



Elections of the representatives of the UNCCD CSO panel

The accredited CSOs should nominate their representatives within the UNCCD CSO panel member to undertake the tasks entrusted by the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD during the period just after the conference of the Parties until the end of the next conference of the Parties. Only an active accredited organization may nominate its representative and participate in the election within each of the five United Nations Regional Groups of Members States, namely Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Europe and Other Groups. The accredited CSO must have the institutional capacity and commitment to accept and execute the duties and responsibilities of this position. In accordance with the decisions 5/COP.9, 5/COP.10, 5/COP.11, 5/COP.12, 5/COP.13, 5/COP.14, 5/COP.15 5/COP.16 the process of elections is facilitated by the UNCCD starting immediately after sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties until next COP. The elections will follow a twostep process (i) nomination of the candidates (ii) election of the panel members among the candidates, by the accredited CSOs.

According to decision 5/COP16, the present call for elections aims to elect a CSO panel that will serve its mandate until the end of the COP17 of the UNCCD.

1. Nomination of candidates

- a.) The Secretariat is launching the following “**Call for Nominations**” to all the accredited CSOs and will post the call on the UNCCD website.
- b.) The deadline to receive nominations is 18 of February. In case of low response, the nomination period may be extended.
- c.) A reminder to submit nominations will be sent out to all the accredited CSO at least one week before the deadline to submit nominations.
- d.) Organizations wishing to nominate themselves as candidates for the CSO panel should submit the following documents:
 - (i) Completed Nomination Form.
 - (ii) A letter signed by the Chairman/President of the organization confirming the CSOs commitment to undertake the tasks of the panel if elected.
 - (iii) A document describing the experience of the organization and its experience related to the UNCCD.
 - (iv) A work plan (maximum 300 words) expressing how the candidate intends to carry out the responsibilities as panel member for the next two years
 - (v) Name and qualifications of the designated CSO representative proposed as panel member.
 - (vi) Annual report and accounts of the CSO for the year 2023 or 2024
 - (vii) A list of members of the board/management Committee and name and contact details of the Chair of board and most senior staff member.

The eligibility for an organization and candidate shall be verified on the basis of the following requirements:

Organization

- Submission of required documents
- Period of operations of at least 3 years
- Executive staff and experience in program/project implementation,



- Organization accredited to the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD and member of an existing network
- Sound financial and accounting systems.

Representative

- An experienced person on management and policy issues
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Following modus operandi of the CSO panel and the specific needs of the regions, for representatives of the African and Latin American and the Caribbean Group the candidate should also be fluent in French and Spanish respectively.
- Having the full capacity to use digital communication tools (emails, video conferencing, text processing)
- Confirmation that the organization and the person have access to internet and communication devices that enable them to deliver the tasks entrusted by the COP decisions
- Familiar with the UNCCD-related matters

e) In order to ensure geographical rotation NGOs from the countries of the current and previous panel members (Benin, Cameroon, India, Iran, Argentina, Colombia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Italy and France) are not eligible. Furthermore, in order to ensure appropriate representativity and rotation, members of the current and previous panels are no eligible for the present election. Nevertheless, members of the former panel may be asked for support, advice and mentoring in a transition period until the new panel is fully operative.

f) Screening of candidates: The secretariat should review and verify the documents based on the information provided and to confirm that candidates meet eligibility criteria. According to the needs, consultation may be made with Government Focal points and exiting CSO panel or other sources to verify the credentials of the candidate organizations. Any organizations found to have submitted false or misleading information may be barred from the election. The secretariat will confirm the list of eligible candidates. In the case of only one eligible candidate for the election, they may be declared the winner without a voting session.

2. Elections

- a) The Secretariat will send out a “Call for Voting” including the documentation of the eligible candidates and the Voting forms to the accredited organizations of the five United Nations Regional Groups of Member States
- b) The election period would last for 14 days, during which the voting organizations would submit their votes electronically to the designated email(s) on the specified Voting forms sent to them.
- c) Any vote received after the deadline will automatically be invalid.
- d) All votes will be acknowledged electronically (automatically) to the official contact of the voting organization within 48 hours of receipt.

3. Voting Eligibility

- a) Only active accredited CSOs are eligible to vote.
- b) The accredited CSOs will only vote to decide between the candidates for their region
- c) A list of such will be posted on the web site prior to the election period



- d) The candidate CSOs are also allowed to vote

4. Validity of Votes

- a) Only the votes received on the formal voting slip and from the designated representative of the organization and sent to the designated email would be considered valid.
- b) Only one vote per organization is eligible.
- c) The votes should be sent to the email designated by the secretariat in its call notice.
- d) The votes received from the emails other than the ones registered would be considered only after proper verification.

5. Counting of votes and declaration of the results

- a.) The secretariat will receive and count all votes received from the accredited CSOs from the five United Nations Regional Groups of Member. The secretariat would review the voting results and prepare a report on results within 3 days of the voting deadline. The announcement of the results would be made on the 14th of March and published on the UNCCD website.
- b.) In case a candidate withdraws from the election after the initiation of the voting process the voting process should be restarted with the reduced number of candidates. In case of election with only two candidates, the other candidate can be declared the elected.
- c.) In order to be declared elected, an organization must receive the largest number of votes of the votes cast.
- d.) In the case of an election where the votes are tied between the two or more candidates after the designated voting period an extension of the election period of up to one week can be granted. If the situation remains the secretariat will apply the 5 criteria identified by decision 5/COP9 to select the candidate.

6. Compliance with the elections procedures

- a) The secretariat shall abide by the procedures laid down such as verification of the membership, nominations, voting information, voting mail address, tally of votes to ensure the holding of fair elections.
- b) Any Candidate who violates the rules or acts in an inappropriate manner to secure votes may be subject to disciplinary action or disqualification

Annex provisional timetable for the elections:

Launch of the call for nomination	5 th of February
Deadline for nomination	18 th of February
Revision on the eligibility of candidates	20 th of February
Launch of the call for voting	21 st of February
Deadline for voting	7 th of March
Announcement of the CSO panel members	14 th of March