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

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

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNEP
ON ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

This document has been submitted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted to the nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (the Convention), pursuant to the memorandum of understanding between the Standing Committee of the Convention and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concerning secretariat services to and in support of the Convention. It has been prepared by UNEP and submitted to the Convention Secretariat under item 7.2 of the provisional agenda (Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on administrative and other matters).

2. The report provides an update on the programmatic, administrative and financial management support provided by UNEP following the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. As such, the report covers the reporting period between August 2019 – May 2022.

Programmatic support and other areas of cooperation

3. Pursuant to resolution 2/5 of the UN Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP is setting the stage for a more coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and providing links to other global environmental goals and strategies through the medium-term strategy for 2022–2025 and the programme of work for the biennium 2022–2023.[1] The climate action, nature action, science-policy and environmental governance subprogrammes are closely aligned with the priorities of the environmental issues of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other biodiversity-related conventions. Sustainable Development Goals 6, 13, 14, 15 and 17 are at the very heart of the work conducted by UNEP in such cross-cutting areas as poverty reduction, food, water and energy security, employment, gender equality and policy coherence.

I. Tackling wildlife and wider biodiversity loss

A. Pivotal outcomes from the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

4. The resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) took place on 28 February to 2 March 2022 and was hosted by UNEP in a hybrid format. Approximately 3000 participants from UN Member States attended in-person in Nairobi and 1500 online. The session concluded with the adoption of 14 resolutions and 4 decisions by the UN Environment Assembly.[2] UNEA 5.2 was followed by UNEP@50, which was a special session of the 6th UN Environment Assembly, held on 3 to 4 March 2022. The purpose of the two-day session was to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of UNEP. One of the most important outcomes emerging from UNEA 5.2 was resolution 5/14 entitled "End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument" which requested the Executive Director of UNEP to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee with the aim of developing an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

5. Further, in response to the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 which called for the harmonious co-existence of humans and nature in which wildlife and other living species are protected, a resolution on Animal Welfare (5/1) was adopted during UNEA 5.2. The resolution highlights how the exploitation and inhumane use of animals has driven the triple environmental crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution. It also emphasizes how this has contributed to the emergence of pandemics such as the Covid-19 pandemic. The resolution therefore calls on Member States to protect animals and their habitats and to meet their welfare requirements. In addition, it outlines how the integration of animal welfare in UNEP's work will benefit the delivery of its Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) and programme of work as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The resolution calls for the UNEP Executive Director to prepare a report on the nexus between animal welfare, the environment and sustainable

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[1] *Available at https://www.unep.org/resources/policy-and-strategy/people-and-planet-unep-strategy-2022-2025*

[2] *UNEA 5.2 report and full list of resolutions and decision is available at https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea-5.2/proceedings-report-ministerial-declaration-resolutions-and-decisions-unea-5.2*

development to present during the sixth session on the UN Environment Assembly.[3]

6.   In line with UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1, resolution 3/4 of the UN Environment Assembly on environment and health, and decisions XIII/6 and 14/4 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, a resolution on Biodiversity and Health (5/6) was adopted during UNEA 5.2. The resolution calls on Member States to reduce health risks associated with trade in live wildlife captured for the purposes of food, captive breeding, medicines and the pet trade, through regulation and sanitary controls. UNEP is called to increase international awareness on the linkages between biodiversity loss and the increase in zoonotic diseases, to support Member States in mitigating the risks posed to human, animal and environmental health, and to carry out a global assessment of the linkages between biodiversity and health.[4]

7.   During the fifth UN Environmental Assembly and UNEP@50 events, four leadership dialogues and two multi-stakeholder dialogues were held. The UNEA 5.2 leadership dialogues brought together stakeholders from across governments, the scientific community, civil society, private sector, the UN system and other international organizations for discussions on how to strengthen action for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of nature, in line with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. For the first time, a dedicated leadership dialogue with the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) was organized as part of the official UNEA programme. It aimed to highlight ways to strengthen coherent and effective implementation of MEAs at both national and international levels. The interlinkages between the various environmental challenges, including between the health of humans, animals and the environment, and the importance of integrated approaches to address these interlinkages, formed a key part of the discussions. The Secretary-General of the CITES took part in the dialogue.

8.   In compliance with CITES resolution Conf. 17.1 and UN General Assembly resolution 68/205 on World Wildlife Day, UNEP celebrated World Wildlife Day on 3 March 2022. This year's World Wildlife Day coincided with the commencement of the UNEP@50 celebrations. The Law Division, through the African Elephant Fund (AEF) Secretariat, organized an exhibit that ran from 28 February to 4 March 2022, to showcase UNEP's work on wildlife conservation during UNEA 5.2 and UNEP@50. The World Wildlife Day 2022 theme, "Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration," was also aligned to the overall UNEA 5 theme of "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals." The exhibit highlighted UNEP's efforts towards addressing wildlife conservation challenges by creating awareness on the work being undertaken by CITES, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the AEF Secretariat which are administered by UNEP. It featured how CITES, CMS and AEF work with Member States to sustainably manage wildlife and restore their habitats in line with national and international laws.

B.   Progress pursuant to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/14 on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products

9.   UNEP continues to provide technical support to the African Union (AU) Commission and the AU Member States in implementing the African Strategy on Illicit Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora. The strategy addresses salient issues arising from CITES COPs including capacity building of national authorities, coordinated approaches to address wildlife issues and the trade thereof, policy on transboundary management of wildlife e.g. in the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier in the shared borders between Botswana and Zimbabwe, and, the development of biodiversity economy framework in partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB), UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). UNEP is further working with Africa-based regional conservation organizations to better coordinate the support provided to countries, such as in preparation for the CITES COP and its key meetings/events.

10.   UNEP's Ecosystems Division is supporting the Secretariat in the preparation of a World Wildlife Trade Report, to be presented at COP 19 (Panama City, November 2022). The report will provide an overview of the scale, trends and patterns of CITES trade at the global and regional levels. The report will also examine the conservation and socio-economic benefits provided by CITES-regulated trade,

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3   *Available at*
     https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39795/ANIMAL%20WELFARE%e2%80%93ENVIRONMENT%e2%80%93S
     USTAINABLE%20DEVELOPMENT%20NEXUS.%20English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

4   *Available at https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39840/BIODIVERSITY%20AND%20HEALTH%20%20-*
     %20English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

links between legal and illegal trade, and the conservation status of highly traded species observers.

C. African Elephant Fund and the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan

11. The African Elephant Fund (AEF) is a multi-donor trust fund which implements the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP). The AEAP was adopted by the African elephant range States in March 2010 in the margins of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES held in Doha, Qatar (CITES COP 15 Inf. 68). The AEF and its Steering Committee (the AEFSC) were established in accordance with Decision 14.79 (COP 15) to support the implementation of the AEAP. The African elephant range States continue to implement the AEAP through projects approved by its Steering Committee and administered by the Secretariat of the AEF, which is hosted by UNEP.

12. The UN Environment Assembly resolution 2/14 on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, requested the Executive Director of the UNEP, among other actions, to continue to collaborate with the Convention and other partners of the international consortium on combating wildlife crime, and with other UN entities, to support Member States in implementing their commitments, including by continuing to support the activities of the African Elephant Action Plan, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

13. By the end of the reporting period (May 2022), forty-eight projects have been completed in the African elephant range States since the inception of the AEF. Though the Covid-19 pandemic caused some delays in project implementation, several projects were completed during the reporting period. Highlights of the projects which had been initiated before the outbreak of the pandemic and were completed by May 2022 include: training of park rangers on antipoaching techniques and use of Spatial, Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) software in Nigeria which has improved enforcement capacity; use of SMART software to accurately estimate elephant populations and establish elephant corridors hence ensuring elephant conservation in the entire landscape in Zimbabwe; development of a SMART curriculum in Zimbabwe and training of key stakeholders on adaptive elephant management and monitoring systems; in Togo, local communities have been trained on the use of technologies for elephant management that also serve as alternative income generation sources thereby reducing human-elephant conflicts; reinforcement of the Dedza Salima Forest boundary in Malawi which has contributed towards restoring elephant habitats; and, in Kenya, training manuals for scenes of crimes and monitoring have been developed and training of lab personnel on analyzing difficult samples and genotyping has been conducted, further improving the country's enforcement capacity. In addition, an inventory of elephants and other large mammals, such as the great apes, has been established in the Gamba Protected Area Complex, Gabon, which is informing conservation strategies in the country; an efficient and reliable communication network, including the establishment of a control room, has been set up in Queen Elizabeth Protected Area in Uganda to support wildlife law enforcement operations; and, in Malawi, a joint workshop on investigating and prosecuting wildlife crime was conducted with law enforcement officers, increasing the enforcement of wildlife laws and prosecution of offenders.

14. In 2020, the AEF Secretariat issued an emergency call for proposals to provide funding to the African elephant range states to address elephant conservation challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic. During its 6th Virtual Meeting, the AEFSC approved a package of nineteen Covid-19 projects, the largest number of projects selected in one call since the initiation of the AEF. The main objective of the projects was to mitigate poaching (objective 1 of the AEAP) and to sustain the progress made in elephant conservation during a time when access to other sources of funding to support these activities was limited. The projects also focus on addressing human-elephant conflicts in close collaboration with the communities and strengthening the enforcement of anti-poaching regulations (objectives 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the AEAP). During the reporting period, five of the Covid-19 projects were completed, while the implementation of nine projects is ongoing. Five others are at various stages of being initiated. The completed projects include a project in Ghana that trained and equipped law enforcement staff to intensify patrol coverage and efficiency leading to an increase in the successful arrests and prosecution of wildlife offenders. In addition, local farms vulnerable to crop raiding by elephants have been mapped and effective deterrent measures implemented to mitigate crop losses and human-elephant conflicts. Similarly, in Kenya, human-elephant conflicts during the Covid-19 period have been reduced through the erection and reinforcement of fencing structures, as well as the establishment of anti-poaching programmes (community-based forest patrols and a network of locally based informants). In Chad, a successful collaring replacement operation on seventeen elephants was conducted contributing towards round the clock monitoring of a total of thirty-nine elephants in Zakouma National Park.

15. It should also be noted that the AEF issued the ninth call for proposals with a deadline of 14 February 2020. A total of eighteen project proposals were received. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these proposals were not evaluated as the package of Covid-19 emergency projects was prioritized for evaluation and implementation. With the majority of the Covid-19 projects completed or ongoing, the AEF Secretariat conducted a pre-screening of the eighteen proposals received and the evaluation process will further continue by the AEFSC.

16. The AEAP is in the process of undergoing review. Several consultative meetings and discussions have been held to gather views and expert opinions on the recommended revisions to the Plan. In 2019, the IUCN and the African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) both provided detailed technical inputs on what should be considered when updating the AEAP. These reports informed part of the discussions of the meeting held with the African elephant range States in November 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya, who also shared their views on the current Plan and proposed changes. The review process was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the process has been reinitiated recently with the goal of finalization and endorsement by the range States in 2022. During the 7th Virtual AEFSC meeting held on 29 September 2021, it was agreed that a consultant will be recruited to support the finalization of the AEAP. The preparation of the terms of reference (ToRs), shortlisting and selection of the consultant is being carried out under the guidance of the AEFSC. Further, the selected consultant will work under the overall supervision of the AEFSC, and with the support of the AEF Secretariat, to complete the revised AEAP for endorsement by the range States.

17. The new AEF Steering Committee (AEFSC) was elected in July 2021 following the expiry of the term served by the previous AEFSC. The current AEFSC will serve for a period of three years (2021 - 2023) as stipulated in the Rules of Procedure. The current sub-regional representatives are Chad (also Chair of the AEFSC), Cameroon (Vice-Chair), Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Niger and Nigeria. Donor members are the European Commission, France, the Netherlands, Belgium (observer) and Germany (observer).

18. The 12th AEFSC Meeting was scheduled to be held in Kampala, Uganda on 10 to 13 March 2020. However, the meeting did not take place due to the global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the AEFSC shifted to virtual meetings. Between March 2020 and October 2021, the AEFSC has held four formal (4th, 5th, 6th and 7th) and four informal virtual meetings.

19. The process of reviewing the Terms of Reference (ToRs) and Rules of Procedure (RoPs) of the Steering Committee was initiated in 2018 during the 10th AEFSC Meeting. The revised RoPs were finalized and adopted by the AEFSC during its 7th Virtual Meeting. The ToRs have been revised based on the inputs and comments received from the range States, donors, AEFSC and the AEF Secretariat. The ToRs were circulated to and endorsed by the African range States in January 2022. The revised ToRs[5] and RoPs[6] have been uploaded on the AEF website.

D.   The Great Apes Survival Partnership

20.   The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Secretariat, which is hosted by UNEP's Ecosystems Division, and UNEP-WCMC have developed and launched the Apes Seizure Database. The database is an online reporting system to assist national authorities, civil society and businesses in monitoring and acting upon illegal trade in live great apes, their body parts and bushmeat. The database was launched at CITES COP 17 (Johannesburg, October 2016). The database has been built and historical records from GRASP partners have been uploaded. Now, with new functionalities, partners in the field can supply and upload new data directly. Building on the achievements of the initial phase, the current objective is to expand and enhance the database capacity in illegal trade detection, identification, recording, reporting and enforcement support.

E.   The programme on capacity building related to MEAs in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries phase III (ACP MEAs III)

21.   UNEP is coordinating the implementation of a partnership programme between the European Commission (EC) and UNEP (ACP MEAs programme), which addresses challenging environmental issues in the African, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) regions. The Programme, now in its third phase, builds national and institutional capacities, processes and infrastructure in the seventy-nine ACP countries to enforce and comply with MEAs, including those related to

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5   Available at *https://www.africanelephantfund.org/en/terms-of-reference*

6   Available at *https://www.africanelephantfund.org/en/rules-of-procedure*

biodiversity, and to improve national legal frameworks, including legislations, and mechanisms, for the effective implementation of CITES. The CITES Secretariat is part of the extended partners of the Programme and will implement activities under the Programme related to the organization of regional preparatory meetings for the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties. It also provides information on developments and activities happening under the convention to other implementing partners in the conduct of their activities.

22. The activities of the Programme are expected to build on the technical assistance and legislative frameworks adopted to date in the ACP region to promote effective enforcement of MEAs including the biodiversity-related conventions to which ACP countries are Parties to. The following paragraphs describe some of the initiatives that have been undertaken during the reporting period, in relation to CITES.

23. In the Caribbean, CARICOM Secretariat in partnership with the CITES Secretariat, held a regional technical workshop in June 2021[7] on e-CITES permit management to support the implementation of CITES in the Caribbean region. The workshop aimed to raise awareness of the potential benefits of automated permitting systems, explore interests of parties in the region towards the implementation of e CITES based solutions, and collect feedback on countries' ability, levels of readiness, challenges and opportunities in the implementation of CITES solutions. Delegates from nine CARICOM Member States attended the workshop including representatives of CITES Management Authorities, technical officers, and focal points of Customs, forestry, fisheries, and environment agencies. The participants learned about the status of the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) projects in the Caribbean context which illustrated the customs and trade automation reforms in the region, and the move to paperless processing with enhanced and integrated operations.

24. Following the awareness building that was undertaken to develop a simplified permit process system that will be compatible with the e-CITES tool to improve customs control of illegal wildlife trade, there is a feasibility study currently ongoing to select one country to implement e-CITES system in the CARICOM region. The expected output of this activity is to ensure that simplified automated permit processes are developed in the target country in order to increase the number of seizures of illegal wildlife resulting from automation of permit processes (CITES Decisions 18.125, 18.127).

25. As the lead agency in helping Member States build legal frameworks for the implementation of relevant MEAs in the Pacific region, SPREP held discussions with CITES Secretariat and Vanuatu on the review and update of the Vanuatu CITES legislation. The review process of Vanuatu national legislation relating to CITES was initiated to enable the implementation of e-CITES in the country through the guidance of the CITES Secretariat. It is expected that by updating its national legislation, this will help the country to smartly control illegal trade in endangered species.

26. National consultations were held in Samoa in October 2021 which resulted in the development of a draft national bill for CITES, which is pending adoption (CITES Decision 18.67, 18.125).

F.   Information sharing and dialogue with UNEP

27. In addition to periodic dialogue and information sharing between the UNEP Executive Director and the Heads of the UNEP-administered MEAs, the Executive Secretaries of the global UNEP-administered MEAs regularly engage with UNEP's Senior Management Team. On a technical level, there are several mechanisms in place to promote regular dialogues between UNEP and the MEAs including the meetings organized through the MEAs Focal Points Network, which offer an opportunity to discuss cooperation among the MEAs and UNEP. In this context, UNEP initiated the Network of MEAs Gender Officers and Focal Points in December 2020 to share gender-related information such as seminars, publication announcements and capacity building opportunities.

28. In April and May 2020, UNEP hosted four virtual MEAs discovery workshops for the UNEP-administered MEAs with a view of collecting inputs for the preparation of UNEP's MTS 2022-25 and engaged the MEAs further in the MTS preparation process.

29. In January 2021, UNEP convened the Bern II Workshop of Biodiversity-Related conventions on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to strengthen cooperation among, and coherent implementation of biodiversity-related conventions. The consultation workshop provided a platform for promoting cooperation within and across MEAs clusters by bringing together the Secretariats of the

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conventions, chairs of their governing bodies, and national focal points from both biodiversity and chemicals and waste clusters, which included CITES. The report[8] of the consultation workshop has been made available as an information document to meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and in particular the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-3), the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (WG2020-3), and the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CBD COP 15).

30. UNEP facilitates the network of Secretariats of MEAs in the context of InforMEA[9], the United Nations Information Portal on MEAs – a one-stop portal for information on MEAs – to help member States and other users access information. In addition to access to over 40 courses on International Law and MEAs, InforMEA provides access to treaty texts, Conference of Parties decisions, national plans and reports, laws, court decisions, and how these relate to the achievement of SDGs. About 70,000 users per month access this Portal, about a third of them coming from government institutions and over 80 percent are satisfied or extremely satisfied with how the information supports them in their work. The rate of satisfaction is even higher for almost 50,000 registered learners on the platform who come from over 190 countries. A CITES introductory course is running on the platform. CITES also collaborates closely with the Initiative in the context of its taxonomy and the associated content management system and hosting.

II. Administrative and financial management support provided to the Convention Secretariat by UNEP

A. UNEP led COVID-19 Pandemic assessment and support

31. In 2020 and 2021, UNEP monitored the impact of Covid-19 on funding and programme delivery ensuring that required administrative support was effectively provided. Consultations between the UNEP Secretariat and the Convention Secretariat reviewed the inflow of contributions, generation of programme support costs as well as expenditure trends, and suggested prudential measures where necessary, to meet programmatic and staff related expenses. The assessment confirmed the importance of maintaining a fund reserve at required levels across core funds as stipulated in UN's financial rules and regulations to guarantee the financial liquidity and integrity of the fund and to compensate for uneven cash flows. UNEP Secretariat is committed to the constant review of reserve levels, taking into consideration the programme of work and budget as approved by parties.

32. Further to the declaration in March 2022 by World Health Organisation (WHO) of the Covid-19 outbreak as a pandemic, business continuity plans were activated globally throughout UNEP. Mechanisms were established to facilitate systematic, transparent communication and adoption of new administrative procedures which were appropriate to a remote working context. Decisions on working arrangements were made based on the guidance of host country as well as guidance issued by UN Headquarters at the Nairobi and New York duty stations. Safety and wellbeing of staff were a priority as well as well as capacities to engage and support parties.

33. This transition has demonstrated capacities of staff to adjust and manage significant change and to acquire new skills. In general, the Secretariat has significantly enhanced its capacity to operate utilizing new technologies and has to a large extent acquired new skills such as planning and administration of virtual and hybrid meetings.

B. Delegation of authority

34. In 2019, the Secretary-General implemented a new delegation of authority framework as part of the management reforms. They largely relate to administrative policies and procedures in the UN covering areas such as budget, property management, human resources and other administrative matters. UNEP has implemented this revised Delegation of Authority Policy Framework for the management and administration (DAPF) for MEA Secretariats. UNEP engaged with all MEA Secretariats to improve understanding on scope and intentions of the revised framework and held inclusive discussions that allowed the revision of the delegation of authority from the UNEP Executive Director to the heads of all UNEP administered MEAs. The new DAPF for MEA Secretariats was accepted by CITES Secretariat on 11 October 2021. This was critical to ensure CITES adheres to best practices within the UN.

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8   Available at https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/35906/Bern2rep21.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

9   More information available at https://www.informea.org/en

C. Financial advisory unit for the multilateral environmental agreements

35. In the last few years, the UN including UNEP has made significant efforts to increase efficiency and transparency around various administrative matters. It is appreciated that the MEA Secretariats are relatively small and need to be supported on other administrative issues that go beyond their approved programmes of work which is their primary focus. In this regard, the Executive Director decided to provide extra administrative coordination to the Secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements through the establishment of a dedicated unit within the Corporate Services Division and under the supervision of its Director. This unit was established in 2018. Support provided by the unit includes budget administration, audit coordination and risk management, backstopping of administrative staff, UMOJA training support and treasury functions for multilateral funds.

D. United Nations system-wide enterprise resource planning system (Umoja)

36. Umoja is the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool that was first implemented in 2015 to process all administrative transactions within a common platform for the entire United Nations Secretariat. Umoja has since been rolled out in phases, with the Implementing Partner module being rolled out in 2018. This module enhances transparency, accountability and cost analysis in the selection of partners with whom the United Nations Secretariat engages with to execute its mandate while complying with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) adopted by UN Secretariat in 2014.

37. Beginning in 2021, additional modules have been rolled out to complete the implementation of Umoja as a one-stop solution for all administrative processes. These modules, which are collectively known as the Integrated Planning and Management Reporting (IPMR), include; (a) budgeting tool; (b) programmatic view that incorporates Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Gender markers; (c) Management tools that measure and record performance as well as highlight any existing funding gaps and finally; and, (d) Dashboards that present visualization tools of captured data for reporting purposes. UNEP will continue to engage the Convention Secretariat to ensure adequate representation, training and incorporation of its requirements resulting in a successful implementation.

38. Implementation of the full suite of Umoja brings efficiencies and transparency to the organization through the integration of processes across different functional silos. Umoja, which means "Unity" in Swahili, was requested by Member States to provide a harmonized and real-time approach to the United Nations Secretariat's management of finances, human resources and assets. As would be expected with the development of ERPs, implementation of Umoja has its associated costs that includes a license fee.

39. Prior to 2020, Umoja license fee was funded from UN Secretariat resources. This platform is comprehensive and in most recent phases has included programme modules, which facilitate improved monitoring capacities as well as efficiencies in engaging with implementing partners. However, in recent years, there has been a substantial increase of the Umoja license fees that are settled by respective MEAs as all other UN entities within the UN Secretariat. This increase in the license fee for the years 2020 and 2021 was significantly higher than previous years due to the new cost distribution methodology implemented by the United Nations Secretariat, which is now based on the number of registered users per entity. These costs are considered as direct costs to the implementation of programmes thus, allowing better allocation of costs as required by IPSAS.

E. Programme support costs

40. With the introduction of IPSAS and Umoja, there has been enhanced transparency in the selection and monitoring of implementing partners across the UN Secretariat. Prior to Umoja implementation, each entity maintained its own database of implementing partners and there was no system in place to cross reference suitability of the partners. Umoja allows all entities to view the performance and track record of partners prior to selection. Report generation including dashboards is now real-time and incorporates data across all the entities within the Secretariat. These benefits to the management reforms over the years come at a cost ranging from more specialized staff within a unit, to software and hardware upgrade costs, to mention a few. Options will continue to be explored to contain this cost category but there may also be a need to consider transitioning some of these costs to the work of the programme budget. UNEP therefore continues to review its existing Programme Support Cost (PSC) policy to determine its adequacy in the sharing and apportionment of programme support resources.

F.   Learning, Development and Gender Parity

41. UNEP is pleased to report that there is equal gender representation in CITES in line with the 2017 UN system wide strategy on gender parity. In relation to learning and development opportunities, UNEP has ensured Convention Secretariat staff are included in general trainings for programme management and leadership. Convention Secretariat staff have registered for mandatory United Nations Leadership Programme, a requirement for D1 and D2 staff and the 360° Leadership Assessment that is hosted by the UN System Staff College at no cost to the Convention Secretariat. CITES staff have also participated in the Executive Management Programme, which is a mandatory requirement for P5 and D1 levels.

G.   Settlement of Contributions

42. The United Nations Secretariat adopted the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in 2014. Umoja implements strict IPSAS-based liquidity management, which requires that cash be available for the settlement of payments. Parties are therefore encouraged to settle their assessed contributions in full early in the year to guarantee continuity of operations under CITES. Those Parties that are in arrears are requested to engage with the Convention Secretariat on settlement modalities.

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

A.   The CITES Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties note the report of the Executive Director of UNEP on administrative matters.

B.   With regards to the resolution on Biodiversity and Health (5/6) adopted during UNEA 5.2, the Secretariat notes that the Executive Director is requested to, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health and other relevant partners, subject to the availability of financial resources, support Member States and members of specialized agencies, upon their request, in assessing the environmental dimension of health and to highlight these matters in the forthcoming One Health joint plan of action. The Secretariat notes that these assessments will be integrated in the work carried out by the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health and could provide information relevant to the work proposed by the Standing Committee relating to the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade* (CoP19 Doc. 23.1). .

C.   The Secretariat suggests in its comments on document CoP19 Doc. 23.1 the adoption of an additional decision directed to UNEP, requesting it to share information from the assessments carried out under the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health with the Secretariat so it can keep Parties informed of developments.

D.   With regards to the delegation of authority and programme support costs, the Secretariat notes the issues raised by the Chair of the Standing Committee in document CoP19 Doc. 9.1.1.

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

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) 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 Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.