



THIRD MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
04 - 05 July 2005, Bonn, Germany

**PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE COSTS LINKED TO
MEETINGS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

INTRODUCTION

During the current triennium, the Secretariat has been confronted with a tremendous increase in costs due to the US dollar's loss of purchasing power. The Secretariat expects no real change in the near future in this respect, and therefore, this has been taken into account in preparing the draft budget proposal for 2006-2008.

So, while drafting the new budget, the Secretariat is looking for options to save money in order to avoid a substantial increase in the annual subscriptions of the Contracting Parties. After a careful study of all budget lines, the Secretariat proposes, amongst other items, to cut some of the costs linked to the TC meetings as follows:

1. To reduce the number of TC meetings in the period 2006-2008 to 2 meetings only;
2. To agree that the working language at TC meetings will be English;
3. To agree that documents are provided in English only;
4. To agree that only Representatives and experts from developing countries or countries with economies in transition will be eligible for funding or travel and subsistence costs.

Ad 1: By organising TC meetings at intervals of 1-½ years, the total costs in the period 2006-2008 could be reduced by US \$ 30,000.

Ad 2: By using English as the working language for the TC meetings, the total funds allocated for this for the next triennium could be reduced by US \$ 18,000.

Ad 3: If documents were being produced only in English, the costs for the period 2006-2008 could be reduced by approximately the amount of US \$ 12,000.

Ad 4: The Standing Committee agreed at its second meeting that funding of delegates to AEWA meetings should be restricted to developing countries and countries with economies in transition taking into account the following:

- a) Setting the threshold for eligibility for funding delegates at 0.200 on the UN Scale of Assessment as a general rule;
- b) Excluding countries from the European Union;
- c) Excluding small European countries with strong economies which are at or below the threshold and which have in previous times not requested funding – this currently includes Monaco, which is not a member of the European Union;

- d) Having the flexibility of funding some identified non-EU members upon request. Since it is difficult to establish clear limits due to periodic fluctuations in the UN Scale of Assessment, the Standing Committee Chairman should have the authority and flexibility to decide on travel assistance in individual cases at the request of the AEWa Secretariat, taking into consideration, for example, the state of the AEWa Trust Fund, the economic situation of AEWa Party countries and countries having recently been upgraded on the UN Scale of Assessment and thus exceeding the established limit; and
- e) Maintaining the flexibility of funding delegates from non-member countries in the process of accession or willingness of accession, depending on the availability of funds. The same eligibility rules should be applied and priority be given to Parties.

Eligibility of current AEWa Parties according to the proposed rules is stated in Annex 1. The Secretariat estimates that by implementing this, an amount of approximately US \$ 10,000 could be saved during the next period.

So this means that the total amount that could be saved if all four points mentioned above were fully implemented would be approximately US \$ 70,000.

ACTION REQUESTED FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee agreed to reduce the costs of their meetings in a way as indicated above. The question is if this would also be acceptable for the Parties in particular regarding the working language of the Technical Committee and the fact that documents will be produced in English only. Both proposals are not in line with the fact that the working languages of the Agreement are English and French. By implementing these two proposals some Parties will have less access to the work done by the Technical Committee. The Standing Committee is requested to review the proposals listed above and to agree that that this paper is submitted to MOP3 for adoption.

ANNEX I

ELIGIBILITY FOR SPONSORSHIP FOR AEWB MEETINGS

N°	Party	Proposed rules UN Scale in % 2004*
1	Congo	0.001
2	Djibouti	0.001
3	Gambia	0.001
4	Niger	0.001
5	Republic of Moldova	0.001
6	Togo	0.001
7	Benin	0.002
8	Equatorial Guinea	0.002
9	Mali	0.002
10	Guinea	0.003
11	Georgia	0.003
12	Monaco	0.003
13	Albania	0.005
14	Senegal	0.005
15	The FYR of Macedonia	0.006
16	Uganda	0.006
17	United Republic of Tanzania	0.006
18	Sudan	0.008
19	Kenya	0.009
20	Jordan	0.011
21	Mauritius	0.011
22	Uzbekistan	0.014
23	Bulgaria	0.017
24	Lebanon	0.024
25	Lithuania	0.024
26	Croatia	0.037
27	Syrian Arab Republic	0.038
28	Ukraine	0.039
29	Nigeria	0.042
30	Slovakia	0.051
31	Romania	0.060
32	Luxembourg	0.077
33	Slovenia	0.082

N°	Party	Proposed rules UN Scale in % 2004*
34	Egypt	0.120
35	Hungary	0.126
36	South Africa	0.292
37	Ireland	0.350
38	Israel	0.467
39	Portugal	0.470
40	Finland	0.533
41	Denmark	0.718
42	Sweden	0.998
43	Switzerland	1.197
44	Netherlands	1.690
45	Spain	2.520
46	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	6.127
47	France	6.030
48	Germany	8.662

Parties which are considered eligible for financial support to attend relevant AEWA-sponsored meetings.

Parties which are considered non-eligible for financial support to attend relevant AEWA-sponsored meetings.

* UN Scale of Assessment 2004 at 3 March 2004 (UN Doc. A/RES/58/1 B)

Annex 2

PROPOSED RULES ON ELIGIBILITY FOR SPONSORSHIP FOR AEWA MEETINGS

With reference to the 2004 United Nations Scale of Assessment, the Standing Committee decides during its 2nd Meeting that:

1. Parties whose percentage lies between 0.001 and 0.049 (except members of the European Union) shall automatically be considered eligible for financial support to attend AEWA-sponsored meetings that are relevant to them.
2. Parties whose percentage lies between 0.050 and 0.2000 (except members of the European Union) shall be considered eligible for financial support to attend AEWA-sponsored meetings that are relevant to them upon request to the Secretariat and depending on availability of funds.
3. Small European countries with strong economies which are at or below the threshold and which are not members of the European Union (currently Monaco) are not eligible for financial support to attend AEWA-sponsored meetings.
4. The Chair of the Standing Committee has the delegated authority and flexibility to exceptionally decide on individual requests of travel assistance at the request of the Executive Secretary. These decisions should be based on the current situation such as the state of the AEWA Trust Fund, the economic situation of AEWA Party countries and other factors as appropriate.
5. This flexibility also applies to the funding of delegates from non-member countries in the process / planning of accession, and decisions should take the availability of funds into account. Priority will be given to the funding of delegates from Party countries.
6. These rules will come into effect as preliminary rules when endorsed by the Standing Committee and will remain in effect until formal adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its third session end of 2005.