



**IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS
3–10 September 2021, Marseille, France**

**Contact Groups:
Procedure and Code of Conduct**

Action Requested: On the proposal of the IUCN Council, the World Conservation Congress is invited to APPROVE the Procedure and Code of Conduct for Contact Groups.

Background

Contact groups are established to discuss and agree on the text of motions before they are brought to the plenary during the Members' Assembly. They should strive to be constructive and inclusive, and make every attempt to achieve the broadest possible support for a motion. In previous World Conservation Congresses, there were instances of disrespectful behaviour during contact groups. In some cases, people expressing minority viewpoints were interrupted by other participants, while in other cases, particular individuals dominated discussions to the irritation of other participants.

In the report of the 2016 Congress Resolutions Committee to the new Council, the Committee recommended the consideration of measures to help ensure respectful behaviour in contact groups. The Committee further suggested that a simple *contact group code of conduct* be drafted to empower Facilitators/Chairs to better manage misbehaviour and be allowed to give warnings to participants who do not adhere to the adopted code of conduct.

In accordance with the feedback received from delegates to the 2016 Congress and the recommendations of the Congress Resolutions Committee, IUCN Members already approved the electronic ballot of March 2019 an amendment to Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure proposed by the IUCN Council as part of the improvements to the Motions Process.

The procedure and code of conduct presented hereby complements Rule 56 and focuses on the main behavioural issues that need to be addressed at contact groups. It is presented for approval of the Members' Assembly on the recommendation of the IUCN Council.



Contact Groups: Procedure and Code of Conduct

1. Contact groups should ensure constructive and inclusive discussion and negotiations, and make every attempt to achieve the broadest possible support for a motion before it is referred to the plenary sitting of the Members' Assembly for the vote.
2. Contact groups are therefore only open to delegates representing IUCN Members, and experts from Commissions, National or Regional Committees, or the Secretariat. All participants of contact groups should carry their Congress badge and should identify themselves when taking the floor. Facilitators may allow observers to stay in the room if there is no objection from any of the IUCN Members represented in the contact group.
3. Facilitators give priority to speak and propose amendments to IUCN Members. If time permits, other participants can be given the floor.
4. To ensure that all amendments are discussed in contact groups and to avoid that amendments are presented in plenary sittings, IUCN Members who cannot attend a contact group meeting are strongly encouraged to either ask another IUCN Member to present their amendments in the contact group concerned, or ask a representative of their recognised National or Regional Committee to do so on the basis of Rule 66 (d).

In addition, if a compromise cannot be reached, instead of voting down minority views in a contact group, alternative formulations representing these minority views may be presented in square brackets for the consideration of the Members' Assembly.

5. Contact group participants are expected to uphold respectful behaviour and engage in a productive way, avoiding controversial or adversarial approaches (e.g. people expressing minority viewpoints should not be heckled by other participants, discussions should not be dominated by certain individuals to the irritation of most of the other participants).
6. If a participant is inappropriate or disruptive, the Facilitator may call the speaker to order.
7. If the breaches of this code persist and threaten to disrupt the contact group meeting, the Facilitator may suspend the meeting in order to report back and receive advice from the Resolutions Committee and/or the Congress Steering Committee as to how to proceed in order to prepare the motion for discussion and vote in the plenary sitting.

Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress

56.
 - (a) The Resolutions Committee may refer a motion to a committee or *ad hoc* contact group of delegates from accredited Members, for its review and advice or decide that it be debated and voted upon directly by the World Congress. It may also propose that motions whose arguments are not technically sound or coherent and require further development or motions, which are so controversial that it is, in its opinion, not possible to produce a consensus text for submission to a decision by the Members' Assembly, be deferred to the next World Congress.
 - (b) The Chair may also propose that a motion under discussion in the World Congress be referred to a contact group.

- (c) Commission members, representatives of recognized National and Regional Committees and members of the Secretariat may take part in contact groups only in a technical advisory and support capacity, without prejudice to the application of Rule 66 (c) and (d).
- (d) For issues that prove hard to resolve in contact groups, the Resolutions Committee or the facilitator of a contact group may set up one or more drafting groups that balance the spectrum of views on the motion, for the purpose of achieving a consensus text. Should a consensus remain impossible, the drafting groups may decide to present minority views as amendments.
- (e) The reports of such contact groups or drafting groups shall ordinarily be considered by the Resolutions Committee prior to their presentation to the World Congress. The debate in the World Congress shall take place on the text resulting from this process.