

(5) The technical group's report shall be circulated to the Parties, Members of the Organization, the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, intergovernmental organizations having agreements with the Organization and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Organization, prior to its consideration by the Committee. The Committee shall decide whether to approve any proposal to amend Annex 1, and any modifications thereto, if appropriate, taking into account the technical group's report. If the report finds a threat of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not, itself, be used as a reason to prevent a decision from being taken to list an anti-fouling system in Annex 1. The proposed amendments to Annex 1, if approved by the Committee, shall be circulated in accordance with article 16(2)(a). A decision not to approve the proposal shall not preclude future submission of a new proposal with respect to a particular anti-fouling system if new information comes to light.

(6) Only Parties may participate in decisions taken by the Committee described in paragraphs (3) and (5).

## ARTICLE 7

### Technical Groups

(1) The Committee shall establish a technical group pursuant to article 6 when a comprehensive proposal is received. In circumstances where several proposals are received concurrently or sequentially, the Committee may establish one or more technical groups as needed.

(2) Any Party may participate in the deliberations of a technical group, and should draw on the relevant expertise available to that Party.

(3) The Committee shall decide on the terms of reference, organization and operation of the technical groups. Such terms shall provide for protection of any confidential information that may be submitted. Technical groups may hold such meetings as required, but shall endeavour to conduct their work through written or electronic correspondence or other media as appropriate.

(4) Only the representatives of Parties may participate in formulating any recommendation to the Committee pursuant to article 6. A technical group shall endeavour to achieve unanimity among the representatives of the Parties. If unanimity is not possible, the technical group shall communicate any minority views of such representatives.