BC-14/29: Programme of work and budget for the Basel Convention for the biennium 2020–2021

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Taking note* ofthe financial reports on the Basel Convention trust funds for 2018 and estimated expenditures for 2019 from the trust fund for the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basel Convention general trust fund),[[1]](#footnote-1)

I

Basel Convention general trust fund

1. *Approves* the programme budget for the Basel Convention for the biennium   
   2020–2021 of 4,856,141 United States dollars for 2020 and 4,856,141 United States dollars for 2021 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 2020–2021;
4. *Adopts* the indicative scale of assessments for the apportionment of expenses for the biennium 2020–2021 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 2020 for 2020 and before 1 January 2021 for 2021;
5. *Recalls* that contributions to the Basel Convention general trust fund are expected by 1 January of the year for which those contributions have been budgeted, urges Parties to pay their contributions promptly, encouragesParties in a position to do so to pay their contributions by 16 October 2019 for the calendar year 2020 and by 16 October 2020 for the calendar year 2021, and requests the Secretariat to notifyParties of the amounts of their contributions as early as possible in the year preceding the year in which they are due;
6. *Reiterates the ongoing concern* that a number of Parties have not paid their contributions to the Basel Convention general trust fund for 2018 and prior years, contrary to the provisions of paragraph 3 (a) of rule 5 of the financial rules, and urges Parties to pay their outstanding contributions in full as soon as possible:
7. *Requests* the Secretariat to work directly with the permanent missions, ministries of foreign affairs and focal points of the Parties in this situation, so that they fully pay their arrears and assessed contributions as soon as possible, and to present at regional meetings information on the current situation[[2]](#footnote-2) regarding arrears and their consequences;
8. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to work closely with the Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants to improve the timely communication of information on the payment of contributions, including arrears;
9. *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 8 of decision BC‑13/24, 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 been outstanding for more than four years must be treated as 100 per cent doubtful debts under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards;
10. *Notes* the efforts of the Executive Secretary and the President of the Conference of the Parties, who through a jointly signed letter invited the ministers for 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;
11. *Adopts* the staffing table for the Secretariat for the biennium 2020–2021 used for costing purposes to set the overall budget, which is set out in table 3 of the present decision;
12. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary to continue to determine the staffing levels, numbers and structure of the Secretariat in a flexible manner, provided that positions remain at the same level or become lower, the Executive Secretary remains within the overall cost of the staff numbers set out in table 3 of the present decision for the biennium 2020–2021, in line with the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services,[[3]](#footnote-3) and that it leads to no additional budget obligations being incurred beyond that biennium;
13. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting on the level of positions filled against the approved staffing table;
14. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary, on an exceptional basis, to draw down from the available surplus of the Basel Convention general trust fund the amount of 24,129 United States dollars in 2020–2021 for specified activities listed in table 4 of the present decision;

II

Basel Convention special trust fund for voluntary contributions

1. *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 (Basel Convention special trust fund for voluntary contributions) in the amount of 4,533,161 United States dollars for 2020 and 4,533,161 United States dollars for 2021;
2. *Notes* that the Basel Convention special trust fund for voluntary contributions 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;
3. *Also notes* the importance of having funding available in the Basel Convention special trust fund for voluntary contributions for the participation of developing-country Parties, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, and Parties with economies in transition, in the meetings of the Convention;
4. *Urges* Parties, and invites others in a position to do so, to contribute urgently to the Basel Convention special trust fund for voluntary contributions with a view to ensuring the full and effective participation of 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;
5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in line with decision 3/3 on the management of trust funds and earmarked contributions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, in consultation with the relevant Parties and/or donors, as appropriate and in accordance with the terms of the respective agreements/funds, to reassign the balances in inactive trust funds when the activities for which they were established have ended, with a view to supporting the implementation of appropriate activities of the programme of work funded by voluntary funds;

III

Preparations for the next biennium

1. *Decides* that the two trust funds for the Basel Convention shall be continued until 31 December 2021, and requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to extend them for the biennium 2020–2021, subject to the approval of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme;
2. *Notes* the efforts since 2012 to enhance efficiency in the use of financial and human resources in the Secretariat, and encourages the Executive Secretary to continue such efforts in the future work of the Secretariat;
3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare a budget for the biennium 2022–2023, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting, explaining the key principles, assumptions and programmatic strategy on which the budget is based and presenting expenditures for the biennium 2020–2021 in a programmatic format;
4. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to determine the staffing levels, numbers and structure of the Secretariat in a staffing table and reflect the total actual costs in the budgets of the conventions for the biennium 2022–2023;
5. *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 2022–2023 two alternative funding scenarios that take account of any efficiencies identified as a result of paragraph 21 of the present decision 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 2020–2021 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 2020–2021 level in nominal terms;

1. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, at the fifteenth 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;
2. *Stresses* the need to ensure that the proposal for the 2022–2023 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.

1. UNEP/CHW.14/INF/45/Rev.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For the present decision, “current situation” 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Internal Audit Division, Report 2014/024, available at <https://oios.un.org/audit-reports>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)