

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 23 May – 3 June 2019

Administrative and financial matters

Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat and  
of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. The present document highlights the administrative performance of the Secretariat since the last Standing Committee meetings (SC69, Geneva, November 2017 and SC70, Sochi, October 2018) and should be read in conjunction with the Secretariat's report on financial matters (see document CoP18 Doc 7.3).

Host country arrangements for the Secretariat

3. Further to the report given at the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee (document SC70 Doc. 9.1), a draft donor agreement for the Convention Support from Switzerland has been shared with the Secretariat. It includes a contribution in the amount of CHF 1 million per year for the period 2019-2022 for activities in the sub-heading items B to E of the programme of work of the Secretariat. The final donor agreement is expected to be signed by early January 2019.
4. The Secretariat held informal consultations with senior Swiss officials and the Secretary-General in Geneva on 14 December 2018 and in Berne on 9 January 2019.

Staffing situation

5. The indicative staffing table for the Secretariat for the period 2017-2019 includes 21 posts funded from the core trust fund (CTL), 3.25 posts funded from the Programme Support Cost (PSC) and 9 project posts from the external trust fund (QTL).
6. In line with Resolution Conf. 17.2, paragraph 35, and remaining within the overall staffing budget, the Secretary-General has used her authority to make staffing decisions as required during the period.
7. At the time of preparing this document, one Professional post remains vacant funded from the external trust fund (QTL) with the recruitment status below:

ICWC Support Officer, P-3 with the Enforcement Support Team (EST), the job opening (JO-104052) closed on 21 November 2018 with 329 applicants received which are being reviewed and the interviews are expected to take place in January/February 2019 with an expected finalization date of April/May 2019.

8. Since the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat is pleased to report that the Secretary-General position at D-2 level has been encumbered by Ms. Ivonne Higuero as of 1 December 2018. In addition, the recruitment of the Programme Assistant at General Service level has been completed and the incoming staff member is expected to report to the Secretariat in late February 2019 and the recruitment of the Associate Programme Officer at P-2 level is being finalized and the selected staff member is expected to start in April 2019

9. It should be recognized that the overall staffing resources available to the Secretariat have been declining over the past decades from 26 core funded positions in 2000 down to 24.25 in 2017, while at the same time the number of Parties has continued to grow from 152 in 2000 to 183 in 2017. In addition, the organization of the governing bodies' and scientific committees' meetings have become increasingly demanding, and the number of Resolutions and Decisions adopted at each Conference of the Parties are increasing rapidly as shown in table 1 below as well as the support provided to the 31 intersessional working groups established at SC69.
10. For the triennium 2017-2019, the Secretariat is operating with 95 Resolutions and 265 Decisions adopted at CoP17 in 2016 which has increased its work and reporting burden dramatically.

Table 1 – Decisions directed to the governing bodies, scientific committees and Secretariat since 2010 to 2017

<b>Decisions directed to</b>	<b>CoP15 in 2010</b>	<b>CoP16 in 2013</b>	<b>CoP17 in 2016</b>
Animals Committee	15	19	31
Plants Committee	20	12	26
Standing Committee	30	49	79
Secretariat	61	60	129
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>265</b>

11. The limited staffing resources to the Secretariat coupled with the significant increase in the workload over time continues to place the Secretariat under enormous pressure and is not sustainable in the long term. Notwithstanding, the Secretariat has continued to fulfil its functions through the efforts of highly dedicated and experienced staff members, as well as through obtaining services of short-term project hired staff, interns and secondments.
12. During the period, Parties have continued to provide support and contributions for project-funded positions related to the team of Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) in Nairobi; co-funding of a Marine Species Officer through the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) programme (Germany); a Project Assistant (European Union); project staff in support of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern Ireland); and co-funding of a Project Assistant in support of work related to compliance and law enforcement in Southeast Asia (United States Fish and Wildlife Service).
13. The additional staffing resources approved at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) of one P-2 and one GS posts funded from the core budget have helped the Secretariat to deliver its work; but is still insufficient to meet the new demands by Parties related to compliance matters, e.g. support to Parties, captive-breeding and scientific support requirements.
14. Taking into account the above information on the staffing resources coupled with the high work demand, the Secretariat is therefore proposing an increase in the staffing component funded from the core Trust Fund (CTL) to meet current and new demands by proposing three additional posts; two Professional (P-3 and P-2) and one at General Service level. This proposal is presented in the document CoP18 Doc. 7.4, Annex 4 (incremental growth scenario), for consideration at the present meeting.
15. The Secretariat is grateful to Parties for their contributions to the core trust fund (CTL) and to those donors, the European Union, Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, that have provided additional contributions to employ additional staff resources through the external trust fund (QTL).

Administrative changes introduced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

16. As reported in document SC69 Doc. 9.1 and document SC70 Doc. 9.1, several administrative changes and policies have been developed and introduced since late 2016 as per below details which are shown in chronological order:

- a) UNEP's relations with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) (UNEA resolution 2/18);
  - b) New Delegation of Authority Policy and Framework for the management and administration of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in effect from 1 November 2016;
  - c) Outsourcing of travel service to the UN Office at Geneva (UNOG) in effect from 1 January 2017;
  - d) Introduction of the "User Pays Principle" for the Geneva offices with notification received on 27 January 2017;
  - e) Discontinuation of the Operational Services Centre (OSC) in Geneva as of 1 March 2017;
  - f) New Programme Support Cost allocation policy in effect on 5 May 2017;
  - g) UNEP framework on administrative and support services provided to Secretariats of MEAs and other entities presented on 29 March 2018; and
  - h) Deployment of new modules in Umoja extension 2 related to strategic planning, programme and project management, implementing partners' management, budget formulation and planning tool and resource mobilization being phased out over a period of one year beginning in September 2018.
17. In addition, the United Nations Secretariat is currently considering further improvements in its administrative processes to consolidate fragmented administrative structures provided throughout the UN system. In this regard, the introduction of the Global Service Delivery Module (see document A/72/801) aims to realign the UN Secretariat's administrative structure to better distinguish strategic from operational activities, as well as strategic oversight from administrative service delivery. The new module is being reviewed by General Assembly during its 73rd session.
  18. The Secretariat has continued its consultations with UNEP regarding the new Programme Support Cost allocation policy, User Pays Principles and new UNEP Secretariat services to MEAs to ensure that they are in line with the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the CITES Standing Committee and the Executive Director of UNEP.
  19. Since SC70, a meeting has been held with the newly incoming Director of the Corporate Services Division of UNEP on 14 December 2018 and further are planned so confirmation can be given to Parties that the introduced administrative changes are consistent and in full compliance with the existing MoU.

#### Recommendation

20. The Conference of the Parties is invited to take note of this report.