

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE
RULES OF PROCEDURE

Adopted by the Council in Helsinki, Finland, 5 September 2005

Amended by the Council in Helsinki, Finland, 15 June 2006

Amended by the Council in Madrid, Spain, 28 May 2008

Amended by the Council in Berlin, Germany, 26 May 2010

Amended by the Council in Zagreb, Croatia, 21 June 2011

Amended by the Council in Nancy, France, 26 September 2013

Amended by the Council in Vienna, Austria, 27 May 2014

Amended by the Council in Dublin, Ireland, 26 April 2017 to come into force 27 April 2017

Amended by the Council, written vote, 2 April 2020

Amended by the Council, videoconference, 10 September 2020

Amended by the Council in Prague, the Czech Republic, 23 April 2026 to come into force 24 April 2026

RULE 1 REPRESENTATION

- 1.1. Each Contracting Party to the Convention on the European Forest Institute (hereinafter referred to as "Member of the Institute" or "Member") shall be represented on the Council by a delegation consisting of representatives, alternate representatives, experts and advisers as may be required by that Member of the Institute.
- 1.2. The names of the members of a delegation shall be submitted to the Secretariat not less than two weeks before the date set for the opening of any session of the Council.
- 1.3. Each Member shall provide the Secretariat with the name and contact details of a focal point of each Member. All official correspondence relating to the Council is to be sent to the focal points and to the Embassies of Members that are accredited to Helsinki, Finland. A Member can change the focal point by written notification to the Director.

RULE 2 CHAIRMANSHIP, CHAIR AND SECRETARY

- 2.1. The Council shall at each ordinary session elect the Member holding the Chairmanship for the forthcoming period, from the closing of the ordinary session until the closing of the following ordinary session. The Chair shall ask the Members to announce their candidature for Chairmanship at least 180 calendar days prior to the ordinary session. A candidature for Chairmanship for the forthcoming period shall be accepted if it is received by the Secretariat not later than 120 calendar days before the opening of the ordinary session.
- 2.2. The Member holding the Chairmanship shall without delay notify the Members of the persons appointed as Chair and vice-Chair.
- 2.3. The Chair may not serve as representative of a Member on the Council.
- 2.4. The Chair, or in the Chair's absence the vice-Chair, shall preside at the sessions of the Council. In addition to exercising the powers and duties conferred upon him/her elsewhere in these Rules the powers and duties of the Chair shall be to declare the opening and closing of the session, preside at the session, ensure the observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, limit the time allowed to speakers and on the number of times each representative may speak on a matter, the adjournment or closure of a debate, put matters to the vote and announce decisions.
- 2.5. The Chair, in the exercise of the functions of that office, remains under the authority of the Council.
- 2.6. The Director shall appoint an EFI staff member to be secretary at the session of the Council.

RULE 3 SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL

- 3.1. Upon convocation by the Chair the Council shall meet in ordinary sessions every three years, in the period April-June. The exact date is to be decided by the Chair, to be notified the Members no later than 180 calendar days before the session. The ordinary sessions shall be held in the territory of the Member holding the Chairmanship unless the Council decides otherwise.
- 3.2. Invitations to an ordinary session of the Council shall be issued by the Director to all Members at least 90 calendar days before the date set for the opening of the ordinary session.
- 3.3. An extraordinary session of the Council shall be convened at any time as decided by the Council, or at the request of any Member or of the Board provided that such a request is approved by a simple majority of the Members. Following a request of a Member or of the Board the extraordinary session shall be held as soon as possible, at such time and place as the Chair determines, after the Director has received the written approval by a simple majority of the Members.
- 3.4. Invitations to an extraordinary session shall, if convened by decision of the Council, be transmitted by the Director at least 90 calendar days before the date set for the opening of the session, or if convened following a request of a Member or of the Board without delay having received the written approval of the request by a simple majority of the Members.
- 3.5. The Council may decide to hold a session by teleconference or videoconference, if so requested by a Member. The Chair shall, with the support of the Secretariat, make all arrangements needed for such a teleconference or videoconference to be held.

The Chair will also otherwise provide for a possibility to join a session by teleconference or videoconference if so requested by a Member at least 60 calendar days before the opening of the session.
- 3.6. The Chair can exceptionally, to ensure the health and safety of delegations or other participants, decide to move a session to a different time the same calendar year.

The Council can exceptionally, to ensure the health and safety of delegations or other participants decide to move an ordinary session to a different calendar year.
- 3.7. For each ordinary and extraordinary session, two minute checkers will be appointed by the Council.
- 3.8. The sessions shall be private unless the Council decides otherwise. The Director, the Chair of the Board, and EFI staff members may be present at the sessions unless otherwise decided by the Council.
- 3.9. In addition to the sessions, the Chair may organise information meetings to brief Members *inter alia* on EFI's recent and forthcoming activities and to facilitate interaction between the ordinary sessions. The information meetings will normally

be held by videoconference.

The Chair shall, no less than four weeks in advance of an intended information meeting, launch a poll to the Members, proposing meeting dates, allowing one week for responses. The Members shall be invited to the meeting, to be held at the most preferred time identified in the poll.

RULE 4 PARTICIPATION OF NON-MEMBERS

- 4.1. Representatives of European States and European regional economic integration organisations referred to in Article 14, paragraphs 1 and 4 of the Convention on the European Forest Institute, that are not Members of the Institute, as well as relevant intergovernmental organisations shall be entitled to participate, without the right to vote, in the sessions of the Council.
- 4.2. States or organisations referred to in paragraph 1 wishing to participate in an ordinary session of the Council shall notify the Director thereof not less than 120 calendar days before the date set for the opening of the ordinary session. The Director shall notify the Members of the Institute of such notifications not later than 90 calendar days before the date set for the session of the Council.
- 4.3. States or organisations referred to in paragraph 1 wishing to participate in an extraordinary session of the Council shall notify the Director. The Director shall notify the Members of the Institute of such requests without delay.
- 4.4. Where a Member of the Institute objects or wishes to restrict the participation of representatives of one or more of the States or organisations referred to in paragraph 1, that Member shall notify the Director within the time limit set by the Director. In such a case the right to participate of such representatives shall be denied or restricted, as appropriate.
- 4.5. The Chair may restrict the participation of a non-member in particular items of the agenda.

RULE 5 AGENDA AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Ordinary sessions

- 5.1. The Director shall in consultation with the Chair prepare the provisional agenda for ordinary sessions of the Council. In ordinary session, at least the following items shall be considered:
 1. The Board's report to the Council on EFI's activities during the past three years in the light of the established policy framework - and based on the report - a review of the strategies and the performance of the Institute and the balance between its various activities
 2. Review of the policy framework

3. General issues of a technical, financial or administrative nature and guidance for the functioning of the Institute and its organs, as submitted by Members, Board or Conference.
 4. Any amendment, if necessary, to the Rules of Procedure of the Council.
 5. Appointment of the elected and re-elected Board members
 6. Appointment of Chairmanship for the next period
- 5.2. Items shall be placed on the provisional agenda of the Council at the request of the Chair, a Member, or the Board. Items for consideration of the Council, or for information, shall be received by the Secretariat no later than 120 calendar days before the session. Any item received for consideration of the Council, or for information, shall contain all necessary background information.
- 5.3. The provisional agenda of the ordinary sessions of the Council and to the extent possible the supporting documentation shall be sent, or made available otherwise, by the Director to the Members at least 90 calendar days before the date of the ordinary session.
- 5.4. Documents containing comments to the provisional agenda and background documentation shall be accepted if they are received by the Secretariat not later than 60 calendar days before the opening of the ordinary session. The Director shall send, or make available otherwise, the documents containing comments to the Members not later than 45 calendar days before the opening of the ordinary session.

Extraordinary sessions

- 5.5. The provisional agenda and all supporting documents necessary shall be sent, or made available otherwise, by the Director to the Members without delay after the submission of the request for the convocation of an extraordinary session.
- 5.6. The provisional agenda for an extraordinary session shall consist of items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the session.
- 5.7. Documents containing comments to the provisional agenda shall be accepted if they are received by the Secretariat before a deadline set by the Director. The Director shall, without delay after the deadline, transmit any such documents containing comments to the Members.

Information meetings

- 5.8. The meeting items and all background materials will be made available to the Members not later than one week before the meeting.
- 5.9. The Director shall in consultation with the Chair prepare the meeting items and

background materials. No decisions can be made by the Council in an information meeting.

RULE 6 VOTING

- 6.1. Each Member shall have one vote in the Council.
- 6.2. Voting shall be done by a show of hands, unless voting by roll-call or secret ballot is requested by any Member or decided by the Chair or otherwise follows from these rules, in which case that shall be the method of voting. In voting by roll-call, each vote shall be recorded. Voting can be conducted through electronic means.
- 6.3. In accordance with Article 6, paragraph 3 of the Convention decisions shall be taken by consensus except in matters referred to in Article 6, paragraph 2 e) and paragraph 2 f) which shall be decided upon by simple majority. Abstentions shall not be considered as votes, and shall not mean that consensus is not reached.
- 6.4. Between sessions of the Council a written vote may be taken.
- 6.5. Any amendment to a proposal before the Council shall be voted on before there is voting on the proposal.

RULE 7 ELECTIONS OF BOARD MEMBERS

- 7.1. According to the Convention on EFI article 8.2. a) four members of the Board shall be appointed by the Council for a period of three years. At each ordinary session of the Council, these four members of the Board shall be appointed through either election of new members or re-election of members currently serving their first term on the Board, where nominated for re-election by a Member. Only members of the Board currently serving their first term and nominated for re-election by a Member may be re-elected. The remaining members of the Board shall be elected by the Council from candidates nominated by a Member and not currently serving on the Board.
- 7.2. The Chair shall request the Members to nominate candidates for appointment to the Board. The names of the candidates and their *Curricula Vitae* shall only be accepted if they are received by the Secretariat not later than 120 calendar days before the opening of a session. Notwithstanding this, the deadline can be extended by the Chair by up to 25 calendar days if enough nominations have not been received by the 120 calendar day deadline to fill all vacant positions on the Board. In such case, only nominations received by the extended deadline shall be accepted. The names and curricula vitae shall be included in the background documentation sent to the Members no later than 90 calendar days prior to the session.
- 7.3. In voting for the Board members, the geographical balance of the Board composition as well as gender balance and available expertise in the Board in its main work areas should be borne in mind.

- 7.4. The Council shall first vote on the re-election of members of the Board and after that vote on the election of new members of the Board.

In electing or re-electing a candidate for Board membership, all free seats on the Board shall be voted on simultaneously. The following procedure shall be followed:

1. Presentation of the candidates, in order of nomination, by the Member having nominated
2. Secret ballot, where each Member of the Council has one vote for each free seat. In re-electing a candidate the decision can be made by a show of hands, unless secret ballot is requested by any Member.
3. Votes are counted by the Chair, assisted by the Secretariat
4. Announcement of the result

In case of an equal number of votes are received by two or more candidates, a second round of voting shall take place between those candidates.

Following announcement of the result, the appointments shall be decided by the Council separately.

- 7.5. For appointments for interim vacancies using a written procedure or at an extraordinary session the following shall apply:

1. The Chair shall ask the Members to nominate candidates, with a deadline taking into account that the Members shall have sufficient time to nominate suitable candidates. The deadline can be extended by the Chair if enough nominations have not been received by the deadline to fill all vacant positions on the Board.
2. The names of the candidates and their *Curricula Vitae* shall only be accepted if received by the Secretariat before the deadline or, in case the deadline has been extended, by the extended deadline.
3. The names of the candidates and their *Curricula Vitae* are sent to the Members.

In electing a candidate for Board membership, all interim vacant seats on the Board shall be voted on simultaneously. The following shall apply:

1. Presentation of the candidates, in order of nomination. In the written procedure the presentation of the candidates shall be done in writing.
2. Secret ballot, where each Member of the Council has one vote for each free seat
3. Votes are counted by the Chair, assisted by the Secretariat
4. Announcement of the result

In case of an equal number of votes are received by two or more candidates, a second

round of voting shall take place between those candidates.

Following announcement of the result, the appointments shall be decided by the Council separately.

- 7.6. The term of a Board member appointed through a written procedure or in an extraordinary session shall equal the remainder of the term of the vacant position. This term shall be considered to be the first term of the Board member, provided it has lasted more than one year.

RULE 8 LANGUAGE OF THE COUNCIL

- 8.1. The working language of the Council shall be English.

RULE 9 LIST OF DECISIONS

- 9.1. At the end of each session the Council shall adopt a list of decisions.
- 9.2. Minutes of the session, including the list of decisions, shall be sent to all Members and to the Board.

RULE 10 AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

- 10.1. These Rules of Procedure may be amended by the Council by a simple majority.
