



COUNCIL

Hundred and Seventy-second Session

Rome, 24-28 April 2023

Special Procedures for the 172nd Session of the Council

Executive summary

This document outlines the special procedures to be applied to the 172nd Session of the Council on an exceptional basis.

These special procedures are the result of consensus arising from informal consultations undertaken with the Membership by the Independent Chairperson of the Council for the 172nd Session, with the understanding that they do not set a precedent for the future.

A Written Correspondence Procedure will be implemented for six agenda items in order to streamline the time management of the proceedings. In addition, introductory presentations on all agenda items shall be made available ahead of the Session.

Members of the Council will be invited to endorse these special procedures under Item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the 172nd Session of the Council. The Report of the Session will record the Council's endorsement of these procedures in order to ensure the integrity of the Report of the Session and all recommendations and decisions contained therein.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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I. Introduction

1. The Independent Chairperson of the Council has consulted with Members on the modalities of the 172nd Session of the Council. The outcome of these consultations are reflected in the special procedures outlined in this document. Members of the Council will be invited to endorse these special procedures under item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the 172nd Session of the Council.
2. The adoption of such procedures shall not create a precedent for the working methods of the Council for its future Sessions.

II. Conduct of Debate

3. All meetings of the 172nd Session of the Council will be conducted in hybrid modality with both physical presence in FAO headquarters and participation through the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The Zoom meeting will be broadcast on large screens inside the meeting room so that participants attending the Session physically will be able to see the participants attending the meeting virtually, and vice versa.
4. The 172nd Session of the Council will be hosted on a virtual environment as used for the 42nd Session of the Conference and recent Sessions of the Council, to provide Members with an interactive meeting experience. All participants will have access to the Zoom meeting rooms through this virtual environment.
5. Members and Observers of the Council attending the meeting virtually will be granted equal accessibility and capability inside the Zoom meeting platform and will be able to address the Council by requesting the floor using the “raise hand” function in the Zoom platform.
6. The draft conclusions of agenda items will be displayed to all Members and Observers of the 172nd Session of the Council through the “share screen” function on the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The conclusions will also be visible on dedicated screens in the meeting room for participants attending the meeting in person. Any adjustments to the draft conclusions will be made on the screens in real time.
7. The meetings of the Drafting Committee of the 172nd Session of the Council will be held in hybrid format in the same manner as its Plenary meetings.

III. Written Correspondence Procedure

8. The following items on the Agenda of the 172nd Session of the Council shall be addressed through a Written Correspondence Procedure:
 - **Item 6** – Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative
 - **Item 13** – Arrangements for the 43rd Session of the Conference
 - **Item 17** – Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 171st Session of the Council
 - **Item 18** – Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO
 - **Item 19** – Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2023-2024
 - **Item 20** – Tentative Agenda for the 173rd Session of the Council
9. The Written Correspondence Procedure aims to allow more time during the discussions of the Council in Plenary and to allow the Council to address all items on its Agenda in a timely manner.
10. Under this procedure, Members will be asked to submit any comments and questions in writing to the Secretariat, and will be provided with written responses where applicable.
11. Members are invited to submit written inputs by Thursday 30 March 2023, to FAO-Council@fao.org. All inputs received will be published on the website of the 172nd Session of the Council. The Secretariat will provide written responses, where necessary, which will be made available ahead of the Council’s discussion in Plenary.

12. The Independent Chairperson of the Council will draft summary conclusions for the agenda items considered through the Written Correspondence Procedure on the basis of this written exchange. The Council will address these draft conclusions at a Plenary meeting of the Council as indicated in the Timetable, and in line with the procedure described in paragraph 8 of this Note. As per established practice of the Written Correspondence Procedure, the sovereign right of Members to discuss agenda items in Plenary meetings is not strained.

13. The Council will be invited to endorse this procedure under item 1 of the Provisional Agenda of the 172nd Session of the Council.

IV. Reports and Records

14. The Draft Report for Adoption will be prepared by the Drafting Committee of the 172nd Session of the Council and will be circulated to the Members of the Council in all FAO languages in due time before the Adoption of the Report, and in any case not less than one hour before said adoption.

15. The Report of the 172nd Session of the Council will be communicated in accordance with Rule VI.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

16. The Report of the 172nd Session of the Council will record the Council's consensus on the amended modalities for the Session outlined in this Note.

17. The Report of the 172nd Session of the Council will record the Council's agreement that participation by virtual means constituted attendance at the Session, which is convened at the seat of the Organization in accordance with Rule II.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

18. The verbatim records of the 172nd Session of the Council shall be made available in line with Rule VI.1 of the Rules of the Procedure of the Council.

V. Other Matters

19. All documents for the Session are prepared and disseminated by the Secretariat, as per established practice, in all six languages of the Organization. An Order of the Day will be circulated, in all languages of the Organization.

20. In order to streamline the proceedings of the 172nd Session of the Council, introductions to agenda items are circulated in writing in advance of the Session.

21. In addition, interventions by Members will be limited to a maximum of three minutes and multi-Member statements will be limited to a maximum of five minutes. The Independent Chairperson of the Council will enforce such time management.

22. The time zone applicable to the Council's 172nd Session Timetable will be Central European Summer Time (UTC +2). The meetings of the 172nd Session of the Council will be scheduled from 9.30 to 12.00 in the morning, from 14.00 to 16.30 in the afternoon, and from 17.00 to 19.30 in the evening.

23. The Drafting Committee of the 172nd Session of the Council will convene its meeting after the conclusion of the Council's consideration of all agenda items.

24. Simultaneous interpretation in all six languages of the Organization will be provided for all Plenary meetings of the 172nd Session of the Council.

25. Sessions of the Council are public (Rule XXV.8(a) of the General Rules of the Organization) and can be followed through the Webcast available on the FAO website.

26. A mobile application for the 172nd Session of the Council will be made available and will communicate any changes to the schedule of items for discussion.