

BC-13/24: Programme of work and budget for the Basel Convention for the biennium 2018–2019

The Conference of the Parties,

Taking note of the financial reports on the Basel Convention trust funds for 2016 and estimated expenditures for 2017 from the Trust Fund for the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basel Convention Trust Fund),¹

I

Trust Fund for the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

1. *Approves* the programme budget for the Basel Convention for the biennium 2018–2019 of 9,634,869 United States dollars for the purposes set out in table 1 of the present decision;
2. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention to make commitments in an amount up to the approved operational budget, drawing upon available cash resources;
3. *Decides* to maintain the working capital reserve at the level of 15 per cent of the annual average of the biennial operational budgets for the biennium 2018–2019;
4. *Adopts* the indicative scale of assessments for the apportionment of expenses for the biennium 2018–2019 set out in table 2 of the present decision and authorizes the Executive Secretary, consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, to adjust the scale to include all Parties for which the Convention enters into force before 1 January 2018 for 2018 and before 1 January 2019 for 2019;
5. *Recalls* that contributions to the Basel Convention Trust Fund are expected by or on 1 January of the year for which those contributions have been budgeted, requests Parties to pay their contributions promptly, encourages Parties in a position to do so to pay their contributions by 16 October 2017 for the calendar year 2018 and by 16 October 2018 for the calendar year 2019 and requests the Secretariat to notify Parties of the amounts of their contributions as early as possible in the year preceding the year in which they are due;
6. *Notes with concern* that a number of Parties have not paid their contributions to the Basel Convention Trust Fund for 2016 and prior years, contrary to the provisions of paragraph 3 (a) of rule 5 of the financial rules;
7. *Urges* Parties to pay their contributions promptly by or on 1 January of the year to which the contributions apply and requests the Secretariat to present at regional meetings information on the state of play² regarding arrears and their consequences;
8. *Recalls* the provisions of paragraph 3 (e) of rule 5 of the financial rules on outstanding contributions due from 1 January 2001 onwards and paragraph 10 of decision BC-12/25 and decides to continue the practice that no representative of any Party whose contributions are in arrears for four or more years and that has not agreed on or is not respecting a schedule of payments implemented in accordance with paragraph 3 (d) of rule 5 of the financial rules shall be eligible to receive financial support for attendance at intersessional workshops or other informal meetings, as arrears that have

¹ UNEP/CHW.13/INF/53/Rev.2.

² For the present decision, “state of play” consists of the current status of arrears, difficulties with paying assessed contributions due to restrictions that go beyond national jurisdiction, and the status of any payment plans agreed on with the Secretariat.

been outstanding for more than four years must be treated as 100 per cent doubtful debts under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards;

9. *Takes note* of the efforts of the Executive Secretary and the President of the Conference of the Parties, who through a jointly signed letter invited the ministers of foreign affairs of Parties with contributions in arrears to take timely action to rectify those arrears, requests that this practice continue and thanks those Parties that have responded in a positive manner by paying their outstanding contributions;

10. *Takes note* of the indicative staffing table for the Secretariat for the biennium 2018–2019 used for costing purposes to set the overall budget, which is set out in table 3 of the present decision;

11. *Authorizes*, on an exceptional basis, the Executive Secretary, as a last resort, to draw additional funds, not exceeding 100,000 United States dollars, from the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions' three general trust funds' net balance to cover any shortfall from the approved staffing envelope for the biennium 2018–2019, should the annual increase applied to real staff costs and used to determine the staffing envelope not be adequate, provided that they are not reduced below the working capital reserve, except in the case of the Stockholm Convention, where the working capital reserve may temporarily be used for this purpose;

12. *Also authorizes* the Executive Secretary to continue to determine the staffing levels, numbers and structure of the Secretariat in a flexible manner, provided that he remains within the overall cost of the staff numbers set out in table 3 of the present decision for the biennium 2018–2019, as recommended by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its audit report;³

13. *Invites* the Executive Secretary to continue cooperating on programmatic matters with the interim secretariat to the Minamata Convention and to provide any secretariat support that may be requested and is fully funded by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention;

14. *Requests* the Secretariat to ensure the full utilization of the programme support costs available to it in 2018–2019 and, where possible, to offset those costs against the administrative components of the approved budget;

II

Trust Fund to Assist Developing Countries and Other Countries in Need of Technical Assistance in the Implementation of the Basel Convention

15. *Takes note* of the funding estimates included in table 1 of the present decision for activities under the Convention to be financed from the Trust Fund to Assist Developing Countries and other Countries in Need of Technical Assistance in the Implementation of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Technical Cooperation Trust Fund) in the amount of 6,657,894 United States dollars for the biennium 2018–2019;

16. *Notes* that the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund requirement presented in the budget represents the Secretariat's best efforts to be realistic and reflects priorities agreed upon by all Parties and urges Parties and invites non-Parties and others to make voluntary contributions to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund so as to encourage contributions from donors;

17. *Also notes* the importance of having funding available in the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund for the participation in the meetings of the Convention of developing-country Parties, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, and Parties with economies in transition;

18. *Urges* Parties, and invites others in a position to do so, to contribute urgently to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund with a view to ensuring the full and effective participation of

³ Office of Internal Oversight Services, Internal Audit Division, Report 2014/024, available at <https://oios.un.org/page/download/id/120>.

developing-country Parties, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, and Parties with economies in transition, in the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies;

III

Preparations for the next biennium

19. *Decides* that the two trust funds for the Convention shall be continued until 31 December 2019 and requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to extend them for the biennium 2018–2019, subject to the approval of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme;

20. *Takes note* of the efforts since 2012 to enhance efficiency in the use of financial and human resources in the joint secretariat and encourages the Executive Secretary to continue such efforts in the future work of the Secretariat;

21. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare a budget for the biennium 2020–2021, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting, explaining the key principles, assumptions and programmatic strategy on which the budget is based and presenting expenditures for the 2020–2021 period in a programmatic format;

22. *Notes* the need to facilitate priority-setting by providing Parties with timely information on the financial consequences of various options and, to that end, requests the Executive Secretary to include in the proposed operational budget for the biennium 2020–2021 two alternative funding scenarios that take account of any efficiencies identified as a result of paragraph 20 above and are based on:

(a) The Executive Secretary's assessment of the required changes in the operational budget, which should not exceed a 5 per cent increase over the 2018–2019 level in nominal terms, to finance all proposals before the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary implications;

(b) Maintaining the operational budget at the 2018–2019 level in nominal terms;

23. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Open-ended Working Group on the status of the implementation of the present decision;

24. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary at the fourteenth ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties to provide, where relevant, cost estimates for actions that have budgetary implications that are not foreseen in the draft programme of work but are included in proposed draft decisions before the adoption of those decisions by the Conference of the Parties;

25. *Stresses* the need to ensure that the proposal for the 2020–2021 Technical Cooperation Trust Fund requirement presented in the budget is realistic and represents the agreed priorities of all Parties so as to encourage voluntary contributions from donors;

26. *Requests* the Secretariat to identify elements of programmatic cooperation with other organizations of the chemicals and wastes cluster for the programme of work for 2018–2019 in line with decision BC-13/16 on international cooperation and coordination.