

# Operating Principles Governing the Work of the Panel

## Request for Written Submissions from Member States and Relevant Stakeholders

Member states, during the resumed first session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG1.2), requested the Secretariat of the OEWG to solicit written submissions from Member States and relevant stakeholders regarding the operating principles governing the work of the panel.

In support of this request, the Secretariat conducted a webinar (on 26 April 2023) dedicated to the issue of operating principles. In advance of the webinar, the Secretariat released a background document which provides a comparative overview of operating principles of relevant, existing science-policy panels (IPCC, IPBES, IRP and GEO). The recording of the webinar can be found on [this website](#), when available, and the background document is available at [this link](#).

A variety of potential operating principles are presented below, based on the analysis performed for this [background document](#). The following questions in no way attempt to rank or preclude consideration of the operating principles of the future SPP, rather, they draw from the agreed text of Resolution 5/8 and other existing, relevant science-policy bodies, as well as the discussions at the OEWG. You may also suggest relevant potential operating principles that have not been identified yet.

Member States are invited to provide submissions through their respective national focal points (list of focal points available [at this link](#)). Non-government stakeholders are invited to submit their submissions on behalf of their organization or group. You are invited to respond to all or some of the questions below. Once complete, please submit this filled document to [SPP-CWP@un.org](mailto:SPP-CWP@un.org). All submissions will be uploaded online and will inform a working document to be considered at OEWG 2.

## **Contact information**

What is your name/surname?

Michel Tschirren

What is your country?

Switzerland

What is your title?

Senior Policy Advisor

What is your email address?

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN  
CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland

Who are you submitting on behalf of?

Switzerland

The following elements are included in Resolution 5/8. Please indicate by clicking on the box(es) where you believe these elements should be included (i.e., operating principles, rules of procedure, guidelines, or other relevant documents, or if they are not relevant). Some key terms have been grouped together for the purpose of this tabular analysis, there is inevitably some overlap across principles.

	Operating Principle	Rules of Procedure	Guidelines	Other	Not relevant
<b>CREDIBILITY</b>					
Robustness/Rigour	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrity/Objectivity / Independence/Impartiality/ Lack of Bias (avoiding conflicts of interest)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interdisciplinary / Multidisciplinary / Balance of disciplines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RELEVANCE/SALIENCE</b>					
Policy-relevant (and not policy prescriptive)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>LEGITIMACY</b>					
Inclusivity/Balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-- indigenous inclusivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-- geographic balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-- regional balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-- gender balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-- balance of disciplines (see also Credibility/Interdisciplinary...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CROSS-CUTTING THEMES</b>					
Transparency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordination (without duplication) / Complementarity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost-Effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide any relevant comments on your choices above:

Switzerland is of the view that the panel's operating principles lay out essential aspects and key values guiding the work of the panel and communicate them to different audiences. Those principles do not need to be revised while other documents that may further detail some aspects of the principles (rules, procedures, guidelines)

might be revised over the years. The principles give overarching guidance to the panel, its work and institutional arrangements.

Switzerland supports using the resolution UNEA5/8 language for formulating the operating principles on:

- Policy relevance: ‘deliver policy-relevant scientific evidence without being policy prescriptive’
- Interdisciplinary and Inclusive: ‘is interdisciplinary, ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise, has inclusive participation, including indigenous peoples; and has geographical, regional and gender balance.’
- Independence and lack of bias: ‘independent intergovernmental body; has the ability to address potential conflicts of interest’

Addressing conflict of interest is key for the panel to be credible, unbiased and scientifically robust and to . In addition to UNEA5/8 language Switzerland also supports the use of language from the IRP’s principles document:

**Objectivity.** *The panel undertakes critical, **unbiased** studies and assessments of best available science, follows robust methodologies and peer review processes, and ensures open and transparent decisionmaking processes.*

**Integrity.** *Panel members maintain the integrity of the scientific process and **avert any conflicts of interest.***

Switzerland is of the view that because of their significance the panel should have a principle ‘independence and of lack of bias’ as part of the operating principles guiding the work of the panel. In addition that principle should be further detailed in rules of procedures, guidelines and other documents. For example, there should be conflict of interest disclosure requirements spelled out and forms prepared to ensure scientific rigor when it comes to contribution to or reviewing documents of the panel or when taking up certain functions in or related to the panel.

Interdisciplinary / Multidisciplinary / Balance of disciplines and Inclusivity/Balance are important aspects of the new panel and thus to be captured in the operating principles. This can happen in a generic way and it is not necessary to go into each subitem to describe scientific discipline or balance type.

The panel shall take into account existing expertise from other actors including MEAs and IOMC organizations and avoid duplication. It would thus be helpful to include the aspect of complementarity and coordination in the operating principles.

Cost-Effectiveness and Flexibility can be addressed with the programme of work and budget of the panel.

**The following table includes other elements that may be considered. Please indicate by clicking on the box(es) where you believe these elements should be included (i.e., operating principles, rules of procedure, guidelines, or other relevant documents, or if they are not relevant). It is also possible to add additional potential operating principles to be considered.**

<b>OTHER</b>	Operating Principle	Rules of Procedure	Guidelines	Other	Not relevant
Promotion of innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehensive, holistic, or integrative approach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Consensus based approach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing accessible outputs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others [please add]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision making processes (procedural / substantial / summary for policy makers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please provide any relevant comments on your choices above:**

**Decision making processes:** There need to be decision making processes that are described in the rules of procedures. They depend on the arrangements of the panel.

**Please provide your written submission in the space below:**

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