

Rules in Respect of Observers
Excerpts from the Rules of Procedure on Observers

Chapter 3 - Meetings

12. Observers may address the Commission at the discretion of the President. The representatives of Contracting Parties may invite their experts or advisers to address the Commission.

Chapter 8 - Rules Granting Observer Status

33. The Secretary shall invite:

- (a) intergovernmental organisations that have regular contacts with NEAFC as regards fisheries matters or whose work is of interest to NEAFC or vice versa
- (b) non-Contracting Parties identified as harvesting fishery resources in the area beyond waters under the fisheries jurisdiction of Contracting Parties (the Regulatory Area).

34. All non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which support the objectives of the Convention, have a demonstrated interest in the species under the purview of NEAFC and are in good standing should be eligible to participate as an observer in all plenary meetings of the Commission, except meetings held in executive sessions or meetings of Heads of Delegations.

35. Any NGO desiring to participate as an observer in a meeting of the Commission shall notify the Secretary of its desire to participate at least 100 days in advance of the meeting. This application must include:

- (a) name, address, telephone, fax number and e-mail address of the organisation and the person(s) proposed to represent the organisation;
- (b) address of all its national/regional offices;
- (c) aims and purposes of the organisation and a statement that the NGO generally supports the objectives of the Convention, ie conservation and optimum utilisation of the fishery resources in the Convention Area;
- (d) information on the organisation's total number of members, its decision making process and its funding;
- (e) a brief history of the organisation and a description of its activities;
- (f) representative papers and other similar resources produced by or for the organisation on the conservation, management, or science of fishery resources to which the Convention applies;

(g) a history of NEAFC observer status granted/revoked;

(h) information or input that the organisation plans to present at the meeting in question and that it would wish to be circulated by the Secretary for review by Contracting Parties prior to the meeting, supplied in sufficient quantity for such distribution.

36. The Secretary shall review applications received within the prescribed time and, at least 90 days before the meeting for which the application was received, shall notify the Contracting Parties of the names and qualifications of NGOs having fulfilled the requirements stipulated in Paragraphs 34 and 35. If one or more of the Contracting Parties object giving in writing its reasons within 30 days, the matter will be put to a vote by written procedure. Applications will then be considered as accepted in accordance with the procedures laid down in Article 3, paragraph 9 of the Convention at least 30 days prior to the meeting. The Secretary shall also circulate any reasons given in a preliminary objection as well as any comments that Contracting Parties may include with their vote on this matter.

37. Any NGO admitted to a meeting of the Commission may:

- (a) attend meetings, as set forth above, but may not vote;
- (b) make an oral statement during the meeting upon invitation of the Chairman;
- (c) distribute documents at the meetings through the Secretary;
- (d) engage in other activities as appropriate and as approved by the Chairman.

Any NGO admitted to a meeting of the Commission may not use films, videos, tape recording devices etc to record meeting proceedings.

38. If additional expenses are incurred by their participation, observers will be required to pay a fee, as determined by the Secretary.

39. The Secretary will determine whether, due to conference room capacity, seating limitations require that a limited number of observers per NGO may be present at any meeting. The Secretary will transmit any such determination in the conditions of participation.

40. All observers admitted to a meeting shall be sent or otherwise receive the same documentation generally available to Contracting Parties and their delegations, except those documents deemed confidential by a Contracting Party or the Secretary.

41. All observers admitted to a meeting shall comply with all rules and procedures applicable to other participants in the meeting. Failure to conform to these rules or any

other rules that NEAFC may adopt for the conduct of observers may result in removal from the meeting by the presiding officer and revocation of observer status.

Amended at the 20th Annual Meeting, 2001