **Rule 6**

Special sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally be convened within forty-two days of the receipt by the Executive Director of a request for such a session, at a date and place fixed by the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, taking into account such observations as may have been made in the request for a special session.

## **Notification of date of opening**

### **Rule 7**

The Executive Director shall communicate the date of the first meeting of each session to all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Chairpersons of subsidiary organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly, as appropriate, the President of the General Assembly when the Assembly is in session, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the appropriate United Nations bodies, the intergovernmental organizations referred to in rule 69 below and the non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders referred to in rule 70 below. Such notification shall be sent:

- (a) In the case of a regular session, at least forty-two days in advance;
- (b) In the case of a special session, at least fourteen days in advance of the date fixed in accordance with rule 6 above.

## **Adjournment of session**

### **Rule 8**

The United Nations Environment Assembly may decide at any session to adjourn temporarily and resume its meetings at a later date.

## **II. AGENDA**

### **Drawing up of the provisional agenda for a regular session**

#### **Rule 9**

1. The Executive Director shall submit to the United Nations Environment Assembly at each regular session the provisional agenda for the following regular session. The provisional agenda shall include all items proposed by:

- (a) The United Nations Environment Assembly;
- (b) A State Member of the United Nations or member of a specialized agency or of the International Atomic Energy Agency;
- (c) The General Assembly;
- (d) The Economic and Social Council;
- (e) The Executive Director.

2. Items proposed under (b) above shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum and, if possible, by basic documents which shall be submitted to the Executive Director at least forty-nine days prior to the opening of the session.

3. In drawing up the provisional agenda, the Executive Director shall take account of suggestions made by the Environment Coordination Board, a specialized agency, the International Atomic Energy Agency, an appropriate United Nations body, or an intergovernmental organization referred to in rule 69 below. The Executive Director shall also consider suggestions from the international non-governmental organizations referred to in rule 70 below.

## **Communication of the provisional agenda**

### **Rule 10**

After the United Nations Environment Assembly has considered the provisional agenda for the following session, the provisional agenda, incorporating any amendments made by the United Nations Environment Assembly, shall be communicated by the Executive Director to all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Chairpersons of subsidiary organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly as appropriate, the President of the General Assembly when the Assembly is in session, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the appropriate United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the intergovernmental organizations referred to in rule 69 below and the international non-governmental organizations referred to in rule 70 below.

## **Supplementary items**

### **Rule 11**

The inclusion of supplementary items in the provisional agenda considered by the United Nations Environment Assembly may be proposed by any authority entitled to propose items under paragraph 1 of rule 9. The request for inclusion of a supplementary item shall be supported by a statement from the authority proposing it, except in the case of the General Assembly, regarding the urgency of the consideration of the item. The Executive Director shall communicate to the United Nations Environment Assembly any requests for the inclusion of supplementary items received before the commencement of the regular session, together with such observations as the Executive Director may wish to make.

## **Adoption of the agenda**

### **Rule 12**

1. At the beginning of each regular session, subject to the provisions of rule 15 and after the election of officers when required under rule 18, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall adopt its agenda for the session on the basis of the provisional agenda and any supplementary items proposed in accordance with rule 11.
2. A State Member of the United Nations or member of a specialized agency or the International Atomic Energy Agency which has requested the inclusion of an item in the agenda under rule 9 or 11 above shall be entitled to be heard by the United Nations Environment Assembly on the inclusion of the item in the agenda for the session.
3. The United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally include in its agenda for the session only items for which adequate documentation has been circulated to members at least forty-two days before the beginning of the regular session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

## **Allocation of items**

### **Rule 13**

The United Nations Environment Assembly may allocate items among the plenary meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and sessional committees and working parties, if any, set up in accordance with rule 61, and may refer items without preliminary debate in the United Nations Environment Assembly to:

- (a) One or more of its subsidiary organs, if any, set up in accordance with rule 63, for examination and report at a subsequent session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
- (b) The Executive Director, for study and report at a subsequent session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; or
- (c) The proposer of the item, for further information or documentation.

## **Provisional agenda for a special session**

### **Rule 14**

The provisional agenda for a special session shall consist only of those items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the session. It shall be transmitted to the authorities mentioned in rule 10 at the same time as the notice convening the United Nations Environment Assembly.

## **Revision of the agenda**

### **Rule 15**

During a regular session, the United Nations Environment Assembly may revise the agenda for the session by adding, deleting, deferring or amending items. Only items which the United Nations Environment Assembly considers to be urgent and important shall be added to its agenda during the session.

## **III. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS**

### **Rule 16**

Each member of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be represented by an accredited representative, who may be accompanied by such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

### **Rule 17**

1. The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Executive Director before the first meeting which the representatives are to attend.
2. The Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall examine the credentials and submit its report to the United Nations Environment Assembly. This rule shall not, however, prevent a member from changing its representative, alternate representatives, or advisers subsequently, subject to proper submission and examination of credentials, where needed.

## **IV. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY BUREAU**

### **Elections**

### **Rule 18**

1. During the final meeting of a regular session, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall elect a President, eight Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur from among its members. These officers shall constitute the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The Bureau shall assist the President in the general conduct of business of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The chairpersons of such sessional committees or working parties as may be established under rule 61 below shall be invited to participate in meetings of the Bureau.
2. In electing its officers, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall ensure that each of the five regions is represented by two members in the Bureau of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
3. The Offices of President and Rapporteur of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally be subject to rotation among the five groups of States referred to in section I, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).



## **Replacement of a Bureau member**

### **Rule 19**

1. During a session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, if a Bureau member, except the President, is unable to permanently carry out any of her or his functions, the Assembly may elect an alternate upon appointment by a member State or by the regional group to which that member belongs.
2. During the intersessional period, if a Bureau member resigns or is unable to exercise her or his functions, the member State or the regional group to which that member belongs shall nominate a replacement for the remainder of the term. The Executive Director shall immediately upon receipt of the nomination inform all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the nomination in writing. If within one month no objections are received in writing, the nominee is elected. If a member State objects, the nominee is elected if a majority of member States responding support the nominee.

## **Terms of office**

### **Rule 20**

The President, the Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall commence their terms of office at the closure of the session at which they are elected and remain in office until the closure of the next regular session. Subject to the provisions of rule 18, they shall be eligible for re-election. None of them may hold office after the expiration of the term of office of the member of which the officer concerned is a representative.

## **Acting President**

### **Rule 21**

If the President cannot preside at a meeting or any part thereof, the President shall appoint a Vice-President to take her or his place.

## **Replacement of the President**

### **Rule 22**

If the President ceases to be a representative of a member of the United Nations Environment Assembly or is unable to perform the President's functions, or if the State of which the President is a representative ceases to be a member of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the Bureau shall designate one of the Vice-Presidents as Acting President.

## **Powers of the Acting President**

### **Rule 23**

A Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.

## **Voting rights of the President**

### **Rule 24**

In the case of a member of the United Nations Environment Assembly, which is for the time being represented by the President, an alternate representative shall, at the discretion of the President, be permitted to participate in the proceedings and to vote in the United Nations Environment Assembly. In such a case the President shall not exercise the right to vote.

## **V. SECRETARIAT**

### **Duties of the Executive Director**

#### **Rule 25**

The Executive Director shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and of its subsidiary organs, if any. The Executive Director may designate any officer of the secretariat to act as the representative of the Executive Director.

#### **Rule 26**

The Executive Director shall direct the staff required by the United Nations Environment Assembly and any subsidiary organs which may be established by it.

#### **Rule 27**

The Executive Director shall be responsible for performing those functions in relation to the United Nations Environment Assembly which the Executive Director is required to undertake by General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

#### Rule 28

The Executive Director, or the Executive Director's representative, may, subject to rule 33, make oral as well as written statements to the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs, if any, concerning any question under consideration.

#### Rule 29

The Executive Director shall be responsible for all the necessary arrangements for meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and of its subsidiary organs, including the preparation and distribution of documents at least forty-two days in advance of the sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs, if any.

### **Duties of the Secretariat**

#### Rule 30

The secretariat shall interpret speeches made at meetings; shall receive, translate and circulate the documents of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs; and shall publish and circulate the resolutions, reports and relevant documentation of the United Nations Environment Assembly. It shall have the custody of the documents in the archives of the United Nations Environment Assembly and generally perform all other work which the United Nations Environment Assembly may require.

### **Estimates of expenditures**

#### Rule 31

1. Before any proposal which involves expenditure from United Nations funds, including the resources of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme established by General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), is approved by the United Nations Environment Assembly or by any of its subsidiary organs, the Executive Director shall circulate to all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of the subsidiary organ concerned, as early as possible, a report from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in terms of Financial Regulations 2.10 and 2.11, on the estimated costs involved as well as on administrative and budgetary implications with reference to existing authorizations and appropriations in accordance with the provisions of section II, paragraph 3, and section III of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).
2. The United Nations Environment Assembly shall take into account the estimates referred to in paragraph 1 before adopting any proposal involving expenditure from United Nations funds including the resources of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme. If the proposal is adopted, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall indicate, whenever appropriate, the priority or degree of urgency which it attaches to the projects and, as the case may be, which current projects may be deferred, modified, or eliminated to ensure that the work of the United Nations Environment Programme will be carried on most effectively.
3. The Executive Director shall submit to the United Nations Environment Assembly in each odd-numbered year, for the following biennium, the estimates of expenditure of the United Nations Environment Programme borne by the regular budget of the United Nations. The Executive Director shall also submit to the United Nations Environment Assembly estimates of expenditures borne by the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, in accordance with the General Procedures formulated by the United Nations Environment Assembly under section III, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), and the Financial Rules of the said Fund.

## **VI. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

### **Quorum**

#### Rule 32

The President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly are present. The presence of a majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be required for any decision to be taken.

### **Powers of the President**

#### Rule 33

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon the President elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly, shall direct the discussion, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put

questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, shall have control of the proceedings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and over the maintenance of order at its meetings. The President may propose to the United Nations Environment Assembly the limitation of time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each representative may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. The President may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting or of the debate on the question under discussion.

#### Rule 34

The President, in the exercise of her or his functions, remains under the authority of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

### **Speeches**

#### Rule 35

No person may address the United Nations Environment Assembly without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to rules 36 and 37, the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The President may call a speaker to order if remarks of the speaker are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

### **Precedence**

#### Rule 36

The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Rapporteur of a sessional committee or working party, or a designated representative of any subsidiary organ, may be accorded precedence in speaking for the purpose of explaining the conclusion arrived at by the sessional committee, working party or subsidiary organ concerned and for the purpose of replying to questions.

### **Points of order**

#### Rule 37

1. During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time rise to a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with the rules of procedure. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote, and the ruling of the President shall stand unless overruled by a majority vote of the members present and voting.
2. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

### **Time limit on speeches**

#### Rule 38

The United Nations Environment Assembly may limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times each person may speak on any question, except on procedural questions, when the President shall limit each intervention to a maximum of five minutes. When debate is limited and a speaker has spoken her or his allotted time, the President shall call the speaker to order without delay.

### **Closing of list of speakers**

#### Rule 39

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the United Nations Environment Assembly, declare the list closed. The President may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if, in the opinion of the President, a speech delivered after the President has declared the list closed renders this justified. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no other speakers, the President, with the consent of the United Nations Environment Assembly, shall declare the debate closed.

### **Adjournment of debate**

#### Rule 40

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative may speak in favour of and one against the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

## **Closure of debate**

### **Rule 41**

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified a wish to speak of that representative. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. If the United Nations Environment Assembly is in favour of the closure, the President shall declare the closure of the debate.

## **Suspension or adjournment of the meeting**

### **Rule 42**

During the discussion of any matter a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motion shall not be debated, but shall be immediately put to the vote.

## **Order of procedural motion**

### **Rule 43**

Subject to rule 37, and regardless of the order in which they are submitted, the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

- (a) To suspend the meeting;
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion;
- (d) For the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.

## **Proposals and amendments**

### **Rule 44**

Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing and submitted to the Executive Director, who shall circulate copies to the members in all the official languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all members not later than the day preceding the meeting. Subject to the consent of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of proposals or amendments even though these proposals or amendments have not been circulated or have only been circulated the same day.

## **Decisions on competence**

### **Rule 45**

Subject to rule 43, any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the United Nations Environment Assembly to adopt any proposal or any amendment submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.

## **Withdrawal of motions**

### **Rule 46**

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion which has thus been withdrawn may be reintroduced by another member.

## **Reconsideration of proposals**

### **Rule 47**

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session of the United Nations Environment Assembly unless the United Nations Environment Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall immediately be put to the vote.

## **VII. VOTING**

### **Voting rights**

#### Rule 48

Each member of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall have one vote.

### **Majority required and meaning of the expression “Members present and voting”**

#### Rule 49

1. Except where the present rules of procedure expressly provide otherwise, decisions of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting.
2. For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "members present and voting" means members present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members which abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

### **Method of voting**

#### Rule 50

Subject to rule 56 the United Nations Environment Assembly shall normally vote by show of hands, but any representative may request a roll call, which shall then be taken in the alphabetical order of the names of the members, beginning with the member whose name is drawn by lot by the President.

### **Recording of roll call**

#### Rule 51

The vote of each member participating in a roll call shall be recorded in the relevant documents of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

### **Conduct during voting**

#### Rule 52

After the President has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The President may permit members to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, except when the vote is taken by secret ballot. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations. The President shall not permit the proposer of a proposal or of an amendment to explain the proposer's vote on the proposer's own proposal or amendment.

### **Division of proposals or amendments**

#### Rule 53

A representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

### **Voting on amendments**

#### Rule 54

1. When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall vote first on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. If no amendments are adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form.
2. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

## **Voting on proposals**

### **Rule 55**

1. If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. The United Nations Environment Assembly may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.
2. Any motions requiring that no decision be taken on the substance of such proposals shall, however, be considered as previous questions and shall be put to the vote before them.

## **Elections**

### **Rule 56**

All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless otherwise decided by the United Nations Environment Assembly.

### **Rule 57**

1. If, when one person or member only is to be elected, no candidate obtains in the first ballot the majority required, a second ballot shall be taken restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes. If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.
2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among the candidates obtaining the second largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held for the purpose of reducing the number of candidates to two. In the case of a tie among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a second ballot shall be held. If a tie results among more than two candidates, the number shall be reduced to two by lot and the balloting, restricted to them, shall continue in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

### **Rule 58**

1. When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining the required majority on the first ballot shall be elected.
2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is more than the number of places to be filled, those candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be elected.
3. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, there shall be held additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, who shall number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled. However, in the case of a tie between a greater number of unsuccessful candidates, a special ballot shall be held for the purpose of reducing the number of candidates to the required number.
4. If three restricted ballots are inconclusive, unrestricted ballots shall follow in which votes may be cast for any eligible person or member. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots (subject to exception in the case similar to that of the tie mentioned at the end of the previous paragraph of this rule) shall be restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted ballots. The number of such candidates shall not be more than twice the places remaining to be filled.
5. The following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted and so on, until the places are filled.

## **Equally divided votes**

### **Rule 59**

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

## **VIII. SESSIONAL OR INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND SUBSIDIARY ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY**

### **Rule 60**

The United Nations Environment Assembly may establish such sessional or intersessional committees, working parties and subsidiary organs as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions.

## **Sessional committees and working parties**

### **Rule 61**

1. At each session, the United Nations Environment Assembly may set up sessional committees and working parties, from among its members, and refer to them any questions on the agenda for study and report.
2. The sessional committees and working parties may set up subcommittees and subgroups of working parties. The member of such subcommittees and subgroups of working parties shall be nominated by the committee or working party concerned.
3. The Chairperson of a sessional committee or working group may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one quarter of the members of the committee or working group are present. The presence of a majority of the members shall be required for any decision to be taken.
4. Subject to paragraph 3 above, the provisions of rules 33 to 59 of these rules of procedure shall be applied as appropriate in the proceedings of the sessional committees, working parties and any subcommittees or subgroups set up by them.

### **Rule 62**

Each sessional committee or working party shall elect its own officers, unless otherwise decided by the United Nations Environment Assembly. In electing its officers each sessional committee or working party shall have due regard to the principle of equitable geographical representation.

## **Subsidiary organs of the United Nations Environment Assembly and expert groups**

### **Rule 63**

1. The United Nations Environment Assembly may establish such subsidiary organs on a permanent or ad hoc basis as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions and, as required, expert groups to consider specific problems and make recommendations.
2. Any State Member of the United Nations or member of a specialized agency or the International Atomic Energy Agency, whether or not that State is a member of the United Nations Environment Assembly, may become a member of any subsidiary organ of the United Nations Environment Assembly. In determining the size of the subsidiary organs and electing their members, the United Nations Environment Assembly shall take fully into account the desirability of including in the membership of these bodies States with a special interest in the subject matter to be dealt with by them, as well as the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution.
3. The rules of procedure of subsidiary organs shall be those of the United Nations Environment Assembly, as appropriate, subject to such modifications as the United Nations Environment Assembly may decide upon in the light of proposals by the subsidiary organs concerned. Each subsidiary organ shall elect its own officers.
4. Each subsidiary organ, taking into consideration the date of the regular session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and bearing in mind the items referred to it by the United Nations Environment Assembly, may adopt its own priorities within the framework of the work programme established by the United Nations Environment Assembly and, in consultation with the Executive Director, meet as may be necessary.

## **IX. LANGUAGES AND RECORDS**

### **Languages and interpretation**

#### **Rule 64**

1. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official and working languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Speeches made in any of these languages shall be interpreted into the other languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
2. Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly. In this case the representative shall provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Interpretation into the other languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly by an interpreter of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first language of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

## **Languages and distribution of resolutions, other formal decisions and documents**

### **Rule 65**

1. All resolutions, declarations, recommendations and other formal decisions of the United Nations Environment Assembly, as well as its reports to the General Assembly and other documents, shall be made available in the languages of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
2. The text of the resolutions, declarations, recommendations and other formal decisions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly, its sessional committees and other subsidiary organs, if any, shall be distributed by the secretariat to all members of the United Nations Environment Assembly and any others participating in the session. The printed text of such resolutions, declarations, recommendations and other formal decisions, as well as the reports of the United Nations Environment Assembly to the General Assembly, shall be distributed after the close of the session to all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to the intergovernmental organizations referred to in rule 69 below.

## **Sound recordings of meetings**

### **Rule 66**

Sound recordings of the meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and of its sessional committees shall be kept by the secretariat in accordance with the practice of the United Nations. Such recordings shall also be made of the proceedings of any subsidiary organs when they so decide.

## **X. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS**

### **Rule 67**

The meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly, its sessional committees and working parties and subsidiary organs, if any, shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides otherwise. If possible, such proceedings shall be broadcast to the wider public through electronic means.

## **XI. PARTICIPATION OF STATES NOT MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY**

### **Rule 68**

Any State Member of the United Nations or member of a specialized agency or of the International Atomic Energy Agency which is not a member of the United Nations Environment Assembly may participate in the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Any State thus participating shall not have the right to vote, but may submit proposals which may be put to the vote by request of any member of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The provisions of this rule shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to participation in a subsidiary organ by States not members thereof.

## **XII. PARTICIPATION OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, UNITED NATION BODIES AND OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Rule 69**

1. Representatives of specialized agencies, of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and of appropriate United Nations bodies, as well as of the intergovernmental organizations referred to in section IV, paragraph 5, of [General Assembly resolution 2997 \(XXVII\)](#) which are designated for this purpose by the United Nations Environment Assembly, may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs, if any, upon the invitation of the President or Chairperson, as the case may be, on questions within the scope of their activities.
2. Written statements of specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and United Nations bodies, as well as of other intergovernmental organizations referred to in paragraph 1 above, related to items on the agenda of the United Nations Environment Assembly or its subsidiary



organs, if any, shall be circulated by the secretariat to members of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of the subsidiary organ concerned.

3. A regional economic integration organization<sup>1</sup> may participate in the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Assembly with the same modalities as those applicable to its participation in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly.

### **XIII. OBSERVERS OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### Rule 70

1. International non-governmental organizations having an interest in the field of the environment, referred to in section IV, paragraph 5, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs, if any. The United Nations Environment Assembly shall from time to time adopt and revise when necessary a list of such organizations. Upon the invitation of the President or Chairperson, as the case may be, and subject to the approval of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of the subsidiary organ concerned, international non-governmental organizations may make oral statements on matters within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements provided by international non-governmental organizations referred to in paragraph 1 above, related to items on the agenda of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of its subsidiary organs, shall be circulated by the secretariat to members of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of the subsidiary organ concerned in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements were made available to the secretariat for distribution.

### **XIV. AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS OF RULES OF PROCEDURE**

#### Rule 71

Any of these rules may be amended or suspended by the United Nations Environment Assembly subject to rules 72 and 73 below.

#### Rule 72

These rules may not be amended until the United Nations Environment Assembly has received a report on the proposed amendment from a committee or working party of the United Nations Environment Assembly established for that purpose.

#### Rule 73

A rule of procedure may be suspended by the United Nations Environment Assembly provided that twenty-four hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given. The notice may be waived if no member objects.

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<sup>1</sup> That is the subject of [General Assembly resolution 65/276](#).