



General Assembly

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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

Fourth session

New York, 7 – 18 March 2022

Information for participants

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to resolution 72/249 of 24 December 2017 and resolution 74/19 of 10 December 2020, the Intergovernmental Conference convened under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee established by resolution 69/292 of 19 June 2015 on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, was scheduled to hold its fourth session from 23 March to 3 April 2020 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Following the postponement of the fourth session of the Conference by decisions 74/543 and 75/570 of the General Assembly, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in decision 75/570, to convene the fourth session on the dates to be determined by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of the Intergovernmental Conference. In this connection, the Secretary-General convened the fourth session from 7 to 18 March 2022. After reviewing the feasibility of holding that session on those dates in the light of the developments concerning the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and their impact on holding in-person meetings at United Nations Headquarters, the President, in consultation with the Bureau, decided that the fourth session of the Conference would be held in person at United Nations Headquarters, in New York, on the scheduled dates of 7 to 18 March 2022.

2. In accordance with resolution 72/249, the Conference will address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

II. Secretariat

3. Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as Secretary-General of the Conference.
4. Support and secretariat services are provided by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations (doalos@un.org).

III. Participation

5. In accordance with resolution 72/249, the Conference shall be open to all States Members of the United Nations, members of the specialized agencies and parties to UNCLOS.
6. Others are entitled to participate in the Conference in the capacity of observers in accordance with resolution 72/249. Pursuant to resolution 72/249, the following entities or organizations are entitled to participate as observers:
 - (a) Organizations and entities that have received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the work of the General Assembly pursuant to its relevant resolutions;
 - (b) relevant specialized agencies, as well as other organs, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system;
 - (c) interested global and regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested international bodies that were invited to participate in any of the following conferences and summits:
 - i. the World Summit on Sustainable Development
 - ii. the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
 - iii. the previous United Nations conferences on sustainable development of small island developing States, held in Barbados, Mauritius and Samoa
 - iv. the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks
 - v. 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
 - vi. 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;
 - (d) relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as those that were accredited to the following conferences and summits:
 - i. the World Summit on Sustainable Development
 - ii. the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
 - iii. the previous United Nations conferences on sustainable development of small island developing States, held in Barbados, Mauritius and Samoa

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- iv. 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; and
- (e) the following associate members of regional commissions: American Samoa, Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Curaçao, French Polynesia, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands.
7. The following modalities decided by the Bureau of the Conference will apply to participation in the fourth session due to the COVID-19 related measures in place at United Nations Headquarters:
- (a) The delegations of States Members of the United Nations, members of the specialized agencies and parties to UNCLOS can participate on a 1+1 basis in Conference Room 4 so long as masks are worn, except when taking the floor, and delegates maintain as much of a physical distance as is possible.
- (b) These delegations are free to determine which two delegates from the delegation may be present in Conference Room 4 at any one time. These delegations are also free to determine how many members of their delegations should be present on United Nations premises.
- (c) For those representatives not present in Conference Room 4, formal meetings will remain viewable, in all official languages, through webcast on UN Web TV. Informal meetings will be viewable via video link made available to all representatives. This link will provide only audio, in English only, and visual feed but will not allow for interventions.
- (d) Should restrictions on access by certain categories of observers to United Nations premises be relaxed in March, the same modalities that applied at previous sessions of the Conference for informal meetings would apply, namely that a limited number of representatives of observers may be admitted to Conference Room 4. In light of more restricted capacity than at previous sessions owing to COVID-19 related measures, three (3) representatives of organizations and other entities with General Assembly permanent observer status, interested intergovernmental organizations and other international bodies and associate members of regional commissions, as well as three (3) representatives of relevant non-governmental organizations will be allowed in Conference Room 4. All other representatives of observers will be able to view the proceedings through the video link.
8. While there is no limit on the total size of delegations, those delegations who currently have access to United Nations Headquarters may wish to take the capacity limits of Conference Room 4 itself into account in determining the size of their delegations physically present on United Nations premises.

IV. Credentials

9. As indicated in the Note Verbale convening the fourth session, dated 9 December 2021, those States wishing to participate in the fourth session and which have not previously submitted credentials covering the fourth session of the Conference or that may wish to update their credentials are kindly invited to deliver the credentials to the **Office of Legal Affairs**, located on the 36th floor of the Secretariat Building (if possible no less than one week before the scheduled opening of the fourth session of the Conference (by **28 February 2022**). The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

10. In addition, a scanned copy of the credentials, as well as other communications containing the names of representatives to the fourth session (such as letters and notes verbales from the Permanent Missions), should be submitted only through the online platform “e-Credentials”, under the tab "BBNJ Conference, fourth session", which can be accessed through the e-deleGATE portal (<https://edelegate.un.int>). No transmission by email is required. For any questions, please contact using the email: ecredentials@un.org.

V. Registration

11. Information on registration modalities for the purpose of issuance of UN grounds passes to access United Nations Headquarters for States and other entities entitled to participate in the Conference is provided on the website of the Conference (<https://www.un.org/bbnj/content/credentials-registration>).

VI. List of participants

12. The Conference Secretariat will compile a list of participants and make it available on the Conference website.

VII. Documentation and statements

13. The provisional agenda and the revised provisional programme of work for the meeting as well as other working documents for the meeting will be made available in all official languages on the website of the Conference (www.un.org/bbnj). Delegations are encouraged to bring their own mobile devices loaded with the relevant documentation. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management will provide documents-on-demand services (printing of documents, assistance with access to online services, etc.) through the Documents Assistance Centre (Secretariat Building, room S-1B-032).

14. States delegations are invited to submit PDF formatted versions of their statements by email to estatements@un.org. When sending the email to estatements@un.org, please indicate the name of the meeting, the date of delivery, and the speaker on the subject line of the email and in the heading of the statement. The statement should be submitted well in advance of the meeting, but no later than two hours before delivery, and not in hard copy. Submitted statements through the said email should appear in the eStatements part of the meeting’s Journal announcement. **Please indicate in the subject line and in the email if the statement is only for the use of interpreters or if you also wish for it to be posted online.** The statements will remain embargoed until their delivery and then posted. eStatement services are only available for the duration of the meeting. Statements sent after **18 March 2022** will not be posted on eStatements.

15. All delegations may submit PDF formatted versions of their statements by email to the Secretariat doalos@un.org, for posting on a dedicated page of the Conference website. When sending statements to the Secretariat, please indicate the name of the meeting, the agenda item and sub-item to which the statement relates (e.g. informal informals on environmental impact assessments), the date of delivery, as appropriate, and the name of the delegation on the subject line of the email and in the heading of the statement.

VIII. Interpretation

16. The six official languages of the Conference are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

17. Statements made in the plenary in any of the six official languages will be interpreted into the other official languages. It is essential that delegations provide the interpreters with copies of their texts by emailing them to estatement@un.org well in advance of the meeting, but no later than two hours before delivery, in order to assure the quality of the interpretation. Speakers are requested to deliver the statement at a speed that facilitates simultaneous interpretation (100 to 120 words per minute).

18. Any speaker may also make a statement in a language other than the official languages. In such cases, in accordance with rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the delegation in question must provide either an interpreter who would interpret from the non-official language into an official language or a written text of the statement in one of the official languages to be read out by a United Nations interpreter. This interpretation or the written text will be considered by the Secretariat as representing the official text of the statement and will be used by the United Nations interpreters as the basis for interpretation into the other official languages. When a written text is provided, the delegation concerned should make available to the interpreter someone who knows the language in which the statement is to be delivered and the official language into which it has been translated, to guide the interpreter through the translated text and ensure synchronization between the speaker and the interpreter. Detailed arrangements for interpretation from non-official languages, including access by non-United Nations interpreters to the interpreters' booths in the General Assembly Hall, must be made in advance through the Meetings Management Section of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (tel: 212 963 8114; e-mail: gmeets@un.org).

IX. Security arrangements

Department of Safety and Security

Security Operations Centre

19. The Security Operations Centre operates on a 24-hour basis and can be contacted at 212 963 6666 for all access requests or any general enquiries. The Centre will handle queries concerning lost and found items after 5 p.m.

20. The Centre is staffed with security and fire safety personnel. For fire or medical emergencies, first call 911 (9-911 from a United Nations telephone) and then contact 212 963 5555 (3-5555 from a United Nations telephone).

21. In addition to providing security and safety services on a 24-hour basis at Headquarters, the Security and Safety Service issues grounds passes, which members of delegations may obtain between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from the Pass and Identification Unit, located on the ground floor of the FF Building at 320 East 45th Street, further to authorization by the Protocol and Liaison Service.

22. The Special Services Unit, located in the first basement of the General Assembly Building (GA-1B-052), will handle queries concerning lost and found items from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and can be contacted at 212 963 7531.

General information

23. In the interest of ensuring the safety of all concerned, members of delegations, staff members, accredited members of non-governmental organizations, the press and affiliates will no doubt appreciate the importance of maintaining the integrity of the United Nations identification that is issued, because of the access it allows.

24. Members of delegations, as with every other authorized pass holder, are reminded that their United Nations-issued identification is solely for the use of the bearer to whom it is issued and that it should not be transferred or given to any other person to use. United Nations identification found to be used in any manner other than that for which it was intended will be confiscated by Security.

25. Staff members, members of delegations and other persons who are entitled to access the premises will be admitted to Headquarters only upon presentation of valid United Nations identification cards. All persons holding such cards are reminded that, in accordance with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/259 of 2 July 1993, identification cards must be worn at all times in a clearly visible manner while on the premises. It is each card holder's responsibility to ensure that cards are current.

X. Media access arrangements and services

26. Given limited room capacity, media access to the conference room(s) may be restricted. However, the open meetings of Conference will be webcast through the UN Web TV (<https://media.un.org/en/webtv>).

27. Media representatives in possession of a valid United Nations grounds pass will be allowed to cover the Conference without additional accreditation within the limits of allowed room capacity. All others will be asked to apply for accreditation in advance of the Conference. Media accreditation is strictly reserved for members of the press (print, photo, radio, television, film, news agencies and online media) who represent a bona fide media organization. Applicants are required to complete an online form, which is available from <http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/accreditation.shtml>. All members of the media submitting a registration form will be required to upload a letter of assignment from their Bureau Chief or Editor-in-Chief addressed to the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit. Two pieces of identification bearing a photograph, including a passport, are also required. Samples of work may be requested.

28. All members of the media corps accompanying the delegation must apply for accreditation as described above, unless the Permanent Mission concerned applies on their behalf via the eRegistration system, accessible from the eDelegate portal (<https://edelegate.un.int>).

29. Approved media members will receive an e-mail confirmation with instructions for picking up their United Nations grounds pass. All media representatives will be required to wear their United Nations grounds pass at all times.

30. Details regarding media access to the United Nations Secretariat, liaison services for coverage of open meetings, press conferences and briefings are available at <http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/guidelines.shtml>.

31. A list of open intergovernmental meetings, press briefings/conferences and other outreach activities at United Nations Headquarters is posted daily at <http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/alert.shtml>.

32. Media members requiring assistance or escort to meeting rooms should visit the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit, on the second floor of the Secretariat Building (S-250).

33. All media representatives will be required to present a valid United Nations grounds pass to the United Nations security officers at the gate. The designated press entrance is at 46th Street and First Avenue.

34. Media representatives are advised to arrive early to allow sufficient time for screening.

35. In an effort to ensure a safe work environment for everyone, proof of COVID-19 vaccination is required for all accredited media who wish to enter UNHQ. A pass will only be issued upon verification of the vaccination status. Accredited media are required to follow all UNHQ protocols and abide by risk mitigation measures.

United Nations audiovisual materials

36. Photographs in digital format (jpg) will be available for download free of charge on the United Nations photo website (<https://www.unmultimedia.org/photo/>). For further photo enquiries, contact the United Nations Photo Library (photolibr@un.org).

37. For requests for videos (MPEG2 and MPEG4 (H.264)), contact the United Nations Audiovisual Library (avlibrary@un.org).

38. United Nations Television will provide live pool coverage of the Conference's public meetings, as well as official press briefings. Live television feeds will be available through commercial carriers (see https://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/pdf/UNTV_Transmission_Guide.pdf). For more information, contact United Nations Television (e-mail: untv@un.org; room GA1B-55; tel: 212 963 7650, 212 963 7667 or 212 963 9399). A detailed schedule of live and playback coverage will be made available to broadcast clients in advance.

39. The Conference will be available live and on-demand on the United Nations Web TV website in English and in the original language (<http://webtv.un.org/>).

United Nations press release coverage

40. The Department of Global Communications will provide press release coverage of public meetings of the Conference in English (<https://www.un.org/press/en/highlights/BBNJ>) and French (<https://www.un.org/press/fr/highlights/BBNJ>). Further queries on press releases should be directed to the Meetings Coverage Section (english_press@un.org and french_press@un.org).

Briefings and news conferences

41. Notices on press conferences by the President of the Conference will be available from www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/alert.shtml. Delegations can book press conferences by calling the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General (tel: 212 963 7707/7160).

XI. Accessibility services for persons with disabilities

42. The United Nations Accessibility Centre offers assistive information and communications technology to support persons with audio, visual and/or physical impairments. The assistive devices are available on-site or as a loan to participants with disabilities. The Accessibility Centre is located in the Conference Building (level 1B, by the Secretariat Building escalators). More information is available at <https://www.un.org/accessibilitycentre/>.

XII. Greening the Conference

43. The United Nations is taking a number of measures to minimize environmental impact and maximize the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the Conference. All participants are encouraged to contribute to sustainability efforts.
44. Participants are encouraged to bring reusable bottles/mugs and avoid disposable cups and plastic water bottles.
45. Participants are encouraged to use portable devices as the main way to access Conference documentation to reduce paper consumption. All pre-Conference and in-session documentation will be made available on the Conference website (www.un.org/bbnj) in a timely manner.

XIII. Medical services and measures in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic

46. The United Nations Medical Service provides health-care support for acute injuries and illnesses and a travel medicine service at its walk-in clinic on the 5th floor of the Secretariat Building (telephone: 212 963 7080). The opening hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. Conference attendees should ensure that they have adequate health insurance arrangements in place for referral to New York City medical practices or hospitals as the United Nations clinic does not provide routine primary care or medication for ongoing care.
47. As a condition of entry to the UN complex, every meeting attendee confirms (by swiping their United Nations issued ID card) that they:
- Have completed quarantine if in the last 14 days they have arrived from a country or US State that is considered elevated risk (please see www.cdc.gov/travel and <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>);
 - Have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days;
 - Have not had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the last 14 days; and
 - Have not had close contact with someone with COVID-19 or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
48. Attention is also drawn to the honour system related to vaccination status announced in the letter of the President of the General Assembly dated 16 September 2021.
49. The latest advice for all meeting attendees on requirements for mitigation of COVID-19 exposure during meetings in the UNHQ complex is available on the United Nations website, here: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/covid-19-mitigation-meetings>.
50. Information on available testing for Permanent Missions of Member States in New York is available on the United Nations website, here: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/permanent-missions-ny>.
51. Entry requirements to the United States in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic are available here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/requirements-for-air-travelers-to-the-us.html>.

XIV. Dining facilities at United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ)

52. The current hours of the operation for the café locations in UNHQ are as follows:
- Lobby Café (Secretariat Building, 1st Floor): 8 AM to 3:30 PM (takeout only)
 - Vienna Café (General Assembly Building, 1st Basement): 10 AM to 5 PM

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- Riverview Café (Conference Building, 4th Floor): 11:30 AM to 3 PM (lunch service only).

53. Proof of vaccination is required for indoor dining at all UNHQ cafeterias for seated meals. Please note that designated personnel will verify proof of vaccination and UN ID at each indoor dining location. Regardless of vaccination status, masks are required at all the cafes until seated. Proof of vaccination may include:

- NYC COVID Safe App: Android | iOS;
- New York State Excelsior Pass;
- CDC Vaccination Card (or photo);
- NYC Vaccination Record; or
- An official immunization record from outside New York City or the United States.

54. Individuals who have received their vaccine outside the United States must have an official immunization record that includes:

- First name and last name;
- Date of birth;
- Vaccine product name;
- Date(s) administered; and
- Site where the vaccine was administered, or name of the person who administered it.

XV. Additional information

55. Additional information will be issued if the need arises to update and expand the information contained in the present note.