

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



Meeting of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee of the Standing Committee
(online meeting on 15 October 2020)

REPORT FOR THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE'S FBSC

The Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC) of the Standing Committee met for an online meeting on 15 October 2020 for one hour. The present report contains the minutes of the meeting and the recommendations of the Subcommittee for consideration by the Standing Committee.

The Administrative and Fund Management Officer was assisting the meeting of FBSC.

Representatives of all regions were present.

1. Welcome remarks by the CITES Secretary-General

The CITES Secretary-General welcomed the representatives of the FBSC at this first online meeting and thanked them for their commitment to CITES and for helping the Secretariat move forward with the Convention's programme of work.

2. Update of members to FBSC for the period 2020-2021

FBSC members introduced themselves. The FBSC noted the presence of Honduras and Peru, members of the Standing Committee, pending an official nomination from the region of Central and South America and the Caribbean. The FBSC further noted that Christine Dawson (USA) should be added as a contact person for the North American region.

3. Appointment of an interim Chair of the FBSC

The Secretariat noted that the FBSC Chair is normally elected by its members during the first intersessional meeting of the Standing Committee. It has however been unable to do so because of the postponement of the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee. With the Standing Committee Chair's approval, the Depositary Government was approached to act as interim Chair of the FBSC.

Representatives of North America (United States of America) and Oceania (New Zealand) supported the nomination of the Depositary Government (Switzerland) as interim Chair. The representative of the Depositary Government accepted to take on the role of FBSC Chair only until the next regular session of the Standing Committee where the FBSC will elect its Chair.

The FBSC agreed that the Depositary Government (Martin Krebs, Switzerland) would act as its interim Chair until the next regular meeting of the Standing Committee.

4. Projections for full year 2020 as at 30 September 2020 and possible savings for the year

After presenting projections for the full year 2020 for the Core Trust Fund, the Secretariat proposed that the FBSC consider the transfer of savings of USD 280,704 related to 2020 AC, PC and SC meetings to the same budget line in 2021.

The representative of Oceania (New Zealand) asked what would happen to these resources if the Secretariat is unable to organize meetings in 2021. The Secretariat clarified that if the proposed meetings were not held in 2021, the savings would be added to the existing fund balance at the end of 2021. In response to a query

from the representative of North America (United States of America), the Secretariat further confirmed that the minimum required reserves of the Core Trust Fund would be maintained at 15%. Out of the projected savings of USD 415,800, the meetings component (USD 280,704) would be transferred for the organization of meetings in 2021 and the projected remaining balance of USD 135,096 would be added to the trust fund balance at the end of 2020.

The FBSC recommended that the Standing Committee:

- a) take note of the financial report for 2020 as at 30 September for the Core Trust Fund (CTL) and projected savings for the year 2020; and
- b) approve the transfer of resources in the amount of USD 280,700 from 2020 related to AC, PC and SC meetings for possible organization of these meetings during 2021, on a one-time exceptional basis, from the expected 2020 savings under the meeting related components.

5. Inclusion of terms of reference of Finance and Budget Subcommittee in an Annex to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees*

After a presentation by the Secretariat of the advantages and disadvantages of including the terms of reference of the FBSC as an Annex to Resolution Conf. 18.2, the representative of North America (United States of America) noted that the terms of reference were already available online. She added that including them could also constrain Parties, as it would only allow amendments to the terms of reference every three years during meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The representative of the Depositary Government (Switzerland) expressed doubts about the urgency of the matter and noted that Resolution Conf. 18.2 directs the Standing Committee to establish a Finance and Budget Subcommittee and specify its terms of reference implying that the terms of reference should be adopted by the Standing Committee and not by the Conference of the Parties. Peru said it needed more time to consult its region on this issue.

The FBSC concluded that it did not see the need to include the terms of reference of Finance and Budget Subcommittee in an Annex to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees* and recommended that the Standing Committee defer the matter.

6. Nomination from the FBSC to the Standing Committee's working group on capacity-building

As directed in Decision 18.41, the FBSC discussed which FBSC member would represent the Subcommittee in the Standing Committee's working group on capacity-building. The representative of Oceania (New Zealand), Chair of the working group on capacity-building, highlighted the need to nominate a member since a complete membership was necessary to allow the working group to move forward with its work. The representative of the Depositary Government (Switzerland) recalled the need for a fair and balanced regional representation in the working groups, noting that Europe and Africa would probably need to increase their participation in the working group on capacity-building. The representative of Asia (Kuwait) noted that it was already a member of that working group. After a discussion between the two representatives of Africa, Namibia, as member of the Standing Committee, agreed to join the working group.

The FBSC nominated Namibia (Ms. Elly Hamunyela) to represent the Subcommittee in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on capacity-building.

7. Coming review by FBSC as per information to SC members

The Secretariat reminded the FBSC of items that would need to be considered at a later stage at the request of the Standing Committee, namely the language strategy, the consultation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) about programme support costs and the guidelines on the reimbursement of communication costs for virtual meetings for meeting participants.

8. Any other business

There was no other business. The representatives of Europe, of Oceania and of the Depositary Government (Switzerland), along with Peru, thanked the Secretariat for its support and the meeting was closed by the Acting Chair.