Twelfth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention on Cooperation for the Protection,
Management and Development of the Marine Environment and
Coastal Areas of the Atlantic Coast of the
West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention)

Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, 27 to 31 March 2017

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES
AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE BUREAU OF THE
CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION
The following officers were elected to serve on the Bureau for a period of 2011 - 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair:</th>
<th>a) Republic of Congo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vice-Chairs:    | b) First Vice-Chair : South Africa  
|                 | c) Second Vice-Chair : Benin |
| Rapporteurs:    | d) First Rapporteur: Gambia  
|                 | e) Second Rapporteur: Cameroon |
RULES OF PROCEDURE

for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties
to the Convention for Co-operation in the Protection
and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment
of the West and Central African Region

PURPOSES

Rule 1

These rules of procedure shall apply to any meeting or conference of the
Contracting Parties convened in accordance with articles 17 and 18 of the
Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the
Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region.

DEFINITIONS

Rule 2

For the purposes of these rules:

1. "Convention" means the 1981 Convention for Co-operation in the
Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the
West and Central African Region and its protocols;

2. "Executive Director" means the Executive Director of the United
Nations Environment Programme or his designated representative;
3. “Secretariat” means the United Nations Environment Programme as provided in article 16 of the Convention;


5. “Co-ordinating unit” means the unit within the United Nations Environment Programme designated by the Executive Director as responsible for the administration of the Action Plan for the West and Central African Region;

6. “Meeting” means any ordinary or extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention;

7. “Conference” means any conference of plenipotentiaries of the Contracting Parties to the Convention;

8. “Steering Committee” means the committee constituted in accordance with rule 25 of the present rules of procedure.

9. “Chairman of the Steering Committee” means the Chairman elected in accordance with rule 21 and rule 25 paragraph 3 of the present rules of procedure.

PLACE OF MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Rule 3

Unless they decide otherwise, the Contracting Parties shall normally meet at the seat of the co-ordinating unit.
DATES OF THE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Rule 4

1. As provided in article 17 of the Convention, ordinary meetings of the Contracting Parties shall be convened once every two years and extraordinary meetings shall be convened in accordance with the conditions set forth in that article.

2. A conference of plenipotentiaries of the Contracting Parties shall be convened in accordance with the conditions set forth in article 18 of the Convention.

3. In accordance with article 16 of the Convention, the Executive Director shall convene any meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties.

4. Any ordinary meeting shall fix the opening date and the duration of the next ordinary meeting.

5. Any extraordinary meeting shall be convened not less than fifteen days nor more than ninety days after the date at which the request mentioned in article 17 of the Convention has been received or formulated by the Executive Director and supported by the requisite number of Contracting Parties.

6. The opening date and the duration of any conference convened in accordance with article 18 of the Convention shall be fixed by a joint agreement of the Contracting Parties which requested the convening of the conference.

INVITATIONS

Rule 5

The Executive Director shall invite all Contracting Parties to the Convention to send representatives to participate in the meetings or conferences.
Rule 6

1. The Executive Director shall invite to send representatives to the meetings or conferences any coastal State of the West and Central African region invited to participate in the 1981 Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region which is not a Contracting Party.

2. The representatives designated by the States invited in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 may participate without vote in the deliberations of the meeting or the conference.

Rule 7

1. The Executive Director shall, with the tacit agreement of two-thirds of the Contracting Parties, invite to send representatives to observe any meeting or conference, any other State Member of the United Nations or member of its specialized agencies which so requests and has a direct concern in the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment of the West and Central African region.

2. Such observers, upon invitation of the President and with the tacit consent of the meeting or the conference, may participate without vote in the deliberations of the meeting or of the conference.

Rule 8

1. The Executive Director shall invite to send representatives to observe any meeting or conference, the United Nations and its competent subsidiary bodies, the United Nations specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency if they are concerned with the activities of the Action Plan for the West and Central African Region.

2. Such observers may, upon invitation of the President and with the tacit consent of the meeting or the conference, participate without vote in the deliberations of any meeting or conference.
Rule 9

1. The Executive Director shall, with the tacit consent of two-thirds of the Contracting Parties, invite to send representatives to observe any meeting or conference, any intergovernmental organization other than the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency or any international non-governmental organization which has specialized expertise related to the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment of the West and Central African region.

2. Such observers may, upon the invitation of the President and with the tacit consent of the meeting or the conference, participate without vote in the deliberations of the meeting or conference dealing with matters of direct concern to the organizations they represent.

PUBLICITY

Rule 10

Plenary sittings of the meetings and conferences shall be held in public unless the meeting or the conference decides otherwise. Sittings of subsidiary bodies of the meetings and conferences shall be held in private, unless the meeting or the conference decides otherwise.

AGENDA

Rule 11

In agreement with the President, the Executive Director shall prepare the provisional agenda of each meeting and conference.
Rule 12

The provisional agenda of each ordinary meeting shall include:

1. As appropriate, items mentioned in article 17, paragraph 2, of the Convention and in relevant articles in any protocol;

2. All items the inclusion of which was requested at a previous meeting;

3. A report by the Executive Director on the work undertaken or achieved as part of the Action Plan for the West and Central African Region since the last ordinary meeting and containing recommendations for activities to be undertaken in the forthcoming biennium;

4. Any item proposed by a Contracting Party;

5. The provisional budget as well as all questions pertaining to the accounts and financial arrangements.

Rule 13

The provisional agenda, together with supporting documents for each ordinary meeting, shall be communicated by the Executive Director to the Contracting Parties at least two months before the opening of the meeting.

Rule 14

The Executive Director shall, in consultation with the President, include any question suitable for the agenda which may arise between the dispatch of the provisional agenda and the opening of the meeting in a revised provisional agenda which the meeting shall examine together with the provisional agenda.
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Rule 15

At the opening of any ordinary meeting, the Contracting Parties, when adopting the agenda for the meeting, may add, delete, defer or amend items. Only items which are considered by the meeting to be urgent and important may be added to the agenda.

Rule 16

The provisional agenda for an extraordinary meeting, or for any conference provided for in article 18 of the Convention, shall consist only of those items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the extraordinary meeting or the conference. It shall be transmitted to the Contracting Parties at the same time as the invitation to the extraordinary meeting or the conference.

Rule 17

The Executive Director shall report to the meeting or conference on the administrative and financial implications of all substantive agenda items submitted to the meeting before they are considered by it. Unless the meeting decides otherwise, no such item shall be considered until at least forty-eight hours after the meeting has received the Executive Director’s report on administrative and financial implications.

Rule 18

Any item of the agenda of an ordinary meeting, consideration of which has not been completed at the meeting, shall be included automatically in the agenda of the next ordinary meeting, unless otherwise decided by the Contracting Parties.
REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rule 19

Each Contracting Party shall be represented by an accredited representative, who may be accompanied by such alternates and advisers as may be required.

Rule 20

The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted by the Contracting Parties to the Executive Director before the opening sitting of a meeting which the representatives are to attend. Any later change in the composition of delegations shall also be submitted to the Executive Director. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of the State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The officers of any meeting or conference shall examine the credentials and submit their report to the meeting or the conference.

OFFICERS

Rule 21

1. At the commencement of the first sitting of each ordinary meeting, a President, two Vice-Presidents and two Rapporteurs are to be elected from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties who will serve as the officers of the meetings or conferences of the Contracting Parties.

2. The President, two Vice-Presidents and two Rapporteurs elected at an ordinary meeting shall remain in office until their successors are elected at the next ordinary meeting and shall serve in that capacity at any intervening extraordinary meeting or conference. Exceptionally, these officers may be re-elected for one further consecutive term.
3. The President, or a Vice-President acting as a President, shall participate in the meeting or the conference in that capacity and shall not at the same time exercise the rights of a representative of a Contracting Party. In such a case, the Contracting Party concerned may designate another representative who shall be entitled to represent the Contracting Party in the meeting or the conference and to exercise the right to vote.

Rule 22

If the President is temporarily absent from a sitting or any part thereof, he shall appoint one of the Vice-Presidents to assume his duties.

Rule 23

If an officer resigns or otherwise becomes unable to complete his term of office, a representative of the same Contracting Party shall be named by the Contracting Party concerned to replace him for the remainder of his mandate.

Rule 24

At the first sitting of each ordinary meeting, the President of the previous ordinary meeting, or in his absence, one of the Vice-Presidents, shall preside until the meeting has elected a President for the meeting.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Rule 25

1. At each ordinary meeting, ten Contracting Parties shall be elected to the Steering Committee of the Action Plan for the West and Central African region.
2. The members of the Steering Committee shall be elected by a simple majority vote, and they shall serve on the Steering Committee until their successors are elected at the next ordinary meeting. At least one-third of the members of the Steering Committee shall be replaced at each ordinary meeting, and no Contracting Party may remain a member of the Steering Committee for more than three consecutive terms.

3. The Contracting Parties whose representative has been elected the President of the ordinary meeting in accordance with rule 21 shall be elected as a member of the Steering Committee. The President of the ordinary meeting shall also serve as the President of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall elect its own two Vice-Presidents and two Rapporteurs.

4. The Steering Committee shall meet at least once in the inter-sessional period between ordinary meetings of the Contracting Parties. It shall be the function of the Steering Committee to provide the Executive Director with policy guidance on all substantive and financial matters related to the implementation of the Convention and the Action Plan for the West and Central African region.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

Rule 26

1. During the course of a meeting or of a conference, the Contracting Parties may establish such committees and other working groups as may be required for the transaction of its business.

2. Unless otherwise decided, the meeting or the conference shall elect a Chairman for each such committee and working group. The meeting or the conference shall determine the matters to be considered by each such committee or working group and may authorize the President, upon the request of the Chairman of a committee or working group, to adjust the allocation of work.
SECRETARIAT

Rule 27

The Executive Director shall act as secretary of any meeting or conference. He may delegate his functions to a member of the secretariat.

Rule 28

The secretariat shall arrange for interpretation of speeches made at meetings or conferences; receive, translate and circulate the documents of the meeting or conference and its committees and working groups; publish and circulate the resolutions, reports and relevant documentation of the meeting or the conference. It shall have custody of the documents in the archives of the meeting or conference and generally perform all other work that the meeting or the conference may require.

LANGUAGES

Rule 29

English and French are the official languages of the meetings or conferences of the Contracting Parties.

Rule 30

1. Statements made in a language of the meeting or conference shall be interpreted into the other official language.

2. A representative may speak in a language other than a language of the meeting or conference, if he provides for interpretation into one such language.
Rule 31

All working documents of the meeting or conference and all reports, resolutions, recommendations and decisions of the meetings or conferences shall be drawn up in one of the official languages and translated into the other official language.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 32

Two-thirds of the Contracting Parties shall constitute a quorum.

Rule 33

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and the closing of the meeting or of the conference. He shall direct the discussions, ensure the observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions resulting from the vote.

POINTS OF ORDER

Rule 34

Subject to the provisions of rule 46, a representative may at any time raise a point of order which shall be decided immediately by the President in accordance with these rules. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a simple majority of the Contracting Parties present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.
Rule 35

Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing by the Contracting Parties and handed to the secretariat, which shall circulate copies to delegations. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any sitting unless copies of it have been circulated to delegations not later than the day preceding the sitting. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments or of procedural motions even though these amendments and motions have not been circulated or have been circulated only the same day.

Rule 36

1. Subject to the provisions of rule 34, the following motions shall have precedence, in the order indicated below, over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

(a) to suspend a sitting;

(b) to adjourn a sitting;

(c) to adjourn the debate on the question under discussion; and

(d) for the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.

2. Permission to speak on a motion falling within (a) to (d) above shall be granted only to the proposer and, in addition, to one speaker in favour of and two against the motion after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

Rule 37

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the meeting or conference, unless it decides otherwise, shall vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted.
Rule 38

A representative of a Contracting Party may request that parts of a proposal or of an amendment be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the President shall permit two representatives to speak, one in favour of and the other against the motion, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

Rule 39

If the motion referred to in rule 38 is adopted, those parts of a proposal or of an amendment which have been approved shall then be put to the vote as a whole; if all the operative parts of a proposal or amendment have been rejected, the proposal or amendment shall be considered to be rejected as a whole.

Rule 40

A motion is considered to be an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises parts of, that proposal. An amendment shall be voted on before the proposal to which it relates is put to the vote, and if the amendment is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

Rule 41

If two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the meeting or conference shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal, then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all amendments have been put to the vote. The President shall determine the order of voting on the amendments under this rule.

Rule 42

A proposal or motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has begun, provided that the motion has not been amended. A proposal or motion withdrawn may be reintroduced by any other Contracting Party.
Rule 43

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session, unless the meeting or the conference, by a two-thirds majority of the Contracting Parties present and voting, decides in favour of reconsideration. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to the mover and one other supporter, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

VOTING

Rule 44

1. Each Contracting Party shall have one vote.

2. A Contracting Party that is more than twenty-four months in arrears with its contributions shall not be entitled to vote. However, the meeting may authorize the Contracting Party concerned to participate in the vote if it finds out that arrears are due to circumstances beyond its control.

Rule 45

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase “Contracting Parties present and voting” means Contracting Parties present at the sitting at which voting takes place and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Contracting Parties which abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

Rule 46

1. Decisions of a meeting or conference on all matters of substance shall be taken by a two-third majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting, unless otherwise provided by the Convention or the financial terms of reference.
2. Decisions of a meeting or conference on matters of procedure shall be taken by a simple majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting.

3. Any difference of opinion as to whether a matter is one of a procedural or substantive nature shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting.

4. If a vote is equally divided, a second vote shall be taken. If this vote is also equally divided, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

Rule 47

Voting shall normally be by show of hands. However, any Contracting Party may request a roll-call vote which shall be taken in the French alphabetical order of the names of the Contracting Parties, beginning with the Contracting Party whose name is drawn by lot by the President. Any Contracting Party may also request a secret ballot.

Rule 48

The vote of each Contracting Party participating in a roll-call vote shall be recorded in the relevant documents of the meeting or of the conference.

Rule 49

After the President has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The President may permit the Contracting Parties to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, except when the vote is taken by secret ballot. The President may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.
SOUND RECORDS OF THE MEETING

Rule 50

Sound records of the meeting or of the conference, and possibly of its committees and working groups, shall be kept by the secretariat in accordance with the practice of the United Nations.

AD HOC MEETINGS

Rule 51

1. The Contracting Parties may recommend to the Executive Director, taking duly into account the financial implications, the convening of ad hoc meetings, either of representatives of the Contracting Parties and of States referred to in rule 6 of these rules, or of experts nominated by Governments of the West and Central African region, in order to study problems which, because of their specialized nature, could not fruitfully be discussed during the normal sittings of a meeting or conference.

2. The terms of reference of these ad hoc meetings and the questions to be discussed shall be determined by the Contracting Parties.

3. Unless otherwise decided, each ad hoc meeting shall elect its own officers.

4. These rules of procedure shall apply mutatis mutandis to such subsidiary bodies and ad hoc meetings.
AMENDMENTS OF PROCEDURE

Rule 52

These rules of procedure may be amended by a two-third majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting at a meeting.

OVERRIDING AUTHORITY OF THE CONVENTION

Rule 53

In the event of any conflict between any provision of these rules and any provision of the Convention, the Convention shall prevail.
TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

1. The Steering Committee shall consist of the representatives of ten states participating in the Action Plan.

2. The members of the Steering Committee will be elected by regular intergovernmental meetings on the Action Plan and meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention.

3. The members of the Steering Committee will be elected by a simple majority of the intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings for a two-year term. At least one-third of the members shall be replaced at each meeting, and no State may be a member of the Steering Committee for more than three consecutive periods.

4. In electing the members of the Steering Committee the following criteria will be taken into account:

   - equitable geographical distribution;

   - contributions to the Regional Trust Fund for West and Central Africa and their regular payments;

   - ratification of the Abidjan Convention;

   - attendance at the intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings.

5. The functions of the Steering Committee shall be:

   (a) To review and evaluate the progress of the Action Plan and the Abidjan Convention between the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings;
(b) To provide guidance to the secretariat on all matters relevant to the implementation of the Action Plan and the Abidjan Convention between the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings and make adjustments in the programme and budget whenever necessary, within the framework of the decisions made by these meetings;

(c) To promote the active participation of the West and Central African countries in the Action Plan and in the Abidjan Convention, and to urge Governments to fulfil their financial and other commitments;

(d) To review the preparations for the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings;

(e) To make recommendations to the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings on all programme, financial and institutional matters related to the Action Plan and to the Abidjan Convention;

(f) To carry out such other tasks as may be determined by the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings.

6. The work of the Steering Committee will be carried out through meetings of the Committee. There should be at least one meeting of the Steering Committee in mid-term between the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings and one meeting immediately before the subsequent intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meeting.

7. The meetings of the Steering Committee will be convened by the Executive Director of UNEP, will be organized by the secretariat and will be chaired by the Chairman of the Steering Committee.

8. The Contracting Party whose representative has been elected as Chairman of the ordinary meeting in accordance with Article 21 of the Rules of procedure of the meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties shall be elected as a member of the Steering Committee. The Chairman of the ordinary meeting shall also act as Chairman of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall elect its own first and second Vice-Chairmen and two rapporteurs who shall constitute, together with the Chairman, the Bureau of the Steering Committee.
9. The Chairman of the Bureau will be elected for a two-year term and can be re-elected, for one additional term.

10. Within a month of their election, the States elected as members of the Bureau will inform the secretariat of the names of their representatives who will serve as Bureau members in their personal capacity. The members of the Bureau, designated in their personal capacity, will be the Chairman, the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur of the Steering Committee.

11. Should the Chairman designated in his/her personal capacity be unable to perform his/her duties, the first Vice-Chairman will automatically become the Acting Chairman of the Bureau in his/her personal capacity. Should the latter be unable to perform the duties of the Chairman, the second Vice-Chairman will automatically become the Acting Chairman of the Steering Committee in his/her personal capacity.

12. The members of the Bureau once designated in their personal capacity, can not be replaced by other persons. In case a member of the Bureau designated in his/her personal capacity cannot continue his/her functions, the relevant State will remain a member of the Steering Committee but not of the Bureau.

13. The duties of the Chairman of the Steering Committee shall be:

   (a) To represent the Contracting Parties during the interval between meetings of the Contracting Parties.

   (b) To ensure effective liaison with the secretariat between the meetings of the Steering Committee and the regular intergovernmental meetings;

   (c) To take the necessary decisions in accordance with the mandate conferred upon him/her by the Steering Committee and in consultation with the other members of the Bureau;

   (d) To determine, in consultation with the secretariat and the other members of the Bureau, as appropriate, the venue and date of the meetings of the Steering Committee and of the intergovernmental meetings;
(e) To determine, in consultation with the secretariat, the agenda and the list of documents for these meetings;

(f) To carry out such other tasks as may be determined by the Steering Committee or the regular intergovernmental and Contracting Parties' meetings.

14. The work of the Bureau will normally be carried out by correspondence. In extraordinary circumstances, at the request of either (a) the Chairman, (b) two members of the Bureau, or (c) the Executive Director of UNEP, the Bureau may carry out its work through a meeting.

15. The meeting of the Bureau will be convened by the Executive Director of UNEP and will be organized in consultation with the Chairman who will chair the meeting.

16. The working languages of the meetings of the steering Committee and of the Bureau will be English and French.

17. The reports of the Steering Committee and of its Bureau will be prepared by the rapporteur and will be made available for the intergovernmental and Contracting Parties' meetings.

18. Invitations to the meetings of the Steering Committee and of the Bureau will be sent out by the Executive Director of UNEP to the members of the Steering Committee and to the members of the Bureau, respectively.

19. All States participating in the Action Plan, and which are not members of the Steering Committee will be informed about the intent to organize the meetings of the Steering Committee and of the Bureau and will be invited to attend these meetings as observers.