

## PUBLICATIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE PREPARATION OF MEETING DOCUMENTS

52. The Commission at its last meeting noted the steps taken by the Scientific Committee regarding publications policies and procedures and asked the Executive Secretary to prepare a report of experience during 1985 for consideration at this meeting. The Commission considered the Report of the Executive Secretary and noted the procedures currently in operation.

53. The current practice for both the Commission and Scientific Committee involves the categorisation of papers into two groups, Working Papers and Background Papers. Working Papers relate directly to agenda items. Background Papers contain more general information and are related to overall objectives of the Convention.

54. Working Papers are translated entirely into the four languages of the Commission. Background Papers are distributed in their original language with only a short translated summary and translated figure and table captions.

55. There was agreement that at this stage the policy of categorisation for translation purposes was appropriate given budgetary considerations.

56. Some delegations, however, emphasised that the Commission has an obligation to provide equal access in all the official languages of the Commission to all text being discussed in the meetings.

57. The Commission noted the heavy burden placed on translation facilities by the late submission of Working Papers and urged members to abide by deadlines and follow established guidelines for document preparation.

58. Once the Headquarters Agreement between the Commission and the State of Australia is concluded, it was recommended that this be included in future editions of the Commission's Basic Documents.

59. Documents concerning the work of the Commission and Scientific Committee such as reports of its meetings and those of its Working Groups should be made freely available to interested members of the general public. However, since there are potential fiscal and other implications in such free distribution, this practice should be reviewed by the Secretariat during the coming year and a report be prepared for consideration under this agenda item at the next meeting of the Commission.