

GUIDANCE FOR PARTICIPANTS
TO VIRTUAL SESSIONS OF CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODY MEETINGS
(Version 1)

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1. Registration

All meeting participants are required to register for the relevant subsidiary body meeting using the Codex Online Registration System that can be accessed by all Codex Contact Points (CCP) by logging onto the [Codex webpage](#). If you have forgotten your credentials, please write to codex@fao.org.

In registering participants, the CCP must also indicate the name of the Head of Delegation. Please note that if there is any change to the Head of Delegation in the course of a subsidiary body meeting, you must advise the Codex Secretariat in writing by sending an email to codex@fao.org to ensure that the new Head of Delegation is recognized as such.

Upon approval of registration, registered delegates will be provided with details by email from the Codex Secretariat on how to connect to the virtual meeting.

All Codex Subsidiary body meetings are open to the General Public. Members of the General Public should contact the relevant Host Country Secretariat and the Codex Secretariat (codex@fao.org) to indicate their wish to follow proceedings of a subsidiary body meeting. All requests are subject to confirmation checks before meeting access is granted. Please note that the sessions will not be webcast, nor will recordings be published subsequently.

Note: Registration must be completed no later than 48 hours before the scheduled start of the meeting in order to guarantee participation.

2. Who should register online?

While there is not an upper limit to the size of Delegations, we would advise that Delegations are limited to those who need to actively follow the discussions and support the Head of Delegation in a timely manner. Only registered and approved delegates will be included in the List of Participants.

3. Meeting Platform

The meeting will be convened using Zoom Meeting (<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>). Please ensure you are running the latest version of Zoom. For more information on how to check your zoom version and ensure you have the latest version please see <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362233-Upgrade-update-to-the-latest-version>.

Joining the meeting

All approved registered delegates will receive a link regarding access to the meeting upon confirmation of registration. Click this link and complete the required fields to generate your own unique access details to the meeting. Please ensure you complete the “Displayed name” field in line with the guidance on display name provided below. Remember to save the access details where they can be easily retrieved such as in your calendar.

The access details will be valid for all sessions of the meeting. These details should not be shared with anyone else. Please note that the link you will receive is only valid for one admission to all sessions of the meeting. Therefore, if someone else uses your link you will not be able to join the meeting.

On each meeting day, your access details will admit you to the meeting waiting room. The Codex Secretariat will then admit you to the meeting room, once they have crossed-checked you against the list of registered participants. Please allow up to five minutes or so for access to be granted. While in the waiting room, messages may be sent by the Codex Secretariat in case there is any delay in providing access to the meeting room or to share any other information that requires your attention.

Please note that only registered participants will be admitted to the meeting room. In case you are not registered to the meeting, the Codex Secretariat reserves the right to remove you from the meeting room.

Note: To facilitate a timely admission to the meeting room please ensure that your name display is inserted as outlined in the following page (i.e. MEMBER/ORGANIZATION/PUBLIC - Registered name). Failure to do so may delay your admission to the meeting.

Heads of Delegations

It is expected that the Head of Delegation normally makes the interventions on behalf of a Member/Observer.

Heads of Delegation are strongly encouraged to have their video on if possible. Please ensure your microphone is always muted and is only opened when the Chairperson gives you the floor. Ensure that your display name clearly indicates that you are the Head of Delegation by following the *Name Display* instructions below.

Other members of delegations

All delegation members will have access to microphone and video functions. However, they should, in line with the Procedural Manual, only speak following a request from their Head of Delegation to the Chairperson. Therefore, please ensure your microphone is muted at all times and is only opened when the Chairperson gives you the floor following the request of your Head of Delegation to give you the right to speak.

General Public

The General Public can only follow the proceedings. No interventions are permitted.

Time requirement for joining the meeting

Please join the meeting platform at least 15-30 minutes before the meeting begins to allow time to address any potential technical problems with joining the meeting and to ensure that there is sufficient time for your name to be checked and for you to be admitted from the waiting room. This may take 5 to 10 minutes. There will be a short introduction to the key features of Zoom and how to use them during the meeting, starting 15 minutes before the official meeting begins.

Please check the webpage of the relevant committee to confirm the meeting start time.

Name display

Your name display is your meeting badge. Please ensure that the name of your Member Country/Member Organization or Observer Organization appears in your name display box in capital letters, followed by your individual name in lower case as follows:

For Head of Delegation (HD)

MEMBER COUNTRY / MEMBER ORGANIZATION NAME (HD) – name as per registration

E.g. AFGHANISTAN (HD) – name as per registration (see [here](#) for full list of Codex Members)

OBSERVER ORGANIZATION NAME (HD) – name as per registration

E.g. AACC intl (HD) – name as per registration (see [here](#) for full list of Observer organizations)

It is critical that **HD** is inserted after your Member/Organization name. The Chairperson will only give the floor to Heads of Delegations and if this is not indicated in the name display you may not be able to make your intervention.

For Members of Delegation

MEMBER COUNTRY /MEMBER ORGANIZATION NAME - name as per registration

E.g. AFGHANISTAN – name as per registration (see [here](#) for full list of Codex Members)

OBSERVER ORGANIZATION NAME – name as per registration

E.g. AACC intl – name as per registration (see [here](#) for full list of Observer organizations)

General Public

Please ensure your name is displayed as follows:

PUBLIC – name as per registration

Please note that the General Public following the discussions are not included in the List of Participants.

To modify your display name, you have two options:

1. Find your name in the participants list, select “More”, which will appear beside your name, and then “Rename” and insert your member country/organization or observer organization name followed by your given name.
2. Find the rename button by clicking on the dots in the top right corner of your image/video stream and select “Rename” to change/insert your member country/organization or observer organization name followed by your given name.

This is essential to ensure the smooth running of the meeting. If you do not insert your Member /Observer name, the Codex Secretariat reserves the right to change your name based on the list of registered participants. If it is not possible to identify a participant, the Codex Secretariat reserves the right to exclude/remove them from the meeting.

Please remember:

All delegates from the same Member or Organization must insert the MEMBER or ORGANIZATION name in the same format in order to ensure that all Delegates from the same Member/Organization are listed together in the participant list in Zoom.

For Members we recommend using the name format listed [here](#) on the Codex Members page and for observers we recommend using the acronyms listed [here](#) on the Codex Observer webpage.

Use of Chat function

For any technical issues with the use of Zoom in the course of the meeting, please use the **Chat function** in Zoom. This will be monitored constantly by the Codex Secretariat and/or the host secretariat. We advise that you regularly check the **Chat** in case there are any direct messages addressed to you by the Codex Secretariat and/or the host secretariat.

In case during your intervention there is a problem with the sound quality the Chairperson may ask you to indicate the key points of your intervention in the **Chat** box. The Codex Secretariat or the host secretariat will then read it out for the purposes of Interpretation. This will only happen when there is a sound failure during an oral intervention.

As the **Chat function** is a very useful tool for alerting us to technical issues, assisting when sound quality of interventions is poor and for communication among delegates, it should be limited to these purposes and not used to share other documentation or links peripheral to or outside of the meeting agenda.

Technical support related to use of the platform

For any issues related to accessing the zoom platform for the meeting, please contact codex@fao.org for technical support.

If you get disconnected

Please note from which time to which time this happened and contact the Technical support team at codex@fao.org.

4. Meeting Languages

Languages

Meetings of Codex Subsidiary body meetings are normally held in English, French and Spanish with simultaneous interpretation in these languages, unless otherwise stipulated in the invitation. Information

on meeting languages will also be indicated on the Codex webpage of the relevant committee.

Language selection

Please click on the interpretation button (globe symbol) on the Zoom toolbar and select your language of choice.

Listening-in to the floor

If you want to listen to the “floor”, please select “Off”.

Please note that if you make an intervention in a language other than the one that you are listening to, you need to turn interpretation off by selecting “Off” in the interpretation menu.

5. Meeting Schedule

The meeting dates together with a tentative meeting schedule will be provided on the Codex webpage of the relevant committee.

The Chairperson will propose a comfort break in the course of the session at an appropriate time in the agenda.

6. Meeting Documentation

All documentation relevant to the meeting is published on the Codex webpage of the relevant committee.

7. Management of the Discussions

The provisional agenda for the meeting will be available on the Codex webpage of the relevant committee. During Adoption of the Agenda the Chairperson will present the tentative meeting schedule which will also be available on the meeting webpage. Further details on the time allotted to each item, the proposed approach to the discussion, and what success will look like will be presented at the beginning of each agenda item.

Reservations

Delegations who wish to reserve their position to a decision of the Committee and would like such a reservation to be recorded may do so, by asking for a statement of their position to be contained in the report of the Committee. This statement should not merely use a phrase such as: “The delegation of X reserved its position” but should make clear the extent of the delegation’s reservation to a particular decision of the Committee and state whether they simply do not support the decision or wished for a further opportunity to consider the question.

Order of speakers

In the first round of comments the floor is normally given to Members and then Observers. The Chairperson will clearly indicate when the list of speakers is being closed and inform the participants of the delegations that have asked for the floor, and the order in which they will speak.

8. Making an Intervention

Technical preparations

Taking part in a meeting online requires a different type of preparation involving audio and video.

To ensure your message is well communicated please make the following technical preparations:

Audio

Audio is perhaps more important than video when working online.

- Do not use your built-in computer microphone if at all possible, as it will not provide sufficient sound quality.
 - Use a USB-headset with integrated microphone.
 - If not available, cellphone earphones/mic are better than none, but only wired, not Bluetooth.
 - If no headset/mic is available, an external USB-wired microphone is another good solution.
 - If participants are in a group and have to use one microphone, make sure whoever is speaking is close to the microphone.
- Connect your computer via an Ethernet cable to your router, rather than using Wi-Fi and disconnect other devices.
- Turn off all sound notifications (Skype, WhatsApp, emails, etc.) while attending the meeting and ensure you are in a place with no background noise or echo.

Video

Seeing the person talking online makes comprehension easier both for the audience and for the interpretation team.

- Turn on your video when taking the floor if your internet bandwidth permits.
- Try to frame yourself in the camera so that you fill the screen (like a TV newsreader) - a simple trick with a laptop is to raise the camera by placing it on a pile of books.
- Built-in webcams are of relatively low quality so if you have access to an external high definition(1080p) webcam or can connect a higher quality device to your set up then this is an advantage.

Making your intervention

In order to make an intervention, the Head of Delegation must raise her/his hand using the Raise Hand function in Zoom.

To raise your hand, select “Reactions” in the Zoom toolbar and then select the hand function. A hand will now appear in your video frame and beside your name in the participant list.

The list of Members/Observers that have requested an intervention will be visible to all Participants in the order in which the hands were raised in the Participants list in Zoom.

*Interventions will be limited to **two minutes** to ensure the efficient running of the meeting. A two-minute countdown timer will be displayed on the Zoom screen to encourage all delegates to keep their interventions concise and focused. If the intervention continues and exceeds the two-minute limit, the Chairperson may intervene and the microphone may be muted.*

For top tips on preparing your interventions for a virtual meeting, please see [here](#).

When given the floor by the Chairperson, please ensure that your video and microphone (unmute) are on so that your intervention can be well heard. Remember, if your intervention is in a different language to

the one in which you are listening to the discussions, you must turn Interpretation to “Off” so as to ensure your intervention can be interpreted to other languages.

Please adjust your speech to the remote distance environment (speak slower and more clearly, be concise, avoid excessive use of acronyms, etc.)

Ensuring optimal interpretation

- Have your video on when you take the floor. As this facilitates interpretation, this should be your first option. If the sound quality is adversely impacted by the video because your connection is slow, switch off the video but speak more slowly and clearly.
- In a virtual meeting, despite the best preparations, audio quality may deteriorate unexpectedly and become insufficient for interpretation purposes. In this case, interpreters will indicate this verbally and resume interpretation as soon as the sound quality permits.

All interventions must be presented orally. To ensure the intervention is well received and in case of any problems with the audio feed, interventions can be sent in parallel using the Chat function in Zoom.

9. Conference Room Documents (CRDs)

CRDs should be sent as Word files to the Codex Secretariat (codex@fao.org) no later than 23:59 CET on the first day of the meeting. All CRDs will be assigned a number and subsequently posted on the Codex webpage for the relevant committee.

Delegations are encouraged to provide their comments in writing as much as possible.

10. List of Participants

The Draft list of participants will be published on the Codex webpage of the relevant committee after the first session of the meeting to facilitate transparency. Any corrections to the List of Participants should be made by the CCP within the date on which the meeting report is adopted.

11. Communication among Members of Delegations during the session

It is recognized that members of a delegation may not be able to sit together during the meeting and it is therefore recommended that each Delegation establish a parallel means of communication during the meeting using a different platform (WhatsApp, WeChat, etc.) or setting up a separate parallel meeting in Zoom or similar.

You can also use the Chat function in Zoom to message another individual participant. Such messages **cannot** be saved or viewed by the host but only the two individuals engaged in that specific Chat.

In case Regional Coordinators or a group of Members need assistance in setting up virtual meetings with other Members in the margins of a Codex committee meeting, please contact the Codex Secretariat directly at codex@fao.org.

12. Adoption of the Report

The availability of the draft report and the process for its adoption will be announced at the meeting.