

SUBMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS
OF THE COMMITTEE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Working Paper
Item 3 of the Agenda

Submitted to CEP IV by Argentina

Resolution 2 (1998) sets out Procedural Regulations for the Committee for Environmental Protection. In Section IV of the aforementioned Resolution (Submission of Documents), Regulation 13 states that submission and distribution of documents will be completed in accordance with guidelines set out in Annex 3 to CEP II for XXII Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. Therefore, all working documents (WD) and information documents (ID) that are presented by any Party for translation, shall be produced to the management of the host Party at least 75 days before the Meeting. Information documents to be translated shall be produced to the Meeting 45 days in advance.

Therefore, these regulations have been elaborated for the purpose of providing sufficient time for the Parties to review ID and WD in official languages of the Committee (English, French, Russian and Spanish subject to Regulation 22, Section IX, Resolution 2, 1998), and hence, to duly prepare their reports to the Meeting.

However, the same procedural regulations for the arrangement of CEP work specified in Clause 2, provide for exceptions with respect to the above terms. Working Documents coming behind schedule, will be distributed "if feasible" by the management of the Host Party in the original language and translated "if possible". Clause 2 also states, that the translation of documents that could not be translated and distributed before the Meeting, will be presented in the course of the Meeting.

Since the effective date of these regulations, the term stipulated by the Procedural Regulations has not been strictly observed.

This may have been caused by various circumstances. For instance, in view that conventionally CEP Meetings are held in late May every year, the period of 75 days stipulated by the Procedural Regulations requires production of Working Documents in early March. By this time, Antarctic Summer Campaigns usually are not accomplished. Therefore, the above situation is inconvenient not only for some Parties, but also for CEP Contact Groups, because the period 75 days considerably limits the time allocated for work.

Of course, the fact that the schedule for submission of documents has not been strictly observed, would not promote discussions within the CEP, nor facilitate the job of its translation corps. This also would adversely affect the right to use any of the four official languages.

CONCLUSIONS

These Procedural Regulations set out the term which in fact, for various reasons, has not been strictly observed. Therefore, Argentina's proposal is that the wording of the Procedural Regulations should be modified stipulating shorter but less flexible period for submission and distribution of documents in order to facilitate the work of the CEP and its translation corps.

Therefore, the proposal is as follows:

- the period for submission and distribution of working documents shall be 45 days before the Meeting
- management of the Host Party shall distribute translated documents not later than 21 days before the Meeting;
- exceptions specified in Clause 2 of the Procedural Regulations (Annex 3 of the CEP II Report for XXII ATCM) shall be replaced by clearer clauses in order to avoid slackening of the regulations.

Therefore, revision of these regulations will be aimed at promoting the CEP discussions, because this will provide sufficient time for the Parties to properly prepare documents for the Meeting in the appropriate languages, including additional time needed for the translation.