

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

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**Report to Finance and Budget Subcommittee**

**Administrative and financial matters as at 30 June 2020**

As per the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC) of the CITES Standing Committee, please find below report on administrative and financial report as at 30 June 2020.

**Members of Finance and Budget Subcommittee during 2020-2022**

Since the report as at 31 March 2020, the Secretariat has received amendment to the FBSC members for the North America region and a revised detailed list of members is attached in annex 1.

Questions has been received on the procedure to elect the chairperson of FBSC. As per the Terms of Reference (ToR), the subcommittee will elect the chairperson from among the members of the FBSC (ToR – Mandate – paragraph 1 a) to b)).

**Administrative matters**

**Delegation of Authority**

Further to the information provided in the report as at 31 March 2020, the Secretariat has been working with other UNEP MEA's on providing joint comments and questions on the draft new delegation policy and framework which was communicated to UNEP at the end of April 2020.

At the time of preparing this report, no feedback on the provided inputs has been received from UNEP.

**Private partnership policy**

The Secretariat has been involved and provided inputs into how UNEP's first Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, which was adopted by its Member States in October 2019, can be integrated and implemented into respective MEA's work.

The UNEP's adopted strategy will be further reviewed to see whether the strategy can be used in CITES interaction with the private sector.

**Staffing situation**

The temporary hiring freeze is still in place for UNEP on its regular and Environmental funded positions while no such freeze is in place for CITES vacant positions.

However, the Secretariat is closely monitoring the expenditure and collected contribution rates to ensure that we are within the available resources so planned recruitment can

proceed. This may delay the process as the Secretariat will proceed up to selection of the new staff while the on-boarding may take longer time.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Secretariat has so far only been allowed to hire on local level due to ongoing on-boarding suspension for international staff.

The Secretariat has completed two of the recruitment cases by temporary appointment of staff for the Research/Programme Assistant and Meeting Services Assistant. Further details are included in below table on vacant positions under recruitment.

Summary of vacant position under recruitment:

<b>Functional title</b>	<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Research / Programme Assistant	Core	Temporary JO-130789; closed on 6 February 2020 and temporary hiring has been completed while the long-term position is being finalized. Selected candidate was on-boarded on 1 June 2020.
Meeting Service Assistant	Core	JO-130531; closed on 25 March 2020 and temporary hiring has been completed while the long-term position is being finalized. Selected candidate was on-boarded on 1 July 2020.
Programme Management Officer, P-3 (MIKE)	External	JO-133481; launched and will be closing on 15 May 2020. Written test phase has been completed and interviews will start at the end of July.
Associate Programme Management Officer, P-2	Core	Job Opening (JO)-128027; closed on 21 February 2020; review of applicants and test phase have been completed and interview phase will start in early August.
Associate Information Systems Officer, P-2	Core	JO-133944; closed on 2 July and review of applicants is ongoing.
Documents Assistant	Core	JO-133921; closed on 27 May 2020. Staff member has temporary stopped the retirement request so recruitment is temporary on-hold.

Please note that the all vacancy announcements for staff or consultancy positions are published on CITES website with direct link to the UN recruitment system *Inspira* to allow for wider information sharing and coming applications.

Financial matters

CITES Trust Fund (CTL)

Financial data for the year 2020 as at 30 June 2020

As at 30 June 2020, the Secretariat has spent nearly 40% of the total budget for 2020 on mainly staff salaries and the assessed contributions collection rate was 45.5% as shown in below table.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget 2020 (USD)</b>	<b>Expenditure (USD)</b>	<b>Assessed contribution collected (USD)</b>	<b>Cash &amp; funds balance (USD)</b>
Post & salary items	4,170,423	1,941,393	-	-
Consultants	475,000	100,251	-	2,614,634
Non-post & salary items	1,536,620	235,102	-	2,713,924
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6,182,043</b>	<b>2,276,746</b> <b>(39%)</b>	<b>2,830,903</b> <b>(45.5%)</b>	<b>5,328,558</b>

As noted, the collection rate for the assessed contribution for 2020 is on track and even at higher rate than in previous years as shown in below table.

The Secretariat is very grateful to Parties that has paid its contribution early in the calendar year and we will continue to closely monitor the payments for 2020 and prior years and consult with Parties on regular basis.

<b>Assessed contributions collection rate per year</b>	<b>%</b>
Year 2020 as at 30 June 2020	45.5
Year 2019 as at 30 June 2019	40.8
Year 2018 as at 30 June 2018	37.7
Year 2017 as at 30 June 2017	48.5

At the time of this report, one official communication has been received from Parties (Portugal) informing that they will pay their 2020 assessed contribution late during the calendar year.

#### Audit of CITES

Further to the information provided in the report as at 31 March 2020, the Secretariat has been in contact with the OIOS office who confirm that the audit is included in their work programme and is tentative planned for in early 2021.

#### Online meetings and possible financial impact

In addition to information provided in the earlier report for 2020, we have received positive information from UNEP regarding the possibility for compensation and remuneration for

sponsored members and delegates that would participate in online meeting and incurred additional costs related to data connection charges.

UNEP will issue guidelines and remuneration rates per region, country and hourly usage costs for these charges that will shortly be presented.

These additional costs for data connection could be financed through the existing registration fees collected during 2019-2020 period.

The Secretariat is proposing to follow the procedures set out in Resolution Conf. 17.3 on Sponsored Delegates Project for nomination of eligible members and delegates, if decision is taken to hold any online meetings/sessions for the scientific and governing bodies committees.

#### Projections for full year 2020 and possible savings for the period

The Secretariat has prepared the projections for the full year 2020 based on the expenditures as at 30 June and available information for the coming months.

The following assumptions and calculations have been made per component:

1. Personnel component (Professional and General Support staff)
  - a. Recruitment will continue on vacant positions as per details under the “staffing situation” above;
  - b. On-boarding of international staff might be delayed due to the Covid-19 situation while local staff can continue;
  - c. Temporary hiring will be undertaken where possible while the process for long-term hiring is ongoing; and
  - d. **Savings expected on this component: around USD 30,000**
2. Consultants
  - a. Consultants hired for translations of working documents to AC, PC and SC meetings will continue during the year; and
  - b. **Savings expected on this heading: USD 10,000**
3. Conference staff to meetings
  - a. 2 online sessions of 2 hours each for SC members to discuss agenda items with interpretation are foreseen at a cost of USD 10,000 each;
  - b. 1 intersessional working group via online session of 2 hours for AC members with interpretation is foreseen at a cost of USD 10,000;
  - c. 1 intersessional working group via online session of 2 hours for PC members with interpretation is foreseen at a cost of USD 10,000; and
  - d. **Savings expected on this heading: USD 60,000**
4. Official travel
  - a. With the assumption that current UN official travel bans will be lifted by mid-September 2020; and
  - b. **Savings expected on this heading: USD 27,000**

5. Sub-contract component
  - a. Full utilization of activities on this component is expected as legal agreement are signed or in the final stages of negotiation; and
  - b. Savings expected on this component: USD 0**
  
6. Meeting component (travel of eligible members and experts to committee meetings)
  - a. No travel of eligible AC, PC and SC members or experts are foreseen during the year; and
  - b. Savings expected on this component: USD 105,000**
  
7. Equipment, premises, operational and maintenance components
  - a. Full utilization of the items for the operation of the Secretariat is expected on these components during the year; and
  - b. Savings expected on these components: USD 0**
  
8. Miscellaneous component
  - a. Logistic support including security for AC, PC and SC meetings will not be used and the contract with the conference venue (CICG) for 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting of SC will be cancelled; and
  - b. Savings expected on this component: USD 90,000**
  
9. Further details on the projections by budget lines level is attached in annex 2; and
  - a. Overall savings expected on the direct costs' items (excluding programme support cost): USD 320,000**

The above expected savings for 2020 will be added to the existing fund balance at the end of the calendar year unless a decision is taken to transfer the amount into 2021 for additional committee meetings which will require prior approval by the Standing Committee.

In line with the resolution 18.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2020-2022*, Annex 6 – Terms of Reference for the Administration of the Trust Fund (CTL) for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, transfer of resources between financial years is possible as per paragraph 8 b):

*8. The Secretary-General of the Convention is authorized, to the extent consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, to:*

*b) transfer resources between financial years within the same activity line. Any such transfers may be made only after they have been agreed by the Standing Committee.*

The Secretariat is working with UN Office at Geneva (UNOG) and its procurement section on identifying options for conference venues in Geneva and Switzerland during the two first quarters of 2021 for possible face-to-face meetings of the scientific and governing bodies committees and will share costing details, when available.

A online meeting to further discuss this option among FBSC members is proposed to take place in the second part of August or early September.

### Support of the CITES Activities Trust Fund (QTL)

As at 30 June 2020, the following contributions have been collected on the external trust fund for ongoing and new activities:

- 30 June 2020: USD 5.4 millions

The Secretariat is posting on monthly basis on its website detailed information on contributions collected on both the core and external trust funds and the detailed data per Party and donor can be found on the below links:

- Core trust fund (CTL):

[https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/funds/ct\\_en.pdf](https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/funds/ct_en.pdf)

- External trust fund (QTL):

[https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/funds/status\\_of\\_external\\_contributions\\_to\\_the\\_CITES\\_External\\_Trust\\_Fund\\_20July2020.pdf](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/disc/funds/status_of_external_contributions_to_the_CITES_External_Trust_Fund_20July2020.pdf)

### Attachments:

1. Members of FBSC during 2020-2022 – revised list
2. Projections for full year 2020 as at 30 June 2020