

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



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 3-8 February 2025

Administrative and financial matters

REPORT ON PROPOSED BUDGET SCENARIOS FOR 2026-2028

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. The proposed programme of work and budget for the triennium 2026-2028 will be shown in similar format to the one submitted for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19 in Panama, 2022) and will be based on the current structure and activities of the Secretariat. The document should be read in conjunction with the report on financial matters (SC78 Doc. 7) and future arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties (SC78 Doc. 13).
3. The functional budget headings and activities will be maintained with some adjustments to specific activities as deemed required by the Secretariat. The proposed activities will represent a mix representing some new and continuation of the activities implemented in the current triennium and include audit outcomes, lessons learned, and outcomes achieved during the period.
4. The Secretariat will include new posts which will increase the current staffing level, i.e., 23 core- and 3 Programme Support Costs-funded positions. The salary costs will be calculated using actual salary costs incurred during the current triennium. The salary cost will also include the normal annual growth rate of 3 per cent, which is an increase from current triennium's 2 per cent annual growth and will be in line with other Geneva-based Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) administered by UNEP, for staff remuneration which will cover an annual step increase, inflation, and exchange rate fluctuations.

Budgetary proposals

5. As per paragraph 10 of the Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2023-2025*, the Secretariat proposes to present three alternative budgetary scenarios at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20). The three scenarios will include the following key elements:

a) Zero nominal growth:

This scenario will show the operational budget maintained at the current triennium 2023-2025 level in nominal terms, including the current staff level of 26 positions and operating costs. The salary costs will be calculated as described in paragraph 4. The Secretariat will also present a comparison table by calculating the salary costs using the UN standard salary costs for 2025.

b) Zero real growth:

This scenario will maintain the current number of staff and will include an increase in the operating costs based on actual expenditures during the current period 2023-2024 and especially considering the higher costs for organization of governing and scientific committee's meetings, i.e. higher venue costs for meetings in Geneva despite being subsidized by Switzerland, costs for the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and private security services, medical support, and higher daily subsistence allowance (DSA) in Geneva for sponsored members.

c) Incremental growth or Secretary-General's proposal:

This scenario reflects the Secretary-General's assessment of the requirements for the coming triennium 2026-2028 and builds on the zero real growth and new core-resources related to:

- Future arrangements for CoP meetings by including staggered funding to increase current budget line related to "*Logistics for CoP*".
- Resources for communication and outreach activities in promoting the Convention.
- Maintenance of CITES Illegal Trade Database.
- New posts as follows:
  - 1 P-3 for Science Unit supporting scientific work.
  - 1 P-3 for Legal Unit supporting compliance assistance.
  - 1 P-2 for Outreach and Projects Unit supporting outreach and communication activities.

Furthermore, this scenario will also propose to regularize the two (2) encumbered posts, 1 P-2 and one General Service, currently funded from the fund balance as agreed upon at CoP18 and CoP19 meetings and already reflected in the overall staff level of 26 positions.

6. The above proposed budgetary scenarios will include staff and non-staff costs proposed to be funded from the respective Trust Fund (CTL) and External Trust Fund (QTL) of the Secretariat.
7. The assessed annual contributions for Parties will be based on the new United Nations scale of assessment for the period 2025-2027 as expected to be adopted by the 79<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly in late December 2024.
8. As per paragraph 23 of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties to CITES and the UNEP Executive Director, the Secretariat will share the draft budget scenarios with the Executive Director for "review and comments in respect of any matters of direct relevance to the role and functions of the Executive Director before the final proposed budget is submitted by the Secretary-General for consideration by the Conference of the Parties".
9. The three budgetary scenarios for the proposed programme of work and budget for the triennium 2026-2028 will be posted in the official languages of the Convention 150 days prior to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Recommendations

10. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) consider this report; and
  - b) provide feedback to the Secretariat on the proposed budget scenarios and the preparation for the budgetary discussions during the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2025.