

# Conf. 19.1

## Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2023-2025

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RECALLING that the financial amendment to the Convention, adopted in Bonn in 1979, entered into force on 13 April 1987;

ALSO RECALLING Resolution Conf. 18.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2020-2022* adopted at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 2019);

HAVING NOTED the 2019-2021 actual expenditures incurred by the Secretariat (document CoP19 Doc. 7.3);

HAVING REVIEWED the proposed costed programme of work for the triennium 2023-2025, submitted by the Secretariat (document CoP19 Doc. 7.4);

ACKNOWLEDGING the Memorandum of Understanding between the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concerning Secretariat Services to and Support of the Convention, effective 1 September 2011;

NOTING the increase in the number of Parties to the Convention and species listed in its Appendices, as well as the growing level of interest in the Convention and FURTHER NOTING the need for greater assistance to the Parties to achieve more effective implementation, the necessity to provide adequately for implementation of all Decisions and Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties as well as the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* as adopted at the 18th meeting, and the resulting increasing expenditure incurred by and pressures placed on the Secretariat;

RECALLING paragraph 203 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (also known as Rio+ 20) entitled *The future we want*, highlighting the importance of CITES;

FURTHER RECALLING resolution 69/314 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on *Tackling Illicit trafficking in wildlife* recognizing the legal framework provided by and the important role of CITES as well as resolution 68/205, on *World Wildlife Day*, in which the UNGA proclaimed 3 March, the day of the adoption of CITES, as World Wildlife Day, and designated the CITES Secretariat as the facilitator for the global observance of this special day for wildlife on the UN calendar;

RECOGNIZING the value of and expressed need for enhanced financing for CITES implementation to assist Parties in more effectively meeting the objectives of the Convention;

REITERATING the *CITES Strategic Vision* and stressing the importance of full and effective implementation of CITES as a means of strengthening the Convention's contribution towards achieving the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets and any relevant goals and targets that are to be agreed as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING the contribution that the full and effective implementation of CITES can make towards achieving relevant Goals and Targets adopted by the UN General Assembly through the Sustainable Development Goals;

NOTING that Decisions of the Parties directed to the Secretariat have an impact on the operation and expenditures incurred by the Secretariat;

WELCOMING the adoption by the UN Environment Assembly of resolution 2/18 on relationship between the UNEP and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements for which it provides Secretariat;

TAKING NOTE of General Assembly resolution 60/283, on *Investing in the United Nations for a stronger organization worldwide*, by which the Assembly approved the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) by the United Nations; and

RECOGNIZING that the International Public Sector Accounting Standards require that full provision be made for doubtful debt in respect of debt for which there is more than four years of non-payment of contributions and that proportionate provision be made for recent non-payment of contributions and that, as a result, an amount, estimated at USD 631,595, will have to be deducted from the end 2021 fund balance of the Convention to cover doubtful debt and cannot be used for the benefit of all Parties during the triennium 2023-2025;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. EXPRESSES its appreciation to the Government of Switzerland as the Host Country for its support to the Secretariat, and NOTES its response to the invitation extended to it through Resolution Conf. 18.1 by providing enhanced support to the CITES Secretariat;
2. ACCEPTS and APPROVES the report of expenditures against the costed programme of work for the years 2019 and 2020, as endorsed by the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting in Lyon, March 2022;
3. ACCEPTS and APPROVES the report of expenditures against the costed programme of work for the year 2021;
4. APPROVES the use of USD 300,000 from the accumulated registration fee for observers and international visitors for the triennium 2023-2025 as was done in the last triennium;
5. TAKES NOTE of the evaluation of central administrative costs following the adoption of Umoja, in particular, the classification into core (indirect) and common (direct) administrative costs to be interpreted and applied in the new context;
6. NOTES that the outstanding invoices from UN Office at Geneva (UNOG) for administrative services provide for the period 2018-2021 amounting to USD 232,309 has been settled by UNEP Executive Director from the CITES unspent programme support fund balance at the closure of the financial year 2021;
7. DIRECTS the Secretariat to make payments for common (direct) costs to UNOG for administrative services provide and for Umoja charges during the triennium 2023-2025 from its portion of the programme support fund balance and to propose any necessary amendments to those policies for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
8. REQUESTS that UNEP provides in its report to the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee any update to UNEP's current policy that restricts carrying forward positive balances at closure of biennial financial period to the detriment of MEAs and update the Committee on the new programme support cost allocation and usage policy;
9. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue to use the format of the costed programme of work and the budgetary presentations for the triennium 2020-2022, as introduced by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Standing Committee, on the recommendation of its Finance and Budget Subcommittee, at its 62nd meeting, and to make any necessary adjustments, as needed, in line with the implementation of Umoja;
10. NOTES with appreciation the three budget proposals submitted by the Secretariat for the triennium 2023-2025 budget period and REQUESTS the Secretary-General to prepare budget proposals in the same format for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting, including, as a minimum, a zero nominal growth budget scenario<sup>1</sup> and a zero real growth budget scenario and, in consultation with the Standing Committee, if necessary, a third scenario;

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<sup>1</sup> A zero nominal growth budget scenario to be prepared at the same level as in 2023-2025 and a zero real growth budget scenario to be prepared by not adding new activities as compared to 2023-2025.

11. REQUESTS the Executive Director of UNEP, in consultation with the Standing Committee, to increase financial transparency by providing the following supplementary financial information in all future financial statements and budget requests:
  - a) categorization of income utilizing the following categories: Regular Resources, Other Resources and Cost Recovery in the Trust Fund budget (CTL);
  - b) to the greatest extent possible, the harmonized format, methodology, and terminology adopted by the UN Funds and Programmes; and
12. REQUESTS the Secretariat, as a means to further enhance efforts to foster transparency and accountability,
  - a) to identify, realize and report on cost savings from efficiency measures implemented by the Secretariat and provide indicative projections on potential efficiency gains for the next triennium; and
  - b) to maintain a section on the website of the Secretariat to publish or provide links to up-to-date information relevant to the governance of the Convention, including, *inter alia*, completed and accepted audit reports, applicable financial rules and regulations, and any other relevant budgetary and financial information;
13. DECIDES that the implementation of the costed programme of work for the triennium 2023-2025, Annex 1, shall be covered by the Trust Fund budget (CTL), Annexes 2 and 3, in the amounts of USD 6,345,108 for 2023, USD 6,443,302 for 2024 and USD 7,051,055 for 2025 and by the Support to CITES Activities Trust Fund (QTL), Annex 3, and ADOPTS the scale of contributions for 2023-2025 as contained in Annex 5;
14. AGREES to continue to fund two temporary positions for the period 2023-2025 – one Programme Management Officer (Marine Species), P-2 and one Research Assistant, (GS) funded through the Trust Fund (CTL) accumulated surplus (fund balance) and to be further reviewed at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
15. DECIDES that the Secretary-General, subject to the approval of the Standing Committee, and in urgent cases with the approval of the Chair of the Standing Committee alone, shall have the authority to use funds from the Trust Fund (CTL) accumulated surplus (fund balance) for the years 2023-2025 to cover any shortfall for staff salary costs funded from the core budget as UN standard salary costs for Geneva are not used for the triennium;
16. REQUESTS the Secretariat to carefully monitor exchange rate fluctuations and adjust levels of expenditure, where necessary; and DECIDES that the Secretariat, as a last resort, can request the Standing Committee to draw down from the Trust Fund Balance on an exceptional basis;
17. REQUESTS the Secretariat to maintain a working capital cash reserve of 15 % of the average annual budget to ensure financial liquidity and AUTHORIZES the Secretariat, with the approval of the Standing Committee, to draw additional funds from the CITES Trust Fund balance at the end of each year, including funds to cover any shortfall should the UN standard salary costs used to develop the budgets for 2023-2025 prove to be underestimated, provided that it is not reduced below the working capital reserve specified above;
18. TAKES NOTE of the funding estimates of the Trust Fund on Support to CITES Activities (QTL) for the 2023-2025 budget period and URGES the Secretariat, where activities that are to be externally funded are concerned, to seek funds, preferably non-earmarked, for the implementation of activities identified in the costed programme of work;
19. ENCOURAGES the Secretariat to increase its efforts to strengthen its capacity building activities, including by conducting at least one training workshop for CITES Management Authorities/Scientific Authorities and Enforcement entities per region, upon request, between the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, intersessionally, depending on availability of resources;
20. APPROVES the Terms of Reference for the Administration of the Trust Fund, in Annex 6, for the budget period beginning on 1 January 2023 and ending on 31 December 2025;

21. INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee to continue to review the Terms of Reference for the Administration of the Trust Fund and make proposals for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties for any necessary changes;
22. DECIDES that:
  - a) contributions to the Trust Fund (CTL) are based on the most recent United Nations scale of assessment<sup>2</sup>, as amended periodically and adjusted to take account of the fact that not all members of the United Nations are party to the Convention;
  - b) any other basis of calculation of contributions shall not be used without the consent of all Parties present and voting at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
  - c) any change in the basic scale of contributions that would increase the expected contribution of a Party does not apply to that Party without its consent, and that any proposal to change the basic scale of contributions from that currently in use shall only be considered by the Conference of the Parties if notice of such proposal has been communicated by the Secretariat to all Parties at least 150 days before the meeting;
23. EXPECTS Parties to pay their contributions to the Trust Fund (CTL) in a timely manner and in accordance with the basic scale and ENCOURAGES them to make special contributions to the Trust Funds above their regular contributions whenever possible;
24. REQUESTS all Parties to pay their contributions as far as possible during the year prior to the one to which they relate or, otherwise, promptly by the beginning of the calendar year (1 January to 31 December) to which the contributions apply;
25. NOTES with deep concern that a number of Parties have pending contributions to the Trust Fund (CTL), thus affecting adversely the implementation of the Convention;
26. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue to monitor Parties that have pending contributions to the Convention by:
  - a) sending reminders twice yearly, with copies to the permanent missions in Geneva; and
  - b) initiating talks with the permanent missions in Geneva of the Parties with pending contributions for three or more years;
27. URGES all Parties with pending contributions to cooperate with the Secretariat in arranging for the payment of their outstanding contributions without delay;
28. INVITES Parties, States not party to the Convention, other governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other entities to contribute to the Trust Fund in Support of CITES Activities (QTL) to ensure the effective implementation of the Decisions and Resolutions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, and the efficient, effective and accountable administrative and financial management support of those activities;
29. DECIDES that the standard participation charge for all observer organizations other than the United Nations and its specialized agencies at meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall remain at a minimum of USD 600 for the first delegate and USD 300 for any additional delegate and that a standard charge is set at USD 100 for international visitors attending such meetings not applicable to host country visitors (except as otherwise decided by the Secretariat as required and following consultation with the Finance and Budget Subcommittee) unless a new standard charged has been determined for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties by the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting, and URGES such organizations to make a greater contribution, if possible, at least to meet their effective costs of participation;
30. FURTHER DECIDES that the standard participation charge for all observer organizations other than the United Nations and its specialized agencies at meetings of the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees shall be set at a minimum of USD 100 for each observer

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<sup>2</sup> *United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/238*

participant (except as otherwise decided by the Secretariat as required and following consultation with the Finance and Budget Subcommittee);

31. REQUESTS the Standing Committee to review possible standard charge fees for observer organizations and international visitors attending electronic meetings of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees;
32. AFFIRMS that:
  - a) all meetings of the Conference of the Parties and all regular meetings of the Standing Committee, the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee should be held in the Host country of the Secretariat unless a candidate host country pays the difference in costs between its proposed venue and the Host country; and
  - b) candidate host country is to sign the Host Country Agreement no later than 60 days after the decision is made by the Conference of the Parties or the Committees and to transfer the host contribution in a timely manner to the Secretariat for its additional costs to hold the meeting outside the host country of the Secretariat; and
  - c) no more than two regular meetings each of the Standing Committee, and the Animals and Plants Committees should be convened between regular meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
33. DIRECTS the Secretariat to make provision for the payment, if requested, of reasonable and justifiable travel expenses of members, including attendance at the relevant committee meetings, and other expenses of the Chairs of the Standing Committee, the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee, other than members from developed countries;
34. INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee to keep under review the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Standing Committee and the Executive Director of UNEP concerning Secretariat Services to and Support of the Convention;
35. REQUESTS the Secretariat:
  - a) to make provisions for all the costs the Secretariat incurs, including costs associated with the hiring of temporary staff and consultants, when seeking funds for the implementation of externally funded projects;
  - b) to seek the most cost effective translation and interpretation services;
  - c) in consultation with proponent Parties, when necessary, to advise the Conference of the Parties on proposals with budgetary implications, including staff costs; and
  - d) in consultation with the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees, to assign scientific consultants and define terms of reference for specific science-based projects. Such a process should be implemented in a fashion that would not have a negative impact on the budget, but rather effectively utilize the scientific expertise of the Parties which is available to the Secretariat via the Chairs of the technical committees;
36. ENCOURAGES the Secretary-General, in line with UN rules, to use opportunities provided by any upcoming vacancies to explore ways to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat within its assigned budget, including through structural change and report to the next meeting of the Standing Committee on any change implemented;
37. WELCOMES the efforts of the CITES Secretariat to raise Parties' awareness of Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding for GEF-eligible projects relevant for CITES, including species-based projects, and INVITES the Secretariat to continue to closely collaborate with the GEF Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Biodiversity Liaison Group on the issue of gaining access to GEF funding for GEF-eligible projects relevant for CITES;

38. ENCOURAGES Parties, in the revision of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, to integrate CITES objectives and priorities in order to facilitate identification of opportunities for GEF-eligible projects relevant for CITES, including species-based projects;
39. INVITES the GEF Council to note relevant Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in the development of the next *GEF Biodiversity Strategy* consistent with the GEF's mandate and the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* and any relevant goals and targets that are to be agreed as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
40. DECIDES to convey to the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD CoP) the CITES objectives and priorities in support of the Aichi Targets and any relevant goals and targets that are to be agreed as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and INVITES the CBD CoP to take these into account in providing the broad strategic guidance to the GEF;
41. Within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* and any relevant goals and targets that are to be agreed as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, CALLS upon Parties, established financing mechanisms, donors, international organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to provide adequate and timely support for the relevant CITES objectives and priorities;
42. DECIDES that:
  - a) the Secretary-General shall have the authority to make staffing decisions as necessary to implement the priorities of the Parties in accordance with the costed programme of work, provided they are within the overall budget and taken in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Standing Committee and the Executive Director of UNEP concerning Secretariat Services to and Support of the Convention;
  - b) any change in the costed programme of work of the Secretariat deriving from a new Resolution or Decision shall be made only if the source of the necessary additional funds has been identified or if that programme is reprioritized at the time such a Resolution or Decision is adopted by the Conference of the Parties; and
  - c) the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, shall continue to explore a closer working relationship with the GEF to address CITES priorities within the context of its Biodiversity Strategy, and consistent with CITES' and the GEF's mandates;
43. REQUESTS the Executive Director of UNEP, in accordance with the existing Memorandum of Understanding, to have comprehensive audits undertaken on a regular basis by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and to ask for reports on UNEP from the United Nations Board of Auditors on CITES financial performance, and to have the reports submitted as part of the documentation for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, together with the management response; and
44. REPEALS Resolution Conf. 18.1 (Geneva, 2019) – *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2020-2022*, which, however, remains on the record as an indication of the expected levels of annual contributions for Parties that have not paid these amounts.

**Annex 1 – [Costed programme of work of the CITES Secretariat for 2023-2025](#)**

**Annex 2 – [Operational budget under the general CITES Trust Fund \(CTL\)](#)**

**Annex 3 – [Operational budget under the general CITES Trust Fund \(CTL\) in UN Umoja format](#)**

**Annex 4 – [Indicative budget under the Support to CITES activities \(QTL\)](#)**

**Annex 5 – [CITES Trust Fund \(CTL\) scale of assessment for the triennium 2023-2025](#)**

**Annex 6**

**Terms of Reference for the Administration of the Trust Fund (CTL) for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**

1. The Trust Fund for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (hereinafter referred to as the Trust Fund) shall be further continued for a period of three calendar years, which begins on 1 January 2023 and ends on 31 December 2025, to provide financial support for the aims of the Convention.
2. Pursuant to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with the approval of the Governing Council of UNEP and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, shall continue the Trust Fund for the administration of the Convention.
3. The appropriations of the Trust Fund shall be financed from:
  - a) the contributions made by the Parties by reference to the table attached in Annex 5, including contributions from any new Parties which are to be added to the table; and
  - b) a drawdown from the Fund balance upon decision of the Parties.
4. The estimates for each of the calendar years covered by a budget period shall be specified in a costed programme of work and shall be accompanied by such information as may be required by, or on behalf of, the contributors, and such further information as the Executive Director of UNEP may deem useful and advisable.
5. The proposed costed programme of work covering the income and expenditure for each of the calendar years constituting the financial period to which it relates, prepared in United States dollars, including all the necessary information, shall be dispatched by the Secretariat to all Parties at least 150 days before the date fixed for the opening of the next regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
6. The costed programme of work shall be adopted by a three-quarters majority of the Parties present and voting at the regular meeting.
7. In the event that the Executive Director of UNEP expects that there might be a shortfall in resources, over the year as a whole, he shall consult with the Secretary-General of the Convention, who shall seek the advice of the Standing Committee as to its priorities for expenditure.
8. The Secretary-General of the Convention is authorized, to the extent consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, to:
  - a) transfer resources between main activity lines, as reflected in the costed programme of work, Annex 1 to present Resolution, up to a maximum of 10 % over and above the annual amount foreseen in the costed programme of work under any activity line. When any such transfers are made, these shall be reported to the Standing Committee at its following meeting. Any adjustments between main activity lines over and above the 10 % flexibility mentioned above may be made only after they have been agreed by the Standing Committee; and

- b) transfer resources between financial years within the same activity line. Any such transfers may be made only after they have been agreed by the Standing Committee.

However, all adjustments to the costed programme of work will be made within the overall level of the approved triennial budget.

9. Commitments against the resources of the Trust Fund may be made only if they are covered by the expected income of the Convention.
10. All contributions shall be paid in any convertible currency. The amount of any payment, however, shall be equal to the amount payable in United States dollars on the day the contribution is made. Contributions from States that become Parties after the beginning of the financial period should be made on a pro-rata basis for the balance of the financial period.
11. At the end of each calendar year, the Executive Director of UNEP shall submit to the Parties the accounts for the year. He shall also submit, as soon as practicable, the audited accounts for the financial period.
12. The Secretary-General of the Convention shall provide the Standing Committee with an estimate of proposed expenditure over the coming calendar year simultaneously with, or as soon as possible after, distribution of the accounts and reports referred to in the preceding paragraph.
13. The general procedures governing the operations of the Fund of UNEP and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations shall govern the financial operations of the Trust Funds for the Convention.
14. These Terms of Reference shall be effective for the financial period of 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025, subject to amendments at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.