



Meeting of States Parties

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New York, 17–19 June 2019

Item 15 of the provisional agenda*

Other matters

Participation of intergovernmental organizations and other entities in the Meetings of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as observers

Note by the secretariat

1. At its twenty-sixth Meeting, the Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea reviewed its practice under rule 18, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of States Parties ([SPLOS/2/Rev.4](#)), which provides that the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other intergovernmental organizations that are invited to the Meeting may also participate as observers. The Meeting decided, in this connection, to align its practice concerning the participation of intergovernmental organizations as observers in its Meetings with that of the subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly. At its twenty-eighth Meeting, the Meeting deferred consideration of the matter to the twenty-ninth Meeting (see [SPLOS/324](#), para. 8).
2. The ocean-related subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly routinely extend an invitation to various categories of entities, including specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations and other entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the work of the Assembly pursuant to its relevant resolutions and intergovernmental organizations, and other entities with competence in ocean affairs (see [SPLOS/303](#), paras. 113–114, and [SPLOS/316](#), para. 110).
3. After the decision was made at the twenty-sixth Meeting of States Parties, the General Assembly, on 24 December 2017, adopted its resolution [72/249](#) on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in which it comprehensively addressed the issue of the participation of various categories of organizations as observers to the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

* [SPLOS/29/L.1](#).



4. In that regard, in order to ensure consistency between the ocean-related meetings convened by the General Assembly and the Meeting of States Parties with respect to the participation of intergovernmental organizations and other entities, and to streamline the participation of various organizations in the Meetings of States Parties, the Meeting of States Parties may wish, in line with Assembly resolution [72/249](#), to issue to the following categories of organizations a standing invitation to participate in the Meetings of States Parties as observers:

(a) Organizations and other entities that have received a standing invitation from the Assembly pursuant to its relevant resolutions to participate, in the capacity of observer, in its sessions and work;

(b) Interested global and regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested international bodies that were invited to participate in relevant conferences and summits;¹

(c) Other organs, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system.

¹ Reference is made to intergovernmental organizations and other international bodies that were invited to participate in the following relevant conferences and summits: The World Summit on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the previous United Nations conferences on sustainable development of small island developing States, held in Barbados, Mauritius and Samoa, the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, the Review Conference on the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, as well as the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.