



Code of Ethics for elected and appointed officers under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement

*Endorsed by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to be applied provisionally
30 November 2018*

Background and purpose

1. The present Code of Ethics for elected and appointed officers under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement (hereinafter referred to as the Code) has been prepared at the request of Presiding Officers of the Subsidiary Bodies and approved by the President of the Conference of Parties following consultation with the COP Bureau.
2. The present Code outlines the standards of conduct expected of officers elected or appointed by the UNFCCC in the performance of their duties, including when chairing bodies, facilitating formal and informal meetings, and their relations with Parties, the secretariat and other participants in undertaking those duties.

Applicability

3. The present Code applies to all elected or appointed officers of the UNFCCC¹ in the exercise of the duties or functions to which they have been elected or appointed, including in the chairing of the governing, subsidiary and constituted bodies of the UNFCCC and in chairing or facilitating informal and formal meetings or events under the UNFCCC or its subsidiary bodies.
4. Such Officers are always under the authority of their respective body, and Officers appointed to chair contact groups or facilitate informal consultations remain under the guidance of the Presiding Officer who appointed them (i.e. President of the governing bodies or the Chair of the subsidiary body, as the case may be).
5. All Officers are expected to observe, at all times, and from the date of election or appointment, the highest standards of ethical conduct in the performance of their duties and functions as outlined below. Such duties and functions shall be performed in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the principles enshrined in the founding documents of the UNFCCC and the draft rules of procedure of the UNFCCC being applied.
6. References in this Code to the UNFCCC and to the COP include, *mutatis mutandis*, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, their governing bodies (CMP, CMA) and the work of subsidiary bodies on their behalf.

¹ See Guide for Presiding Officers (November 2017), https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/20170919_guideforpresidingofficers_final.pdf, page 3.



7. References in this Code to the subsidiary bodies include the permanent subsidiary bodies established under articles 9 and 10 of the UNFCCC and any other subsidiary bodies that may be created by the COP in exercise of article 7.2(i) of the UNFCCC.

8. References to the constituted bodies include all the bodies which operate under the UNFCCC or its subsidiary bodies and whose members are elected by them. The application of this Code is without prejudice to the terms of reference agreed by the COP in relation to the bodies.

Impartiality

9. Pursuant to rule 22 of the draft rules of procedures being applied, elected and appointed officers shall be impartial and ensure the appearance of impartiality in the discharge of the duties and functions to which they have been elected or appointed. In particular, they are expected to interpret interventions and provide advice to Parties without bias, prejudice, favoritism, caprice, self-interest, preference or deference, strictly based on sound, independent and fair judgement. They are also expected to ensure that personal views and convictions do not compromise or appear to compromise their role and functions as UNFCCC Officer. Officers are expected to desist from exercising the rights of a representative of a Party in the exercise of their duties and functions to which they have been elected or appointed, and to refrain from acting in any way that might reflect negatively on their role and functions as elected or appointed officer of the United Nations climate change process.

Ethical behavior

10. Officers are expected to treat all persons involved in the UNFCCC conferences, meetings, events and processes with dignity and respect, and ensure that their conduct reflects commitment to the values of the United Nations Charter and UNFCCC.

11. Officers are expected to conduct themselves in the exercise of the duties and functions to which they have been elected or appointed with probity, integrity and professionalism in accordance with the draft rules of procedure being applied, thereby enhancing confidence in their role.

12. Officers are not to abuse their authority or to directly or indirectly accept, offer or provide any gift, advantage or reward that can be reasonably be perceived as being intended to influence the performance and independence of their functions.

13. In accordance with the **Code of conduct for UNFCCC conferences, meetings and events**,² Officers are not to engage in any form of discrimination or harassment in any form, including sexual harassment.

Conflict of interest

14. Officers are to avoid any conflict of interests as well as situations which might reasonably be perceived as giving rise to a conflict of interest, in order to guarantee the integrity, impartiality and transparency of the climate change conferences. In particular, they are expected to:

² Published on the UNFCCC website on 26 April 2018,
https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/CodeOfConduct_Harassment_UNFCCC_Conferences.pdf



- a. Refrain from giving unwarranted preferential treatment to any Party, group of Parties, organization or person;
- b. Desist from using their role as elected or appointed Officers as a means to seek private gain or obtain private pecuniary advantages or other remuneration;
- c. Serve in their capacity as UNFCCC Officer rather than the representative of a Party, a group or person, with respect to any matter that is under consideration in the exercise of the duties and functions to which they have been elected or appointed;
- d. Deal with issues presented before them in a consistent, apolitical and fair manner, in conformity with the draft rules of procedure as being applied;
- e. Refrain from impeding the work of the UNFCCC or taking a preferential, biased or prejudiced approach;
- f. Refrain from adversely affecting the confidence of Parties in the integrity of the work of the UNFCCC.

15. In the event that the Officer considers that a conflict of interest may arise, he or she shall recuse himself or herself from acting as Officer.

Diligence

16. Pursuant to rule 23 of the draft rules of procedure as being applied, Officers are expected to perform their duties efficiently and maintain control over the proceedings. These duties extend to the delivery of duties fairly and with reasonable promptness, including to:

- a. Ensure that the meetings are conducted in an efficient and respectful manner;
- b. Accord the right to speak, maintain a list of speakers and limit the time to be allowed to speakers and observers, as appropriate;
- c. Call a speaker to order if his or her statement is not relevant to the subject under discussion or is offensive to other Parties;
- d. Declare the opening, adjournment and closing of meetings, ensuring that meetings start and end on time.

Responsibility of presiding officers in cases of non-adherence to the code

17. In cases where it is found that the Code is not being adhered to, appropriate and expeditious remedial action may be taken by the relevant Presiding Officer, after due consideration and process, including by way of discussions with the Officer concerned, and if necessary through the election or appointment of a replacement Officer, in accordance with the draft rules of procedure being applied.