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Agenda Item 17.2

**APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

**Summary:**

This document summarizes the work undertaken by the Secretariat in consultation with the Standing Committee to develop a consultative process aimed at producing recommendations to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties on the composition of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the next intersessional period, as requested by Resolution 11.4.

The guidance and decision of the Conference of the Parties is requested on some elements of the process, in particular on the possibility to appoint alternate members for the regional membership and on the need for renewal of the COP-appointed membership of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council.

This document should be read in conjunction with UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.16.2 and UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.21.2.6.

## APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

### Background

1. The Secretariat has prepared this note to assist Parties in their deliberations to appoint members to the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council to serve during the period from the close of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting to the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP).

### *Composition of the Sessional Committee*

2. In accordance with Resolution 11.4, the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council is a representative selection of the membership of the Scientific Council appointed for each intersessional period between two consecutive ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
3. Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties, the Sessional Committee is composed of:
  - (a) nine COP-appointed Councillors with expertise in taxonomic and thematic issues; and
  - (b) fifteen Party-appointed Councillors selected from within the Standing Committee's geographic regions, as follows: three from Africa; three from Asia; three from Europe; three from Oceania; three from South and Central America and the Caribbean.

### *Terms of office*

4. COP-appointed Councillors are appointed by each meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the subsequent triennium. Their appointment can be renewed. However, re-appointment is not automatic and has to be confirmed by each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
5. Party-appointed Councillors are appointed by individual Parties. Each Party is entitled to appoint one member of the Scientific Council (Art. VIII para.2 of the Convention). Party-appointed Councillors do not have a time limit for their appointment; they remain members until they themselves step down or they are replaced by the Party that appointed them.
6. Sessional Committee members should normally be appointed for a minimum term of two triennia. Each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties, starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting (COP12), should decide upon the renewal of half of the membership of the Sessional Committee. As a transitional measure, half of the first appointees were to serve for a single triennium.

### Definition of a process for the selection of members of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council

7. Resolution 11.4 requests the Secretariat to provide for a consultative process in order to elaborate, in consultation with the Standing Committee, recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on the composition of the Sessional Committee.
8. In considering a possible consultative process leading to recommendations to the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) on the composition of the Sessional Committee for the subsequent intersessional period, the Secretariat identified a number of options, notably for the nomination and selection of Party-appointed members selected regionally, with different implications, and sought the advice and guidance of the Standing Committee at its 44<sup>th</sup> meeting (document [UNEP/CMS/StC44/14](#)).

9. From the discussion at StC44 a broad consensus emerged for an option providing for the identification of candidate Party-appointed members by the regions through a consultation process among the Parties in the regions, coordinated by the relevant members of the Standing Committee, and the submission of definite recommendations on the candidates to be appointed to the COP, formulated in consultation between the Secretariat and the Standing Committee. Further details can be found in paragraphs 112-122 of the [StC44 report](#).
10. The outcomes of the StC44 deliberations were reported to the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee (ScC-SC1, Bonn, 18-21 April 2016). Relevant discussions at the meeting raised issues about the expected renewal of half of the membership of the Sessional Committee by COP12, notably whether the expected renewal should concern only the Party-appointed members or also the COP-appointed members. Potential difficulties in membership renewal were also pointed out as there is an odd number of regional representatives (15) with three members from each of the five regions. The usefulness of identifying alternate members to substitute for appointees in case they had to resign or were unable to attend a particular meeting was also discussed.
11. Based on the discussions at ScC-SC1, the Secretariat sought the guidance of the Standing Committee at its 45<sup>th</sup> meeting in relation to the issues mentioned above (document [UNEP/CMS/StC45/Doc.13.1](#)).
12. Invited to express a position on whether the 50 per cent renewal of the membership of the Sessional Committee should apply also to the COP-appointed membership, the Standing Committee, after discussion, agreed that the COP-appointed councillors were exempt from the rotation provision, at least for the appointment of the Sessional Committee for the triennium 2018-2020. COP12 is requested to confirm whether this interpretation will remain applicable also for subsequent cycles. All COP-appointed Councillors for the current intersessional period confirmed their availability to serve for the next term, should the COP so wish.
13. On the issue of the renewal of the Party-appointed membership of the Sessional Committee, the Secretariat solicited a decision by the Standing Committee on the number of members to be replaced for each region before the regional consultations. Based on a consultation with the current members to ascertain who was willing and able to continue to serve, and on vacant positions, the Standing Committee agreed that two regions (Asia and South & Central America & the Caribbean) should be required to choose two members each for rotation at COP12, while the remaining regions (Europe, Africa and Oceania) should replace only one member each.
14. On the question of the appointment of alternate members, the Standing Committee generally supported the possibility of identifying alternate members for the regions, in the understanding however of that not being obligatory. COP12 is invited to consider this possibility and confirm its agreement with it. If agreed, the appointment of alternate members could be reflected in the Terms of Reference and/or the Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Council, as appropriate (see also document UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.16.2).
15. The possibility of having a back-up for regional members appears particularly useful in the event of a regional member resigning from the Sessional Committee in the course of his or her term, as the modality for nomination and appointment of members makes it impractical to appoint members intersessionally. In addition, alternate members, even if not having to replace regular members permanently, might obtain some exposure to the work of the Sessional Committee, which would constitute a qualification for their possible consideration as candidates for regular membership at the time of renewal of the membership. Alternate members could be identified in the number of one or two for each region, at the same time as the appointment of the regular members.

Appointment of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP12 and COP13

16. At the time of writing, regional members of the Standing Committee are being reminded to undertake the necessary consultations within their regions to identify (i) which current members of the Sessional Committee representing their region should be replaced; (ii) the Party-appointed councillors from their region proposed to replace them; (iii) possible alternate members for the region, should COP12 confirm its agreement with this arrangement. Recommendations to the COP on the composition of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP12 and COP13 are expected to be finalized at the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (Manila, 22 October 2017).

Recommended actions

17. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:

- a) consider the option for the appointment of alternate members for the regional membership of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council;
- b) appoint the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP12 and COP13, taking into account the recommendations from the Standing Committee and the Secretariat;
- c) provide clarification and guidance in relation to the need for renewal of the COP-appointed membership of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council.