

Report of the Administrative Working Group

The Working Group met on 4th, 5th and 6th September, being chaired by Ms. Luisa Rodrigues (Portugal). Appointed delegates of the Parties attending the Meeting were present: Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Albania), Dr. Ludo Holsbeek (Belgium), Ms. Zrinka Domazetovic (Croatia), Ms. Andrea Štefan (Croatia), Ms. Libuse Vlasakova (Czech Republic), Ms. Maj F. Munk (Denmark), Ms. Lilika Kais (Estonia), Mr. Matti Osara (Finland), Ms. Tuuli Loven (Finland), Dr. Nathalie Lacour (France), Dr. Michel Perret (France), Ms. Ann Rukhadze (Georgia), Mr. Jochen Flasbarth (Germany), Mr. Oliver Schall (Germany), Mr. Joachim Schmitz (Germany), Dr. Zoltan Bihari (Hungary), Mr. Peter Carvill (Ireland), Mr. Felice Cappelluti (Italy), Ms. Teresa Catelani (Italy), Mr. Vilnis Bernards (Latvia), Mr. Laurent Biraschi (Luxembourg), Mr. Aleksandar Nastov (Macedonia), Ms. Diana Celac (Moldova), Ms. Gelare Nader (The Netherlands), Mr. Øystein Størkersen (Norway), Prof. Bronislaw Woloszyn (Poland), Ms. Alina Frim (Romania), Mr. Peter Pilinský (Slovakia), Mr. Peter Skoberne (Slovenia), Ms. Mateja Blazic (Slovenia), Ms. Marie Nedinge (Sweden), Dr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine), and Mr. Huw Thomas (United Kingdom). Mr. Andreas Streit (Executive Secretary UNEP/EUROBATS), Ms. Elisabeth Mrema (UNEP), Mr. Abderrahmane Jai (UNON), and Ms. Paola Deda (UNEP/CMS) were also present in the meeting.

The Working Group discussed the documents *Draft Resolution 5.1* (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.7), *Budget Option 2* (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP.5.18), *Option 3 - Draft Budget Estimates for 2007-2010* (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.21), and *Draft Resolution 5.8* (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.14).

i) Draft Resolution 5.1: Financial and Administrative Matters (Budget 2007-2010), Budget Option 2, and Option 3 - Draft Budget Estimates for 2007-2010

The Executive Secretary opened the session and presented the documents *Report of the 2006 targeted Audit of the Secretariat and Budget* (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.19), *Report on income and expenditure for the financial year 2003* (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.4), *Report on income and expenditure for the financial years 2004 and 2005* (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.5), *Trust Fund Status for the financial years 2004-2005* (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.6), and *Trust Fund Status as at 31.07.2006* (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.7). Parties congratulated the Executive Secretary for the outcome of the Audit concerning his successful management of the budget.

Draft Resolution 5.1 was then introduced by the Secretariat. Two additional options were also introduced. Option 2 prepared by the Secretariat upon the request of UK, Germany and France (and on behalf of Italy) during AC 11, and option 3 proposed by UK. After initial discussions, the Parties decided to discard option 3, and to focus the discussions on option 2. Parties concluded that on budget line 1303 the Secretariat staff should remain part-time. Budget line 3302 should be 0 for the meetings of the Standing Committee, as they will meet at the CMS Family headquarters in Bonn. Budget line 3303 should have a total of Euro 36.000: being 0 in 2008 as it will occur back to back with the European Bat Research Symposium in Romania. For budget line 5201, Germany has proposed to pay 50% (total of Euro 16.000 for the period of 4 years) from the annual regular 25.600 voluntary contributions. The remaining 50% (total of EUR 16.000 for the period of 4 years) plus the budget line 5202 (EUR 800 for the period of four years) will be financed by a voluntary contribution from The Netherlands. The commitment to fund these budget lines (5201 and 5202) by voluntary contributions is for this coming period of four years only and at the next MoP shall be revised again.

The Executive Secretary presented different scenarios where the total maximum contribution percentage of the ceiling was varied to see an overall effect on levels of contributions. The working group found this to be very useful during the course of the discussion and concluded that the ceiling should remain unchanged (maximum 20% for any one Party).

At the request of the Parties the Chair of the MoP will send a letter to the Executive Director of UNEP to accommodate the costs of the extraordinary audit from the UNEP programme Support costs (budget line 6000). Should this be the case, the Euro 4.000 will be used for contingency, in accordance with the audit report.

Paragraph 13 of Draft Resolution 5.1 was changed. “*Authorises* the Standing Committee in case of unforeseen major shortfalls on established budget lines and subject to satisfactory documentation provided by the Secretariat, to decide upon withdrawals from the Trust Fund reserve as deemed appropriate” was replaced by “*Instructs* the Standing Committee, through the Secretariat, to advise the Executive Director of UNEP, when requested, of its priorities for expenditure to enable the consideration of any need for withdrawing funds from the Trust Fund reserve”.

The UNON adviser informed the Parties that they are expecting an 3% VAT increase in Germany soon, which will affect the staff costs of the Secretariat and should be taken

into consideration when reviewing the budget. He recommended a 7% increase in the budget for unforeseen costs in the future. This proposal was not taken up.

After being reviewed and agreed by the working group, the estimate was incorporated in Draft Resolution 5.1 as Annex 1, and Annex 2 was changed accordingly.

A new version of the Draft Resolution was prepared (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.7.Rev.2).

ii) Draft Resolution 5.8: Establishment of a Standing Committee of the Agreement

Some concerns were expressed that there had not been sufficient time to consider this draft resolution but it was subsequently agreed that a Standing Committee should be established. It was noted that Poland would not support the establishment of the Standing Committee if it would impose additional budgetary pressure.

It was considered that five members were insufficient and a posed operational difficulties in the event of absences and it was agreed that there should be seven, with the Depositary and host government of the Secretariat as permanent members.

It was also agreed that any Party should be entitled to participate in the deliberations of the Standing Committee but not to vote on decisions. In this regard it was important that Parties received the working documents concurrently with the Standing Committee.

It was understood that the Standing Committee would remove budgetary and administrative issues from the remit of the existing Advisory Committee, and that this would lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency in progressing business under the Agreement. With this in mind, it was decided that the Standing Committee should not require budgetary provision on the basis that any necessary meetings will be held at the premises of the Secretariat in Bonn.

It was understood that the Standing Committee, and in particular the Chair of the Committee, may in appropriate circumstances, also have a representational role as regards the interests of the Agreement and the Parties to it.

The Working Group considered the provision in the Draft Resolution for having due regard to geographical distribution in the composition of the Standing Committee and then proceeded to identify proposed members. It was agreed that the Standing Committee should elect its own Chair and Vice Chair.

A new version of the Draft Resolution was prepared (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.14.Rev.2).