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INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE



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PROPOSAL FOR A POLICY AND PROCESS FOR ADMITTING OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

Proposal for a policy and process for admitting observer organizations

Background

The list of participating organizations in IPCC Sessions has grown historically. In the past, over 50 international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attended IPCC Sessions and have been listed as observers. Recently the number of organizations asking for observer status has increased considerably. The Principles Governing IPCC Work and their Appendix A contain references to “international, intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations” and to “participating organizations” but the IPCC has never agreed on a policy and process for admitting observer organizations. Requests have been considered on a case by case basis by the Secretary. This makes it difficult for the Secretariat to manage the increasing requests from organizations, where the climate change relevance is not immediately obvious, and from commercial companies to participate in IPCC Sessions. This document is to propose a policy and process for admitting observer organizations to Sessions of the Panel and Sessions of a Working Group¹. It is based on criteria similar to those used under the UNFCCC.

Proposed admission policy for observer organizations

The following policy for admitting observer organisations to IPCC Sessions is proposed:

- A body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which is qualified in matters covered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and which has informed the IPCC Secretariat of its wish to be represented at Sessions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and any of its Working Groups, may be so admitted subject to acceptance by the Panel.
- In judging whether an organization is “qualified in matters covered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change” the Secretariat should be guided by the Principles Governing IPCC Work.
- Organizations need to be non-profit organizations and are required to furnish proof of their non-profit and/or tax-exempt status in a State Member of the United Nations, of one of its specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, or in a State Party to the International Court of Justice.
- Bodies and organizations, which are part of the UN System are considered participating organizations of the IPCC and are not requested to submit an application or other documentation.
- Applications from national organizations will be brought to the attention of the IPCC Focal Point of that IPCC Member.
- Only admitted observer organizations may designate representatives to attend Sessions of the IPCC and Sessions of a Working Group. Observer organizations have to register their representatives for each Session in advance.
- Being admitted as observer organization to Sessions of the Panel and Sessions of a Working Group does not imply that invitations to workshops, expert meetings and other closed meetings are extended to the observer organization. During a Session of the Panel or a Working Group certain meetings may be closed to observers. However, consistent with the IPCC procedures experts from “international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations may be invited in their own right to contribute to the work of the IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces”.
- Subject to availability of sufficient space in the conference room UN and other international and intergovernmental organizations will be provided with nameplates.

¹As defined in Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work “Session of the Panel” and “Session of a Working Group” refer to a series of meetings at the plenary level of the governmental representatives to the IPCC or to a Working Group of the IPCC. “IPCC Sessions” refers in this document to Sessions of the Panel and Sessions of Working Groups.

Process of admitting observer organizations

For admitting observer organizations the following process is proposed:

1. Organizations interested in being admitted as an observer to Sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups will be asked to send by post a letter of application with copies of
 - Official documents containing the mandate, scope and governing structure of the organization, such as the charter/statutes/constitution/by-laws or articles of association
 - Evidence of the non-profit and/or tax-exempt status of the organization.
 - Information on the activities undertaken by the organization that indicate the competence of the organization in matters related to the IPCC
 - A recent annual report including a financial statement and funding sources.
 - Information on the affiliation with other non-governmental organizations or institutions involved in climate change activities.
 - Brochures, newsletters and other publications related to the IPCC process from the organization.
 - Completed form with contact information of the organization and of a designated contact point
2. The Secretariat will screen the submissions and make a proposal to be considered by the IPCC Bureau. Following consideration by the IPCC Bureau, at a Session of the IPCC Bureau or by correspondence, an observer organization may be admitted on a provisional basis to a Session of the Panel or a Working Group
3. The list of observer organizations as agreed by the IPCC Bureau will be presented to the next Session of Panel for acceptance.
4. A body or organization is admitted as observer organization unless at least one third of the Members of the IPCC Members present at the Session object.
5. The Secretariat shall extend invitations to Sessions of the Panel and its Working Groups to all accepted observer organizations. The list of accepted observer organizations shall be reviewed by the IPCC Bureau and the Panel every five years.
6. New requests for admission to Sessions of the IPCC shall be submitted at least 4 months before a Session of the Panel or a Working Group.
7. Organizations, which are already on the list of the IPCC Secretariat and have received invitations to Sessions of the IPCC in the past, will be asked to submit documentation listed under item 1 above and will be invited to Sessions of the Panel and Working Groups on a provisional basis until the Panel has taken a decision. Admission of observer organizations will be included as regular agenda item of Sessions of the IPCC Bureau and the Panel.

Proposed action by the Panel

The Panel is invited to consider the proposal by the Secretariat at the present Session and take a decision on future action.