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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on  
Access to Information, Public Participation  
in Decision-making and Access to Justice  
in Environmental Matters

**Working Group of the Parties****Twenty-fourth meeting**

Geneva, 1–3 July 2020

Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Preparations for the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties:  
future work programme****Draft elements of the work programme for 2022–2025****Prepared by the Bureau with the assistance of the secretariat***Summary*

At its sixth session (Budva, Montenegro, 11–14 September 2017), the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters requested the secretariat to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, including a detailed breakdown of estimated costs, for consideration and further elaboration by the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1, decision VI/5, para. 10). The Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, was also requested to provide an estimation of the operational costs needed for the effective functioning of the Convention that was clearly distinct from the cost of other activities subject to the availability of resources (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1, decision VI/6, para. 10).

In accordance with those decisions, the present document contains the draft elements of the future work programme for 2022–2025 and three tables: a draft work programme for 2022–2025 (annex I); draft estimated costs of activities for the work areas listed in the work programme for 2022–2025 (annex II); and an example of the possible distribution of different meetings under the Convention for the period 2022–2025 (annex III).

There will be opportunities for open-ended consultations among national focal points and stakeholders on the present draft document prior to and after the twenty-fourth meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 1–3 July 2020). The Bureau is expected to revise the draft document thereafter in the light of the comments received and to submit it to the Working Group for consideration and approval at its twenty-fifth meeting (2021), with a view to its subsequent submission to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration at its seventh session.



## Introduction

1. At its sixth session (Budva, Montenegro, 11–14 September 2017), the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters requested the secretariat to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, including a detailed breakdown of estimated costs, for consideration and further elaboration by the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1, decision VI/5, para. 10). The Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, was also requested to provide an estimation of the operational costs needed for the effective functioning of the Convention that was clearly distinct from the cost of other activities subject to the availability of resources (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1, decision VI/6, para. 10).

2. In accordance with the above-mentioned decisions, the present document contains the draft elements of the future work programme and three tables: a draft work programme for 2022–2025 (annex I); draft estimated costs of activities for the work areas listed in the work programme for 2022–2025 (annex II); and an example of the possible distribution of different meetings under the Convention for the period 2022–2025 (annex III).

3. The draft elements for the work programme document was prepared on the basis of the outcomes of the meetings of the Working Group of the Parties and information notes submitted by the Chairs of the task forces and of the thematic session on promoting the principles of the Convention in international forums. The draft elements also take into account the outcomes of the implementation of the current Strategic Plan and a proposal for the new Strategic Plan.

4. The draft suggests a similar approach to that taken under the current work programme in terms of allocating four years to the intersessional period and including a thematic discussion on different substantive issues at each meeting of the Working Group of the Parties. The outcomes of the work of the task forces and of the work area on genetically modified organisms will provide a basis for discussion at the thematic sessions. It is expected that, as in the current intersessional period, the Working Group will continue to focus its discussion on those issues (for example, strategic policy) that require the particular attention of the Convention's focal points. Furthermore, the Working Group, within its mandate of overseeing the progress in implementing the Convention's work programmes (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.15, decision I/14, paras. 1 and 2 (b)), will be given the opportunity, at each of its meetings, to hear more detailed reports on the implementation of decisions on compliance matters adopted by the Meeting of the Parties.

5. Thanks to the diverse working structure under the Convention (i.e. three task forces on the three Convention pillars; the Compliance Committee, with meetings taking place an average every five weeks; ongoing advisory support from the secretariat; and cooperation with numerous partners), the four-year intersessional period, combined with annual thematic policy discussions and a thorough review of the progress achieved in implementing the work area on compliance by the Working Group of the Parties, did not have a negative impact on the work under the Convention. On the contrary, the extension of the intersessional period allowed more time for the substantive preparation of meetings and increased the capacity of Parties to participate in the different meetings. On average, one meeting of a subsidiary body or one capacity-building activity for the Convention still took place every month.

## New elements

6. Based on experience in implementing the current work programme, several new elements are proposed for the new work programme. It has been suggested that a new mechanism under the work area on the compliance mechanism should be established and the legal support to this work area strengthened. This mechanism will function in addition to the Compliance Committee and will deal exclusively with urgent response to matters related to article 3 (8) of the Convention. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the following work areas should be strengthened with advisory assistance: capacity-building; awareness-raising

and promotion; and promotion of the *Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums* (ECE/MP.PP/2005/2/Add.5, annex) and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes. It should be noted that all new proposed activities significantly contribute at the same time to the work area on capacity-building. Thus, the work areas will be as follows (see new additions underlined below):

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*Work area*

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**Substantive issues**

- I. Access to information, including electronic information tools
- II. Public participation
- III. Access to justice
- IV. Genetically modified organisms

**Procedures and mechanisms**

- V. Compliance mechanism
- V.1 Compliance Committee (*strengthened with legal assistance*)
- V.2 *New rapid response mechanism to deal with cases related to article 3 (8) of the Convention*
- VI. Capacity-building (*strengthened with advisory assistance*)
- VII. Reporting mechanism
- VIII. Awareness-raising and promotion (*strengthened with advisory support*)
- IX. Promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes (*strengthened with advisory support*)

**Coordination, Meeting of the Parties and horizontal support**

- X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities
  - XI. Meeting of the Parties
  - XII. Horizontal support
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**Why new elements are needed**

7. There is an urgent need to address the harassment of environmental defenders and to offer them protection under the Convention. This is demonstrated by: the outcomes of the twenty-second (Geneva, 19–21 June 2018) and twenty-third (Geneva, 26–28 June 2019) meetings of the Working Group of the Parties (see ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2018/2 and ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2019/2 for respective meeting reports); Human Rights Council resolution 40/11 recognizing the contribution of environmental human rights defenders to the enjoyment of human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development (A/HRC/RES/40/11); and reports of the relevant Special Rapporteurs appointed by the Human Rights Council. Furthermore, a number of reports by non-governmental organizations addressed this critical matter, including: the 2019 report “Dangerous Work: Reprisals against Environmental Activists”,<sup>1</sup> and “Front Line Defenders: Global Analysis 2018”.<sup>2</sup> There is a critical need to address this issue effectively in order to respond to the

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<sup>1</sup> See: [https://crudeaccountability.org/wp-content/uploads/Report\\_DangerousWork\\_compressed\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://crudeaccountability.org/wp-content/uploads/Report_DangerousWork_compressed_for_web.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Front Line Defenders (Blackrock, County Dublin, Front Line, the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, 2018). Available at [www.frontlinedefenders.org/sites/default/files/global\\_analysis\\_2018.pdf](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/sites/default/files/global_analysis_2018.pdf).

increase in persecution and harassment of environmental defenders, including in Parties to the Aarhus Convention. In addition to considering this matter at intergovernmental (Working Group of the Parties) and task force meetings, as has been done in the current intersessional period, it has been suggested that a dedicated mechanism should be set up (see ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2020/13 for more information). The secretariat plays several roles in this area by: organizing and substantively servicing meetings; providing substantive input to documents and material; and acting as a “help desk” to respond to numerous requests from countries and organizations regarding human rights in the field of the environment. This work also requires close cooperation and liaison with relevant bodies of the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Environment Programme, as appropriate.

8. Furthermore, there is a real need to strengthen cooperation with other relevant organizations, multilateral environmental agreements and processes dealing with human rights and the environment and to devote more effort to the promotion of the Convention among non-ECE countries and in other international forums (for example, international forums dealing with climate change, chemicals or health and international financial institutions). There has been a substantial increase in demand from countries, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and international organizations for advisory expert support from the secretariat on the above. Usually these requests are made on an urgent basis, for example, immediately before and often during the other multilateral environmental agreements’ Meeting of the Parties or Implementation/Compliance Committee meetings. Support by the secretariat is pursued through providing substantive inputs to numerous reviews and documents prepared under other forums, liaising with these forums, delivering presentations and training sessions at relevant meetings and acting as a “help desk” to respond to the many requests from countries and organizations. Currently, due to lack of capacity, the secretariat is turning down the vast majority of requests. The heavy workload and the continuous demand for the secretariat’s input put staff under great strain and lead to serious frustration among the countries and organizations concerned.

9. Furthermore, the secretariat’s workload regarding the compliance mechanism has significantly increased due to the volume and complexity of the cases considered and of the follow-up to implementation of Meeting of the Parties decisions concerning the compliance of individual Parties. In addition to preparing a large number of documents and background analytical material, the secretariat devotes significant time to responding to Parties’ and communicants’ enquiries and to providing advisory support to Parties concerned to assist them in better understanding the Committee’s procedures and/or what may be needed from them in order to come into compliance. The advisory support that the secretariat provides to Parties regarding the compliance mechanism has a double added value since it not only assists the Compliance Committee in carrying out its work but also contributes significantly to capacity-building for those Parties (at present 27 Parties are subject to compliance review, consisting of 68 cases (14 follow-ups on sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties decisions/requests and post-sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties findings of non-compliance, plus 49 pending communications/submissions and 5 pre-admissibility communications). At present, two P-3 staff members are budgeted to work at 80 per cent of full-time equivalent on these tasks. However, in periods of peak workload prior to and during meetings (on average, one meeting every five weeks), staff work at 100 per cent and very often considerably more than 100 per cent. If sufficient staff resources are not provided for this work area there is a risk of substantial delay in the consideration, finalization and follow-up of cases. Consequently, the Parties concerned may not be provided with assistance in a timely manner to bring their legislative frameworks and practice into compliance with the Convention.

10. The above-mentioned work areas are closely linked with the implementation of a number of regional and global commitments made by Parties and other member States. Notably, improved legislative frameworks and authorities’ capacities to effectively provide access to information and to justice and ensure inclusive and meaningful public participation are critical for the success of such initiatives as, for example:

(a) A new European Green Deal,<sup>3</sup> which sets a path for a transition that is “green”, just and socially fair.

(b) A number of Human Rights Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 37/8 on human rights and the environment (A/HRC/RES.37/8), 40/11 on recognizing the contribution of environmental human rights defenders to the enjoyment of human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development (A/HRC/RES/40/11), 42/21 on protection of the rights of workers exposed to hazardous substances and wastes (A/HRC/RES/42/21), and processes such as universal periodic reviews<sup>4</sup> and special procedures<sup>5</sup> with direct relevance to environmental matters.

(c) Pledges made under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to pursue mitigation and adaptation measures through participatory processes, including through implementation of article 6 of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the Paris Agreement.

(d) Open government and open data initiatives,<sup>6</sup> which are key to furthering transparency and preventing corruption across different sectors.

(e) Strategies and action plans aimed at protecting biodiversity requiring the full engagement of the population, in particular local communities.<sup>7</sup>

(f) The firm determination of States Members of the United Nations to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through participatory processes.

11. The Convention is thus a powerful horizontal tool for furthering environmental democracy across different sectors and processes. Owing to its cross-cutting nature, the Convention plays an important role in the achievement of all of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16, by empowering the public with the right to participate effectively in decision-making on a wide range of issues addressed by the Goals, such as: health protection (Goal 3); water and sanitation management (Goal 6); clean energy (Goal 7); green economy (Goals 8, 9 and 12); the reduction of inequalities (Goal 10); climate action (Goal 13); tourism (Goals 8, 12, 14 and 15); urban planning (Goals 11 and 13) and disaster risk reduction (Goals 9 and 11). References to the respective Goals have been added to the explanatory text contained in annex I below.

### **Additional financial requirements**

12. The proposed cost allocation for work areas on compliance (V), capacity-building (VI) and promotion matters (VIII and IX) reflects the above-mentioned new elements. Thus, additional costs will be required for: (a) work associated with the new mechanism to deal with matters related to article 3 (8);<sup>8</sup> (b) additional legal support to the Compliance Committee; (c) supporting capacity-building and advisory support to Parties, in particular for implementing decisions of the Meeting of the Parties on compliance; (d) strengthening synergy on the relevant work on human rights matter under other organizations and processes; and (e) promotion of the Convention and its principles among non-ECE countries and in other international forums.

13. Due to their nature (for example, preparation of complex legal documents, provision of expert advisory support, liaising and coordinating) the above-mentioned assignments are particularly human resource intense. Therefore, supplementary costs will be required for: two

<sup>3</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en).

<sup>4</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/upr/pages/uprmain.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/upr/pages/uprmain.aspx).

<sup>5</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx).

<sup>6</sup> See <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/ict4d>; [www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/](http://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/); [www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm](http://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm); and <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/open-data>.

<sup>7</sup> See [www.cbd.int/nbsap/](http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/).

<sup>8</sup> Subject to the decision on establishing a possible new mechanism to deal with matters related to article 3 (8).

additional posts at the P–2 and P–3 levels to meet the demand for increased assistance to Parties, in particular to implement Meeting of the Parties decisions on compliance, support the work of the new mechanism related to article 3 (8) and provide legal support to the Compliance Committee; and one additional post at the P–3 level to support work to strengthen synergies with other bodies and processes and for promotion of the Convention and its principles. In addition, costs will be required for the related consultancy (for example, translation of material, substantive support on specific topics), travel and technical support. Per work area annually, the increase is as follows.<sup>9</sup>

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Estimated increase in operational cost (in US dollars)</i>
I. Access to information	–
II. Public participation	–
III. Access to justice	–
IV. Genetically modified organisms	–
V. Compliance mechanism	212 000
VI. Capacity-building	142 000
VII. Reporting mechanism	–
VIII. Awareness-raising and promotion of the Convention	72 000
IX. Promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes	62 100
X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, including eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties	–
XI. Eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties	–
XII. Horizontal support areas	30 800
<b>Total (including 13 % programme support costs)</b>	<b>586 357</b>

14. The major cost allocations for other work areas remain approximately the same as in the current work programme. Staff time for some areas has been redistributed to reflect the current work demand, which has led to a slight decrease of costs for those work areas. The costs set out in annexes I and II below have been calculated accordingly. As Italy offered a Junior Professional Officer as of October/November 2020, the total amount could be decreased by \$120,000 (one-year staff salary at P–2 level in 2022; Junior Professional Officer salaries are normally covered by member States for two years). In addition, if no new mechanism related to article 3 (8) is established, consultancy and travel costs can be decreased by \$29,000 for the work area on the compliance mechanism. Staff requirements for this work area will remain unchanged as the resources will be needed to bridge the increased demand for this work area.

15. In order to meet this increase in cost, Parties may wish to explore different ways to allocate the required funds. They could increase their regular contribution to the Convention. Alternatively, they could make additional multi-year earmarked contributions (minimum for two years, considering time required for staff recruitment), ideally for the period of the entire work programme, especially for areas related to capacity-building, awareness-raising, promotion of the Convention and promotion of the Almaty Guidelines. Human rights-related

<sup>9</sup> Estimations for the work area on the compliance mechanism are based on Option 3 (Rapporteur on environmental defenders) contained in the draft note on a rapid response mechanism to deal with cases related to article 3 (8) of the Aarhus Convention (see ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2020/13) for more information.

issues will be among the key subjects in this regard, linked to activities on promoting human rights and the environment. As activities would also target non-ECE countries (in particular in the Mediterranean region, Africa and Asia), additional funds might be allocated not only by ministries of the environment, but also by ministries/agencies responsible for foreign affairs and for development issues. Parties may also identify areas that are in line with their countries' priorities and take leadership (either individually or jointly) for those areas. For example, the requested increase could be grouped in two clusters: "Human Rights and the Environment" (work areas V and VI) and "Global outreach and promotion of democracy in international decision-making on environmental matters" (work areas VIII and IX).

16. New additions to the text contained in annex I below, as compared to the annex I in the current work programme, are marked in track changes in an accompanying document (AC/WGP-24/Inf.11).

17. The costs are redistributed between "operational" and "other" costs by each work area. Operational costs, as opposed to other costs, are the minimum funds needed to ensure the effective implementation of mandated activities in the different work areas in a balanced way. The same approach was applied to the current work programmes of the Convention and of its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.

## Annex I

### Draft work programme for 2022–2025

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
<b>Substantive issues</b>				
I. Access to information, including electronic information tools	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VII/... on promoting effective access to information. (mainly supports SDGs 3, 11, 12 and 17 and SDG target 16.10)	Task Force on Access to Information  Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties  Secretariat, enlisting technical support as necessary	Task Force meetings and workshops; survey(s); participation in other relevant regional initiatives, as appropriate, through development of sector-based partnership approaches; pilot projects and capacity-building activities at the subregional and national level, which are expected to be funded by partners.  Central management of the Aarhus Clearinghouse <sup>b</sup> and promotion through online social media; provision of advice to and coordination of national information nodes of the Clearinghouse mechanism; information- sharing and promotion of electronic tools through maintaining online databases for jurisprudence, good practices and national implementation reports, and maintaining online case studies on: (a) electronic information tools; (b) public participation at the national level; and (c) public participation in international forums.	79 900 (6 500)
II. Public participation	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VII/... on promoting effective public participation in decision-making.	Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making	Task Force meetings; workshops; the use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse, its good practice database and collection of case studies to facilitate exchange of information on good practices; exploring	82 900 (8 500)

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
	(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 and SDG target 16.7)	Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties Secretariat, enlisting expert support as necessary	synergies and possibilities for cooperation with relevant bodies under other multilateral environmental agreements and partner organizations. Participation in other relevant regional initiatives as appropriate; pilot projects and capacity-building activities at the subregional and national levels, which are expected to be funded by partners.	
III. Access to justice	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VII/... on promoting effective access to justice. (mainly supports SDG target 16.3)	Task Force on Access to Justice Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties Secretariat, enlisting expert support as necessary	Task Force meetings, if feasible back-to-back with other relevant events, to be organized in liaison with partner organizations active in access to justice, and through the development of sector-based partnership approaches, where appropriate. Strengthen the network of the judiciary, judicial training institutions and other review bodies in the pan-European region and cooperation with other existing networks of judges and other legal professionals, and other international forums; use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse, its jurisprudence and good practice databases to facilitate exchange of information on good practices; exchange information and support capacity-building. Develop analytical and training materials. Pilot projects and capacity-building activities at the subregional and national levels, which are expected to be funded by partners.	107 100 (10 500)

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
IV. Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)	Support the implementation of decision II/1 on GMOs (GMO amendment) and relevant provisions of the Convention in this area, as well as the application of the Guidelines on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice with Respect to Genetically Modified Organisms (MP.PP/2003/3), inter alia, by promoting exchange of information on common difficulties in and the main obstacles to their implementation, as well as good practices to address them.  (mainly supports SDGs 15 and 16)	Secretariat, in close cooperation with other stakeholders  Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties	Workshop(s), round table(s); survey(s); advisory support to, and cooperation with, relevant bodies under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity; advisory support to countries upon request; and use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse and its good practice database to facilitate exchange of information on good practices.	24 500 (2 000)
<b>Procedures and mechanisms</b>				
V. Compliance mechanism				554 600
V.1 Compliance Committee	Monitor and facilitate the implementation of and compliance with the Convention.  Increase support to individual Parties in following up on decisions on compliance.  (mainly supports SDG targets 16.6 and 16.10 and SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15)	Compliance Committee  Secretariat	Compliance Committee to review submissions, referrals, requests and communications on cases of possible non-compliance, prepare findings and reports and undertake fact-finding missions.  Compliance Committee to explore possible synergies with other relevant forums.  Secretariat to assist the Committee as required, including with legal support,	

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
V.2 Rapporteur on matters related to article 3 (8)	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VII/... on ensuring the safety of environmental defenders (mainly supports SDG target 16.10)	Rapporteur on matters related to article 3 (8) Secretariat	publicize the compliance mechanism and manage the Committee's web page.  Secretariat to prepare background material on relevant issues of a systemic nature identified through the work of the Compliance Committee to support discussion at the meetings of the task forces and respective thematic sessions of the Working Group of the Parties.  Rapporteur to examine, monitor, advise, undertake fact-finding missions and prepare decisions and reports on matters related to article 3 (8)  The use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse library on the protection of environmental defenders. Preparation of training material for different target groups such as officials of public authorities, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, members of the judiciary, private security service providers and developers.	
VI. Capacity-building	Coordination of capacity-building activities to assist countries in the effective implementation of the Convention; implementation of capacity-building measures at the regional and subregional levels.  Advisory support to Parties, in particular, with regard to implementation of MOP decisions on compliance.	Secretariat, in close cooperation with other relevant stakeholders	Inter-agency coordination meetings; maintaining the Convention web pages with information on capacity-building activities; the use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse, its databases and other capacity-building material to facilitate exchange of information on good practices; training workshops and technical assistance, mostly separately funded under other substantive work areas; capacity-building activities at the national and	177 000 (17 000)

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
	(All relevant SDGs, mainly SDG 16)	Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Compliance Committee and relevant stakeholders	subregional levels, which are expected to be funded by partners. Secretariat to assist Parties as required.	
VII. Reporting mechanism	Production of national implementation reports and a synthesis report.	Secretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessary  Compliance Committee	Preparation of the synthesis report and processing of national implementation reports.  Analysis of reports and preparation of a synthesis report.  Use of national implementation reports to identify relevant topics for the work of the task forces and other activities.	7 500
<b>Awareness-raising and promotion</b>				
VIII. Awareness-raising and promotion of the Convention, including through:	The work will focus on:	Secretariat	Participation in key regional and international events and processes; use of bilateral, regional and international cooperation arrangements to raise interest in the Convention, for example, the European Neighbourhood Policy; feed into international processes that closely relate to the Convention, including the special procedures under the United Nations Human Rights Council (depending on the mandate), the United Nations Environment Programme, the international financial institutions and other relevant international forums.	119 000 (34 500)
VIII.1. Communication Strategy	(a) Raising public awareness of the Convention throughout the ECE region and beyond;	Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties		
VIII.3. Support to non-ECE States to accede to the Convention	(b) Increasing the number of Parties to the Convention;	Working Group of the Parties		
VIII.4. Support to regional and global initiatives on	(c) Supporting regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.  Activities should be carried out in synergy with the relevant activities of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.  Work area VIII will be implemented in synergy with work area IX.		Expert assistance to regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration; support to relevant events organized by others; missions and assistance to countries organized at the	

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration	(mainly supports SDGs 4, 12, 16 and 17)		request of host Governments, with a focus on States that have expressed formal interest in becoming Parties to the Convention.  Implementation of the Communication Strategy; the Aarhus Clearinghouse and web site management; preparation of leaflets, publications, news bulletins, articles and other information materials.	
IX. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums, promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VII/... on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums.  (mainly supports SDG targets 16.7 and 17.14)	Secretariat, in close cooperation with other relevant stakeholders  Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties  Working Group of the Parties	Thematic sessions, as needed, at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to oversee progress in promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums and to address challenges encountered in the implementation of article 3, paragraph 7, of the Convention.  Surveys regarding experiences gained in the implementation of article 3, paragraph 7, and the Almaty Guidelines; online networks; capacity-building and expert assistance to relevant international forums and to Parties upon request and the use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse, its good practice database and collection of case studies to facilitate exchange of information on good practices on establishing effective processes for the public to participate in international forums; cooperation with Signatories and future Parties to the Escazú Agreement, <sup>c</sup> as well as its secretariat and the engaged stakeholders; joint activities with other treaties and multilateral processes;	125 000 (3 000)

<i>Work area</i>	<i>Objective and expected outcome</i>	<i>Lead country, body or organization</i>	<i>Method of work</i>	<i>Average annual subtotal (US dollars)<sup>a</sup></i>
			concrete actions by Parties at the national and international levels to promote the principles of the Convention in international forums and the Almaty Guidelines.	
<b>Coordination, horizontal support and Meeting of the Parties</b>				
X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities	Coordination and oversight of the activities under the Convention.  Preparation of substantive documents for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties (for example, drafting decisions, including the future work programme, and reviewing the implementation of the current work programme and the Strategic Plan).	Working Group of the Parties  Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties	Working Group meetings, meetings of the Bureau and consultations among Bureau members electronically.	100 700
XI. Eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties	See article 10 of the Convention.	Meeting of the Parties	Session of the Meeting of the Parties.	15 000 <sup>d</sup>
XII. Horizontal support areas	Overall support that covers multiple substantive areas of the work programme.	Secretariat	Secretarial support, staff training, equipment.	108 000
<b>Total (including costs for all work areas and 13% programme support costs)</b>				<b>1 696 356 (92 660)</b>

*Abbreviations:* DSA, daily subsistence allowance; GMO, genetically modified organism; MOP, Meeting of the Parties; SDG, Sustainable Development Goal.

<sup>a</sup> Estimation of the cost includes operational and other costs as presented in annex II. Figures between brackets refer to “other costs”.

<sup>b</sup> Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy, available at <https://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org/>

<sup>c</sup> Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.

<sup>d</sup> Costs for travel and DSA for eligible participants are reported under work area X.

## Annex II

### Draft estimated costs of activities of the work areas listed in the work programme for 2022–2025

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year<sup>a</sup></i>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>
I.	Professional staff support, <sup>c</sup> one P–3 staff at 30 per cent of FTE	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000 <sup>c</sup>	—
	Access to information <sup>b</sup>										
	Consultancy (for example, maintenance of Aarhus Clearinghouse and Aarhus Good Practice database)	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000
	Travel, DSA of eligible participants (2 meetings)	—	—	40 800	—	40 800	—	—	—	20 400	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>d</sup>	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>59 500</b>	<b>6 500</b>	<b>100 300</b>	<b>6 500</b>	<b>100 300</b>	<b>6 500</b>	<b>59 500</b>	<b>6 500</b>	<b>79 900</b>	<b>6 500</b>
II.	Professional staff support, <sup>c</sup> one P–3 staff at 30 per cent of FTE	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—
	Public participation										
	Consultancy (for example, preparation	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000



		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year<sup>a</sup></i>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>
	Consultancy (for example, preparation of the required material)	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000
	Travel, DSA of eligible participants to event (for example, workshop, round table)	—	—	40 000	—	—	—	—	—	10 000	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>d</sup>	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>14 500</b>	<b>2 000</b>	<b>54 500</b>	<b>2 000</b>	<b>14 500</b>	<b>2 000</b>	<b>14 500</b>	<b>2 000</b>	<b>24 500</b>	<b>2 000</b>
V. Compliance mechanism	Professional staff support, <sup>c</sup> three P–3 staff (one at 80 per cent of FTE, one at 70 per cent of FTE, one at 55 per cent of FTE), and one P–2 staff at 50 per cent of FTE.	429 000	—	429 000	—	429 000	—	429 000	—	429 000	—
	Consultancy (for example, translation outside United Nations, preparation of the required material)	30 000	—	30 000	—	30 000	—	30 000	—	30 000	—
	Travel, DSA of Committee members,	103 800	—	103 800	—	103 800	—	103 800	—	103 800	—

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year<sup>a</sup></i>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>
	other participants (4 Compliance Committee meetings per year) and travel, DSA of Rapporteur										
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>e</sup>	21 800	—	21 800	—	21 800	—	21 800	—	21 800	—
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>554 600</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>554 600</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>554 600</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>554 600</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>554 600</b>	<b>—</b>
VI.	Professional staff support, <sup>c</sup> one P–3 staff at 20 per cent of FTE, one P–3 at 40 per cent of FTE and one P–2 staff at 50 per cent of FTE	168 000	—	168 000	—	168 000	—	168 000	—	168 000	—
Capacity-	Consultancy (for example, capacity-	3 000	5 000	3 000	5 000	3 000	5 000	3 000	5 000	3 000	5 000
building <sup>f</sup>	building activities, materials, studies)										
	Travel, DSA of eligible experts (for example, annual meeting of capacity-building partners, capacity-building activities)	3 000	3 800	3 000	3 800	3 000	3 800	3 000	3 800	3 000	3 800

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year<sup>a</sup></i>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>d</sup>	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>177 000</b>	<b>17 000</b>	<b>177 000</b>	<b>17 000</b>	<b>177 000</b>	<b>17 000</b>	<b>177 000</b>	<b>17 000</b>	<b>177 000</b>	<b>17 000</b>
VII. Reporting mechanism	Consultancy (processing of national implementation reports, preparation of the synthesis report, translation)	—	—	—	—	10 000	—	20 000	—	7 500	—
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>10 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>20 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>7 500</b>	<b>—</b>
VIII. Awareness- raising and promotion of the Convention <sup>g</sup>	Professional staff support, <sup>e</sup> one P–3 staff at 50 per cent of FTE and one P–3 staff at 5 per cent of FTE	99 000	—	99 000	—	99 000	—	99 000	—	99 000	—
	Consultancy (for example, publications, promotion materials)	5 000	9 000	5 000	9 000	5 000	9 000	5 000	9 000	5 000	9 000
	Travel, DSA for participation in events and country missions to promote the Convention and its principles; support to non-ECE States to accede to the	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000

		Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year <sup>a</sup>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
Work area	Cost description	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other
	Convention; support to regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development										
	Travel, DSA (staff missions), <sup>d</sup> participation at relevant events where no other funding is available	10 000	7 500	10 000	7 500	10 000	7 500	10 000	7 500	10 000	7 500
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>119 000</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>119 000</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>119 000</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>119 000</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>119 000</b>	<b>34 500</b>
IX.	Professional staff support, <sup>c</sup> two P–3 staff: one at 50 per cent of FTE and one at 10 per cent of FTE	108 000	—	108 000	—	108 000	—	108 000	—	108 000	—
Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums, promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes	Consultancy (expert studies)	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000	2 000	3 000
	Travel, DSA (expert missions)	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>d</sup>	10 000	—	10 000	—	10 000	—	10 000	—	10 000	—

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year<sup>a</sup></i>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Operational</i>	<i>Other</i>
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>125 000</b>	<b>3 000</b>	<b>125 000</b>	<b>3 000</b>	<b>125 000</b>	<b>3 000</b>	<b>125 000</b>	<b>3 000</b>	<b>125 000</b>	<b>3 000</b>
X.	Professional staff support, <sup>h</sup> three P–3 staff: one at 10 per cent of FTE and two at 5 per cent each of FTE	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—
	Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, including eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties										
	Travel, DSA for eligible participants (meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, the Bureau and the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties)	47 600	—	47 600	—	47 600	—	102 000	—	61 200	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) <sup>d</sup>	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>87 100</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>87 100</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>87 100</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>141 500</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>100 700</b>	<b>—</b>
XI.	Professional staff support, <sup>e</sup> one P–2 staff at 50 per cent of FTE	—	—	—	—	—	—	60 000	—	15 000 <sup>i</sup>	—
	Eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties										
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>60 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>15 000</b>	<b>—</b>
XII.	Secretarial staff support, one G–5 support areas	90 000	—	90 000	—	90 000	—	90 000	—	90 000	—

		Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year <sup>a</sup>									
		2022		2023		2024		2025		2022–2025 annual average	
Work area	Cost description	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other
	staff at 70 per cent of FTE <sup>j</sup>										
	Technical support costs <sup>k</sup> (for example, computers, licences, equipment, external printing)	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—
	Other operational support costs (for example, financial administration)	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—	5 000	—
	Training of staff <sup>l</sup> (training activities to enhance staff skills)	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>—</b>
	<b>Total</b>	1 465 300	82 000	1 505 300	82 000	1 475 300	82 200	1 558 900	82 000	1 501 200	82 000
	<b>Programme support costs (13%)</b>	190 489	10 660	195 689	10 660	191 789	10 660	202 657	10 660	195 156	10 660
	<b>Grand total</b>	1 655 789	92 660	1 700 989	92 660	1 667 089	92 660	1 761 557	92 660	1 696 356	92 660

*Abbreviations:* FTE, full-time equivalent.

<sup>a</sup> The estimated costs shown here are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions made under the Convention's scheme of financial arrangements, either through its trust fund or in kind. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. Figures are rounded up. They may change in accordance with the United Nations administrative regulations.

<sup>b</sup> Experts involved in the work of the task forces on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice will be invited to provide substantive support to the activities through commenting documents and participating in training sessions, workshops, pilot projects, etc. Meetings of the Task Force will provide a forum to discuss key outcomes of the activities and identify good practices and challenges in implementation.

<sup>c</sup> Professional staff costs are estimated by multiplying expected staff time in each activity area by the projected annual salary costs of staff hired at the level indicated. Staff costs are considered to be operational as they are essential for ensuring effective and balanced implementation of all work areas. In addition, the necessary funds for staff contracts must be secured at least one year in advance. This P-2 staff member is required in order to provide the necessary support to preparations for the sessions of the Meetings

of the Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol, in particular, the joint High-level Segment, communication activities and participation process. The staff costs would be split between the Convention and its Protocol (50% for the Aarhus Convention and 50 % for the Protocol).

<sup>d</sup> Operational costs for staff missions refer to the cost of travel for secretariat staff members to service, for example, task force meetings that are not held in Geneva and workshops/events related to this work area.

<sup>e</sup> The secretariat may be required to conduct official missions in relation to the work of the compliance mechanism. Such costs are therefore considered to be operational.

<sup>f</sup> This category of activities encompasses activities that build capacity in areas that relate to the Convention as a whole. Capacity-building activities relating to a specific topic under the Convention (for example, electronic information tools, access to justice) are covered under those activity areas. In order to increase the effectiveness of capacity-building and synergies, the secretariat is carrying out such activities in collaboration with all key capacity-building actors in the region. Furthermore, the secretariat services a region-wide capacity-building coordination mechanism aimed at ensuring that the projects implemented by partner organizations match the requirements of decisions by the Meeting of the Parties. Most travel and consultancy costs are normally covered by other sources: either by partner organizations or specific donor contributions. These synergies also lead to a considerable reduction of the financial burden as Parties to the Convention are required to contribute a small amount in relation to the final impact of activities.

<sup>g</sup> Awareness-raising will include promotional work in the region and beyond. Such work serves as the Parties' "ambassador". The secretariat and Aarhus experts are regularly invited to international meetings and processes across the world to share their experiences and expertise. Where possible, the promotion of the Convention is carried out through the use of electronic tools. The secretariat is making every possible effort to ensure that these activities have the minimum financial implications possible. In addition, in line with past practice, it is anticipated that some publications will be funded from the United Nations regular budget.

<sup>h</sup> Including provision of legal advice and general tasks. Professional staff costs are estimated by multiplying expected staff time in each activity area by the projected annual salary costs of staff hired at the level indicated. Staff costs are considered to be operational as they are essential for ensuring effective and balanced implementation of all work areas. In addition, the necessary funds for staff contracts must be secured at least one year in advance.

<sup>i</sup> Costs for travel and DSA for eligible participants are reported under work area X.

<sup>j</sup> As of 1 February 2016, the funding of one administrative staff member through the 13 per cent programme support costs, levied from the trust funds of the ECE Environment Division, was discontinued. This staff member is required in order to provide the necessary administrative support to activities under the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol, including administrative arrangements for the meetings of the governing and subsidiary bodies of the two treaties. The staff costs would be split between the Convention and its Protocol (70 per cent for the Aarhus Convention and 30 per cent for the Protocol). The change from G-4 to G-5 reflects the current seniority in grade.

<sup>k</sup> Technical equipment and other operational support costs (for example, financial administration) were normally provided by the United Nations also to extrabudgetary staff. However, this practice has been discontinued; the related expenditures are included in the operational costs of the work programme.

<sup>l</sup> All United Nations staff are expected to develop their skills and attend training. Continuous training and development of new skills is essential in order for the staff to maintain a high level of professionalism and to adapt to new competency requirements. As a result, training of staff is considered to be operational costs

### Annex III

**Example of the possible distribution of different meetings under the Convention for the period  
2022–2025 (the same as in the current work programme 2018-2021)**

<i>Type of meeting</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025
Task Force Access to Information (AI)	—	x	x	—
Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (PP)	x	—	x	—
Task Force on Access to Justice (AJ)	x	x	—	x
GMO Round Table (GMO)	—	x	—	—
Thematic sessions at the Working Group of the Parties	AI	PP	AJ	GMO
Meeting of the Parties	—	—	—	x

*Note:* The substantive preparation of the thematic sessions of the Working Group of the Parties is based on the outcomes of the work of a specific Task Force and other activities in the relevant work areas.