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**Economic Commission for Europe**

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice
in Environmental Matters

**Working Group of the Parties**

**Nineteenth meeting**

Geneva, 17–19 June 2015

Item 7 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Financial Matters: future funding of the Convention**

 Draft estimation of the operational costs needed for the effective functioning of the Convention

 Prepared by the Bureau with the assistance of the secretariat

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| *Summary* |
|  At its fifth session (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 30 June–1 July 2014), the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters requested the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, to prepare an estimation of the operational costs needed for the effective functioning of the Convention, which should be clearly distinct from the cost of other activities that are subject to the availability of resources (ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.1, decision V/7, para. 10).[[1]](#footnote-2) **http://undocs.org/m2/QRCode.ashx?DS=ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2015/7&Size=2 &Lang=E** The current draft estimation was prepared by the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, on the basis of annex II to decision V/6, which sets out the costs of activities of the work areas proposed in the work programme for 2015–2017 (see ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.1). The costs set out in the work programme remain the same, but they have been redistributed between “operational” and “other” costs per each work area. Operational costs, as opposed to other costs, are the minimum funds needed to ensure the effective implementation of mandated activities in the different work areas in a balanced way. The same approach was used by the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for the Protocol’s current work programme, which distinguishes between “core” costs and “additional” costs (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/4/Add.1, decision II/3, annex).[[2]](#footnote-3)  The Working Group of the Parties is expected to consider the draft estimation and may wish to take it into account when preparing a draft decision on financial arrangements for the next intersessional period. |
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Estimated costs of operational and other activities of the work areas listed in the work programme for 2015–2017

|  |  |  | *Average estimated costs in US$ per year a* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *2015* |  | *2016* |  | *2017* |  | *2015—2017  annual average* |
| *Work area* | *Cost type* | *Description* | *Operational* | *Other* |  | *Operational* | *Other* |  | *Operational* | *Other* |  | *Operational* | *Other* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I. Access to information*b* | Staff time | Professional support, two P–3 staff: one at 30 per cent and one at 20 per cent of FTE  | 90 450 | *—* | 90 450 | *—* | 90 450 | *—* | 90 450*c* | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (e.g., upgrade and maintenance of Aarhus Clearinghouse and Aarhus good practice database) | 5 000 | 10 000 | 5 000 | 10 000 | 5 000 | 10 000 | 5 000 | 10 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Travel of eligible participants (3 meetings) | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions*d* | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 |
|  **Subtotal I** |  |  | **139 750** | **13 500** | **139 750** | **13 500** | **139 750** | **13 500** | **139 750** | **13 500** |
| II. Public participation | Staff time | Professional support, one P–3 staff at 40 per cent of FTE  | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (e.g., preparation of the required materials) | 5 000 | 8 000 | 5 000 | 8 000 | 5 000 | 8 000 | 5 000 | 8 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Travel of eligible participants (3 meetings) | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions*e* | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 |
|  **Subtotal II** |  |  | **121 660** | **11 500** | **121 660** | **11 500** | **121 660** | **11 500** | **121 660** | **11 500** |
| III. Access to justice | Staff time | Professional support, two P–3 staff: one at 30 per cent and one at 10 per cent of FTE  | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* | 72 360 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (e.g., preparation of the required materials) | 10 000 | 7 000 | 10 000 | 7 000 | 10 000 | 7 000 | 10 000 | 7 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Travel of eligible participants (3 meetings) | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* | 40 800 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions*f* | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 | 3 500 |
|  **Subtotal III** |  |  | **126 660** | **10 500** | **126 660** | **10 500** | **126 660** | **10 500** | **126 660** | **10 500** |
| IV. GMOs | Staff time | Professional support, two P–3 staff: each at 5 per cent of FTE  | 18 090 | *—* | 18 090 | *—* | 18 090 | *—* | 18 090 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (preparation of the required material) | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 | 2 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Eligible participants travel to event (e.g., workshop, round table) | *—* | *—* | 34 000 | *—* | *—* | *—* | 11 333 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions*g* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal IV** |   | **23 590** | **2 000** | **57 590** | **2 000** | **23 590** | **2 000** | **34 923** | **2 000** |
| V. Compliance mechanism | Staff time | Professional support, three P-3 staff: one at 70 per cent and two at 10 per cent each of FTE  | 162 810 | *—* | 162 810 | *—* | 162 810 | *—* | 162 810 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (e.g., translation outside United Nations, preparation of the required material) | 25 000 | *—* | 25 000 | *—* | 25 000 | *—* | 25 000 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Committee members, other participants (four Compliance Committee meetings per year) | 91 800 | *—* | 91 800 | *—* | 91 800 | *—* | 91 800 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (Staff) | Missions*h* | 9 800 | *—* | 9 800 | *—* | 9 800 | *—* | 9 800 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal V** |  |   | **289 410** | *—* | **289 410** | *—* | **289 410** | *—* | **289 410** | *—* |
| VI. Capacity-building*i* | Staff time | Professional support, two P–3 staff: one at 10 per cent and one at 5 per cent of FTE  | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (e.g., capacity-building activities, materials, studies) | 2 000 | 5 000 | 2 000 | 5 000 | 2 000 | 5 000 | 2 000 | 5 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Eligible experts (e.g., annual meeting of capacity-building partners, capacity-building activities) | 3 000 | 3 800 | 3 000 | 3 800 | 3 000 | 3 800 | 3 000 | 3 800 |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions | 3 000 | 8 200 | 3 000 | 8 200 | 3 000 | 8 200 | 3 000 | 8 200 |
|  **Subtotal VI** |  |  | **35 135** | **17 000** | **35 135** | **17 000** | **35 135** | **17 000** | **35 135** | **17 000** |
| VII. Reporting mechanism | Subcontracts | Consultancy (processing of national implementation reports, preparation of the synthesis report) | *—* | *—* | 10 000 | *—* | 20 000 | *—* | 10 000 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal VII** |  |  | *—* | *—* | **10 000** | *—* | **20 000** | *—* | **10 000** | *—* |
| VIII. Awareness-raising and promotion of the Convention *j* | Staff time | Professional support, three P-3 staff: one at 20 per cent and two at 5 per cent each of FTE  | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (publications, promotion materials) | 5 000 | 9 000 | 5 000 | 9 000 | 5 000 | 9 000 | 5 000 | 9 000*j* |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Participation in events and country missions to promote the Convention and its principles; support to non-ECE States to accede to the Convention; support to regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development | 5 000 | 18 800 | 5 000 | 18 800 | 5 000 | 18 800 | 5 000 | 18 800 |
|  | Travel, DSA (Staff) | Participation at relevant events where no other funding is available | 10 000 | 7 500 | 10 000 | 7 500 | 10 000 | 7 500 | 10 000 | 7 500 |
|  **Subtotal VIII** |  | **74 270** | **35 300** | **74 270** | **35 300** | **74 270** | **35 300** | **74 270** | **35 300** |
| IX. Promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes | Staff time | Professional support, one P–3 staff at 15 per cent of FTE  | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* | 27 135 | *—* |
|  | Subcontracts | Consultancy (expert studies) | 2 000 | 3 000 | 2 000 | 3 000 | 2 000 | 3 000 | 2 000 | 3 000 |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts) | Expert missions  | 3 400 | *—* | 3 400 | *—* | 3 400 | *—* | 3 400 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) | Missions | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal IX** |  | **36 035** | **3 000** | **36 035** | **3 000** | **36 035** | **3 000** | **36 035** | **3 000** |
| X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, including sixth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties | Staff time*k* | Professional support, three P-3 staff: one at 15 per cent; one at 10 per cent and one at 5 per cent of FTE  | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* | 54 270 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (experts/ participants) | Eligible participants (meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, Bureau, sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties) | 47 600 | *—* | 47 600 | *—* | 102 000 | *—* | 65 733 | *—* |
|  | Travel, DSA (staff) |  | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* | 3 500 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal X** |  | **105 370** | *—* | **105370** | *—* | **159 770** | *—* | **123 503** | *—* |
| XI. Sixth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties |  | *—* | *—* | *—* | *—* | *—* | *—* | *—l* | *—* |
| XII. Horizontal support areas | Secretarial support(G–5)*m* | General support | 140 000 | *—* | 140 000 | *—* | 140 000 | *—* | 140 000 | *—* |
|  | Technical support costs*n* | Computers, equipment, external printing | 6 000 | *—* | 6 000 | *—* | 6 000 | *—* | 6 000 | *—* |
|  | Training of staff*o* | Training activities to enhance staff skills | 4 000 | *—* | 4 000 | *—* | 4 000 | *—* | 4 000 | *—* |
|  **Subtotal XII** |  |  | **150 000** | *—* | **150 000** | *—* | **150 000** | *—* | **150 000** | *—* |
|  **Total (I–XII)** |  |  | **1 101 880** | **92 800** | **1 145 880** | **92 800** | **1 176 280** | **92 800** | **1 141 347** | **92 800** |
| Programme support costs (13%) |  |  | 143 244 | 12 064 | 148 964 | 12 064 | 152 916 | 12 064 | 148 375 | 12 064 |
|  **Grand total** |  |  | **1 245 124** | **104 864** | **1 294 844** | **104 864** | **1 329 196** | **104 864** | **1 289 722** | **104 864** |

*Abbreviations*: DSA = daily subsistence allowance; ECE = United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; FTE = full-time equivalent; GMOs = genetically modified organisms; PRTRs = pollutant release and transfer registers.

aThe estimated costs shown here are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions made under the Convention’s scheme of financial arrangements, either through its trust fund or in kind. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. Figures are rounded up. They may change in accordance with the United Nations administrative regulations.

*b*Including responsibility for electronic information tools under the Convention and Protocol.

*c*Professional staff costs are estimated by multiplying expected staff time in each activity area by the projected annual salary costs of staff hired at the level indicated. Staff costs are considered to be operational as they are essential for ensuring effective and balanced implementation of all work areas. In addition, the necessary funds for staff contracts must be secured at least one year in advance.

*d* Operational costs for staff missions refer to the cost of travel for secretariat staff member to service, e.g., task force meetings that are not held in Geneva and workshops/events related to this work area.

*e*Ibid.

*f*Ibid.

*g* Ibid.

*h*The secretariat may be required to conduct official missions in relation to the work of the compliance mechanism. Such costs are therefore considered to be operational.

*i* This category of activities encompasses activities that build capacity in areas that relate to the Convention as a whole. Capacity-building activities relating to a specific topic under the Convention (e.g., electronic information tools, access to justice) are covered under those activity areas. In order to increase the effectiveness of capacity-building and synergies, the secretariat is carrying out such activities in collaboration with all key capacity-building actors in the region. Furthermore, the secretariat services a region-wide capacity-building coordination mechanism aimed at ensuring that the projects implemented by partner organizations match requirements of decisions by the Meeting of the Parties. Most travel and consultancy costs are normally covered by other sources: either by partner organizations or specific donor contributions. These synergies also lead to a considerable reduction of the financial burden as Parties to the Convention are required to contribute a small amount in relation to the final impact of activities.

*j*Awareness-raising foresees promotional work in the region and beyond. Such work serves as the Parties’ “ambassador”. The secretariat and Aarhus experts are regularly invited to international meetings and processes across the world to share their experiences and expertise. Where possible, the promotion of the Convention is carried out through the use of electronic tools. The secretariat is making every possible effort to ensure that these exercises have the minimum financial implications possible. In addition, in line with past practice, it is anticipated that some publications will be funded from the United Nations regular budget.

*k*Including provision of legal advice and general tasks.

*l*Costs are reported under work area X.

*m* As of 1 January 2016, the funding of one administrative staff member through the 13 per cent programme support costs, levied from the trust funds of the ECE Environment Division, will be discontinued. This staff member is required in order to provide the necessary administrative support to activities under the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs, including administrative arrangements for the meetings of the governing and subsidiary bodies of the two treaties.

*n* Technical equipment is normally provided by the United Nations also to extrabudgetary staff. However, if this practice is discontinued, the related expenditures should be included in the operational costs of the work programme.

*o* All United Nations staff are expected to develop their skills and attend trainings. Continuous training and development of new skills is essential in order for the staff to maintain a high level of professionalism and to adapt to new competency requirements. As a result, training of staff is considered to be operational costs.

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1. Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html#/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Available from <http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2_docs.html#/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)