



International Oil Pollution
Compensation Funds

Agenda item 1	IOPC/MAY26/1/3	
Date	2 April 2026	
Original	English	
1992 Fund Assembly	92AES30	●
1992 Fund Executive Committee	92EC86	●
Supplementary Fund Assembly	SAES14	●

MEETINGS OF THE IOPC FUNDS' GOVERNING BODIES

WORKING PRACTICES

Note by the Secretariat

Summary:	<p>The Secretariat trialled a number of new practices in relation to the delivery of the IOPC Funds' meetings at the November 2025 sessions of the governing bodies and reported on their potential impact on delegations.</p> <p>The governing bodies were invited to share any feedback on the impact of the changes to the working practices described in document IOPC/NOV25/1/4 after the November 2025 meeting, so that it could be taken into account for future sessions.</p> <p>This document reports on the success of the practices trialled in November and confirms additional changes that have been introduced.</p>
Action to be taken:	<p><u>1992 Fund Assembly, 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u></p> <p>Information to be noted.</p>

1 Background

- 1.1 The Secretariat regularly reviews its working practices in relation to the delivery of the IOPC Funds' meetings, particularly with regards to its ability to continue to produce quality documents and Records of Decisions in a timely manner in all three official languages of the organisation.
- 1.2 The Secretariat trialled a number of new practices in that regard at the November 2025 sessions of the governing bodies and presented a document explaining how those practices might impact delegations (document [IOPC/NOV25/1/4](#)). During the discussion of the document, support was expressed for the Secretariat's efforts to ensure that the current demands on staff to deliver all documents, including the Record of Decisions, were reasonable and took into account staff well-being.
- 1.3 The Secretariat was also commended for its continued dedication to the efficient and transparent management of the IOPC Funds' meetings and the consistent delivery of high-quality Records of Decisions in all three official languages under demanding time constraints. The further integration of digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI) was welcomed, whilst emphasis was given to the importance of maintaining the accessibility, inclusiveness and accuracy that multilingualism brings to the organisation.

- 1.4 The Secretariat was encouraged to continue to consult delegations throughout the trial process and to provide a clear post-trial assessment at the next meeting of the governing bodies. One delegation also commented that the hybrid meeting format had enhanced flexibility and inclusivity for Member States and expressed its willingness to provide constructive feedback as the new working methods were implemented.

2 Impact of new internal practices following November 2025 meeting

- 2.1 The format of the Record of Decisions of the November 2025 sessions of the governing bodies was streamlined considerably, with hyperlinks included to relevant reference documents containing background information. In addition, a number of new tools were used to assist members of the Secretariat in the summarising of discussions. Under the debate section of any agenda item, efforts were made to more frequently summarise and group comments which were aligned together, rather than detailing the comments of individual delegations.
- 2.2 This overall reduction in length of the document greatly reduced the time required to produce a quality report in three languages overnight.
- 2.3 It was proposed prior to the November sessions that any statement made during the meeting and provided to the Secretariat would only be included in the original language in which it was made for the purpose of the adoption of the draft Record of Decisions. The intention was that the text would be translated and included in all languages in the final version, which is issued two to three weeks after the meeting. However, as a result of the reduction in length of the Records of Decisions, sufficient time was available for the Secretariat to translate all statements made during that meeting, for inclusion in the draft Record of Decisions in November 2025.
- 2.4 In order to protect the well-being of staff, the Director proposed in November 2025, as a general guide, that the Secretariat should aim for all staff members to cease working no later than 1 am on report night. He noted at the time that, since the final English text was often not finalised until late into the evening, the document and all its annexes were unlikely to be finalised in French and Spanish until the following day, even with the reduction in word count and the exclusion of statements from translation. The expectation was that the adoption of the Record of Decisions was therefore more likely to take place in the afternoon of the following day and not in the morning as had sometimes been the case.
- 2.5 In practice, the efficiencies gained through the introduction of the new working practices referenced in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above, resulted not only in the staff involved in the production process being able to cease working by 1 am, but also the adoption of the Record of Decisions could still take place in the morning of the following day. It was not necessary to compromise on the quality of any of the reports by reducing the time spent proofreading or leaving any sections incomplete in French or Spanish until later, when the documents were circulated during the correspondence period.
- 2.6 The Record of Decisions was published in all languages, in full, for the consideration of the governing bodies an hour before the sessions were convened to adopt the documents. No negative feedback was received regarding the impact on delegations as a result of the change in working practices of the Secretariat.

3 Additional changes to working practices

- 3.1 Ahead of the November 2025 meeting, which was the first to be held in a fully hybrid format, the Secretariat took the opportunity to issue a circular in October 2025, setting out practical guidance for participating in IOPC Funds' meetings ([IOPC/2025/Circ.8](#)). Having gained experience in the delivery of the hybrid meeting in November, the Secretariat would like to draw attention to some particular aspects which may facilitate participation in future meetings.
- 3.2 Circular [IOPC/2025/Circ.8](#) included guidance on accessing the meetings and on policies and practices relating to credentials and requests to speak. Delegations will recall that, in order to participate either in person or remotely in meetings of the IOPC Funds' governing bodies, credentials or notifications are required as set out in [IOPC/2025/Circ.6](#).
- 3.3 In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of each governing body, each Member State shall transmit to the Director the credentials of its representative, together with the names of any alternates or other members of its delegation, not later than five working days prior to the opening of the session.
- 3.4 Whilst delegations generally recognise and respect this requirement for representatives attending in person, the Secretariat noted that several delegations did not include in their credentials the names of those persons registered to attend the meeting remotely. This placed the Secretariat in a difficult position since it is keen to encourage the wider participation of delegations through the introduction of hybrid meetings. However, it must not allow representatives who are not authorised by their State to request to speak via Zoom.
- 3.5 Shortly before the November 2025 meeting, the Secretariat identified all those persons registered to participate remotely who did not appear on the credentials for their delegation and advised them that they would be prevented from actively participating in the meeting unless they provided credentials.
- 3.6 The Secretariat therefore wishes to highlight this issue, and urges States to note that only those persons included on the credentials of a delegation will be able to actively participate.
- 3.7 The Secretariat also noted that a small number of unregistered delegates arrived on the opening morning of the meeting and were disappointed not to find their name plate or sufficient seats allocated in the room. Please note that the seating plan is prepared based on registered participants a day in advance of the meeting and those who register late, may be allocated a seat on arrival which is separate to the rest of their delegation or outside of the usual seating plan.
- 3.8 One further change that was introduced to the internal working practices during the November 2025 meeting, was the use of a tool to transcribe the discussions of the governing bodies. The resulting transcription was then used by the Secretariat to summarise the Record of Decisions during the meeting week. This was pivotal in the reduction of the time spent producing the document in all languages.

4 Director's considerations

- 4.1 The Director considers that the new working practices were successfully introduced in November with no negative impact on delegations. The Chairs of the 1992 Fund Assembly and the Supplementary Fund Assembly have confirmed that they were also pleased to witness the impact the changes made on those involved in the production of the report during the evenings, in which they also play an active role.

- 4.2 The Director confirms that, in the absence of any concerns from Member States, the new practices will be adopted for future meetings. He continues to welcome any feedback from delegations and reiterates that the Secretariat will continue to review its practices and seek to introduce further efficiencies whenever appropriate.

5 Action to be taken

1992 Fund Assembly, 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly

The governing bodies are invited to take note of the information contained in this document.
