



Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

(IOC/INF-1166 Rev.)

Rules of Procedure

In 2000 the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission undertook the revision of its rules of procedure to make them compatible with the new Statutes of the Commission adopted in 1999*. The present Rules of Procedure were adopted by the IOC Assembly at its 21st session on 11 July 2001 through Resolution XXI-4.

In 2021 the IOC Assembly at its 31st session adopted Resolution A-31/2 initiating the revision of the Rules of Procedure “in order to align them with the prevailing United Nations best practices” facilitating informed and timely decision-making by IOC Member States.

The present Rules of Procedure were revised by the IOC Assembly at its 32nd session on 30 June 2023 through Resolution A-32/4.

* Document [IOC/INF-1148](#), July 2000

Table of content

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- I.1. Membership of the Commission
- I.2. Officers
- I.3. Committees, subsidiary and other bodies
- I.4. Secretariat
- I.5. Languages
- I.6. Conduct of business
- I.7. Voting
- I.8. Reports
- I.9. Representation of the Commission
- I.10. Relations with international organizations
- I.11. Finance
- I.12. Recommendations for Amendments of the Statutes
- I.13. Online sessions
- I.14. Consultation by correspondence

II. THE ASSEMBLY

- II.1. Membership and Sessions
- II.2. Agenda of the Assembly
- II.3. Organization of the Assembly
- II.4. Reports

III. THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- III.1. Membership and Representation
- III.2. Sessions
- III.3. Agenda of the Executive Council

IV. RULES OF PROCEDURE: AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION

- IV.1. Amendments
- IV.2. Suspension

List of Online Appendices

[Appendix I](#) (including Annexes [I](#), [II](#) & [III](#)): Technical arrangements for the elections of Officers of the Commission and other Members of the Executive Council

[Appendix II](#): Groupings of IOC Member States for the purpose of election to the Executive Council

[Appendix III](#): Current distribution of Member States seats at the Executive Council per electoral group

[Appendix IV](#): Guidelines on the working methods for online sessions

[Appendix V](#): Guidelines on Responsibilities of the Officers of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

[Appendix VI](#): Revised Guidelines for the Preparation and Consideration of Draft Resolutions

[Appendix VII](#): Financial Regulations applicable to the IOC Special Account

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

I.1. Membership of the Commission

Rule 1

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (hereinafter called "the Commission") is composed of States that have given notification in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Statutes of the Commission.

I.2. Officers

Rule 2

1. The Officers of the Commission shall be the Chairperson and five Vice-Chairpersons.
2. The Chairperson shall be elected from individuals nominated for their personal qualifications. The nomination of those individuals shall be done by their respective States and seconded by two other Member States.
3. The Chairperson shall not act as representative of its State at any of the sessions or other activities of governing bodies of the Commission.
4. The five Vice-Chairpersons shall be nationals of Member States of different electoral groups (listed in Appendix II to these Rules of Procedure) and shall be elected in a single ballot following the procedure set forth in Appendix I to these Rules of Procedure.

Rule 3

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons shall decide which Vice-Chairperson will be called upon if the Chairperson is unable to act at any session of the Assembly or the Executive Council, or during any part of such session. If neither the Chairperson nor any of the Vice-Chairpersons are able to act as Chairperson, the Executive Secretary shall act as Chairperson until the Assembly or the Executive Council as the case may be, designate an Acting Chairperson. No other business shall be conducted by the Assembly or the Executive Council until it has so designated its Acting Chairperson. An Acting Chairperson shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairperson.

Rule 4

A Vice-Chairperson acting as Chairperson in the sessions of the Assembly or the Executive Council shall not, at the same session, act as a representative of its State. In such a case the Member State concerned may designate another representative.

Rule 5

1. If the Chairperson can no longer hold office for any reason, the Vice-Chairperson identified in accordance with Rule 3 shall become Chairperson for the term of office. If this Vice-Chairperson can no longer hold office, one of the other Vice-Chairpersons, in the order decided upon under Rule 3, shall become Chairperson for the term of office.
2. If a Vice-Chairperson assumes the responsibilities of Chairperson, or is no longer able to hold office, the Chairperson and the remaining Vice-Chairpersons or, if the Chairperson is unable to act, the remaining Vice-Chairpersons shall reallocate the responsibilities previously carried by that Vice-Chairperson to other Officers as appropriate.

Rule 6

The Chairperson and each Vice-Chairperson shall be eligible for re-election in their capacity as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson, but only once for successive terms. The Officers of the Commission shall act in accordance with the Guidelines on the Responsibilities of the Officers of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission reproduced in Appendix V to these Rules.

I.3. Committees, subsidiary and other bodies

Rule 7

1. The Assembly or the Executive Council, shall determine the need and terms of reference of the primary subsidiary bodies (committees, subcommissions and regional committees), as well as approve the creation, terms of reference and the expected lifetime of secondary subsidiary bodies (groups of experts and task teams). In exceptional cases the Assembly and the Executive Council may determine the need for, and terms of reference of, the groups of experts. The Assembly and the Executive Council shall take into account the need for broad geographical participation and appropriate expertise in such bodies. At each of its ordinary sessions, the Assembly can review terms of reference and continuing requirement for each of these bodies and make changes and decisions as necessary.
2. The primary subsidiary bodies and those established on exceptional basis shall meet in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Assembly or the Executive Council.

Rule 8

1. Member States of the Commission should be invited to participate in the work of primary subsidiary bodies and shall inform the Executive Secretary of the names of their representatives. The same procedure is applied to the bodies established on exceptional basis. Composition of secondary subsidiary bodies is determined by primary subsidiary bodies in consultation with the Executive Secretary. Where applicable, the designation of representatives or experts should be continuous for the period specified in the Terms of Reference for subsidiary bodies. The Executive Secretary shall also be informed in a timely manner of any change made in such representation.
2. The Assembly or the Executive Council can establish subsidiary bodies jointly with other organizations as stated in Article 9.2 of the Statutes. In such cases, the Terms of Reference, the membership and the expected lifetime will be established, and any subsequent reviews and changes carried out, in consultation with the other organization(s) involved. No decisions affecting the joint bodies will be undertaken or expected, without such consultations.
3. Unless otherwise designated by the Assembly or the Executive Council or, in the case of joint bodies, otherwise agreed upon, the Chairperson of each subsidiary body shall be elected by the body concerned.
4. The Assembly, the Executive Council, or any subsidiary body may elect Rapporteurs.
5. Whenever feasible, committees, subsidiary or other bodies shall carry out their work by correspondence.

Rule 9

1. Member States acting individually should take into account the scientific and technical character of the purposes and functions of the Commission when nominating representatives or experts to the Commission's subsidiary bodies.
2. Member States shall make the nominations, when applicable, through the official designated national coordinating body specified for liaison with the Commission.

I.4. Secretariat

Rule 10

The Executive Secretary shall direct the personnel of the Secretariat provided in accordance with Article 8 of the Statutes of the Commission, as well as other personnel as may be made available in accordance with applicable regulations, rules and procedures.

Rule 11

The Executive Secretary shall act with the instructions provided by the Assembly and the Executive Council and in accordance with the Statutes.

Rule 12

The Executive Secretary shall ensure the convening and servicing of all sessions of the Assembly, of the Executive Council and of primary and secondary subsidiary bodies of the Commission. The Executive Secretary shall also ensure that appropriate arrangements are concluded for the convening and servicing of subsidiary bodies established or convened by the Commission jointly with other organizations. The Executive Secretary or designate shall act as the Secretary at each session of the Assembly, of the Executive Council and of subsidiary bodies of the Commission and shall participate appropriately in any body established or convened jointly.

Rule 13

The Executive Secretary or designate may make oral as well as written statements to the Assembly, the Executive Council and any subsidiary body concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 14

The Executive Secretary shall ensure the application of the decisions of the Assembly and of the Executive Council, and appropriate instructions contained therein by *inter alia*:

- (a) on behalf of the Commission submitting to the Director-General and the Governing Bodies of UNESCO policy decisions adopted by the Governing Bodies of IOC;
- (b) in accordance with the functional autonomy status of IOC within UNESCO, transmitting to the Director-General the Programme and Budget Resolution adopted by the Assembly of IOC, and related staffing requirements;
- (c) on behalf of the Commission liaising on matters of common interest, with the relevant Sectors, Divisions, Units or Sections of UNESCO mainly in connection with the implementation of the IOC programme of work;
- (d) in his capacity as Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, liaising with UNESCO's Administration to ensure the status of IOC as an autonomous body within UNESCO;
- (e) notifying all concerned of the Assembly and the Executive Council decisions;
- (f) preparing and distributing the necessary reports and documents and providing the requisite information on the actions, requirements, budget, expenditures and financial and other resources of the Commission;
- (g) taking steps for the necessary coordination of various actions of the Commission;
- (h) maintaining working relations with Member States of the Commission and with international organizations and bodies concerned with the work of the Commission;
- (i) arranging for appropriate representation of the Commission at meetings of other organizations and bodies whose work is of interest to the Commission;
- (j) liaising with the Chairperson, and through the Chairperson with the Vice-Chairpersons as appropriate, on progress and results.

Rule 15

The Executive Secretary or designate may participate in such inter-organizations' secretariat bodies as may be established in accordance with Article 11 of the Statutes.

1.5. Languages**Rule 16**

1. The official languages of the Commission shall be English, French, Russian and Spanish.
2. English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the working languages for documentation and interpretation at sessions of the Assembly and the Executive Council of the Commission.

3. Documentation needed for the work of any subsidiary body shall be provided in the appropriate working languages according to the needs of the Member States of the Commission represented on such bodies, or of the individual experts, which are members of them.
4. Interpretation needed for conducting meetings of subsidiary bodies shall be provided in the appropriate working languages according to the needs of the representatives of Member States of the Commission or of the individual expert members participating at such meetings.

Rule 17

Any speaker may speak in a language other than the working languages currently in use for a particular session of the Assembly or of the Executive Council or any committee, subsidiary or other body on the condition that the speaker provides for interpretation into one or another of the said working language(s) of the particular session.

I.6. Conduct of business

Rule 18

1. A simple majority of the Member States of the Commission shall constitute a quorum in the Assembly.
2. A simple majority of the members of the Executive Council and of subsidiary bodies shall constitute a quorum therein.

Rule 19

1. The Chairperson shall declare the opening and closing of each session, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these Rules of Procedure, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. He shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Rules, shall control the proceedings and the maintenance of order.
2. The Chairperson shall strive to work by consensus.

Rule 20

The Chairperson shall call upon speakers in the order in which they have expressed the desire to speak.

Rule 21

During the discussion on any matter, a Member State of the Commission participating in the Assembly, or a member of the Executive Council, or subsidiary body, as the case may be, may at any time raise a point of order, and the point of order shall be forthwith decided by the Chairperson. Any such member may appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson which can only be overruled by a majority of the members present and voting. Such member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 22

Subject to Rule 21, the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

- (a) to suspend the meeting;
- (b) to adjourn the meeting;
- (c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
- (d) to close the debate on the item under discussion.

Rule 23

Draft resolutions for consideration by the Assembly or the Executive Council shall be submitted in writing to the Resolutions Committee. Accepted draft resolutions shall be given to the Executive Secretary for translation into the working languages of the Commission. Proposals for amendment of such draft resolutions may be submitted in writing or orally during the discussion. Draft resolutions

should be prepared and considered in accordance with the Revised Guidelines for the Preparation and Consideration of Draft Resolutions.

Rule 24

Meetings of the Assembly or the Executive Council shall be open unless the Assembly or the Executive Council decides otherwise.

1.7. Voting

Rule 25

1. Unless otherwise provided in these Rules of Procedure, or unless the Assembly or the Executive Council shall decide that a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting is required on a particular matter, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the members present and voting.
2. Decisions whether a particular matter, not specified in these Rules of Procedure, shall require a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at the Assembly or the Executive Council, shall be made by a simple majority of the members present and voting.

Rule 26

For the purpose of these Rules, the phrase “members present and voting” means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

Rule 27

Voting shall normally be by show of hands, except that any member may request a roll call. The vote and abstention of each member participating in a roll call shall be inserted in the record.

Rule 28

1. When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, there shall first be a vote on the amendment furthest removed from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest therefrom, and so on, until all amendments have been put to a vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on. If no amendment is adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form.
2. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

Rule 29

If a vote is equally divided, in voting not concerned with elections, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

1.8. Reports

Rule 30

1. A draft Summary Report of a session of the Assembly or the Executive Council shall be submitted by the Executive Secretary in the working languages of the Commission, before the closing dates of such sessions, and approved. If, however, a part of such draft Summary Report has not yet been approved during the session, it shall be done by correspondence as soon as possible.
2. The approved Summary Report of a session of the Assembly or the Executive Council shall be completed in final form and in the working languages of the Commission, by the Secretariat, taking into account all comments received concerning the draft.
3. Each primary subsidiary body or other body if so requested by the IOC Governing Bodies shall submit to the next ordinary session of the Assembly a short and concise report on its work since the last such report, containing the following elements: election of officers; decisions; financial implications; a list of recommendations; major achievements and

problems occurred during the intersessional period; list of participants and annexes as needed.

Rule 31

The Executive Secretary shall submit to each session of the Assembly and the Executive Council a report on the work accomplished since the previous session.

I.9. Representation of the Commission

Rule 32

Any person called upon to represent the Commission before any external authority shall act in that capacity only and not on behalf of their respective State.

Rule 33

1. The Chairperson, or a designated Vice-Chairperson, or the Executive Secretary, shall represent the Commission at any inter-agency body established by the organizations of the United Nations system, or other organizations referred to in Article 2.2 of the Statutes of the Commission and concerned wholly or in part with the support and programme of the Commission, or with its resources and activities, or with furthering the common aspects of the work of the Commission and those organizations.
2. The Chairperson or designated Vice-Chairperson shall report on such attendance to the Assembly or the Executive Council of the Commission.
3. The Executive Secretary of the Commission shall represent the Commission in meetings of United Nations and the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as in meetings concerned wholly or in part with the duties laid down under Part I.4 (Secretariat) of these Rules of Procedure.

I.10. Relations with international organizations

Rule 34

1. Intergovernmental organizations not within the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations falling in the following categories, as well as advisory bodies to the Commission, may be invited by the Executive Secretary, in accordance with the decisions of the Assembly or the Executive Council, to participate in the work of the Commission, or, as the case may be, in the sessions of the Assembly, of the Executive Council or of primary or secondary subsidiary bodies:
 - (a) intergovernmental organizations active or interested in marine science affairs whose collaboration can help advance the work and objectives of the Commission and whose members are Member States of an organization of the United Nations system;
 - (b) non-governmental organizations active or interested in marine science affairs whose collaboration can help advance the work and objectives of the Commission.
2. In accordance with the decisions of the Assembly, the Executive Council may authorize the Chairperson, or the Executive Secretary on behalf of the Commission, to establish effective working relationships with the organizations meeting the conditions in paragraph 1 of this Rule.
3. Representatives of intergovernmental organizations not within the United Nations system and of non-governmental organizations may participate, without the right to vote, in the sessions of the Assembly and appropriate sessions of the Executive Council or of any subsidiary body and may make oral or written statements on matters within their respective competence.

I.11. Finance**Rule 35**

1. The Assembly or the Executive Council may accept or reject any offer of any voluntary contribution to the Special Account of the Commission, the expenditure of which has been restricted or designated for specific purposes by the contributor.
2. Allocations to programmes of the Commission from voluntary contributions and from the regular budget shall be made following decisions of the Assembly.
3. Funds so allocated shall be expended under the authority of the Executive Secretary.

I.12. Recommendations for Amendments of the Statutes**Rule 36**

1. Any Member State of the Commission may communicate a proposal for the amendment of the Statutes of the Commission to the Executive Secretary at least eight months in advance of the session of the Assembly at which it is proposed it be acted upon. The Executive Secretary shall communicate any such proposal, on its receipt, to all Member States and to the organizations specified in Article 2.2 of the Statutes.
2. The Executive Council shall consider any proposal submitted and shall report thereon to the Assembly, giving its recommendation as to whether the proposal should be adopted, rejected or modified. The recommendation of the Executive Council shall be circulated at least three months prior to the session of the Assembly.
3. A majority of all Member States of the Commission shall be required for the adoption of a recommendation for the amendment of the Statutes.

I.13. Online sessions**Rule 37**

1. The Assembly, the Executive Council and their subsidiary bodies may hold online sessions only during periods of emergency or in exceptional circumstances rendering 'in-person' sessions impracticable. Online sessions shall be held in accordance with the "Guidelines on the working methods for online sessions" reproduced in Appendix IV to these Rules of Procedure.
2. At an ordinary or extraordinary session, the Assembly, the Executive Council and their subsidiary bodies may decide to hold an online session by a simple majority of members present and voting.
3. Should the approval of the Assembly or the Executive Council or one of their subsidiary bodies to hold an online session be required while not in session, the chairperson of the body concerned, in consultation with the officers of the body concerned and in agreement with the Executive Secretary, shall consult the Member States by correspondence. The Assembly or the Executive Council or one of their subsidiary bodies shall hold an online session unless one-third of the members of the body concerned disagree to the proposal.

I.14. Consultation by correspondence**Rule 38**

Following the instructions of the Executive Council or the Assembly, the Chairperson or the Executive Secretary may consult Member States of the Commission by correspondence on substantial matters prior to taking action and may establish a reasonable time limit for replies.

II. THE ASSEMBLY

II.1. Membership and Sessions

Rule 39

Each Member State of the Commission shall notify the Executive Secretary of the Commission of the names of its designated representatives, alternates and advisers for each session of the Assembly.

Rule 40

The Assembly shall meet in extraordinary session if it so decides or if summoned by the Executive Council, or at the request of at least one- third of the Member States of the Commission, which have submitted their requests to the Executive Secretary at least four months in advance of the date proposed.

Rule 41

On the proposal by the Executive Council, the Assembly shall fix the place of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. The Executive Council shall fix the place of the extraordinary sessions of the Assembly except for the extraordinary sessions requested by Member States in accordance with Rule 38. For the latter the Executive Secretary shall fix the place of the extraordinary session in consultation with the Officers of the Commission and the Member States requesting the extraordinary session.

Rule 42

Any Member State of the Commission, or any international organization specified in Article 2.2 of the Statutes, may invite the Assembly to hold an ordinary or extraordinary session in the territory of such Member States, or at the headquarters of such organization as the case may be. The Executive Secretary shall inform the Executive Council of all such invitations.

Rule 43

The opening and closing dates of an ordinary session shall be fixed by the Executive Secretary under guidance from the Executive Council and taking into account any preference which the Assembly may have expressed previously. The opening and closing dates of an extraordinary session shall be fixed by the Executive Secretary after consultation with the Officers of the Commission.

Rule 44

The Executive Secretary shall notify Member States of the Commission and organizations cooperating and contributing to the work of the Commission, as well as States not Members of the Commission, having expressed interest to participate in a session of the Assembly not less than five months in advance of the date and place of an ordinary session and, if possible, not less than three months in advance of the date and place of an extraordinary session.

II.2. Agenda of the Assembly

Rule 45

1. The Provisional Agenda of an ordinary session of the Assembly shall be made up of items requiring a decision by the Assembly and shall include:
 - (a) statement of the Chairperson on the state of IOC;
 - (b) report by the Executive Secretary on programme implementation;
 - (c) report by the Executive Secretary on Programme and Budget for the next biennium;
 - (d) items whose inclusion has been decided by the Assembly itself;
 - (e) items proposed by any Member State of the Commission;

- (f) items proposed by the Executive Council;
 - (g) items proposed by the Executive Secretary of the Commission;
 - (h) items proposed by the Executive Head of any organization of the United Nations system on behalf of that organization, in particular the organizations referred to in Article 2.2 of the Statutes;
 - (i) items proposed by other organizations invited to participate in the work of the Commission;
 - (j) review of reports and composition of its subsidiary bodies, as covered in Rules 7, 31 and 50.
2. The provisional agenda of an extraordinary session shall include only the items for whose consideration the extraordinary session was convened.
 3. The Provisional Agenda of a session of the Assembly shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary in accordance with decisions of the Executive Council.
 4. The Provisional Agenda of a session shall be circulated at the same time as the notice of the date and place of session.

Rule 46

Any Member State or organization cooperating and contributing to the work of the Commission may at least two months before the date fixed for the opening of a session of an Assembly, request the inclusion of supplementary items on the Provisional Agenda. The Executive Secretary shall, upon receipt, circulate the requests for inclusion of supplementary items on the Provisional Agenda.

Rule 47

1. At the beginning of each session, the Assembly shall adopt the Agenda for that session.
2. After the adoption of the Agenda, the Assembly may modify the order of items or add or delete items. A two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required for the addition or deletion of any item. The discussion of any item so added to the Agenda shall, at the request of any Member State of the Commission, be deferred for a period at least of three days after its inclusion in the Agenda.

Rule 48

1. Documentation required for consideration of the various items on the provisional agenda of a session of the Assembly shall be sent not less than two months before the opening of an ordinary session and not less than one month before the opening of an extraordinary session.
2. Any Member State of the Commission and organization cooperating and contributing to the work of the Commission requesting the inclusion of a supplementary item on the Provisional Agenda shall at the same time submit to the Executive Secretary documentation for the consideration of the item. The Executive Secretary shall circulate such documentation as soon as possible, but not less than twenty days prior to the opening date of the ordinary session, together with any additional documentation that may be considered necessary.

II.3. Organization of the Assembly

Rule 49

1. During the course of a session, the Assembly shall establish such committees and such other subsidiary bodies as may be required for the transaction of its business.
2. The Committees of the Assembly shall include a Nominations Committee, a Resolutions Committee, upon the proposal of the Executive Council pursuant to Rule 53.2, and a Financial Committee.
3. A Financial Committee shall be established by the Assembly and be open to all Member States of the Commission.

II.4. Reports

Rule 50

The Assembly shall submit a Summary Report on the Commission's activities and other reports as necessary to the General Conference of UNESCO.

III THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

III.1 Membership and Representation

Rule 51

1. The Executive Council shall consist of the Chairperson, the five Vice-Chairpersons and a number of representatives of Member States of the Commission elected by the Assembly in accordance with Article 7 of the Statutes of the Commission and following the procedure set forth in Appendix I of these Rules of Procedure. States member of the Executive Council shall be eligible for re- election.
2. In accordance with Article 7A.1 of the Statutes the Executive Council shall encompass a maximum of forty Member States seats on the Executive Council (including those of the Member States represented by the Officers), which shall be distributed among the electoral groups listed in Appendix II to these Rules of Procedure according to the distribution of Member States seats at the Executive Council per electoral group listed in Appendix III to these Rules of Procedure.
3. The distribution of seats shall be updated when the circumstances so justify.
4. In accordance with Article 6B.6 of the Statutes, the Nominations Committee shall present information relating to the existing and equitable geographical distribution of Member States on the Executive Council prior to the elections. The above-mentioned information shall include as necessary:
 - (a) an updated listing of the IOC electoral groups;
 - (b) an updated listing of the distribution of seats on the Executive Council among the electoral groups.
5. Each State member of the Executive Council shall designate and may replace its representative on the Executive Council by informing the Executive Secretary.
6. If the Chairperson or a Vice-Chairperson is unable to attend any session of the Executive Council, the State of which he is a national shall be entitled to designate a representative who shall represent that State for the session but who shall not act as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

Rule 52

1. Representatives of Member States of the Commission which are not members of the Executive Council or of a subsidiary body may participate, without the right to vote, in the sessions of such Executive Council or a subsidiary body.
2. The retiring Chairperson may participate as ex officio Past Chairperson, without the right to vote, in sessions of the Executive Council until a new Chairperson is elected. On these occasions the Past Chairperson shall not represent the Member State of which he/she is a national. Alternatively, he/she may participate in such sessions of the Executive Council as a representative of his/her Member State.

III.2 Sessions

Rule 53

1. The Executive Council can hold ordinary and extraordinary sessions.

2. The Executive Council shall hold two ordinary sessions during the interval between ordinary sessions of the Assembly at times and places to be determined by the Council. One such session shall be held immediately prior to the opening date of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. At this session the Executive Council is given a task of a steering committee. Among these tasks the Executive Council shall propose the composition of the Nominations and Resolutions Committees to the Assembly, as specified in Rule 49.2.
3. Extraordinary sessions may be convened by decision of the Executive Council, or of one-third of its members, or at the request of the Officers of the Commission who have submitted such a request to the Executive Secretary at least four months before the proposed date. Any request should mention the agenda or agenda item required. The place and date of extraordinary sessions shall be decided by the Executive Council, or by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Officers of the Commission and Member States requesting an extraordinary session.

Rule 54

The Executive Secretary shall notify the Members of the Executive Council, other Member States of the Commission and the organizations cooperating and contributing to the work of the Commission, invited to participate in a session of the Executive Council, not less than two months in advance of the opening date of the session.

III.3 Agenda of the Executive Council

Rule 55

1. The Executive Council shall exercise the responsibilities delegated to it by the Assembly, acting on its behalf in the implementation of the decisions.
2. The Provisional Agenda of an ordinary session of the Executive Council shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Officers of the Commission and shall be made up only of items requiring a decision by the Executive Council and as such may include:
 - (a) items whose inclusion has been referred to by the Assembly;
 - (b) items whose inclusion has been decided by the Executive Council itself;
 - (c) items proposed by the Executive Secretary of the Commission;
 - (d) items proposed by any Member State of the Commission;
 - (e) items proposed by the Executive Head of any organization referred to in Article 2.2 of the Statutes;
 - (f) items proposed by other organizations invited to participate in the work of the Commission;

Proposals made in accordance with subparagraphs (c) to (f) should include an explanation why the decision of the Executive Council is required.

3. The Provisional Agenda of an extraordinary session of the Executive Council shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary and shall include only the items for whose consideration the extraordinary session was convened.
4. The Provisional Agenda of a session of the Executive Council shall be circulated at the same time as the notice of the date and place of the session, together to the fullest extent possible, with the documentation required for consideration of the various items on the Provisional Agenda.

Rule 56

1. At the beginning of each session the Executive Council shall adopt the agenda of that session.

2. After the adoption of the agenda, the Executive Council may modify the order of items on such agenda or add or delete items. A two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required for the addition or deletion of any item on the adopted agenda.
3. The discussion of any new item so added to the agenda shall, at the request of any member of the Executive Council, be deferred for a period of at least two days after its inclusion in the agenda.

IV. RULES OF PROCEDURE: AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION

IV.1 Amendments

Rule 57

1. Without prejudice to paragraphs 2 and 3 below, these Rules may be amended only by a decision of the Assembly adopted by a majority of all Member States of the Commission present and voting.
2. The Rules in Part III (The Executive Council) may only be amended by a decision of the Assembly pursuant to paragraph 1, on the basis of a proposal by the Executive Council adopted by a majority of the Members of the Council present and voting.
3. Any of the Rules otherwise pertaining to the organization, functioning and competences of the Executive Council, may only be amended by a decision of the Assembly pursuant to paragraph 1, on the basis of a proposal by the Executive Council adopted by a majority of the Members of the Council present and voting, insofar as they relate to the Executive Council.
4. Updates to the Appendices to these Rules shall not be considered as amendments subject to the preceding provisions.

IV.2 Suspension

Rule 58

1. Without prejudice to paragraphs 2 and 3 below, any of these Rules may be suspended only by a decision of the Assembly, adopted by a majority of all Member States of the Commission present and voting.
2. Any of the Rules in Part III (The Executive Council) may be suspended only by a decision of the Executive Council, adopted by a majority of the Members of the Council present and voting.
3. Any of the Rules otherwise pertaining to the organization, functioning and competences of the Executive Council, may be suspended only by a decision of the Executive Council, adopted by a majority of the Members of the Council present and voting, insofar as they relate to the Executive Council.