

ANNEX IV

WORKING METHODS OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

1. The working methods of the Committee of Experts and its working groups should be of sufficient flexibility to manage a project or a task in a dynamic manner and to provide for increased use of electronic working which would allow for issues to be considered by a maximum number of experts. The overall mandate of the Committee of Experts should be to provide policy guidance with regard to the development of the IPC, to consider the reports of the working groups as to whether their activities are in line with overall objectives of the development of the IPC, to establish work programs of the working groups and to adopt the results achieved.
2. The working groups should have authority to modify their work programs. In respect of the IPC revision requests, a simplified procedure has already been authorized by the Committee allowing submissions of the revision request directly to the IPC Revision Working Group.
3. The Committee should also authorize the IPC Revision Working Group to carry out the work on the introduction in the electronic layer of the IPC of the electronic data, such as classification definitions, illustrating chemical formulae and informative references, and to approve this data, when appropriate, without submitting them for adoption to the Committee which will carry out monitoring of this work.
4. Any working group dealing with tasks of IPC reform should be authorized to modify the title and scope of the task, as needed, and accept new tasks to the reform program proposed by its members, if appropriate. Decisions of a working group regarding new tasks and changes to existing tasks should be based on the overall policy laid down by the Committee and should be reported to the Committee.
5. The Committee itself or the working groups are empowered to create Task Forces to carry out short-term, focused activities. Emphasis will be placed on working by electronic means but physical meetings of the Task Forces may be held, as necessary.
6. Discussion of IPC revision projects and of other tasks of the IPC Revision Working Group is carried out electronically, through submission of proposals and comments to the IPC electronic forum which is structured with regard to major activities of the Working Group, such as revision projects, definition projects, translation projects. Alternatively, the IPC revision list server may be used for other submissions.
7. Discussion of IPC reform tasks is carried out electronically through submission of proposals and comments to the IPC reform list server. In the future, activities with respect to IPC reform tasks and certain tasks which could be carried out by the Committee of Experts itself will also be incorporated in a structured form on the WIPO IPC website.

8. Meeting documentation will be handled electronically with the exception of the letter of invitation and the agenda. The agenda will indicate the meeting documents available on the WIPO IPC website and an address to contact should paper copies be required. A limited number of paper copies will be available at the meeting for delegates.

[Annex V follows]