



**ISO/TMB/WG SR**  
Social Responsibility

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## **Operating Procedure on Observers, Special Advisors and Balanced Participation**

### Observers

1. Observers may receive all communications and documents circulated by, and attend all meetings of, the WG and TGs to which they have been registered.
2. In TG 1, 2 and 3, observers may, in special circumstances subject to the procedures outlined below (clause 6-9), make formal comments in meetings and/or in correspondence.
3. In the WG or any other TG or subgroup, observers may not comment or otherwise seek to influence the proceedings, either in meetings or in correspondence.
4. Observers may participate in their respective Stakeholder Groups according to the policy elaborated by that Stakeholder Group.
5. Observers shall be differentiated from experts in the following ways:
  - a. Observers' name tags are to be a different color than those of experts.
  - b. Observers may only sit in a designated "observers' section", which will be clearly indicated at each WG and TG meeting. Meeting organizers should consider the value of locating observers close to experts from their national member or D liaison body in the WG meeting.

### Observers to Strategic Task Groups (TG1, TG2 and TG3)

6. TG1,2 and 3 Convenors may each, with the consensus support of their respective experts, allow observers to make formal comments within their TG, both at meetings and during correspondence between meetings. This consensus support should be sought at each meeting.
7. TG 1, 2 and 3 Secretariats shall ensure that all meeting minutes, or other records of discussions, indicate clearly which comments observers made.
8. Observers may provide information on a discussion topic. The relevant TG Convenors should encourage discussion among experts after all observers' input have been offered. Observers will not engage in debate on a topic and their views will not be considered during the assessment of consensus. Observers may not lodge sustained oppositions.
9. Any expert who believes that the rights granted to an observer have diluted their own influence in the TG should notify the relevant TG Convenor immediately. If necessary, the expert may also choose to notify the WG Chairs. TG Convenors and/or WG Chairs shall record all such notifications and shall seek to resolve them in consultation with the relevant expert.

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Additional Expertise: Special Advisors

10. Where they have identified an important gap in expertise, the WG Chairs and/or the Convenors of a TG may, with the approval of the respective experts, invite national member bodies and D liaison organizations to nominate individuals with relevant expertise to serve as Special Advisors. The participation may be limited to a defined period of time.
11. Special Advisors shall submit the same registration information as experts and observers, as well as an indication that they possess the required expertise.
12. The TG Convenor may, with the consensus support of the TG experts, invite a Special Advisor(s) from among the nominations. If more nominations have been received than are required, the TG Convenor shall consult with the respective national member bodies and liaison D organizations prior to proposing a Special Advisor(s) to the TG experts. The TG Convenor will also circulate to the respective TG a list of all nominees and relevant information on them, clearly indicating the TG Convenor's proposal for Special Advisor(s) and a justification for the decision.
13. Special Advisors shall be granted:
  - a. access to relevant TG documents;
  - b. the right to formally comment on relevant documents in the relevant TG during the defined period of time;
  - c. observer status in the WG at the discretion of the WG chairs for the defined period of time.

Ensuring balanced participation in TGs

14. The WG and TG Secretaries should keep an up to date register of TG experts, observers and Special Advisors, including information on their delegation, stakeholder category and expert status. A summary of this information shall be made publicly available (i.e. stakeholder category; developed/developing country; and national member body/liasion organization).
15. An aggregated summary of the stakeholder and regional balance of experts, observers and Special Advisors registered in the TG shall also be kept up to date and made publicly available.
16. Stakeholder Groups are encouraged to nominate at least one "TG liaison" for each TG. These Stakeholder TG Liaisons shall accept shared responsibility, along with the respective TG Convenor, for monitoring, assessing and ensuring adequate stakeholder balance. They may also serve as an informal liaison mechanism between the TG Convenors and the Stakeholder Groups. Each Stakeholder Group is free to establish its own TG Liaison nomination process.
17. TG Convenors shall, in cooperation with the Stakeholder TG Liaisons, review stakeholder and regional balance at regular intervals and decide if and how to address stakeholder imbalances.
18. Temporary stakeholder imbalances shall not restrict progress in the TG.
19. There are a wide range of approaches through which balance can be improved, including:
  - a. encourage WG experts from the under-represented stakeholder group(s) or regions to join the work of the TG;



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- b. encourage WG experts from the under-represented stakeholder group(s) or regions to comment on a specific issue;
  - c. seek input on an issue from the relevant Stakeholder Group TG Liaisons;
  - d. seek advice from the WG Chairs, in consultation with the CAG;
  - e. in deciding on whether the objection is made by an important part of the concerned interests, the Chair/Convenor should consider developed/developing country and stakeholder representation.  
The Chair/Convenors's decision and its context will be recorded.
20. The WG Secretariat will provide logistical assistance in achieving any of the above, including sending requests from TG Convenors to all WG experts.