UNECE Grants Committee Annual Report

2015

1. **Foreword**

The Grants Committee was established in December 2000, to provide recommendations to the Executive Secretary of UNECE on the use of voluntary contributions or extra-budgetary resources received from donors for grants to non-profit partner organisations in accordance with the Guidelines approved by the Office of the Controller of the United Nations.

The overall governance and Guidelines for the Grants Committee (“Guidelines”) and its related approval process were revised in coordination with, and under the direct approval of the UN Controller in 2013. These changes brought about a more consistent approach to the UN procurement rules of the grants approval process, in particular to focus on best value for money, fairness, integrity and transparency, and ensuring that the interests of the UNECE are maintained at all time.

In 2015, the ECE Grants Committee further amended the Guidelines, the Memorandum of Understanding and the Terms of Reference templates, to ensure their compliance with OIOS recommendations and IPSAS standards.

2. **Composition**

The UNECE Grants Committee for 2015 was established in line with the approved General Procedures. The Committee members had been appointed by the Executive Secretary on 1 January 2015 as follows;

- **Chairperson:** Ms. Zamira Eshmambetova, Director, Programme Management Unit, Office of the Executive Secretary
  
  **Alternate Chairperson:** Mr. Serhii Yampolskyi, Economic Affairs Officer, Programme Management Unit

- **Legal:** Mr. Markus Schmidt, Senior Legal Adviser, UNOG
  
  **Alternate Legal:** Ms. Stephanie Cochard, Legal Officer, UNOG

*Prior to October 10, 2015:*

- **Financial:** Ms. Leslie Cleland, Executive Officer, Executive Office
Alternate Financial: Mr. Michael Sylver, Administrative Officer, Executive Office and Mr. Joon Kong Tay, Senior Budget Assistant, Executive Office

From and after October 10, 2015:

- Financial: Mr. Michael Sylver, Acting Executive Officer
- Alternate Financial: Mr. Joon Kong Tay, Senior Budget Assistant

3. Meetings

There were twelve grants committee meetings held during the year 2015.

4. Grants

The number of grants reviewed by the committee has increased by 9%: from 33 in 2014 to 36 in 2015. The funding for the grants has increased by 15%: from US$ 965,694 in 2014, to US$ 1,107,466 in 2015. The most significant increase in funding was observed in the Environment Division: an increase by US $ 345,255 or 49% compared to 2014. The number of grant recipients has increased from 33 in 2014 to 36 in 2015. Eight of them were new grantees which received grants for the first time. Five of them were returning grantees who received two or three grants in 2015. Four were continuing grantees: they have received numerous grants over the last number of years. These include: Central Asia Regional Environmental Centre (CAREC), International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), International Sava River Commission and Zoi Environmental Network which have established long-term strategic partnership with UNECE and proved to be reliable partners in implementation of grants.

The quality of grant submissions varied despite classroom-led and face-to-face trainings given by the EO with PMU and the availability of training material and tools (guidelines, templates and forms) on the EO Intranet. Many grant proposals lacked clarity in formulating the purpose, expected outcomes and outputs, and in detailing the assignments and specifying performance indicators. The benchmark rates used to justify the value of services requested were often excessive and/or unsubstantiated. As a result, most of the grant proposals were approved only after their substantial revision.

To address these concerns, the Grant Committee will (i) provide additional details in the TOR and Grant Proposals templates; (ii) upload the samples of the TOR and Grant Proposals on the EO Intranet and (iii) request EO, in collaboration with PMU to provide additional training to project managers in 2016. In addition, the
Grant Committee will be revising its Guidelines, to (i) ensure more transparent and competitive selection process of grantees and (ii) prevent any conflict of interest in awarding grants in the future.

5. **Annexes**

**Annex I:** Charts detailing grant performance during the reporting period

**Annex II:** Detailed list of UNECE Grants for the year 2015
Division | # of Grants 2015
--- | ---
Environment | 34
Forestry, Land and Housing | 0
Transport | 0
Statistics | 1
Economic Cooperation and Trade | 1
Sustainable Energy | 0
Total: | 36

Number of Grants by Division 2012 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division - # of Grants</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Incr/(Decr) *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry, Land and Housing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Cooperation and Trade</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Energy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Incr/Decr refers to the variance between 2014 and 2015.
### Grant Value by Division - USD Amount

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Incr/(Decr) *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>$625,207</td>
<td>$771,474</td>
<td>$705,791</td>
<td>$1,051,046</td>
<td>$345,255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forestry, Land and Housing</td>
<td>$135,600</td>
<td>$402,228</td>
<td>$234,903</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>($234,903)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>$262,801</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Cooperation and Trade</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$47,920</td>
<td>$22,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Energy</td>
<td>$72,947</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$1,108,555</td>
<td>$1,215,703</td>
<td>$965,694</td>
<td>$1,107,466</td>
<td>$141,772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Incr/Decr refers to the variance between 2014 and 2015.

**ECE Grants by Division in USD 2015**

**2012 - 2015 Grant Value by Division in USD**