

Economic Commission for Europe

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

Sixth session

Budva, Montenegro, 11–13 September 2017

Excerpt from the addendum to the report of the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1)*

Decision VI/5 on work programme for 2018–2021

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling its decision I/11 on the procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes,

Taking into account the Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 for the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) adopted through decision V/5, and the scheme of financial arrangements adopted through decision VI/6,

1. *Welcomes* the interest of countries from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region to join the Convention and reaffirms its decision IV/5 on accession to the Convention by non-ECE member States,

2. *Adopts* the work programme for 2018–2021, containing the estimated costs of each activity, as set out in annex I to this decision;

3. *Agrees* upon the indicative allocation of resources and the resulting estimated costs set out in annexes I and II, subject to annual review and, as appropriate, revision by the Working Group of the Parties on the basis of annual reports provided by the secretariat pursuant to decision VI/6 on financial arrangements;

4. *Encourages* Parties to endeavour to ensure that the funding of the activities of the work programme remains stable throughout the period 2018–2021;

5. *Also encourages* Parties, insofar as possible, and subject to the internal budgetary procedures of the Parties, to contribute to the Convention's trust fund for a given calendar year by 1 October of the preceding year, so as to secure staff costs for the smooth functioning of the secretariat, as a priority, and the timely and effective implementation of the priority activities of the work programme for 2018–2021;

6. *Reiterates* its commitment to implementing the Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Principles of the Convention in International Forums (Almaty Guidelines), through all the activities of the work programme, as relevant;

* The full text of addendum to the report of the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1) is available in English, French and Russian from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop6_docs.html#.

7. *Decides* to give general priority¹ to issues related to compliance and implementation, including capacity-building;

8. *Also decides* to give particular priority to the following substantive issues:

- (a) Access to justice;
- (b) Public participation;
- (c) Access to information;

9. *Calls on* the Parties, and invites signatories, other States and relevant intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations, to contribute actively to the activities contained in the work programme;

10. *Requests* the secretariat, taking into consideration the results of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 and the work programme for 2018–2021, 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, at the latest three months before the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to possible adoption at that meeting;

11. *Requests* the Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, taking into account the results of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 and the work programme for 2018–2021, to develop a Strategic Plan for 2022–2030, at the latest three months before the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to possible adoption at that meeting.

¹ The primary function of the prioritization indicated in paragraphs 7 and 8, apart from explaining and reflecting the proposed allocation of resources in the annexes, is to provide guidance in situations in which there is a significant discrepancy between the actual income and the estimated financial requirements. If there is a significant shortfall in resources, then savings need to be made, and the prioritization provides guidance as to where those savings should be made. If there are surplus resources that are not earmarked, then the prioritization provides guidance as to how that surplus may be used. If the resources available closely match the estimated requirements set out in the annexes, the resources can simply be applied as indicated therein, i.e., there is no need for any further exercise of prioritization.

Annex I
Work programme for 2018–2021

<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\$)^a</i>
Substantive issues				
I. Access to information, including electronic information tools	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VI/1 on promoting effective access to information.	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 and promotion through online social media; provision of advice to and coordination of national and information nodes of the clearinghouse mechanism; information sharing and promotion of electronic tools through maintaining online databases for jurisprudence and national implementation reports, and maintaining online case studies on (a) public participation at the national level and (b) public participation in international forums.	86 400
II. Public participation	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VI/2 on promoting effective public participation in decision-making.	Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties Secretariat, enlisting expert support as necessary	Task Force meetings; workshops; collection of case studies; exploring 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.	91 400

<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\$)^a</i>
III. Access to justice	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VI/3 on promoting effective access to justice.	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 capacity-building 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 cooperation with existing networks of judges and other legal professionals, and other international forums, to 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.	117 600
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.	Secretariat, in close cooperation with other stakeholders Thematic session at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties	Workshop(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 Aarhus Good Practice database to facilitate exchange of information on good practices.	26 500

<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\$)^a</i>
Procedures and mechanisms				
V. Compliance mechanism	Monitor and facilitate the implementation of and compliance with the Convention. Increase support to individual Parties in following up on decisions on compliance.	Compliance Committee Secretariat	Compliance Committee to review submissions, referrals, requests and communications on cases of possible non-compliance, prepare decisions and reports and undertake fact-finding missions. Compliance Committee to explore possible synergies with other relevant forums. Secretariat to publicize the mechanism, manage the Committee's web page and develop a database of the Compliance Committee's findings. Secretariat to prepare background material on relevant issues of a systemic nature identified through the work of the Compliance Committee for discussion at the meetings of the task forces and respective thematic sessions of the Working Group of the Parties.	342 600
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.	Secretariat, in close cooperation with other relevant stakeholders	Inter-agency coordination meetings; maintaining the Convention's web pages with information on capacity-building activities; use of the Aarhus Clearinghouse and the Aarhus Good Practice database 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 subregional levels, which are expected to be funded by partners.	52 000
VII. Reporting mechanism	Production of national implementation reports and a synthesis report.	Secretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessary Compliance Committee	Preparation 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

<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\$)^a</i>
Awareness-raising and promotion				
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, e.g., 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. 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 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; website management; preparation of leaflets, publications, news bulletins, articles and other information materials.	81 500
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.2. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums	(b) Increasing the number of Parties to the Convention;	Working Group of the Parties		
VIII.3. Support to non-ECE States to accede to the Convention	(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.			
VIII.4. Support to regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration	Work area VIII.2 will be implemented in accordance with decision VI/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums.			
IX. Promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes	The work area will be implemented in accordance with decision VI/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums.	Secretariat 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; expert assistance to relevant international forums and to Parties upon request and populating a repository of good practices on establishing effective processes for the public to participate in international forums;	65 900

<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\$)^a</i>
			joint activities with other treaties and multilateral processes; concrete actions by Parties at the national and international levels to promote the principles of the Convention in international forums and the Almaty Guidelines.	
Coordination, horizontal support and Meeting of the Parties				
X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities	Coordination and oversight of the activities under the Convention. Preparation of substantive documents for the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties (e.g., 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. Seventh 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 ^b
XII. Horizontal support areas	Overall support that covers multiple substantive areas of the work programme.	Secretariat	Secretarial support, staff training, equipment.	77 200
Grand total (including costs for all work areas and 13% programme support costs)				1 201 303

^a Estimation of the cost includes operational and other costs as presented in annex II.

^b Costs for travel and DSA for eligible participants are reported under work area X.

Annex II
Estimated costs of activities of the work areas listed in the work programme for 2018–2021

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year^a</i>									
<i>Work area</i>	<i>Cost description</i>	<i>2018</i>		<i>2019</i>		<i>2020</i>		<i>2021</i>		<i>2018–2021 annual average</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. Access to information ^b	Professional staff support, ^c one P–3 staff at 30 per cent of full-time equivalent (FTE)	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000 ^c	—
	Consultancy (e.g., 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, daily subsistence allowance (DSA) of eligible participants (2 meetings)	—	—	40 800	—	40 800	—	—	—	20 400	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500
Subtotal		59 500	6 500	100 300	6 500	100 300	6 500	59 500	6 500	79 900	6 500
II. Public participation	Professional staff support, ^c one P–3 staff at 30 per cent of FTE	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., preparation of the required materials)	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000
	Travel, DSA of eligible participants (2 meetings)	40 800	—	—	—	40 800	—	—	—	20 400	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500
Subtotal		103 300	8 500	62 500	8 500	103 300	8 500	62 500	8 500	82 900	8 500
III. Access to justice	Professional staff support, ^c one P–3 staff at 35 per cent of FTE	63 000	—	63 000	—	63 000	—	63 000	—	63 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., preparation of the required materials)	10 000	7 000	10 000	7 000	10 000	7 000	10 000	7 000	10 000	7 000
	Travel, DSA of eligible participants (3 meetings)	40 800	—	40 800	—	—	—	40 800	—	30 600	—

		Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year ^a									
		2018		2019		2020		2021		2018–2021 annual average	
Work area	Cost description	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500
Subtotal		117 300	10 500	117 300	10 500	76 500	10 500	117 300	10 500	107 100	10 500
IV. GMOs	Professional staff support, ^c one P–3 staff at 5 per cent of FTE	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—	9 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., 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 (e.g., workshop, round table)	—	—	40 000	—	—	—	—	—	10 000	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—
Subtotal		14 500	2 000	54 500	2 000	14 500	2 000	14 500	2 000	24 500	2 000
V. Compliance mechanism	Professional staff support, ^c two P-3 staff: one at 80 per cent and one at 40 per cent of FTE	216 000	—	216 000	—	216 000	—	216 000	—	216 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., translation outside United Nations, preparation of the required material)	25 000	—	25 000	—	25 000	—	25 000	—	25 000	—
	Travel, DSA of Committee members, other participants (4 Compliance Committee meetings per year)	91 800	—	91 800	—	91 800	—	91 800	—	91 800	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^e	9 800	—	9 800	—	9 800	—	9 800	—	9 800	—
Subtotal		342 600	—	342 600	—	342 600	—	342 600	—	342 600	—
VI. Capacity-building ^f	Professional staff support, ^c one P–3 staff at 15 per cent of FTE	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., capacity-building activities, materials, studies)	2 000	5 000	2 000	5 000	2 000	5 000	2 000	5 000	2 000	5 000

		<i>Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year^a</i>									
		<i>2018</i>		<i>2019</i>		<i>2020</i>		<i>2021</i>		<i>2018–2021 annual average</i>	
<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 of eligible experts (e.g., 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
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200	3 000	8 200
	Subtotal	35 000	17 000	35 000	17 000	35 000	17 000	35 000	17 000	35 000	17 000
VII. Reporting mechanism	Consultancy (processing of national implementation reports, preparation of the synthesis report, translation)	—	—	—	—	10 000	—	20 000	—	7 500	—
	Subtotal	—	—	—	—	10 000	—	20 000	—	7 500	—
VIII. Awareness- raising and promotion of the Convention ^g	Professional staff support, ^c three P–3 staff at 5 per cent each of FTE	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—	27 000	—
	Consultancy (e.g., 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 Convention; support to regional and global initiatives on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000	5 000	18 000
	Travel, DSA (staff missions), ^d 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
	Subtotal	47 000	34 500	47 000	34 500	47 000	34 500	47 000	34 500	47 000	34 500

		Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year ^a									
		2018		2019		2020		2021		2018–2021 annual average	
Work area	Cost description	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other
IX. Promotion of the Almaty Guidelines and other interlinkages with relevant international bodies and processes	Professional staff support, ^c three P–3 staff, one at 15 per cent, one at 10 per cent and one at 5 per cent of FTE	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—	54 000	—
	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)	3 400	—	3 400	—	3 400	—	3 400	—	3 400	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—
Subtotal		62 900	3 000	62 900	3 000	62 900	3 000	62 900	3 000	62 900	3 000
X. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, including seventh ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties	Professional staff support, ^h three P–3 staff: one at 10 per cent and two at 5 per cent each of FTE	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—	36 000	—
	Travel, DSA for eligible participants (meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, the Bureau and the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties)	47 600	—	47 600	—	47 600	—	102 000	—	61 200	—
	Travel, DSA (staff missions) ^d	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—	3 500	—
Subtotal		87 100	—	87 100	—	87 100	—	141 500	—	100 700	—
XI. Seventh ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties	Professional staff support, ^c one P–2 staff for 6 months	—	—	—	—	—	—	60 000	—	15 000 ⁱ	—
Subtotal		—	—	—	—	—	—	60 000	—	15 000	—
XII. Horizontal support areas	Secretarial staff support, one G–4 staff at 70 per cent of full-time equivalent ^f	67 200	—	67 200	—	67 200	—	67 200	—	67 200	—

		Average estimated costs in United States dollars per year ^a									
		2018		2019		2020		2021		2018–2021 annual average	
Work area	Cost description	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other	Operational	Other
	Technical support costs ^k (e.g., computers, equipment, external printing)	6 000	—	6 000	—	6 000	—	6 000	—	6 000	—
	Training of staff ^l (training activities to enhance staff skills)	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—	4 000	—
	Subtotal	77 200	—	77 200	—	77 200	—	77 200	—	77 200	—
	Total	946 400	82 000	986 400	82 000	956 400	82 222	999 200	82 000	981 100	82 000
Programme support costs (13%)		123 032	10 660	128 232	10 660	124 332	10 660	129 896	10 660	127 543	10 660
	Grand total	1 069 432	92 660	1 114 632	92 660	1 080 732	92 660	1 129 096	92 660	1 108 643	92 660

^a 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.

^b 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.

^c 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.

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

^e 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.

^f 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 (e.g., 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.

^g 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.

^h 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.

ⁱ Costs for travel and DSA for eligible participants are reported under work area X.

^j 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).

^k Technical equipment is normally provided by the United Nations also to extrabudgetary staff. However, if this practice is discontinued, the related expenditures should be included in the operational costs of the work programme.

^l 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 2018–2021**

<i>Type of meeting</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
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.

