

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

Arrangements for the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18)

SPONSORED DELEGATES PROJECT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project*, which established the Sponsored Delegates project as a means to support the travel cost of delegates from developing countries to attend the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. In paragraph 7 of Resolution Conf. 17.3, the Conference of the Parties

*CALLS on the Secretariat to administer the Sponsored Delegates Project and to widely and proactively disseminate information about the Sponsored Delegates Project to all CITES Parties at least one year before each meeting of the CoP, with the aim to raise sufficient external funds among donors and inform developing countries about the existence of this Project and the modalities to apply for it.*

3. Parties also adopted Decision 17.17 on *Sponsored Delegates Project* at CoP17:

**17.17 Decision directed to Standing Committee**

*With respect to the sponsored delegates project established in Resolution Conf. 17.3, the Standing Committee shall consider:*

- a) *The criteria used to select Parties for sponsorship; and*
- b) *The practical arrangements for the provision of support.*

*If possible, it should provide guidance to the Secretariat at its 70th meeting, and it shall report its conclusions and any recommendations to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Report on the progress of the Sponsored Delegates Project

4. A dedicated webpage on the Sponsored Delegates Project<sup>1</sup> on the CITES website was published in February 2018 to widely and proactively disseminate information about the Sponsored Delegates Project to CITES stakeholders. The page contains the relevant text of the Convention, Resolutions and Decisions, Notifications, current funding status, and other information on past Sponsored Delegates Projects.

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://cites.org/eng/disc/sponsored\\_delegates\\_project](https://cites.org/eng/disc/sponsored_delegates_project).

5. In addition, [Notification No. 2018/024](#) on *Sponsored Delegates Project* was issued on 5 March 2018 to inform Parties about the launch of the Project, and to request submission for financial support to CoP18. The application deadline for support is 31 December 2018.
6. At the time of writing (early August 2018), the European Union has deposited financial support of a total of USD 150,000 to the Sponsored Delegates Project. A pledge from the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of USD 91,394 has also been confirmed, and is awaiting deposit. Other confirmed pledges and deposits, if any, will be announced in the oral intervention at the present meeting.
7. In August 2018, the Secretariat communicated to potential donors (Parties, organizations, and private bodies) with the aim to raise further funds. This exercise will be repeated again after the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee, in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Implementation of Decision 17.17 a): criteria used to select Parties for sponsorship

8. To assist the Standing Committee in considering the criteria used to select Parties for sponsorship and the practical arrangements for the provision of support, Secretariat queried other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to collect information on existing practices. Responses were received from the Secretariats of the following MEAs: Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resource for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The details can be found in Annex 1 to this document.
9. Below is a summary of the current practice of other MEAs for providing financial support to Parties for attending their meetings of the Conference of the Parties, or its equivalent:

MEA	Criteria used for CoPs
<b>CITES</b>	Based on the four categories of the <u>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index</u> Priority given to <u>Small Island Developing States (SIDS)</u>
<b>BRS</b>	Parties that are not members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or the European Union or small Western European countries.
<b>CBD</b>	Least Developing Countries(LDC)/SIDS, countries with Economy in Transition; and other developing countries based on the classification of UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), with priority to LDC/SIDS.
<b>CMS</b>	Threshold of 0.200 per cent on the UN scale of assessment, excluding countries from the European Union, other European countries with developed economies and countries that have payments in arrears of three years or more.
<b>ITPGRFA</b>	All Parties with nomination of the Government for funding
<b>Ramsar<sup>2</sup></b>	OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of Overseas Development Assistance Recipients
<b>UNFCCC<sup>3</sup></b>	GDP per head based on UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 2011 statistics Two different ceilings used as thresholds (for all Parties and for SIDS/Bureau members)

10. From the above table, it is clear that there is no common index/scale used as the basis for determining the priority of Parties to be supported. In fact, all seven MEAs surveyed used different base scales. The Secretariat therefore does not see a strong reason for changing its current practice of using the UNDP Human Development Index as the base scale.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc51\\_20\\_fundraising\\_efforts\\_cop12\\_delegates\\_e.pdf](https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc51_20_fundraising_efforts_cop12_delegates_e.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://unfccc.int/files/secretariat/budget/funding\\_at\\_the\\_unfccc/application/pdf/trust\\_fund\\_for\\_participation\\_in\\_the\\_unfccc\\_process.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/secretariat/budget/funding_at_the_unfccc/application/pdf/trust_fund_for_participation_in_the_unfccc_process.pdf)

11. There are, however, some additional criteria that may be worth considering:
  - a) giving priority to Small Island Developing States (SIDS): employed by CITES, CBD, UNFCCC;
  - b) giving priority to Least Developed Countries (LDCs<sup>4</sup>): employed by CBD, Ramsar<sup>5</sup>;
  - c) excluding Parties from the European Union and other selected European countries: employed by BRS and CMS (“small Western European countries” for BRS, “European countries with developed economies” for CMS); and
  - d) giving priority to Parties with fewer than six delegates at the previous CoP: considered by CITES in the past, but not in current practice.
12. The Standing Committee may therefore wish to consider whether some or all of the above criteria should be used in addition to the UNDP Human Development Index.

Implementation of Decision 17.17 b): *practical arrangements for the provision of support*

13. The current practice for the practical arrangements are as follows. Detailed timeline of the processes can also be found in Annex 2 of this document.
  - a) Eligible Parties should send the request for support and the nomination of delegates to the Secretariat ideally by 31 December 2018.
  - b) Donors should make the cash deposit of the pledged funds by early 2019 for it to be useable.
  - c) By the end of the first quarter of 2019, and depending on the cash deposit made, the Secretariat will prepare a list of delegates to be sponsored and their priority, using the criteria described in paragraph 9 above.
  - d) The travel arrangement process would normally take between one to four weeks, depending on the number of participants that must be processed.
  - e) The delegates receive an electronic ticket of their air travel, along with their Daily Subsistence Allowance charged to a pre-loaded cash card.
  - f) Using the air ticket and the invitation letter (issued separately through the meeting registration system), the delegates must apply for the entry visa to Sri Lanka. This may take two to three weeks, depending on the nationality of the applicant and the location of the nearest Sri Lankan consulate/embassy.
  - g) The delegates will need to arrive in Colombo by 21 May 2019, on the day before the 71st meeting of the Standing Committee.
14. In considering the practical arrangement described above and in Annex 2, the Standing Committee is requested to consider whether and how the following measures may be built into the process:
  - a) Identification of any representative of a Party at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties who is also registered as an observer for a non-governmental organization. This may be done through a declaration by the nominating Party at the support request stage, or a disclosure by non-governmental organizations of any observer who is also representative of a Party. Considering the procedural implications, the former option appears to be more practicable.
  - b) Identification of other sources of funding which is supporting the participation in CoP meetings of representatives from other Parties (for example by covering travel or accommodation costs). Resolution Conf. 17.3 calls for government, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and private bodies which provide such support to inform the Secretariat about such funding, and also calls for Parties that benefited from funding from another source to inform the Secretariat. The timing of the

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<sup>4</sup> At the time of writing (August 2018), there are 47 countries. See <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category.html>

<sup>5</sup> Although Ramsar does not explicitly mention LDCs in the criteria, the OECD DAC of Overseas Development Aid recipients uses LDCs as the priority category.

availability of this information may cause some challenge in taking them into consideration during the selection process of the supported delegates under the Sponsored Delegates Project.

- c) In order to fully participate in the meetings, Party delegates are required to present signed original credentials, together with the list of names of members of the delegation, to the CITES Secretariat at or before the CoP. It would be crucial that delegates receiving support through the Sponsored Delegates Project be fully accredited to participate in the CoP. Parties are normally encouraged to submit a photocopy or a scanned or telefaxed copy of their signed original credentials to the Secretariat at least one week before the opening of the meeting, and it may be possible to include this as one of the extra steps when Parties nominate the delegates under the Sponsored Delegates Project.

#### Other considerations

15. The Secretariat observes that there has been some interest by donors for supporting the participation of developing Party delegates to the meetings of Standing, Animals, and Plants Committees. The Secretariat currently does not have a mechanism to manage such funds and does not in principle provide travel support to delegates for these meetings other than from the Trust Fund to the Committee members who are from developing countries as currently instructed in Resolution Conf. 17.2 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2017-2019*. The Standing Committee may wish to consider whether such support should be formalized, and whether or not the same principles to the Sponsored Delegates Project should be applied for the selection process for the meetings of these committees.

#### Recommendation

16. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to:
  - a) take note of the present document;
  - b) welcome the generous support of donors for the Sponsored Delegates Project, and request governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and private bodies to pledge their financial support;
  - c) consider the criteria used to select Parties for sponsorship described in paragraphs 9 to 12 above, and recommend that the Secretariat continue to apply clear selection criteria and exercise its best judgement in selecting the delegates to be sponsored for the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
  - d) consider the practical arrangements for the provision of support for the Sponsored Delegates Project described in paragraph 13 above and make recommendations to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on whether and how to introduce the mechanisms described in paragraph 14, as well as on any other inputs that may be relevant to take into consideration in the future.

**MEA efforts on funded/sponsored participants to official meetings** (information as at 1 July 2018)

MEA	Meetings	No. of delegate per eligible Party	Funding source	Criteria & other conditions
CITES	a) CoPs b) Meetings of Standing, Animals and Plants Committees	Up to 2 for CoP  Members of SC/AC/PC	Voluntary at every CoP (fundraising needed) SC/AC/PC from the core budget	The selection is based on the four categories of the UNDP Human Development Index, (with priority order starting at the bottom of the lowest development list). For CoP16, the Secretariat recommended the use of the same indicator as the one that will be selected in relation to document SC62 Doc. 11 (on Provision of support for committee members) in order to harmonize the approaches to these support mechanisms.
BRS	COPs and their subsidiary body meetings <sup>6</sup>	1 per Convention for CoPs and BC OEWG Members of eligible Parties for subsidiary body meetings	Voluntary Special Trust Funds <sup>7</sup> for COPs, BC OEWG, and ad hoc subsidiary bodies. Core budget for the standing subsidiary body meetings of the three conventions	Parties from developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are not members of the OECD or the EU or small Western European countries. No representative of any Party whose contributions are in arrears for four or more years, and that has not agreed on or is not respecting a schedule of payments implemented in accordance with paragraph 3(d) of rule 5 of the financial rules, shall be eligible to receive financial support to attend “intersessional workshops or other informal meetings”. <sup>8</sup>
CBD	Bureau meetings COP and intersessional meetings, and some expert meetings	1(tbc)	Core budget for Bureau meetings and some expert meetings (e.g. Informal Advisory Committee) COP and intersessional meetings from Special voluntary Trust Fund (BZL) <sup>9</sup>	Parties eligible are in three categories: LDCs/SIDS; Countries with Economy in Transition; and other developing countries. These categories are based on the classification of UN DESA <sup>10</sup> . Funding from the BZL is allocated in priority to LDC/SIDS.

<sup>6</sup> Includes the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (BC OEWG), and other subsidiary bodies of the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions.

<sup>7</sup> The procedure for allocation of funding from the voluntary Special Trust Funds for facilitating the participation of parties in meetings of the Conference of the Parties and BC OEWG can be found in the BRS Financial Rules (Annex to Decision BC-10/28, Annex to Decision RC-5/1, and Annex to Decision SC-5/2).

<sup>8</sup> See COP decisions SC-8/27 paragraphs 8, BC-13/24 paragraph 9, and RC-8/17 paragraphs 11-12

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-09/cop-09-dec-34-en.pdf> (page 17)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/document\\_gem/global-economic-monitoring-unit/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-wesp-report/](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/document_gem/global-economic-monitoring-unit/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-wesp-report/)

CMS	All meetings that fall under the Secretariat's responsibility as well as those that fall under the Standing Committee and Scientific Council and their Working Groups	1	Core funding for meetings of Scientific Council and Standing Committee; limited core funding for COP	Threshold of eligibility for funding delegates to attend the Convention's meetings at 0.200 per cent on the United Nations scale of assessment and as a general rule, furthermore, to exclude from such eligibility countries from the European Union, other European countries with developed economies and countries that have payments in arrears of three years or more. <sup>11</sup> Requires either an advanced copy of the credentials or a letter from the competent authority to identify who should receive financial support
ITPGRFA	Governing Body and intersessional Committees	Usually 1 delegate per meeting at Governing Body and intersessional meetings	Special Agreed Fund to support the participation of developing countries	For the Governing Body, it requires the nomination of the Government for funding; for the intersessional committees, it follows the agreed nominations.
Ramsar <sup>12</sup>	COP and pre-COP meetings	2 (1 for COP13)	Voluntary budget (fundraising needed at every COP period)	OECD DAC Proposal at SC54 for non-mutually exclusive actions requesting: use of some unspent 2017 balances for delegate travel, and funding for delegate travel be incorporated into an increased core budget.
UNFCCC <sup>13</sup>	Meetings of COP and its subsidiary bodies, intersessional meetings of the Bureau, Bureau participation in consultations or official meetings relating to the UNFCCC process, preparatory meetings of selected negotiating groups <sup>14</sup>	1 for subsidiary body sessions (2 for SIDS & LDCs)  2 for COP (3 for SIDS and LDCs)	Trust Fund for Participation in the UNFCCC Process (established by decision 15/CP.1 of the Conference of the Parties)	GDP per head based on UNCTAD 2011 statistics Two different ceilings used as thresholds (for all Parties and for SIDS/Bureau members)

<sup>11</sup> [http://cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms\\_cop12\\_res.12.2\\_financial-and-administrative\\_matters\\_e.pdf](http://cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms_cop12_res.12.2_financial-and-administrative_matters_e.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc51\\_20\\_fundraising\\_efforts\\_cop12\\_delegates\\_e.pdf](https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc51_20_fundraising_efforts_cop12_delegates_e.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [https://unfccc.int/files/secretariat/budget/funding\\_at\\_the\\_unfccc/application/pdf/trust\\_fund\\_for\\_participation\\_in\\_the\\_unfccc\\_process.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/secretariat/budget/funding_at_the_unfccc/application/pdf/trust_fund_for_participation_in_the_unfccc_process.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> G77 and China, LDCs and SIDS and African Group

**Practical arrangements for the provision of support** [details of Decision 17.17 b)]

