



European Ecoforum: Addnl statement Attracta Uí Bhroin

Agenda 7(b) Future Financial Arrangements.

Note: Text in [*italics*] won't be delivered to keep within time – it is left in for clarity and completeness.

Thank-you Chair,

We wish to acknowledge and welcome the calls of Norway and Switzerland for a scheme of mandatory contributions, and support Norway's call for specific clarifications. We also wish to express our disappointment in respect of the EU's statement supporting the continuation of voluntary contributions.

So here we are again I fear at another Groundhog day. This means a situation which has happened before, happens over and over again.

At the first meetings around this Convention that I attended over a decade ago – my former colleague Jeremy Wates, was urging the Parties to step up and agree a proper funding structure adequate to the needs of this Convention, where a Parties ratification contributes so positively to its democratic reputation internationally.

Today the situation on funding is much more dire. Given the lack of consensus on an approach, the draft decision before you this morning, reflects the three different options under consideration, [*options are as follows:*

- A. *the current financial scheme based on voluntary contributions;*
- B. *a recommendatory scheme;*
- C. *and a mandatory scheme of contributions aligned with the United Nations scale of assessment.]*

The recitals to the draft decision fail to adequately set out what the Parties know to be the dire and really critical situation facing the Convention. We submit this must be rectified to reflect the proper context in which the decision on the contribution mechanism to be adopted will be being made. That is the role of the recitals.

So today and during the commenting period following this working group we invite the Parties to consider including these further recitals, or recitals along similar lines,

“Having considered the grave resourcing situation facing the Convention highlighted in particular at the 27th and 28th Working Group of the Parties, and in particular the increased workload facing the Compliance Committee and its secretariat, and strong and repeated calls from the Chair of the Compliance Committee for more resources to assist their work in supporting the Parties with their Compliance, in the face of persistent under-resourcing;

Having considered the inter-twinned climate, biodiversity and pollution crises, on which the exercise of the Convention's rights and obligations can and should play a key role in responding at both national and international level, and thus the necessity of ensuring its secretariat is resourced accordingly to provide necessary support including in awareness raising and integration opportunities;

Having considered the potential risk of impact to the effective work of the Convention consequent on the liquidity crisis facing the UN over the inter-sessional period; “

The Parties have consistently resisted anything other than discretionary contributions. That would be acceptable were it not for the fact that such discretionary contributions fall short of what is needed to resource the Convention's work. The issues have been set out clearly in the report on contributions and note on further pledges: some Parties do not contribute, or very infrequently, others contribute very little, others contribute in an unpredictable way, others contribute late, others of course are generous. But no one can plan or budget on this basis.

Just take a step back for a minute and look at the overall budget – it's tiny at around \$1.8 million. This should not be an issue for 47 Parties, including the European Union to deliver several times over, if they wanted to. You are in an international forum making this decision and I would highlight your obligations under Article 3(7) to act in accordance with the principles of this Convention – where under-funding the Convention will invariably compromise its effectiveness.

Just hours ago yesterday – we all burst into applause in recognising the work of the Compliance Committee and its secretariat. Yet its Chair made clear, it is on its knees, with persistent long term failure to fund the secretariat adequately.

It is hard to think of a more important environmental defender than someone like Ms Fiona Marshall. Yet I wonder how many of the delegates here realise she is considered to be an “extra budgetary” resource. Only a tiny contingent of the Convention secretariat is funded out of the UN budget – which was set decades ago when there were less Parties to service, and considerably less work to do. So her contract is tentatively renewed on an annual basis. It is hard to attract high calibre new resources to work alongside her given such uncertainty. But we need at least 3, if not more of such resources.

Our thanks ring hollow if we do not follow through here on what is needed.

The timeline for finalising this draft decision have been set out

We call on all delegates to

- engage actively with their Governments in the months up to end of September, to encourage the making of a draft decision for the next MoP which moves beyond discretionary contributions, and also to
- in the interim - step up with increased and timely financial contributions to help address the immediate crisis.

We also ask Parties to constructively engage with each other to advance us toward the adoption of a more appropriate scheme of mandatory contributions or at the very least recommendatory contributions.

Finally, we invite Parties to engage with us and the secretariat to proactively explore opportunities to additionally secure private sector funding for the Convention's Compliance Committee by highlighting its profound importance for the Convention, in line with paragraph 3 of the Draft decision.

Thank-you

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