



COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

Twenty-sixth Session

3-7 October 2022

Note on Special Procedures for a hybrid meeting of the Committee on Forestry

Executive Summary

This document outlines the special procedures to be applied for the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (the Committee), on an exceptional basis, in light of the hybrid modality of the Session necessary to meet health and safety considerations arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. These special procedures build upon the special procedures enacted for the virtual 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry, as well as the hybrid 168th, 169th and 170th Sessions of the FAO Council.

A Written Correspondence Procedure will be implemented for items 8.1, 8.2 and 9.3 of the agenda in order to streamline the time management of the proceedings. In addition, introductory presentations on all agenda items shall be made available ahead of the Session. Members of the Committee will be invited to endorse these special procedures under item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the Committee. The Report of the Session will record the Committee's endorsement of these procedures in order to ensure the integrity of the Report of the Session and all recommendations and decisions contained therein.

I. Introduction

1. The Secretariat has consulted with members of the Steering Committee of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry on the modalities of the forthcoming session. The outcome of these consultations is reflected in the special procedures outlined in this document. Members of the Committee will be invited to endorse these special procedures under item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the 26th Session of the Committee (the Committee).
2. These special procedures apply on an exceptional basis for the Committee in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting hybrid modality, comprising both in-person and virtual dimensions of this Committee session. The adoption of such procedures shall not create a precedent for the working methods of the Committee for its future sessions.

II. Conduct of Debate

3. All meetings of the Committee will be conducted in hybrid modality with both physical presence in FAO headquarters and participation through the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The Zoom meeting will be broadcast on large screens inside the meeting room so that participants attending the Session physically will be able to see the participants attending the meeting virtually, and vice-versa.
4. Due to the restrictions in place for the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, a limited number of delegates will attend the Session in-person. Three representatives per Member of the Committee, as well as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee, and the Chairpersons of the Statutory Bodies in Forestry, will be invited to attend the Session in physical modality in Plenary Hall, FAO headquarters. One representative per Observer will be invited to attend the Session in physical modality in Plenary Hall, FAO headquarters.
5. The Red and Green Rooms inside FAO headquarters will be available to additional delegates of Members as well as representatives of the Observers of the Committee, should they wish to follow the Session in-person.
6. Any further refinements to the modality for physical participation for the Committee will be communicated immediately before the start of the Session.
7. Members and Observers of the Committee attending the Session virtually will be granted equal accessibility and capability inside the Zoom meeting platform and will be able to address the Committee by requesting the floor using the 'raise hand' function in the Zoom platform.
8. The draft conclusions of the agenda items will be displayed to all Members and Observers of the Committee through the 'share screen' function on the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The conclusions will also be visible on dedicated screens in the meeting room for participants attending the meeting in-person. Any adjustments to the draft conclusions will be made on the screens in real time.
9. The meetings of the Drafting Committee of the Committee will be held in hybrid format in the same manner as its Plenary meetings.

III. Written Correspondence Procedure

10. The following items on the Agenda of the Committee shall be addressed through a Written Correspondence Procedure:
 - 8.1. Decisions and Recommendations of FAO Bodies of Interest to the Committee;

8.2. Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan;

9.3. Multi-year Programme of Work of the Committee on Forestry 2020-2023.

11. The Written Correspondence Procedure aims to allow more time during the discussions of the Committee in Plenary and to allow the Committee to address all items on its Agenda in a timely manner.

12. Under this procedure, Members will be asked to submit any comments and questions in writing to the Secretariat; and will be provided with written responses where applicable.

13. Members are invited to submit written inputs by 15 September 2022, to COFO@fao.org. All inputs received will be published on the website of the Committee, along with an English translation, if not originally provided in English. The Secretariat will provide written responses, where necessary, which will be made available ahead of the Committee's discussion in Plenary.

14. Any items for which the relevant documentation has not been published by the statutory deadline of 5 September 2022, in all languages, shall not be considered under the Written Correspondence Procedure.

15. The Chairperson of the Committee will draft summary conclusions for the agenda items considered through the Written Correspondence Procedure on the basis of this written exchange. The Committee will address these draft conclusions at a Plenary meeting of the Committee as indicated in the Timetable, and in line with the procedure described in paragraph 8 of this Note. As per established practice of the Written Correspondence Procedure, the sovereign right of Members to discuss agenda items in Plenary meetings is not constrained.

16. The Committee will be invited to endorse this procedure under Item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the Committee.

III. Reports and Records

17. The Draft Report for Adoption will be prepared by the Drafting Committee of the Committee, and will be circulated to the Members of the Committee as soon as possible before the Adoption of the Report, in accordance with established practice.

18. The Report of the 26th Session of the Committee will be communicated in accordance with Rule VI.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

19. The Report of the 26th Session of the Committee will record the Committee's consensus on the amended modalities for the Session outlined in this Note.

20. The Report of the 26th Session of the Committee will record the Committee's agreement that participation by virtual means constituted attendance at the Session.

V. Other Matters

21. All documents for the session are prepared and disseminated by the Secretariat as per established practice, in all six languages of the Organization.

22. In order to streamline the proceedings of the Committee, introductions to agenda items are circulated in writing/shall be made available on the Committee's website in advance of the Session.

23. Brief oral introductions to Agenda items may also be delivered in Plenary, at the opening of any agenda item, including on any new developments since the publication of the written introductions. Introductions to Agenda items 5, 6, 8.5 and 8.6 will have a form of a panel.
24. In addition, interventions by Members will be limited to a maximum of three minutes and multi-Member statements will be limited to a maximum of five minutes.
25. The time zone applicable to the Committee's 26th Session Timetable will be Central European Summer Time (UTC +2).
26. The meetings of the 26th Session of the Committee will be scheduled from 10.00 hrs to 12.30 hrs in the morning and from 14.30 hrs to 17.00 hrs in the afternoon.
27. The Chairperson of the Committee may call for a short break of up to ten minutes at any time during the meeting.
28. The Drafting Committee of the 26th Session of the Committee will convene its meeting after the conclusion of the afternoon sessions of Wednesday, 5 October and Thursday, 6 October 2022.
29. Simultaneous interpretation in all six languages of the Organization will be provided for all Plenary meetings of the Committee.