

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



Seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee
Rosa Khutor, Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018

Administrative and financial matters

Administrative matters

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
ON ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

This document has been prepared and submitted by the United Nations Environment Programme.*

Introduction

The present report is submitted to the seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (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 concerning secretariat services to and support of the Convention. The report summarizes information on the administrative and financial management support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme to and in support of the Convention since the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee.

Administrative and financial management support provided to the Convention Secretariat by the United Nations Environment Programme

A. Delegation of Authority

Following the departure of the Secretary-General responsible for managing the Secretariat of the Convention, the Officer-in-Charge has been issued with an interim delegation of authority on 6 April 2018, in accordance with the Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework adopted on 1 November 2016.

B. Standardized guidelines and procedures for financial matters

The United Nations Environment Programme continues to prepare new or enhance existing standardized guidelines and procedures for financial and administrative matters in order to continuously improve internal processes with a view to making them more efficient, streamlined and transparent. With the finalization and distribution, on 29 March 2018, of the suite of secretariat services provided to multilateral environmental agreements, the United Nations Environment Programme has fully implemented the resolution 2/18 on "Relationships between the United Nations Environment Programme and Multilateral Environmental Agreements for which it provides the secretariat", adopted by the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in May 2016.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

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

The United Nations Secretariat is working towards the deployment of new modules to enhance its Enterprise Resource Management System, Umoja, which was launched in June 2015. With the introduction of new modules, strategic planning, programme and project management, resource mobilization and implementing partners management will be standardized and integrated within the same system. The United Nations Environment Programme will continue to engage the Secretariat of the Convention to achieve a successful implementation of the extension of the system. The new modules will be rolled out in a phased manner over a period of 1 year beginning September 2018. The United Nations Environment Programme continues to organize knowledge sharing sessions to build its staff's capacity to further optimize the use of the system and provide support to resolve technical issues and, where necessary, escalates problems to the United Nations Secretariat for problem solving.

On 31 March 2018, the Executive Director signed the annual financial statements for the United Nations Environment Programme for the financial year ended 31 December 2017, of which the Convention forms part of the Conventions and Protocols segment. The United Nations Board of Auditors performed an audit of the statements and underlying transactions and did not raise any matters that required adjustment to the financial statements. The draft report from the Auditors dated 2 July 2018 provided a clean audit opinion. The final report is expected later during the year and relevant matters of concern, if any, will be brought to the attention of the Head of the Convention Secretariat.

D. Support provided to the Convention from programme support resources

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/217 and the United Nations procedures stipulated in ST/AI/286, programme support costs at a standard rate of 13 per cent is charged to all extrabudgetary resources¹ to recover the incremental costs incurred when supporting activities financed through such resources. The amount of programme support resources available in any given year is based on the income generated for that purpose in the previous year. In line with the United Nations Environment Programme's procedures on management of programme support resources, an agreed portion of the income generated by the multilateral environmental agreements is allocated² to the Convention and the balance contributes to the pool that funds central administrative functions and any unforeseen financial liability.

The United Nations Environment Programme closely monitors its programme support resources, whose fund balance has reduced in the last few years due to increasing requests from donors to waive or reduce the programme support rate chargeable. In order to reverse this trend, on 26 April 2018, the Executive Director issued a memorandum to the Heads of all Offices requesting them to re-consider their requests for waivers, review their cost structures and closely monitor utilization of their programme resources.

All Convention trust funds continue to be administered by the Executive Director and have been extended to 31 December 2019.

¹ For the United Nations Environment Programme, the term "extrabudgetary resources" refers to trust funds as distinct from core budgetary resources, namely the Environment Fund.

² As in previous years, the posts of three administrative staff members directly assigned to the Convention secretariat have been funded from programme support costs which include: Administrative and Financial Management Officer (P4), an Administrative Assistant (G6) and a Finance Assistant (G6).