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Economic Commission for EuropeMeeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary ContextMeeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment**Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment
and Strategic Environmental Assessment****Ninth meeting**

Geneva, 9–11 June 2020

Items 3, 4 (c) and 6 (c) of the provisional agenda

Financial arrangements,**Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings****of the Parties: draft workplan 2021–2023,****Compliance and implementation: draft long-term strategy
and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol****Draft joint decisions by the Meetings of the Parties to the
Convention and the Protocol****Proposals by the Bureau***Summary*

In accordance with the mandate given to the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Working Group is tasked with making recommendations to these governing bodies regarding future work under the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2, decision I/5–V/5, operative para. 4).

In accordance with the above-mentioned mandate, the present document contains a number of draft texts for the Working Group's consideration: a draft decision on financial



arrangements for 2021–2023 (VIII/1–IV/1); a draft decision on the adoption of the workplan (VIII/2–IV/2); and a draft decision on the long-term strategy and the action plan for the Convention and the Protocol (VIII/3–IV/3).

The draft decisions contained in the present document were prepared by the joint Bureau of the governing bodies of the two treaties, with the support of the secretariat, as requested by the Working Group at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 26–28 November 2019). The first two draft decisions were substantially revised by the Bureau taking into account the Working Group’s comments on informal draft versions of these documents. The third decision contained in the present document is a new proposal.

Draft decision VIII/1–IV/1 focuses on spelling out financial arrangements for sufficient, predictable and equitable distribution of funding. The annex to that draft decision illustrates the adjusted United Nations scale of assessment as a possible reference for the level of Parties’ contributions.

Unlike in the past, the proposed new draft workplan for 2021–2023 contained in annex I to draft decision VIII/2–IV/2 spells out all the secretariat’s tasks and services as stipulated by the two treaties and the rules of procedure for their Meetings of the Parties and, as required, for the functioning of the treaties. As needed, that will also facilitate the Working Group’s identification of the secretariat services and activities that could be cut should sufficient funding not be forthcoming in the next period (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, para. 9). Moreover, to respond to the request of the Working Group, and to help it ensure that the workplan is backed by matching resources, the resource requirements for the workplan’s implementation are now set out in tables 1 and 2 of annex II to draft decision VIII/2–IV/2. The workplan activities for which financial or in-kind resources have not yet been identified (i.e. most of the activities) are indicated in square brackets. Table 3 of annex II to draft decision VIII/2–IV/2 provides an overview of resources available from the European Union for Environment (EU4Environment) programme for 2021 and 2022. Lastly, annex III to draft decision VIII/2–IV/2 lists activities requested by Parties but requiring both additional financial and secretariat staff resources to be implemented in the period 2021–2023.

The Working Group is expected to review and agree on the text of the draft decisions to be forwarded for consideration by the governing bodies of the Convention and the Protocol at their next joint sessions (Vilnius, 8–11 December 2020).

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Decision VIII/1–IV/1

Financial arrangements for 2021–2023

The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol), meeting in joint session,

Recalling decision VII/4–III/4 on the budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance for the period 2017–2020,

Recalling also the financial strategy adopted through decision VI/4–II/4 (annexII), while regretting its limited applicability for improving the funding for the Convention and its Protocol, as well as the predictability and the equitable distribution of the contributions,

Recognizing the wish of the Parties for a high degree of transparency and accountability regarding the status and developments in the financing of activities under the Convention and the Protocol,

Welcoming the annual financial reports prepared by the secretariat during the intersessional period 2017–2020,

Acknowledging with appreciation the contributions made in cash and in kind during that period,

Regretting, however, the insufficiency and unpredictability of the contributions, which were aggravated by the unfunded extension of the period by six months,

Regretting also that the financial burden remained unevenly distributed, with only a few Parties providing most of the funding and several Parties not contributing at all,

Affirming the need for all the Parties to ensure stable and sufficient financial and human resources for the implementation of the workplan of the Convention and its Protocol for the next intersessional period (2021–2023), adopted through decision VIII/2–IV/2,

Affirming also the ~~duty-necessity that~~ each Party-takes part in an equitable sharing of the workplan costs, to contribute, as a minimum, at a level that is not below its economic strength,

Aware of the importance of wide participation by the Parties in activities under the Convention and the Protocol in order to improve their effectiveness,

Aware also of the need to facilitate the participation, at the meetings and in activities under the Convention and the Protocol, of several countries with economies in transition that may otherwise not be able to take part,

Recalling article 23, paragraph 3, of the Protocol, which allows States Members of the United Nations not members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to accede to the Protocol, and also article 17, paragraph 3, of the Convention that will, in the near future, also allow for the accession of non-ECE member States to the Convention,

1. *Decide* on a financial scheme for funding the adopted workplans whereby all the Parties have a duty to contribute to the sharing of the costs that are not covered by the United Nations regular budget;

2. *Agree* that the financial scheme should be based on the following principles:

(a) All Parties are expected to take part in sharing the extra-budgetary costs to keep the Convention and its Protocol functional~~Each Party should make a yearly or multi-year contribution to finance the implementation of the workplans;~~

~~(b) To ensure an equitable distribution of the financial burden among the Parties, each State Party should contribute, as a minimum, an amount calculated based on the adjusted~~

~~scale of assessments of the United Nations,¹ with a view to contributing to the agreed resource requirements of the workplan; [This method does not concern the contribution of the European Union];~~

(~~eb~~) The Parties should pledge, well in advance of the adoption of the workplan and the budget by the Meetings of the Parties, their expected yearly or multi-year financial and in-kind contributions, to ensure that the workplans match the level of funding and to provide greater certainty for financial and project management;

(~~ed~~) Regular yearly or multi-year contributions should be made in cash, and preferably not be earmarked for a particular activity but be made towards the overall implementation of the workplan, in order not to limit their allocation for the priority costs – additional contributions may be made in cash or in kind and may be earmarked for a particular activity;

(~~ed~~) Contributions in cash should be made through the ECE trust fund for the Convention and its Protocol, against payment requests to be issued by the secretariat;

(~~ef~~) Bearing in mind the administrative transaction costs of each payment, a single contribution should not be less than \$500;

(~~fg~~) Insofar as possible, contributions for a given calendar year should be made by 1 October of the preceding year or, where this is not an option, it is recommended that contributions be made in the first six months of the calendar year, so as to secure the extension of the contracts of extrabudgetary secretariat staff, as a priority, for the smooth functioning of the secretariat and the timely and effective implementation of the workplan;

3. *Request* every Party to make yearly or multi-year contributions towards the financing of the workplan, in accordance with the scheme referred to in paragraph 2 above;

4. *Encourage* Parties to use various financial sources within the national budgets for their financial contributions;²

5. *Invite* signatories, other interested States, organizations and international financial institutions to also contribute financially or in kind;

6. *Decide* to discontinue the system of shares endorsed by decision III/10 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (where one share equalled \$1,000) and to indicate instead, in a more straightforward manner, the resource requirements and the countries' contributions in dollar values;

7. *Adopt* the report prepared by the secretariat on the budget and financial arrangements during the period 2017–2020 contained in document ECE/MP.EIA/2020/[...]-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2020/[...];

8. *Decide* that activities under the workplan for 2021–2023 and the corresponding estimated resource requirements, as set out in, respectively, annexes I and II to decision VIII/2–IV/2, and which are not covered by the United Nations regular budget, are to be covered by Parties' contributions to the trust fund totalling [...] United States dollars;

9. *Underline* the need for appropriate and stable staffing of the secretariat for the planning and delivery of activities, by giving the highest priority to financing sufficient extrabudgetary secretariat staff to provide support for the Implementation Committee under the Convention and the Protocol;

¹ ~~The United Nations scale of assessments is adopted by the General Assembly for a three-year period. It provides the basis for calculating the contributions of States Members of the United Nations to the United Nations regular budget. In December 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/271 on a scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations for the period 2019–2021. That scale is adjusted to the number of Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol.~~

² Ministries of foreign affairs and development cooperation agencies may be able to provide funding for capacity development and outreach activities in the workplan in countries eligible for official development assistance. The list of eligible countries is available on the website of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development at www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/dac-list.htm.

10. *Agree* that, in accordance with the financial rules of the United Nations, the secretariat should allocate the required amount of contributions in the trust fund by 1 October of each year to secure extension of the contracts of extrabudgetary secretariat staff, as a priority;

11. *Request* the secretariat to provide Parties with timely reminders concerning outstanding pledges and possible arrears at the beginning of each year;

12. *Also request* the secretariat, in accordance with the financial rules of the United Nations, to:

(a) Monitor the use of funds, and continue to prepare and submit to the Bureau annual financial reports and further request the Bureau to consider the reports and to agree to their publishing;

(b) Include in the reports information on the resources available (including in-kind contributions) and to highlight any arrears in the payment of Parties' regular contributions during the intersessional period;

(c) Prepare a report for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, based on the information contained in the annual reports and giving a clear indication of the significant developments during the period, in order that Parties can best meet future demands for resources under the Convention and its Protocol;

(d) If contributions of any parties have not been received by 31 December of the relevant year, the Secretariat shall write to those Parties to impress upon them the importance of contributing.

13. *Further request* the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment to consider, in the light of the annual reports, whether changes would be required to the content or time frame of the workplan, in the event that the level of contributions does not match the level of funding needed;

14. [*Decide* that the Executive Secretary of ECE has the authority, after consultations with the Bureau, to make adjustments to the budget allocations, up to a maximum of [10][5] per cent, where such adjustments are necessary before the next sessions of the Meetings of Parties, and that Parties be promptly informed of such adjustments;] or [*Decide* that the Executive Secretary of ECE has the authority, after consultations with the Bureau, to make transfers between the main budget lines of up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the main budget line from which the transfer would be made, where such adjustments of the allocations are necessary before the next sessions of the Meetings of Parties, and that Parties be promptly informed of such adjustments;]

15. *Request* the Secretary of ECE to allocate more resources to support the work under the Convention and the Protocol, considering the balance in the use of regular budgetary resources in the different subprogrammes;

16. *Decide* that the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment should prepare a further draft decision on financial arrangements for adoption by the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol at their ninth and fifth sessions, respectively, based on the experience gained in the interim period under the financial arrangements adopted at the present joint session;

17. *Call upon* countries with economies in transition to finance, to the extent possible, their own participation in the activities under the Convention and its Protocol, in order to ensure that the limited funds available are used efficiently;

18. *Urge* Parties and encourage non-Parties and relevant international organizations to contribute financial resources to enable countries with economies in transition and non-governmental organizations to participate in the meetings under the Convention and its Protocol;

19. *Recommend* that the Convention and its Protocol should apply the guiding criteria established and periodically updated by the Committee on Environmental Policy for financial assistance to support the participation of experts and representatives from countries with economies in transition in meetings and workshops organized within the framework of

the Convention and its Protocol and other relevant activities, depending upon the availability of funds for this purpose;

20. *Decide* that, contingent on the availability of funds for this purpose, financial support is to be provided for participation in formal meetings of representatives of non-governmental organizations and of developing and least-developed countries from outside the ECE region, in accordance with the agreed budget and criteria to be set by the Bureau; [and, for non-ECE countries, subject to a case-by-case examination by the Bureau];

21. *Agree* to review the operation of the financial scheme at the ninth and fourth sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol, respectively.

Annex

Indicative annual minimum contributions for the period 2021–2023

<i>Column A</i>	<i>Column B</i>	<i>Column C</i>	<i>Column D</i>
<i>Countries (Parties and Signatories)</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment (percentage)*</i>	<i>Adjusted United Nations scale of assessment (percentage)[†]</i>	<i>Contribution for one year (US dollars) based on adjusted scale and resource requirements for the workplan 2021–2023 (VIII/2–III/2) (Small amounts increased to \$500)</i>
Albania	0.008	0.024	
Armenia	0.007	0.021	
Austria	0.677	2.017	
Azerbaijan	0.049	0.146	
Belarus	0.049	0.146	
Belgium	0.821	2.447	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.012	0.036	
Bulgaria	0.046	0.137	
Canada	2.734	8.147	
Croatia	0.077	0.229	
Cyprus	0.036	0.107	
Czechia	0.311	0.927	
Denmark	0.554	1.651	
Estonia	0.039	0.116	
Finland	0.421	1.255	
France	4.427	13.192	
Germany	6.09	18.148	
Greece	0.366	1.091	
Hungary	0.206	0.614	
Ireland	0.371	1.106	
Italy	3.307	9.855	
Kazakhstan	0.178	0.530	
Kyrgyzstan	0.002	0.006	
Latvia	0.047	0.140	
Liechtenstein	0.009	0.027	
Lithuania	0.071	0.212	
Luxembourg	0.067	0.200	
Malta	0.017	0.051	
Montenegro	0.004	0.012	
Netherlands	1.356	4.041	
North Macedonia	0.007	0.021	
Norway	0.754	2.247	
Poland	0.802	2.390	
Portugal	0.35	1.043	

<i>Column A</i>	<i>Column B</i>	<i>Column C</i>	<i>Column D</i>
<i>Countries (Parties and Signatories)</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment (percentage)^a</i>	<i>Adjusted United Nations scale of assessment (percentage)^b</i>	<i>Contribution for one year (US dollars) based on adjusted scale and resource requirements for the workplan 2021–2023 (VIII/2–III/2) (Small amounts increased to \$500)</i>
Republic of Moldova	0.003	0.009	
Romania	0.198	0.590	
Serbia	0.028	0.083	
Slovakia	0.153	0.456	
Slovenia	0.076	0.226	
Spain	2.146	6.395	
Sweden	0.906	2.700	
Switzerland	1.151	3.430	
Ukraine	0.057	0.170	
United Kingdom	4.567	13.610	
European Union ^{c,d}	—	—	
— Total	33.557	100.0	

^aThe figures in column B are based on the scale of assessment contained in General Assembly resolution 73/271, adopted on 22 December 2018 to reflect the economic strengths of the countries in the period 2019–2021 and determine the contributions of the States Members of the United Nations to the United Nations regular budget.

^bThe percentages from the United Nations scale of assessments have been adjusted to the number of Parties to the Convention (by using a multiplier of 2.98, in order to arrive at a total of 100 per cent).

^cSubject to footnote d below on the contribution of the European Union, the figures in column D would be derived by multiplying the percentage value in column C by the annual estimated cost requirements for the workplan 2021–2023 to be recommended by the Bureau. The actual amounts for the contributions would be calculated in due course, subject to the consideration and approval of the draft decisions on the work programme and budget for 2021–2023, and would be readjusted based on the updated United Nations scale of assessment to be adopted by the General Assembly for the period 2022–2024.

^dA percentage has not been assigned to the European Union, since it is not included in the United Nations scale of assessments. Consequently, it is not possible to calculate the level of its contribution on the same basis as those of the other Parties and Signatories. In the period 2017–2020, the European Union has contributed annually €50,000, which corresponds to approximately \$60,000 per year or to \$180,000 for a three-year period (subject to fluctuations in the exchange rate), representing nearly 13 per cent of the total budget.