

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Administrative and financial matters

Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat
and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

SPONSORED DELEGATES PROJECT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project*, which established the Sponsored Delegates Project as a means to support the travel cost of delegates from developing countries to attend the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. In paragraph 7 of Resolution Conf. 17.3, the Conference of the Parties:
 7. *CALLS on the Secretariat to administer the Sponsored Delegates Project and to widely and proactively disseminate information about the Sponsored Delegates Project to all CITES Parties at least one year before each meeting of the CoP, with the aim to raise sufficient external funds among donors and inform developing countries about the existence of this Project and the modalities to apply for it.*
3. At its 18th meeting (Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 18.12 on the *Sponsored Delegates Project*:

Directed to the Secretariat

18.12 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *continue to apply clear selection criteria, taking into account the various possible options for the selection criteria and additional ways to prioritize beneficiary Parties, including the guidelines of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the prioritization of small island developing States and least developed countries;*
- b) *explore further the practical arrangements for the provision of support under the Sponsored Delegates Project for delegates attending the meetings of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees; and*
- c) *bring any recommendations to the attention of the Standing Committee or the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.*

CoP19 Sponsored Delegates Project

4. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.3, the Secretariat launched the Sponsored Delegates Project for the present meeting of the Conference of the Parties on 1 October 2021 through [Notification to the Parties No. 2021/057](#). The aim was to mobilize USD 1 million to provide financial support to delegates from developing country Parties. The deadline for applying for support through the Sponsored Delegates Project was initially 30 April 2022. However, through Notification to the Parties No. 2022/039 issued on 24 May 2022, the Secretariat extended the deadline to 30 June 2022.
5. The Secretariat has published a [dedicated page on the CITES website](#), which provides information on pledges to the Project and funding pledged or received. In line with Decision 18.12, paragraph a), the webpage now contains information related to the selection criteria. The selection of eligible Parties is based on the Human Development Index with a priority to be given to Parties with fewer than six delegates at previous meetings of the Conference of the Parties. At the time of writing (1 June 2022), the Secretariat has received applications from 66 Parties.
6. As mentioned above, the funding target for the Sponsored Delegates Project is USD 1 million to cover the costs of about 150-160 participants at the CoP. The Secretariat recalls that Resolution Conf. 17.3, in paragraph 6, calls upon UNEP and the CITES Secretariat to waive the 13 per cent programme support costs. In its comments on the working document (see document [CoP17 Doc. 8](#)) presented to CoP17, the Secretariat noted that *In the past the Secretariat has often used extra-budgetary personnel (interns or secondees) to support the SDP and if the Project is given formal status, such additional resources may be needed in future.* Accordingly, and as discussed at the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC74, Lyon, March 2022) (see summary record [SC74SR, item 11.6](#)), the costs of the administration of the Sponsored Delegates Project (e.g. additional support staff) is charged to the Sponsored Delegates Project. In order to clarify this, the Secretariat proposes to amend paragraph 6 of the Resolution as set out in Annex 1 to the present document.
7. In January 2022, the Secretariat issued letters to selected Parties, non-governmental organizations and private bodies to solicit financial support to the Project. At the time of writing (1 June 2022), a total of about USD 336,400 has been received by the CITES Secretariat and approximately USD 190,000 has been pledged from a total of 13 Parties: Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, the European Union, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. On behalf of the sponsored delegates, the Secretariat is grateful for the support by the Parties to the Project.
8. Paragraph 9 of Resolution Conf. 17.3 urges governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private bodies which provide funding for representatives from Parties to participate in CoP meetings, to inform the Secretariat about such funding before the relevant CoP meeting. Similarly, paragraph 10 urges Parties whose delegates benefit from funding from another government, international organizations, non-governmental organizations or private bodies for their participation in a CoP meeting to inform the Secretariat about such funding before the relevant CoP meeting. The Resolution further calls upon the Secretariat to publish this information before the meeting. The Secretariat will provide any information received concerning alternative funding in an information document to increase transparency in the sponsorship of developing country delegates.
9. The Secretariat will also provide an oral update on the contributions received and the Parties provided with sponsorship under the Sponsored Delegates Project at CoP19.

Sponsored Delegates at meetings of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees (Decision 18.12, paragraph b)

10. In the past intersessional period, there has only been one in-person meeting of the three Committees, namely SC74. In line with the Decision, the Secretariat therefore offered financial support to delegates from developing country Parties concerned by an Article-XIII process (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Nigeria) and one Party concerned by the National Ivory Action Plan Process (Cambodia). In total, eight delegates to SC74 were provided with financial support, thanks to generous contributions from Sweden and the reallocation of unspent funds from Canada. The Secretariat notes that the Parties concerned highly appreciated the financial support provided.
11. The Secretariat notes that the administration of the Sponsored Delegates Project represents a significant workload for the Secretariat. This involves, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

- a) receiving pledges from potential donors, finalising the donor agreement with each of them, entering the funds in the financial system, and reporting as per donor requirements;
 - b) receiving requests from interested beneficiaries, cross-checking them against the CoP delegations list and against the advance copy of the letters of credentials, determining their support in accordance with the selection criteria, and issuing confirmation and visa letters as appropriate;
 - c) processing the UN travel request procedure for each delegate, collecting passports and other documentation (e.g., banking information), registering them in the UN financial system, communicating with the delegates to adjust/finalize the travel itinerary, liaising with the travel agency, issuing tickets, troubleshooting problems of the delegates en route, including in relation to COVID-19 vaccine requirements;
 - d) senior staff approving travel requests and any deviation requested: and
 - e) issuing and administering the pay cards at the CoP venue, collecting delegates' tickets and boarding passes to complete the travel process, and processing any reimbursements/reversals of funds as necessary (particularly for cancelled delegates).
12. These tasks will become a heavier burden if the Sponsored Delegates Project is expanded to generally cover the meetings of the Standing Committee and of the Animals and Plants Committees. However, in very specific circumstances, e.g., where a Party is subject to an Article-XIII procedure in the Standing Committee, the Secretariat considers that this heavier administrative burden may be justified.
13. The Secretariat therefore proposes the adoption of a draft decision in Annex 2 to the present document so that, if funding becomes available, support to participate in meetings of the Standing Committee to eligible Parties subject to Article-XIII procedures could be considered in the next intersessional period. The Secretariat notes that the administration costs will be charged against the 13% Project Support Costs that will be levied on the contribution. The Secretariat will continue to monitor the implementation of this decision, if agreed, and report to the Conference of the Parties, including possible recommendations to amend Resolution Conf. 17.3 to permanently provide such support, as appropriate.

Gender mainstreaming

14. The CITES Secretariat considers that it is important to ensure that CITES decision-making processes at all levels include both women and men, including at the level of the CoP. There tends to be a balanced representation of men and women in *CITES* meetings and the Secretariat considers that it is important to acknowledge and maintain this positive aspect of the Convention. The Secretariat therefore proposes a small amendment to the preamble of the Resolution and to paragraphs 8 and 12 as set out in Annex 1 to the present document.
15. The Secretariat will continue to report, at the beginning of the meetings of the CoP, on the results achieved by the Sponsored Delegates Project (amount of funding gathered, donors, beneficiaries, number and gender of the sponsored delegates etc.) as per paragraph 12 of Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project*.

Recommendations

16. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties
- a) adopts the amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.3 as set out in Annex 1 to the present document;
 - b) adopt the draft decision set out in Annex 2; and
 - c) delete Decision 18.12 that has been fully implemented.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 17.3
SPONSORED DELEGATES PROJECT

New text is shown underlined and deleted text as ~~strike through~~:

Preamble, last paragraph:

DESIRING, through its official endorsement by the CITES CoP, to institutionalise, strengthen and promote the Sponsored Delegates Project as developed by the Secretariat, so that it can benefit a maximum number of delegates from developing countries, while ensuring gender balance;

Operational paragraphs

6. CALLS on the Secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme to ~~waive~~ charge any costs of administration of the Sponsored Delegates Project against the 13% programme support costs applied to contributions made to the Sponsored Delegates Project;

....

8. ENCOURAGES Parties from developing countries to contact the Secretariat sufficiently ahead of the CoP in case they wish to benefit from the Sponsored Delegates Project, as well as to make sure that they are represented at CoP meetings by the relevant experts, especially from their CITES scientific and management authorities, while ensuring gender balance;

....

12. INVITES the Secretariat to report, at the beginning of each CoP meeting, on the results achieved by the Sponsored Delegates Project (amount of funding gathered, donors, ~~beneficiaries~~ beneficiary Parties, number and gender of the sponsored delegates, etc.).

DRAFT DECISION ON *SPONSORED DELEGATES PROJECT*

Directed to the Secretariat

19.AA Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) offer to provide financial support for the participation at meetings of the Standing Committee of a maximum of two delegates from each developing country Party subject to an Article-XIII process; and
- b) report on the implementation of paragraph a) and bring any recommendations to the attention of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

**TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS**

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding.

The implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.3 and Decision 19.AA has workload and cost implications as follows:

	Description	Priority	USD
Decision 19 AA	Financial support for the participation in two regular meetings of the Standing Committee of two delegates of five developing country Parties concerned by Article XIII process	Medium	100,000
Res. Conf. 17.3	Financial support for participants at CoP20	High	1,000,000
	Programme Support Costs (13%)		143,000
	TOTAL		1,243,000