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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution

#### Forty-second session

Geneva, 12–16 December 2022

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

#### Financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention

### Resources for the secretariat to support the core functioning of the Convention

#### Note by the secretariat

##### *Summary*

The present document was prepared by the secretariat following a request by the Executive Body at its forty-first session (Geneva (hybrid), 6–8 December 2021) to its Bureau in cooperation with the secretariat to assess the financial situation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and to present the results of the assessment, in particular on the funding of the secretariat on a stable basis, for discussion at the Executive Body's forty-second session. The document reviews the resources in the secretariat and the challenges encountered, presents different options for secretariat support to the Convention to address resource gaps, and outlines different options to mobilize additional resources to support the core functioning of the secretariat.



## I. Introduction and proposed action by the Executive Body

1. For the forty-first session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 6–8 December 2021), its Bureau presented a note<sup>1</sup> to support discussions on the overall financing of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention), and in particular the situation regarding available secretariat support. The note explained the different sources of funding for the Convention, the overall financial situation, and the need to strengthen the financing on a long-term and stable basis for the secretariat support to the core functioning of the Air Convention. It was particularly noted that the current resource gap had hindered the smooth performance of core secretariat functions, and had prevented the absorption of any additional requests, such as the organization of additional meetings in relation to the review of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol).

2. The Executive Body therefore requested its Bureau, in cooperation with the secretariat, to assess the financial situation of the Convention in further detail, using as a basis the information presented at the session, giving initial consideration to an assessment of the financial requirements for holding an additional meeting of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in 2023. It also requested the Bureau to present its draft findings to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its sixtieth session (Geneva (hybrid), 11–14 April 2022), and to present its assessment of the financial situation of the Convention, in particular on the funding of the secretariat on a stable basis, for discussion at the forty-second session of the Executive Body.<sup>2</sup>

3. The Executive Body Bureau presented its findings on the requirements for holding an additional meeting of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in 2023 at the sixtieth session of the Working Group.<sup>3</sup> The Working Group recommended that the Executive Body at its forty-second session invite Parties to make earmarked voluntary contributions to enable the organization of a second Working Group meeting in autumn 2023.<sup>4</sup>

4. In the present document, accompanying the note by the Executive Body Bureau, available as an informal document for the current session, the secretariat presents a review of the resources in the secretariat and the challenges encountered, presents different options for secretariat support to the Convention to address resource gaps, and outlines potential options for the way forward.

5. It is proposed that the Executive Body discuss the funding of the core services of the secretariat, while keeping in mind that other financing issues also merit attention and discussion by the Executive Body, in particular the financing of the activities on effects.

6. The Executive Body is invited to discuss the different options for core secretariat support to the Convention presented in section III of this document and to decide how it wishes to address the resource gap.

7. Should the Executive Body decide to mobilize additional resources for the core secretariat functions, section IV below outlines possible approaches to doing so.

## II. Resources in the Convention secretariat

8. Multilateral environmental agreements enjoy legal autonomy and decision-making is under the purview of their Parties. Consequently, almost all multilateral environmental

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Financing%20of%20the%20Air%20Convention%20Note%20for%20the%20Executive%20Body\\_final.pdf](https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Financing%20of%20the%20Air%20Convention%20Note%20for%20the%20Executive%20Body_final.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> ECE/EB.AIR/148, para. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Available at <https://unece.org/environment/documents/2022/03/informal-documents/agenda-item-6-preliminary-findings-financial>.

<sup>4</sup> ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/128, para. 31 (advance version), available at [https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/%28Advance%20version%29%20ECE\\_EB.AIR\\_WG.5\\_128.pdf](https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/%28Advance%20version%29%20ECE_EB.AIR_WG.5_128.pdf).

agreements are fully funded by their Parties. Conventions and protocols serviced by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) are exceptions to this rule, with funding coming from both the United Nations regular budget (targeted to secretariat support and conference services) and from contributions (cash and in-kind) by Parties, in particular financing a large number of activities under the unique and extensive network of Party-driven science and policy groups.

9. In terms of core secretariat support, the Convention has largely relied on the United Nations regular budget.<sup>5</sup> A major strengthening of the secretariat has derived from generous earmarked contributions by Parties to capacity-building activities that have greatly enhanced the implementation of the Convention in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. However, these contributions do not support the core functioning of the secretariat.

10. Over the years, due to successive cuts in the ECE budget, the support provided by the United Nations regular budget for different ECE programmes has decreased. The Convention – which has historically benefited more than other ECE conventions from regular budget resources – has been affected. Since 2010, the Air Convention secretariat has lost two posts; however, it remains the ECE convention that most benefits from staff support from the regular budget.

11. At the same time, the Convention's activities have steadily increased, reflecting the growing importance of the topic and the achievements under the Convention. The number of protocols to the Convention and their complexity have increased, together with the number of Parties thereto. The focus on compliance emission reduction commitments and reporting obligations has had an impact on the workload of the secretariat. The number of activities, subsidiary bodies and scientific centres has also increased. The growing focus by ECE member States and in the United Nations system on coherence and “delivering as one” has led to the expansion of coordination efforts and partnerships. Lastly, new administrative procedures adopted by the United Nations, whilst improving quality, transparency and accountability, have added remarkable administrative burden.

12. Since the 2000s, other ECE conventions and protocols have tackled the same challenges by strengthening secretariat services through extrabudgetary contributions, for both core activities and assistance projects. While, ten years ago, the Convention began dedicating extrabudgetary resources to capacity-building activities, no additional resources have been mobilized to support the core functioning of the secretariat so far.

13. The expansion of the Convention's activities and the increase in the demands on the secretariat have reached a point where, in spite of the dedication of and efforts by the secretariat, the expected outputs cannot be delivered to a satisfactory level, particularly concerning some “core” secretariat functions (e.g., support to the intergovernmental process and review and revision of protocols). The secretariat has endeavoured to maintain “minimum service” across its main functions and ensure the continuity of the Convention's operation. The mismatch between the demands on and expectations regarding the secretariat and the resources available to it has prevented it from responding to requests for additional meetings or activities. The Executive Body Bureau and Parties have expressed concerns regarding the gradual deterioration of the services to the Convention.

14. The current situation requires action by the Executive Body to either streamline and reduce the workload and activities of the secretariat to align it with the resources provided by the United Nations regular budget, or ensure additional resources for the secretariat core functions.

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<sup>5</sup> Only 1 Party (Norway) out of 51 has provided regular contributions to the secretariat's core activities and for travel and consultancies.

### III. Options for core secretariat support to the Convention

15. The following section outlines three possible scenarios for staffing of the secretariat, the corresponding implications in terms of functions that could be carried out with such resources, and the relevant resources to be mobilized.

16. Option 1 foresees no mobilization of additional resources for supporting the core functions of the secretariat, which would continue to rely solely on existing resources from the United Nations regular budget and be carried out by three P staff members and one G staff member. The proposed distribution of such resources between different secretariat functions/activities is reflected in table 1 below. This option would entail streamlining and reducing activities and secretariat support so to align them with the resources available. In the past years, efforts have been made to relieve the secretariat of certain functions it could not carry out due to resource limitations (e.g., limitation of secretariat's attendance in task force meetings). Hence, at this point, this option would necessarily require decreasing or interrupting some secretariat activities. Table 2 below outlines the corresponding implications in terms of activities and functions that the secretariat could support under this scenario.

17. Option 2 corresponds to providing additional secretariat resources corresponding to two P staff members (2 P-3s) and 1 G staff member (1 G-5). From the secretariat perspective, this option would allow for appropriate support to all bodies under the Convention to be maintained, while ensuring timeliness and quality, and without reducing any activity or function. The proposed distribution of the overall resources (a total of five P staff members and two G staff members) between different secretariat functions/activities is reflected in table 1. This option would ensure the needed support of the secretariat to the different Convention bodies, including participation in and contribution to task force meetings. It would also allow for the absorption of reasonable requests from the different Convention bodies. With this option, the gap in secretariat resources that has built up over the past 20 years would be addressed. Table 2 details the corresponding activities and functions that the secretariat could support under this scenario.

18. Option 3 corresponds to 3 additional P staff members (3 P-3s) and 1.5 additional G staff members (1.5 G-5). This option would allow the secretariat to take up additional functions and activities. Indeed, in the past years, Parties have put forward several suggestions regarding additional initiatives that could be undertaken, and it was not possible to meet such requests. The overall proposed distribution of resources (total of 6 P staff members and 2.5 G staff members) between different secretariat functions/activities is reflected in table 1, noting that this could be adjusted depending on future priorities. Table 2 details the corresponding activities and functions that the secretariat could support under this scenario.

Table 1

#### **Distribution of staff resources for core functions and activities of the secretariat under the different options**

<i>Function/activity</i>	<i>P staff requirement (in percentage of full-time equivalent)</i>		
	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
EB	0.6	0.9	1
WGSR	0.6	0.9	1.5
EMEP/WGE	0.6	0.9	0.9
Financing of centres	0.3	0.6	0.6
Compliance/IC	0.2	0.7	0.9
Visibility and promotion	0	0.1	0.2

<i>Function/activity</i>	<i>P staff requirement (in percentage of full-time equivalent)</i>		
	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
Intersessional activities, horizontal support	0.2	0.3	0.3
Coordination and oversight of XB-funded capacity-building and outreach activities and projects, fundraising and donor relations	0.2	0.3	0.3
General Programme planning and management, budgetary, human resources, administrative and reporting actions	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>Total number of P staff</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Corresponding total number of G staff*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.5</b>

\*In the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) the average ratio of G to P staff is 1/2 .

*Abbreviations:* EB, Executive Body; EMEP, Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe; IC, Implementation Committee; WGE, Working Group on Effects; WGSR, Working Group on Strategies and Review; XB, extrabudgetary.

Table 2

**Proposed core activities and functions carried out by the secretariat under the different options**

<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
UNRB: 3P, 1G Additional: none	UNRB: 3P, 1G Additional: 2 P3, 1 G5	UNRB: 3P, 1G Additional: 3 P3, 1.5 G5
<b>EB</b>		
Reduced duration of annual EB session, streamlined agenda, no thematic sessions, organization of maximum of 3 Bureau meetings per year focused on intersessional coordination and preparation of EB session, limitation of tasks EB and its Bureau can request secretariat	1 Annual session of EB, no thematic sessions, organization of Bureau meetings and consultations, follow-up to EB Bureau requests  Follow-up to EB decisions and requests	This option could allow for possibility for organization of high-level segment, or thematic session, or round table discussion on specific issue, at or back-to-back with annual session of EB
<b>WGSR</b>		
Reduced number of official documents: Reports of task force meetings published as informal documents, no support to task forces or ad hoc groups, no support to strategies and policies reporting; 1 Bureau meeting/consultation per year, no thematic sessions or other workshops, limitation of tasks WGSR can request of secretariat	1 Annual session of WGSR, no thematic sessions, organization of Bureau meetings and consultations, Organization of strategies and policies reporting within WGSR  Follow-up to WGSR requests, collection of information, compilation of comments, circulation of questionnaires; Coordination and support to task force chairs, participation in task force meetings and delivery of presentations, participation and support to ad hoc groups set up by WGSR	This option could allow for organization of an additional session of WGSR, or thematic sessions within regular WGSR session
<b>EMEP/WGE</b>		
Reduced number of official documents: Reports of task force meetings published as informal documents, no support or participation to task force meetings, no	1 Annual joint session of EMEP/WGE; 1 annual joint meeting of EMEP/WGE Bureaux; Reporting of emission data: Initiate annual reporting, liaise with CEIP,	This option would allow, in addition, for facilitation of cooperation with other

<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
support to strategic documentation, limited support to cooperation with other bodies or organizations, limitation of tasks EMEP/WGE can request secretariat	keep record of notifications and requests for adjustments, in accordance with relevant Protocol articles and EB decisions, provide advice on procedure  Coordinate and cooperate with 11 task forces and their chairs, 14 scientific centres, participate in selected meeting and deliver presentations, as necessary	relevant bodies and organizations

### **Financing of centres**

Reducing number of contracts to be established and managed by secretariat to 5, 1 WGE centre to be identified to subcontract all other centres, except WHO; streamlined information on funding of effects-oriented activities	Financial and budgetary matters: collection of mandatory and voluntary contributions in accordance with EMEP Protocol and decision 2002/1; scales of assessments, information on in-kind contributions; tracking of arrears, in-kind contributions; information on use of budgeted resource, and other financial information for presentation to EMEP/WGE and EB  Funding of 12 centres: Supporting 12 centres in process of submitting their applications for funding through Umoja Implementing Partner Module and UNPP; Manage process of reviewing and approval of applications: Establish MoUs and annual appendices; Request, review and summarize expense reports; Arrange for timely approval and disbursement of payments (21); Provide guidance and advice to centres on financial and administrative matters, including reporting  Trust fund management: preparation of unreleased and released annual budgets and revisions thereto as necessary, reporting and inputs to budgetary preparations in accordance with ECE internal processes; liaise with Executive Office and UNOG Finance	Same as in option 2
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### **Compliance/IC**

Streamlining procedure for review of compliance to minimize secretariat's involvement; through, e.g., routing information on exceedances through EMEP Steering Body and to EB. EB would send cases to IC based on that information	Annual review of reported emission data for compliance with emission reduction obligations and compliance with reporting obligations, as reported to CEIP, liaison with CEIP; Identification of possible cases of non-compliance and correspondence with Parties concerned; Drafting and presentation of referrals to IC (max. 3 substantive cases per year); Uploading information/maintenance of password-protected website for Committee members; Preparation of agenda and documentation for two meetings of IC (as per decision 2012/25); Logistics and arrangements for meetings of IC (2 meetings of 2–3 days);	This option could allow for strengthening of compliance review and support to IC in view of increased complexity of emission data reported, as well as closer follow-up of cases and support to discussions on systemic issues
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Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
	Preparation and posting of informal document(s) for EB; Drafting IC report, circulation and finalizing	
<b>Visibility and Promotion</b>		
Secretariat will not engage in efforts to promote Convention beyond efforts already undertaken regarding outreach and capacity-building activities	Increased visibility and more frequent communication and promotion activities, including high-level involvement of ECE management, Coordination with other relevant organizations, participation in relevant international meetings, provision of information	This option could allow for stronger engagement with other relevant organization, publications, increased participation and promotion of Convention in relevant forums, and support identification of policy areas where Convention could contribute to work under other organizations and conventions; ensure regular updates on other international developments to Parties and provide such regular updates on work of Convention to other forums
<b>Intersessional activities, horizontal support</b>		
No review of draft recommendations/decisions with a view to promoting coherence and consistency, including with established procedures and any existing guidelines, as well as complementarity with previous decisions, no compiled texts of protocols as amended and their annexes, no legal advice or consultations	Timely reply to general inquires, legal consultations, liaison with OLA/Treaty Office, circulation of notifications, compiling texts of protocols as amended and their annexes, support to drafting or reviewing procedures, review draft recommendations and decisions with a view to promoting coherence and consistency, including with established procedures and any existing guidelines, as well as complementarity with previous decisions, information and advice on procedural issues, information on existing practices in other MEAs/forums, etc.	Same as in option 2
Limited capacity for providing information and clarification on documentation and procedures in response to inquiries by Parties, Bureau members or other experts		
<b>Coordination and oversight of XB-funded capacity-building and outreach activities and projects, fundraising and donor relations</b>		
Limited engagement of Secretary or other RB staff in XB-funded capacity-building and outreach activities, mostly focused on oversight	Increased engagement of RB staff in XB-funded activities, including support to fundraising and promotion	Same as in option 2
<b>General programme planning and management, budgetary, human resources, administrative and reporting actions</b>		
This area cannot be streamlined/reduced as it is linked to United Nations obligations (recruit/contract and manage secretariat staff and consultants, input to general programme and budget planning documents, United Nations secretariat-wide processes and policies, mandatory	Same	Same

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

training sessions, inputs to activities of ECE, Division and section, annual cost-plans and forecast meetings, documents and publications for processing by United Nations administration and relevant services, internal reports on substantive and administrative issues)

*Abbreviations:* CEIP, Centre on Emissions Inventories and Projections; OLA, Office of Legal Affairs; MEA, multilateral environmental agreement; MoU, memorandum of understanding; RB, regular budget; UNOG, United Nations Office at Geneva; UNPP, United Nations Partner Portal; UNRB, United Nations regular budget; WHO, World Health Organization.

19. These different scenarios only focus on the resources for core activities of the secretariat; they do not affect the requirements for implementing capacity-building and outreach activities to be funded through voluntary contributions – the current situation in that regard is reflected in table 3 below.

Table 3

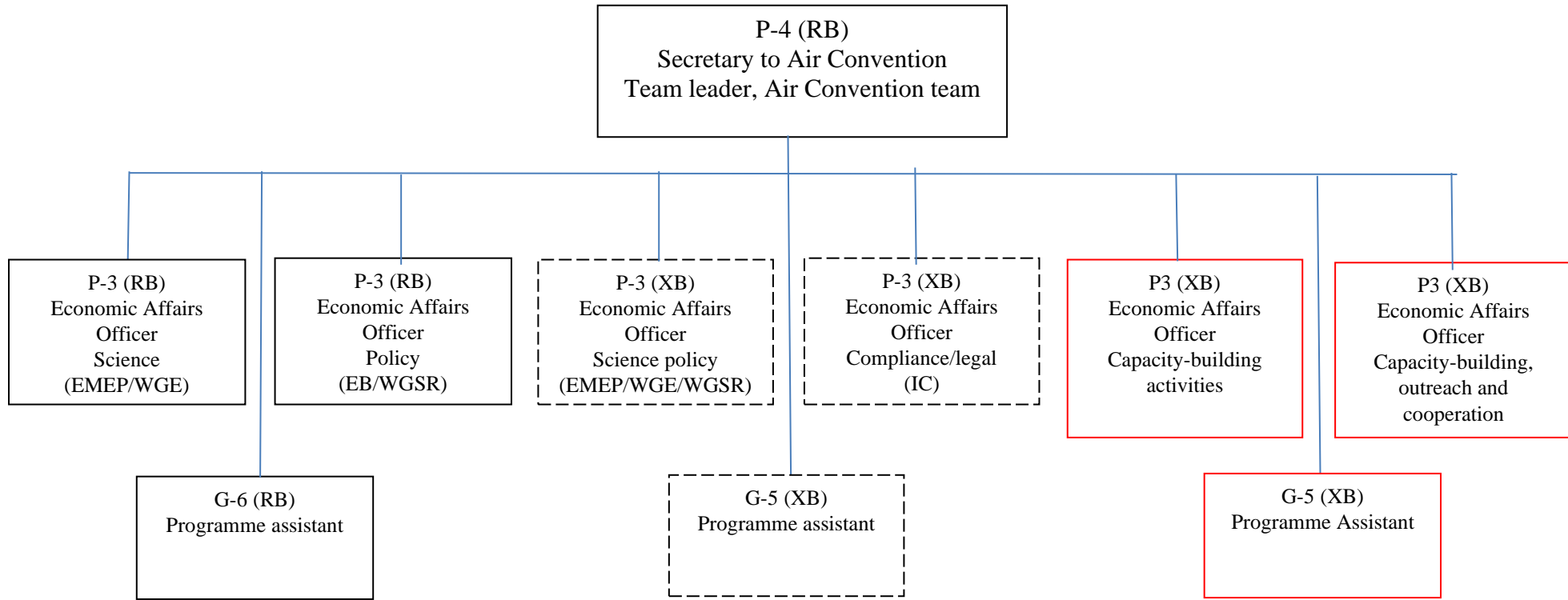
**Staffing requirements for implementing capacity-building and outreach activities to be funded through voluntary contributions**

<i>Function/activity</i>	<i>Staff requirement (in percentage of full time equivalent)</i>
Capacity-building and awareness-raising activities to promote ratification and implementation in EECCA countries, organization of missions and workshops, support to EECCA Coordinating Group, e-learning courses, etc.	2 XB P 1 XB G
Outreach, partnership and activities beyond ECE region	

*Abbreviations:* EECCA, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.



**Organigram of Air Convention secretariat, with grade and functions, under Option 1**



- Posts provided by UNRB
- Additional posts
- Posts funded through voluntary contributions to implement capacity-building programme

## IV. Mobilizing additional resources for core secretariat functions

### Funding from extrabudgetary contributions by Parties

20. This approach is the one traditionally followed by all multilateral environmental agreements, which are fully funded by their Parties, and by ECE multilateral environmental agreements, which couple United Nations regular budget resources with extrabudgetary contributions from their Parties to support core secretariat functions.

21. In this respect, the following considerations should be taken into account:

(a) The funding should be long-term, stable, predictable and shared by all Parties, i.e. through indicative contributions based on the United Nations scale of assessment;<sup>6</sup>

(b) Relying on ad hoc financing for short-term solutions (e.g., a few months of temporary staffing) would not only not address the problem but would aggravate the burden on the secretariat, which would need to dedicate its limited resources to carry out recruitment, training and other administrative procedures;

(c) Similarly, relying on project financing is not suited to the nature of the work to be carried out and would not be sustainable;

(d) The approach should build on already established funding mechanisms under the Convention (unique amongst ECE multilateral environmental agreements).

22. To operationalize this approach, the Executive Body could follow different avenues, as set out below.

### Establish a separate budget for secretariat resources through a new Executive Body decision, to be funded through a scale of indicative contributions

23. Building on the successful example of decision 2002/1,<sup>7</sup> the Executive Body could decide annually on a budget for secretariat support and adopt an indicative scale of contributions, based on the same recommended scale of assessments as that used for decision 2002/1 (including all Parties). As for other contributions to the work of the Convention, they would be collected on a yearly basis. However, as some of them would be very small and would be completely spent in administrative charges, the Executive Body could define a minimum pledge amount of \$500 or \$1,000, as done under other ECE instruments.

24. The advantages of such an approach are that it involves equitable sharing of costs by all Parties, is consistent with the long-term nature of the activities, and is based on existing practice under other multilateral environmental agreements.

25. The disadvantages of this approach are that there would be a certain irregularity in the payment of voluntary contributions, and that Parties would receive three requests for contributions to be paid annually. This might lead to a certain amount of confusion.

### Amend decision 2002/1 on financing the financing of core activities in order to extend the scope of funded activities to cover additional secretariat resources

26. The Executive Body could amend decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities to include within its scope the costs of core secretariat functions, in addition to the “costs of the international coordination of health, materials and ecosystem effect-related activities and integrated assessment modelling at the designated international centres that are covered by the work-plan adopted by the Executive Body, but excluding costs covered by the EMEP Protocol” (decision 2002/1, para. 1 (d)). The annual budget for the costs of core activities adopted by the Executive Body would then be increased adding core secretariat costs to the costs of the centres. This would not be the first increase in the budget under this decision: the

<sup>6</sup> General Assembly resolution 76/238 on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/RES/76/238).

<sup>7</sup> All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present document are available at <https://unece.org/fr/node/4188>.

budget for the effects-oriented activities was increased by 10 per cent in 2019 to accommodate the establishment of the Centre for Dynamic Modelling (decision 2019/22).

27. The advantage of this approach is that there would be regularity in the payment of contributions, consistent with the long-term nature of the activities.

28. The disadvantages of this approach are that some Parties provide in-kind or in cash contributions directly to the centres under decision 2002/1, thus it should be ensured that such Parties pay their share of the secretariat costs in cash to the trust fund. Voluntary contributions in accordance with decision 2002/1 are not always fully collected, the Executive Body should therefore decide on approaches to the sharing of the funds between the centres and the secretariat that would ensure staff security and long-term stability.

29. Table 4 below shows the financial implications of options 2 and 3, based on 2022 estimates of standard salary costs and direct costs as follows: P-3 standard salary cost – \$187,000; G-5 standard salary cost – \$150,7000; direct costs per post – \$6,850, including programme support costs.

Table 4

**Financial implications of options 2 and 3**

(United States dollars)

<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
<i>2 P-3s</i>	<i>3 P-3s</i>
<i>1 G-5</i>	<i>1.5 G-5s</i>
615 220	799 770

30. Table 5 below presents the corresponding scale of indicative annual contributions per Party related to the costs of core secretariat resources under options 2 and 3.

31. Lastly, it should be noted that Parties will continue to have the possibility to provide additional voluntary funding for specific activities, events, travel support for participants, etc. These would continue to be channelled through the existing projects and trust funds.

Table 5  
**Indicative annual contributions by Parties for funding option 2 and option 3**

<i>Parties to Convention</i>	<i>United Nations 2021 assessment rate (percentage)</i>	<i>Recommended scale secretariat (percentage)</i>	<i>Recommended contribution (US dollars)</i>	
			<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
<i>Non-European Union countries</i>				
Albania	0.008	0.017	105	136
Armenia	0.007	0.015	92	120
Azerbaijan	0.030	0.062	381	496
Belarus	0.041	0.085	523	680
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.012	0.025	154	200
Canada	2.628	5.464	33 616	43 699
Georgia	0.008	0.017	105	136
Iceland	0.036	0.075	461	600
Kazakhstan	0.133	0.277	1 704	2 215
Kyrgyzstan	0.002	0.004	25	32
Liechtenstein	0.010	0.021	129	168
Monaco	0.011	0.023	142	184
Montenegro	0.004	0.008	49	64
North Macedonia	0.007	0.015	92	120
Norway	0.679	1.412	8 687	11 293
Rep. of Moldova	0.005	0.010	62	80
Russian Federation	1.866	3.880	23 871	31 031
Serbia	0.032	0.067	412	536
Switzerland	1.134	2.358	14 507	18 859
Türkiye	0.845	1.757	10 809	14 052
Ukraine	0.056	0.116	714	928
United Kingdom	4.375	9.096	55 960	72 747
United States	22.000	22.000	135 348	175 949
<i>European Union countries+European Union</i>				
Austria	0.679	1.412	8 687	11 293
Belgium	0.828	1.721	10 588	13 764
Bulgaria	0.056	0.116	714	928
Croatia	0.091	0.189	1 163	1 512

<i>Parties to Convention</i>	<i>United Nations 2021 assessment rate (percentage)</i>	<i>Recommended scale secretariat (percentage)</i>	<i>Recommended contribution (US dollars)</i>	
			<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
Cyprus	0.036	0.075	461	600
Czechia	0.340	0.707	4 350	5 654
Denmark	0.553	1.150	7 075	9 197
Estonia	0.044	0.091	560	728
Finland	0.417	0.867	5 334	6934
France	4.318	8.977	55 228	71 795
Germany	6.111	12.705	78 164	101 611
Greece	0.325	0.676	4 159	5 406
Hungary	0.228	0.474	2 916	3 791
Ireland	0.439	0.913	5 617	7 302
Italy	3.189	6.630	40 789	53 025
Latvia	0.050	0.104	640	832
Lithuania	0.077	0.160	984	1 280
Luxembourg	0.068	0.141	867	1 128
Malta	0.019	0.040	246	320
Netherlands	1.377	2.863	17 614	22 897
Poland	0.837	1.740	10 705	13 916
Portugal	0.353	0.734	4 516	5 870
Romania	0.312	0.649	3 993	5 191
Slovakia	0.155	0.322	1 981	2 575
Slovenia	0.079	0.164	1 009	1 312
Spain	2.134	4.437	27 297	35 486
Sweden	0.871	1.811	11 142	14 484
European Union	—	3.330	20 487	26 632
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.915</b>	<b>100.000</b>	<b>615 220</b>	<b>799 770</b>

#### A. Mobilizing additional resources from United Nations regular budget

32. The Executive Body could attempt to mobilize additional resources for the Air Convention secretariat from the United Nations regular budget.

33. These resources cannot be taken from those currently available to ECE. In fact, after subsequent cuts to the ECE budget, all ECE programmes are already severely understaffed. With the highest number of regular budget posts of all ECE conventions, the Air Convention is the one that benefits the most from the United Nations regular budget. It will not therefore be attributed further resources. On the contrary, if the ECE budget continues to be cut, Air Convention posts could be affected in the long term.

34. The Executive Body could attempt to mobilize additional resources from the United Nations regular budget for ECE to be dedicated to the Air Convention. This would entail a process with different decision-making steps, from the Executive Body up to the General Assembly.

35. The first step required would be a decision by the Executive Body requesting the Secretary-General to increase the support by ECE in order to ensure the effective management and full implementation of the expanded programme of work of the Air Convention. As a second step, the issue should be considered by the Economic Commission for Europe (or by the Executive Committee, depending on when the process is initiated). Should the Executive Committee/Commission back the Executive Body decision, it would transmit to the Economic and Social Council a draft resolution on this issue for consideration and possible adoption. As a third step, the draft resolution would be considered and adopted in New York by the Economic and Social Council. Lastly, if adopted by the Economic and Social Council, the draft resolution would be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee for a final decision by the General Assembly.

36. It should be noted that this process was undertaken, to no avail, in order to gather additional regular budget resources for the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and its Protocol on Water and Health. It proved impossible to gather the needed support at the level of the Executive Committee, or of the Economic and Social Council. Given the length and uncertainty of this process, should the Executive Body decide to pursue it, it could, as was done regarding the Protocol on Water and Health, at the same time decide to adopt and mobilize a budget including extrabudgetary resources for the core activities of the secretariat for which contributions would be raised in the period it would take to recruit such additional regular budget staff (1–2 years).

## **B. Junior Professional Officers Programme**

37. Another possibility to gather resources for the core secretariat functions is through the Junior Professional Officers Programme. Junior Professional Officers are recruited under bilateral agreements between the United Nations and donor countries. Candidates are young professionals, usually with an advanced university degree and a minimum of two years of professional experience. Junior Professional Officer positions are generally at the P-1 or P-2 level. Initially, Junior Professional Officers are granted a one-year appointment, which may be extended, on the basis of good performance, to two or three years, depending on the donor country. The main objective of the Programme is to provide young professionals with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the field of multilateral international cooperation through a learning experience under the supervision of specialists. The Programme also represents an opportunity for mobilizing additional capacity development resources from some donors.

38. While Junior Professional Officers represent a welcome opportunity to strengthen the secretariat, it should be noted that the Junior Professional Officer Programme is not intended to address resources gaps in the secretariat. The missing resources to support the core functions of the secretariat cannot be filled through a succession of Junior Professional Officers.

## **V. Further action by the Executive Body**

39. The Executive Body is invited to consider the above-mentioned options and decide on the way forward. It should be noted that, between the adoption of a decision by the Executive Body and its visible effect, there is a time lapse of between one and two years, necessary for the collection of funds, recruitment and other administrative procedures.

40. In view of the above, the Executive Body is invited to consider adjusting the workplan and the priorities for 2023, including reducing the involvement of the secretariat in certain activities, while increasing the in-kind support by Parties, lead countries, experts, technical

bodies and centres. In particular, the Executive Body might wish to consider the following options in 2023:

(a) Annual sessions of the Executive Body and the main subsidiary bodies: The following sessions are scheduled to take place in 2023: the sixty-first session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, 11–14 April 2023; the ninth joint session of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects, 11–15 September 2023; and the forty-third session of the Executive Body, 11–14 December 2023. To maintain the smooth preparation, organization and conduct of the three plenary sessions as scheduled, the Executive Body needs to consider the following actions:

(i) Reducing the number of official documents: The Executive Body might wish to decide that reports of task force meetings and technical reports be submitted as informal documents in 2023. The Executive Body might further wish to invite lead countries of task forces to consider providing informal translations of the meeting reports, especially for meetings for which they provide interpretation. This would reduce the workload of the secretariat and enable it to ensure timeliness and quality in the issuance of guidance and policy documents prepared by task forces and technical bodies for consideration and adoption by the subsidiary bodies and the Executive Body;

(ii) Limiting the number of meetings of the Bureaux of the Executive Body and the main subsidiary bodies: While regular communication and cooperation with the Bureaux is necessary for the effective preparation of the annual sessions, the secretariat can support with logistics, agendas, notes and other documentation a maximum of five Bureau meetings. The Executive Body might wish to consider the following Bureau meetings for 2023: Joint EMEP/WGE Bureaux (one meeting), Bureau of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (one meeting), Bureau of the Executive Body (three meetings);

(b) Financing of centres: Under EMEP, the secretariat provides funding to five centres through agreements with only three centres, as one of the centres subcontracts two other centres. Under the Working Group on Effects, each centre is financed through a separate agreement with the secretariat. The secretariat currently manages 9 agreements with WGE centres. This is beyond the secretariat's current capacity and leads to delays in the collection of contributions, the establishment of annual appendices and the disbursement of payments for all centres. The Executive Body might wish to invite one host institution of WGE centres to consider subcontracting the other centres (except the World Health Organization) It could invite Parties to consider providing in-kind contributions to centres to enable such subcontracting. This would decrease the number of agreements established and managed by the secretariat from 12 to 5;

(c) Review of compliance and meetings of the Implementation Committee: With the increased number of protocols in force, Parties and obligations, the implementation of the secretariat functions described in decision 2012/25, annex, is beyond its current capacity. The revision of the mandate of the Implementation Committee was included in the 2020–2021<sup>8</sup> and 2022–2023<sup>9</sup> workplans for the implementation of the Convention. The Executive Body might wish to consider revising the procedures for compliance review in order to decrease the involvement of the secretariat. In particular, in 2023, the Executive Body might wish to consider: inviting the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections to present the information on exceedance of emission reduction obligations under the various protocols to the EMEP Steering Body; inviting the EMEP Steering Body to forward that information to the Executive Body; inviting Parties that may be in non-compliance according to the information presented by the Centre to provide clarification prior to or at the forty-third session of the Executive Body; and inviting the Implementation Committee to consider those cases and to report back to the Executive Body in 2024;

<sup>8</sup> ECE/EB.AIR/2019/1, table 3, item 3.5.

<sup>9</sup> ECE/EB.AIR/148/Add.1, table 3, item 3.5 (advance version), available at <https://unece.org/environment-policy/air>.

(d) Additional session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in 2023: The workplan for the implementation of the Convention for 2022–2023 includes an additional session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, tentatively scheduled for August–September 2023.<sup>10</sup> Professional staff requirements for the organization of this meeting could be covered thanks to the contribution of a Junior Professional Officer by Germany; the staff costs for a programme assistant and the conference costs are still to be covered by voluntary extrabudgetary contributions by Parties. The Executive Body might wish to consider whether to maintain this meeting in 2023 and invite Parties to provide the additional resources necessary for its organization. Alternatively, the professional staff resources provided by Germany through the Junior Professional Officer Programme could be used to support the work under subparagraphs (b) and (c) above.

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, Table 6.