

# The United Nations Environment Assembly/Committee of Permanent Representatives - Rules of Procedure

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**Orientation session for the accredited representatives of the Committee of Permanent Representatives  
of the United Nations Environment Programme**

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

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## 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 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.**



# Committee of Permanent Representatives

- **General Assembly resolution 67/213 of 21 December 2012 decided in OP 4(b), to establish universal membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. It was subsequently renamed the United Nations Environment Assembly.**
- **The Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was established by Governing Council Decision 13/2. The CPR consists of the representatives of all States Members of the United Nations and members of its specialized agencies, and the European Union, accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme. (Governing Council decision 19/32).**
- **Decision 19/32 provides that the CPR shall hold four regular meetings a year. Extraordinary meetings may be also convened. The CPR may establish subcommittees, working groups and task forces as deemed appropriate to carry out its mandate.**
- **Decision 19/32 OP 7 refers to its mandate, including inter alia, to review, monitor and assess the implementation of decisions; to review the draft PoW and budget, reports requested of the secretariat; prepare draft decisions.**

# Rule of Procedure of Subsidiary Bodies

## Rule 63

- 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.**



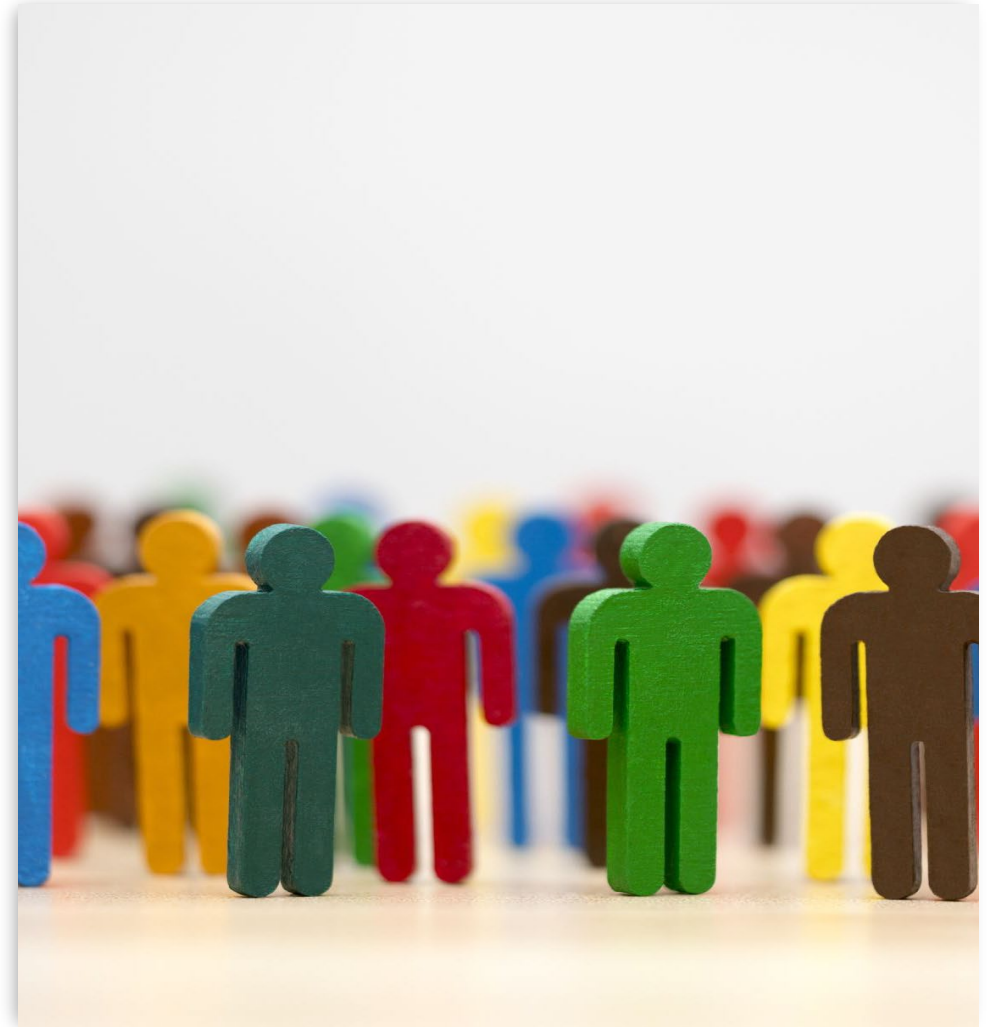
# Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

- **Governing Council decision 19/32, paragraph 9 provides that “the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall elect a Bureau composed of a Chairperson, three Vice Chairpersons and a Rapporteur, for a period of two years, taking into account the principles of rotation and equitable geographical representation”.**
- **Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau shall assist the Chair in the general conduct of business of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.**
- **Decision of 23 June 2021, reaffirmed that the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall conduct its work in a collaborative manner and, in the light of the tasks expected of it, recommends that it adopt, under the leadership of its Chair and in a balanced manner, practical arrangements for the sharing of responsibilities among the Chair, the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur.**

# Committee of Permanent Representatives: Decision 27/2 – 22 February 2013 - strengthened role

**Decides that an open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives will be the inter-sessional subsidiary body of the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme and perform the following functions:**

- a) Contribute to the preparation of the agenda of its governing body;**
- b) Provide advice to its governing body on policy matters;**
- c) Prepare decisions for adoption by its governing body and oversee their implementation;**
- d) Convene thematic and/or programmatic debates;**
- e) Promote effective ways and means to facilitate participation of the non-resident members of the Committee, particularly from developing countries; and**
- f) Perform any other functions delegated to it by its governing body.**



# Credentials

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**All Member States are required to present credentials for each session of the UN Environment Assembly pursuant to the rules of procedure of the Assembly.**

**For high level plenaries such as the General Assembly, as well as UNEA, Member States often do provide credentials, signed by either the Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, other formal communications containing the names of representatives to the UN-Habitat Assembly, such as letters and Note Verbales from the Permanent Missions or formal communications from Government Ministries would be sufficient.**

**Subsidiary bodies of UNEA – credentials signed by Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs are not required to participate. Representatives of Member States, as well as representatives of the Holy See, the State of Palestine and the European Union are required to register through the INDICO platform available online by uploading a formal letter or Note Verbale from their Embassy or Permanent Mission addressed to the Secretariat containing the composition of delegation.**

**Formal registration is subject to review and approval by the Secretariat and is sufficient to participate in the meetings of subsidiary bodies, including participating in the election of officers.**

# Replacement of a Bureau Member

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## Rule 19

- 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.**



# Powers of the President/Chair

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## Rule 33

- (i) The President/Chair declares the opening and closing of each meeting**
- (ii) Directs the discussion, ensures observance of rules, accords the right to speak, puts questions to the vote and announces decisions.**
- (iii) Rules on points of order and, subject to these rules, has control of the proceedings.**
- (iv) Proposes 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.**
- (v) Proposes the suspension of the meeting.**

## Rule 34

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

# Acting President/Chair

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**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.**

**Powers of the Acting President: Rule 23: A Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.**

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# 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.**

- **General presumption of regularity: When a meeting is opened it is assumed that the presiding officer has determined the presence of the necessary quorum, even if the presiding officer does not announce it -- and similarly, there is such a presumption as the meeting continues, that quorum is maintained. However, at any time a point of order can be made with respect to quorum.**
- **Different quorum requirements for the discussion phase and the decision-making phase.**

# Quorum – Action/Adoption phase

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- **A point of order can be made with respect to the fact that there is no quorum / with respect to proposals adopted by consensus or a vote.**
  - **Presumption of regularity: If the presiding officer permits a decision to be taken, he may be presumed to have established to his satisfaction that a majority of the members are present.**
  - **Physical presence of an authorized representative behind the nameplate of a Member State.**
  - **Procedural question relating to the specific vote in question / To be determined prior to adoption/before action and not ex post facto.**
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# Action phase: Adoption by Consensus

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- **In the United Nations practice, most proposals are adopted by consensus.**
- **Consensus is generally understood to mean adoption of a decision without formal objections and vote; this being possible only when no delegation formally objects to consensus being recorded, though some delegations may have reservations to the substantive matter at issue or to a part of it. The fact that consensus is recorded does not necessarily mean that there is “unanimity”, namely, complete agreement as to substance and a consequent absence of reservations. For example, there are numerous occasions where States make declarations or reservations to a matter at issue while not objecting to a decisions being recorded by consensus.**
- **Within the practice of the United Nations explanation of votes before and after the vote are permitted even when a proposal is adopted by consensus.**

# Action phase: Adoption by Vote

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- **Methods of voting: Rule 50: (1) Show of hands, (2) Roll call; and now (3) electronic means.**
- **Whether a draft proposal or resolution has been adopted by a vote is determined based on whether the draft resolution has met the required majority, i.e., a majority of those present and voting, which is determined exclusively based on the affirmative and negative votes cast. (Rule 49)**
- **The mere fact that the number of votes (i.e., yes, no and abstentions) recorded, is less than a majority of the Members of the United Nations Environment Assembly, is insufficient evidence that a majority (i.e., quorum) was not present, since there is no obligation to vote. Thus, representatives may be physically present for the purpose of quorum but not participate in the voting process**

# 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.**



# Participation of Specialized Agencies, The International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations 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.**



# Participation of Specialized Agencies, The International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations Bodies and Other Intergovernmental Organizations

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## Rule 69

- 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 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.**

# Observers of international non-governmental organizations

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## 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 and subject to the approval of the United Nations Environment Assembly or of the subsidiary organ concerned, international nongovernmental organizations may make oral statements on matters within the scope of their activities.**

# Observers of international non-governmental organizations

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## Rule 70

- 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.**

# Thank you



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