



European Environment and Health Ministerial Board

Rules of Procedure

I. Membership and attendance

Rule 1

1.1 In accordance with the document *The European Environment and Health Process (2010–2016)* adopted by the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health and endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy, the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministerial Board”) shall consist of the representatives of Member States of the Region duly elected by the WHO Regional Committee and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy, the WHO Regional Director for Europe, the Executive Secretary of UNECE, the Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Europe and a representative of the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as the “members”).

1.2 Once the European Environment and Health Task Force (the “Task Force”) constitutes itself, the Chair and the Co-chair of the Task Force shall be *ex officio* members of the Ministerial Board.

Rule 2

2.1 Any Member State wishing to change its appointed representative on the Ministerial Board shall notify the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe), which serves as the Secretariat to the Ministerial Board.

2.2 Representatives of Member States may be accompanied by one alternate and by an appropriate number of advisers as members of the delegation.

2.3 Delegations eligible for financial support for their participation in the Ministerial Board shall receive such support for no more than two persons.

2.4 If a member is not able to attend a meeting of the Ministerial Board, an alternate may replace the representative with full rights to speak, vote and otherwise participate in the Ministerial Board meeting.

Rule 3

3.1 The meetings of the Ministerial Board shall be private unless it decides otherwise.

3.2 However, having in mind the substantive issues on its agenda, and taking into account the terms of any relevant agreement, the Regional Director after consultation with the co-Chairs of the Ministerial Board may invite representatives of a Member State, Associate Member or non-Member State, the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations to participate without vote in the deliberations of the Ministerial Board.

3.3 Reports of meetings of the Ministerial Board, along with all other non-confidential meeting documents, shall be made public in an appropriate manner after the draft meeting report has been cleared by the co-Chairs and the Secretariat in its provisional form, subject to final approval at the following meeting.

II. Meetings

Rule 4

4.1 The Ministerial Board shall meet not less than once a year. The Ministerial Board shall determine the dates and places of its meetings.

4.2 Notices convening the scheduled meetings of the Ministerial Board, together with the proposed agenda, shall be sent by the Secretariat not later than six weeks before the meeting to the members of the Ministerial Board and to all Member States, and to such United Nations and other international organizations, Associate Members and non-Member States as may be invited to a meeting under Rule 3.

4.3 Working papers shall be sent by the Secretariat to the members of the Ministerial Board not later than three weeks before the meeting and shall be made available to all Member States at the same time.

4.4 Members States shall have the opportunity to provide comments on and make proposals for items on the agenda, sending their proposals to the Secretariat not later than one week before the meeting.

4.5 The Ministerial Board may decide to hold meetings also using teleconferencing facilities (video or telephone conferences) or other alternative and appropriate means of communication.

Rule 5

5.1 The Ministerial Board, after having consulted the Secretariat, may also hold such additional meetings as it sees fit, and in which others may be invited by the WHO Regional Director to participate as provided in Rule 3.

5.2 The WHO Regional Director shall also convene the Ministerial Board at the joint request of at least five members addressed to him/her in writing and stating the reason for the request. In this case the Ministerial Board shall be convened within thirty days

following receipt of the request. The agenda of such a meeting shall be limited to the question having necessitated that meeting.

5.3 If events occur requiring urgent action and specifically an early additional meeting of the Ministerial Board or a subdivision thereof, the WHO Regional Director may, in consultation with the co-Chairs, convene the Ministerial Board, in a special meeting and shall fix the date and determine the place of the meeting.

III. Agenda

Rule 6

The provisional agenda of each meeting shall be drawn up by the Secretariat in consultation with the co-Chairs. It shall be despatched with the notice of convocation to be sent in accordance with Rule 4 or 5 of these Rules of Procedure.

Rule 7

7.1 Except in the case of meetings convened under Rule 5, the provisional agenda shall include, *inter alia*:

- (a) items the inclusion of which has been requested by the WHO Regional Committee for Europe or the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy;
- (b) all items the inclusion of which has been ordered by the Ministerial Board at a previous meeting;
- (c) any item proposed by a member of the Ministerial Board or by a Member State or Associate Member of the Region, it being understood that (i) the Secretariat would not automatically prepare a report on the item and (ii) the Ministerial Board, when adopting its agenda, could decide to defer consideration of the item to a future meeting in light of its relative urgency;
- (d) any item proposed by the WHO Regional Director for Europe in his/her capacity as the head of the Ministerial Board Secretariat.

7.2 Should the items on the agenda be too numerous to be completed in one meeting, the Ministerial Board may convene extra meetings, or decide to consider specific matters in another appropriate manner.

7.3 Any proposal for the inclusion on the agenda of any item under the provisions of sub-paragraph (c) above, fully documented as appropriate, shall reach the Secretariat of the Ministerial Board not later than four weeks before the meeting.

Rule 8

Except in the case of special meetings convened at the request of the members of the Ministerial Board under Rule 5, the co-Chairs, in consultation with the WHO Regional Director, may include any question suitable for the agenda which may arise between the dispatch of the provisional agenda and the opening day of the meeting in a supplementary agenda which the Ministerial Board shall examine together with the provisional agenda.

IV. Officers of the Ministerial Board

Rule 9

9.1 The Ministerial Board shall elect two co-Chairs from among its members representing the Member States.

9.2 The co-Chairs shall hold office until their successors are elected.

9.3 The duration of the co-Chairs' term is one year.

9.4 The co-Chairs shall be eligible for re-election provided that the normal term of membership of the Member State of which he or she is a representative in the Ministerial Board continues for at least as long as the term of office of co-Chair.

Rule 10

In addition to exercising such powers as are conferred upon them elsewhere by these Rules, the co-Chairs shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Ministerial Board, shall direct the discussions, accord the right to speak, put questions, announce decisions and ensure the application of these Rules. The co-Chairs shall accord to speakers the right to speak in the order of their requests.

Rule 11

If both co-Chairs or their alternates are unable to attend a meeting of the Ministerial Board, or are absent from a meeting or any part thereof, the Ministerial Board shall elect a person to preside during the meeting.

V. Secretariat

Rule 12

The WHO Regional Director shall be *ex officio* Secretary of the Ministerial Board (“The Secretary”). In consultation with the co-Chairs, he or she may delegate these functions to another senior WHO staff member.

Rule 13

The Secretary shall report to the Ministerial Board on the technical, administrative, financial and policy implications, if any, of all agenda items submitted to the Ministerial Board.

Rule 14

The Secretary may at any time make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration. The Secretary may also at his or her discretion designate such senior staff of the WHO Regional Office as have technical and managerial responsibilities related to any question under consideration to attend the Ministerial Board meeting and to speak to and answer any points raised on the said items of business.

Rule 15

15.1 The Secretariat shall prepare the report of the meeting, to be distributed to the members as soon as possible after the close of the meeting to which it relates. Members shall inform the Secretariat in writing of any corrections they wish to have made, within such period of time as shall be indicated by the Secretary, having regard for the circumstances.

15.2 The report of the meeting, together with other documents, shall be made public in accordance with Rule 3.4.

Rule 16

16.1 All proposals for formal decisions, draft resolutions and other major recommendations to be submitted to the Ministerial Board shall be communicated by the Secretariat to the members of the Ministerial Board.

16.2 All Member States and Associate Members of the WHO European Region and UNECE shall be sent an annual report on the Ministerial Board's activities.

VI. Languages

Rule 17

Any member of the Ministerial Board or invited representative of another organization or of a Member State or of an Associate Member or of a non-Member State may speak in a language other than one of the languages decided on for the conduct of business. In this case, he or she shall provide for interpretation from that language into the language(s) chosen for the meeting.

Rule 18

All formal decisions, draft resolutions and other recommendations to be submitted to the Ministerial Board, as well as finalized reports of meetings of the Ministerial Board, shall subsequently be made available in four official languages of the WHO European Region.

VII. Conduct of business

Rule 19

Eight of the members of the Ministerial Board, one of whom may for this purpose be the Chairperson, shall constitute a quorum.

Rule 20

20.1 The Ministerial Board makes decisions, in principle, by consensus. However, if a consensus cannot be reached, the co-Chairs of the Ministerial Board may propose adoption of a decision by voting. A decision will be adopted if a majority of those members present and voting support the proposed decision.

20.2 The Ministerial Board is accountable to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy and shall report to them annually on progress in the implementation of the European environment and health process. It shall also submit its decisions for endorsement by the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy.

VIII. Suspension and amendment of the Rules of Procedure

Rule 21

Any of these Rules may be suspended by the Ministerial Board, provided that at least forty-eight hours' notice of the proposal for such suspension has been given to the co-Chairs and communicated by him or her to the members twenty-four hours before the meeting at which the proposal is to be submitted. If, however, on the advice of the co-Chairs the Ministerial Board is unanimously in favour of such a proposal, it may adopt it immediately and without notice.

Rule 22

The Ministerial Board may adopt amendments or supplements to these Rules at any of its meetings.

Rule 23

These Rules of Procedures will be made available for comment by all Member States for a period of thirty days. Comments received by the Secretariat will be submitted to the Ministerial Board for review and consideration before adoption.