



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

(prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary

The present document solicits the Standing Committee's advice and guidance to the Secretariat concerning the definition of a process effective from COP12 for the selection of members of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council.

[Resolution 11.4](#), adopted by the Conference of the Parties to CMS at its 11th meeting, provides for several organizational changes to the Scientific Council, and gives a mandate to the Standing Committee to oversee, and make decisions towards the implementation of some of these changes in the intersessional period 2015-2017.

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Introduction

1. [Resolution 11.4](#), adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to CMS at its 11th meeting, provides for several organizational changes to the Scientific Council, and mandates the Standing Committee to oversee, and make decisions towards the implementation of some of these changes in the intersessional period 2015-2017.
2. In particular, Resolution 11.4 stipulates that, for each intersessional period between two consecutive meetings of the Conference of the Parties, a representative selection of the membership of the Scientific Council, to be named the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council, should be identified, composed of COP-appointed Councillors and Party-appointed Councillors selected regionally, to be appointed at each ordinary meeting of the COP on the basis of a recommendation from the Secretariat in consultation with the Standing Committee.
3. In relation to the appointment of Sessional Committee members, Resolution 11.4 also requests the Secretariat to provide for a consultative process in order to elaborate, in consultation with the Standing Committee, its recommendation to the Conference of the Parties on the composition of the Sessional Committee (Res.11.4, § 7).

Progress in the definition of a consultative process

4. In considering a possible consultative process leading to recommendations to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the composition of the Sessional Committee for the subsequent intersessional period, the Secretariat identified a few 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 44th meeting (document [UNEP/CMS/StC44/14](#)).
5. 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 draft [StC44 report](#).
6. The outcomes of StC44 deliberations were reported to the 1st 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. The Secretariat, while noticing that Resolution 11.4 did not make a distinction between Party-appointed and COP-appointed members in relation to membership renewal, undertook to seek the advice of the Standing Committee on this matter. 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 five regions.

Elements for the definition of a consultative process requiring Standing Committee advice

7. Based on the above, the Secretariat has identified a few issues to be clarified in relation to the appointment of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the triennium 2018-2020, on which the guidance of the Standing Committee is requested.

Identification of the Party-appointed members to be replaced

8. Resolution 11.4, while stipulating that Sessional Committee members shall normally be nominated for a minimum term of two triennia, provides for half of the first appointees to be nominated for a single triennium (Res. 11.4 §5). A decision on the members to be replaced should be the prerogative of the regions, and could be made at the same time as the regional consultations to identify the candidates to replace them. However, because of the odd number of representatives for each region, in order to achieve an overall 50 per cent renewal, it will be necessary to replace one member for some regions, and two for others. It appears convenient that a decision on the number of members to be replaced for each region be made before the regional consultations, to the extent possible at StC45.

9. At the time of writing, two positions of Party-appointed members are vacant, one for the Asia Region and one for the South and Central America and the Caribbean region. The Secretariat will consult the current Party-appointed members before StC45 with a view to determining their availability to be re-appointed for a new term.

Identification of alternate members for the regions

10. The possibility of appointing alternate members, who would replace a regular member in the event of him or her being unable to attend a meeting or resigning from the Sessional Committee in the course of his or her term, was raised at StC44. The Secretariat would like invite the Standing Committee to consider this option specifically in relation to regional 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.

11. 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.

Renewal of COP-appointed members of the Sessional Committee

12. In relation to the request of clarification made at ScC-SC1 (see para. 6 above), the Standing Committee is 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.

13. 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. In the established practice, COP-appointed councillors have seen their mandate renewed from one triennium to the next. Replacement of COP-appointed Councillors has taken place only as a consequence of non-availability to continue in the role.

14. At the moment, the Scientific Council includes nine COP-appointed members (with the position of COP-appointed councillor for birds being shared by two experts), which are also all members of the Sessional Committee.

15. Should the principle of 50 per cent renewal of the Sessional Committee membership be considered applicable to COP-appointed members, COP12 should normally have to replace four or five of the current COP-appointed members. This could be achieved either through a replacement of four or five COP-appointed Councillors, maintaining the number of COP-appointed members of the Scientific Council equivalent to the number of COP-appointed members of the Sessional Committee; or by designating additional COP-appointed members of the Scientific Council, that would replace an equivalent number of the current COP-appointed members of the Sessional Committee, for the next triennium. Replaced COP-appointed members of the Sessional Committee would maintain their position as COP-appointed members of the Scientific Council. Established practice for the selection of COP-appointed members, as illustrated in document [UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.17.2 Nominations for the COP-appointed Councillors for Aquatic Mammals and Birds](#) would be followed unless otherwise advised by the Standing Committee.

Action requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- i.) decide on the number of members to be replaced for each region in the appointment of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the triennium 2018-2020;
- ii.) consider the option for the appointment of alternate members for the regional membership of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council;
- iii.) provide clarification and guidance in relation to the need for renewal of the COP-appointed membership of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council.