

Structure and procedures of the
Vienna NGO Committee on Sustainable Development

1. As a substantive committee of the Conference of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, the aims of the Committee are to:
 - a) Focus on the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.
 - b) Provide a forum for NGOs interested in discussing and analysing the work of the UN intergovernmental bodies active in the field of sustainable development, as well as in related activities of the Vienna-based UN organisations.
 - c) Encourage new initiatives and seek input into civil society's contribution to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in September 2015.
 - d) Facilitate liaison with the United Nations organisations and agencies working in the field of sustainable development.

Membership

2. Membership of the Committee is open to:
 - a) NGOs that enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and have been granted general, special or roster status and which have a permanent representative accredited to the United Nations in Vienna;
 - b) NGOs granted roster status pursuant to action by the Secretary-General, and which have a permanent representative accredited to the United Nations in Vienna;
 - c) NGOs granted roster status by virtue of their consultative status with specialised agencies or other United Nations bodies, which have a permanent representative accredited to the United Nations in Vienna;
 - d) Admission to the Committee requires an application to have been submitted to the Chairperson and approved by the Board;
 - e) The full membership dues have to be paid on an annual basis. If a member is in arrears, the Treasurer shall send a written reminder. If a member is two years in arrears, membership ceases automatically.

Structure

3. The Committee consists of:

- a) The Member Organisations
- b) The Board
- c) The Officers
- d) The Auditors.

Committee

4. The Committee shall normally meet regularly, at least three times in the course of the calendar year. The Committee shall determine the date and place of the meetings. The Board may convene the Committee at an earlier date or postpone it to a later date. However, at the request of one-third of the member organisations of the Committee, the Board shall convene the Committee within two weeks of such a request being received.

5. The Committee shall review the activities that it has undertaken since the previous meeting. It shall review the state of liaison between NGOs and those UN bodies dealing with matters related to sustainable development. It shall also maintain close contact with other NGO groupings.

6. The Committee shall elect the Board and its Officers from among the representatives of member organisations.

7. The Committee shall decide on the amount of membership dues and approve the budget of the Committee.

8. The Board may invite to its meetings observers in the following categories:

- a) NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC that are not member organisations of the Committee;
- b) National associations and international NGOs that do not enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC, but dispose of expertise in the field of sustainable development;
- c) Representatives of the United Nations system;
- d) Representatives of Governments.

9. The Committee may establish Sub- or Ad hoc Committees at the request of five or more full member organisations. Once such a decision has been taken to establish such Sub- or Ad hoc Committees, the Board shall notify the member organisations concerned and invite them to an initial meeting.

Board

10. The Board of the Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, the First Vice-Chairperson, the Second Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Treasurer and the Deputy Treasurer and a maximum of four other members, and the Chairpersons of Sub- or Ad hoc Committees.

- a) The Board shall draw up the agenda for the Committee meetings and submit proposals to the Committee for adoption by consensus.
- b) The Board shall propose the disbursement of funds to the Committee for its decision.
- c) Only one person per organisation shall be eligible for membership on the Board.

Officers

11. The following shall be Officers of the Committee:

- a) Chairperson
- b) First Vice-Chairperson
- c) Second Vice-Chairperson
- d) Secretary
- e) Deputy Secretary
- f) Treasurer
- g) Deputy Treasurer.

12. The Chairperson shall convene and preside over meetings and maintain communications with other NGO Committees and competent groups interested in the problems of sustainable development, as well as representatives of the UN system. He/she shall represent the Committee as and when required.

13. The First or Second Vice-Chairperson shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, act on his/her behalf.

14. The Secretary shall draft minutes of the meetings of the Committee, maintain a record of membership and keep records of attendance at meetings. The Secretary shall arrange for the timely distribution of the minutes of each meeting and other written material to the member organisations and to such persons or organisations as the Committee may decide.

15. The Deputy Secretary shall, in the absence of the Secretary, act on his/her behalf.

16. The Treasurer shall receive the membership dues and other contributions and be responsible for all disbursements and the maintenance of accounts. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer shall act on his/her behalf.

Conduct of meetings

17. Decisions shall normally be reached by consensus except at the request of any member on specific questions. A quorum shall consist of at least one-third of the member organisations.

18. Where it is necessary to vote, each member organisation shall have one vote. There shall be no provision for absentee voting.

Matters of Substance

19. Any statement of the Committee on matters of substance must be signed by each member organisation with the approval of their headquarters. Such matters shall include in particular recommendations or statements of positions to be adopted in the name of the Committee.

Elections

20. A Nominating Sub-Committee shall invite nominations for election to the Board. Members of the Nominating Sub-Committee may not stand for election. The Nominating Sub-Committee shall prepare a list of those candidates who have been nominated. The report of the Nominating Sub-Committee shall be circulated to all member organisations of the Committee at least four weeks in advance of the election date. Nominations may also be made from the floor.

21. The Officers of the Committee and the other Board members shall be elected for a term of two years and no person shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

22. Two auditors shall be appointed for a period of two years from among those members who are not members of the Board. They can be re-appointed but once.

23. The election of the Board Members of the Committee shall be by a majority of member organisations in good standing, present and voting.

Amendments

24. A proposal to amend these Statutes may be made by a member organisation. Only the Committee can decide upon such a proposal.

25. Proposed amendments shall be notified to the Chairperson and shall be circulated to all member organisations of the Committee at least four weeks before its next meeting. In order to take effect, a proposed amendment must be ratified by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in the Committee.

For adoption by the Board and the General Assembly in December 2023.