

Agenda Item 7.1

Administrative and Budgetary Issues

Financial and Administrative Matters
2017-2020

Document 7.1a/Rev.1

**Report of the Secretariat on Financial and
Administrative Matters 2017-2020**

Action Requested

- Take note
- Comment

Submitted by

Secretariat



Note:

Delegates are kindly reminded to bring their own document copies to the meeting, if needed.

Secretariat's Note

In Revision 1, footnote 13 has been added in Annex 2 *Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2020* on Table 1. The indicated payment was received in July 2020 but not identified until after mid-August 2020, which is why the footnote was missed from the document published on 7 August 2020.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS 2017-2020

1. Pursuant to Article 4.3 of the Agreement, the Secretariat hereby presents a summary report on progress made and challenges encountered since the last Meeting of the Parties. This paper focuses exclusively on the Agreement's financial and administrative matters. Other aspects are reported separately in [ASCOBANS/MOP9/Doc.4.2](#).

Location and Status of the Secretariat

2. There has been no change in the location or status of the Secretariat since 8th Meeting of the Parties (MOP8). The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat continues to provide Secretariat services to ASCOBANS, as per [CMS Resolution 13.2](#). Office space in Bonn is provided free of charge by the German Government.
3. Since 2007, the ASCOBANS budget provides for 3 % of the CMS Executive Secretary's time, 15 % of the Head of Unit of the CMS Aquatic Team, 75 % of the time of a Coordinator, and a part-time (50 %) Administrative Assistant. The Secretariat receives administrative support from the Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU) of CMS, which works closely with the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON).

Personnel / Staff Arrangements

4. The Secretariat has undergone several staffing changes since MOP8. Following the unexpected passing of the CMS Executive Secretary, Bradnee Chambers, in January 2019, Amy Fraenkel took over in May 2019, first as the Acting Executive Secretary of CMS and ASCOBANS, and in February 2020, she was appointed to the role.
5. Melanie Virtue, Head of the CMS Aquatic Species team, continues as the Senior Advisor to ASCOBANS. Besides all of the CMS Secretariat's work on cetaceans, this team has been dealing with other aquatic mammals, sharks, other fish, marine turtles and cross-cutting marine issues such as bycatch, underwater noise, marine debris and pollution. This structure ensures that overlapping interests are dealt with effectively.
6. In December 2016, the long-standing ASCOBANS Coordinator, Heidrun Frisch-Nwakanma, resigned to take up a P3 level position in another CMS agreement. In January 2017 the coordinator position was taken over by Aline Kühl-Stenzel, who had previously worked in CMS. However, due to family reasons she moved from Bonn in January 2018, while continuing to work remotely for the remainder of the year. The current Coordinator, Jenny Renell, entered duty in January 2019, arriving from Abu Dhabi where she had worked in the CMS Dugong and Raptors MOU Secretariats.
7. The 50% position of the Administrative Assistant remained unchanged over the reporting period. Bettina Reinartz has been working in this position since April 2010.
8. The Secretariat team enjoyed the support of five interns through the joint internship programme with CMS in the reporting period, most of whom were university students or recent graduates. Details are contained in the administrative reports submitted to the Advisory Committee. Information on internship opportunities can be found on the [ASCOBANS website](#).
9. Reports on these administrative matters have been submitted to each meeting of the Advisory Committee, as follows:
 - [AC23/Doc.16.1a](#) Report on Administrative Issues 2016/2017

- [AC24/Doc.18.1](#) Administrative Report 2017
- [AC25/Doc.18.1](#) Report on Administrative Issues 2018/2019

Projects and initiatives implemented

10. The tasks of the Secretariat include ensuring the smooth operation of administrative and staff-related matters and the administration of the ASCOBANS budget. This includes projects short-listed for support from the ASCOBANS budget. Since MOP8, the Secretariat has administered the following projects:
 - Baltic Sea Harbour Porpoise Foraging Habitats (BALHAB) (Aarhus University; final report: [ASCOBANS/AC24/Inf.11.1.a](#))
 - Web-accessed Database for Cetacean Strandings and Necropsy Data in the ASCOBANS Region (Zoological Society of London, reports in [ASCOBANS/AC23/Inf.9.1a](#), [AC24/Pres.2.5.2](#), [AC25/Inf.9.1](#); delivery delayed due to implications from COVID-19) – partly supported by a voluntary contribution
 - Coordination of the ASCOBANS Harbour Porpoise action plans (Sea Watch Foundation, [ASCOBANS/AC24/Doc.3.1b](#), [AC24/Doc.3.2b](#), [AC24/Doc.3.3](#), [AC25/Doc.4.3/Rev.1](#), [AC25/Doc.4.2](#), [AC25/Doc.4.3/Rev.1](#); Coalition Clean Baltic [AC25/Pres.4.1](#), [AC25/Pres.4.3](#), [JG16/Pres.2.1](#), [JG16/Doc.2.1a](#), [JG16/Doc.2.1c](#)) – partly supported by voluntary contributions
11. Other initiatives fully funded by voluntary contributions in the reporting period include:
 - ASCOBANS Anniversary book (see [ASCOBANS/MOP9/Doc.4.2](#) for more information)
 - Cost-benefit analysis of different monitoring methods aboard fisheries with regard to cetacean bycatch (terms of reference in [ASCOBANS/AC25/Inf.3.1a Annex 5](#); report in preparation)
 - Cost analysis for mitigation measures in fisheries with high bycatch (terms of reference in [ASCOBANS/AC25/Inf.3.1a Annex 6](#); report in preparation)
 - Development of a ASCOBANS National Reporting form covering all sections as per Resolution 8.1 (the form can be found in [ASCOBANS/MOP9/Inf.5.1](#))

Budget Implementation

12. During the quadrennium, the Agreement's yearly expenditure has kept within respective approved budgets with the positive balances being rephased into the subsequent year. A total amount of EUR 44,653 was spent from 2017 to 30 June 2020 for projects selected by the Advisory Committee (see paragraph 10 above) and for expert travel as detailed in the annual financial reports (listed below).
13. Details on expenditures, balances, rephasals and their use have been provided in the annual reports to the Advisory Committee:
 - [AC23/Doc.16.2a](#) End of Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2016
 - [AC23/Doc.16.2b](#) Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2017
 - [AC24/Doc.18.2a/Rev.1](#) Report on Budgetary Issues 2017
 - [AC24/Doc.18.2b](#) Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2018
 - [AC25/Doc.18.2a](#) End of Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2018
 - [AC25/Doc.18.2b](#) Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2019
14. The end-of-year report for 2019 is contained in Annex 1 to this document. The mid-year report of 2020 is contained in Annex 2.

Annex 1: End of Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2019

1. This report has been prepared using information provided by CMS AFMU and UNON. It is an update with respect to the mid-term report published as [ASCOBANS/AC25/Doc.18.2b](#).
2. The report contains figures as recorded in the UN book-keeping system (Umoja) as at 31 December 2019. The report is presented in Euro, which has been converted from the US dollar figures provided by AFMU/UNON. All Euro figures are approximations due to variations in the exchange rate between Euro and US dollar. All figures are rounded to the next full Euro.
3. Voluntary contributions were received in the reporting period as follows:
 - Germany: EUR 25,600 (incl. PSC) for supporting the long-term coordination of the Harbour Porpoise Plans, expert participation at the Jastarnia and North Sea Group meetings, and supporting the AC meeting,
 - Finland: EUR 6,250 (incl. PSC) for co-funding of a coordinator for the ASCOBANS Harbour Porpoise Action Plans, and
 - The Netherlands: EUR 5,000 (incl. PSC) to support tasks related to ASCOBANS National Reporting Form.

Income to the General Trust Fund

4. Table 1 below shows contributions to the ASCOBANS General Trust Fund as at 31 December 2019. Pledges are based on Annex 2 of [Resolution 8.13](#).

Table 1. Income to the General Trust Fund (in Euro)

Country	Pledges for 2019	Contributions received for 2019	Outstanding amount at 31 Dec 2019
Belgium	13,500	13,500	0
Denmark	8,908	8,908	0
Finland	6,956	6,956	0
France	40,240	40,240	0
Germany	40,240	40,240	0
Lithuania	1,098	1,098	0
Netherlands	22,606	22,606	0
Poland	12,828	12,828	0
Sweden	14,583	14,583	0
United Kingdom	40,240	40,240	0
Total	201,198	201,198	0

Expenditure of the General Trust Fund

5. Table 2 below shows the approved budget for 2019 (as per [Resolution 8.13](#)) and the status of expenditures as recorded in the UN book-keeping system at 31 December 2019. The table also factors the carry-over from 2018 of EUR 135,165.
6. A total expenditure of EUR 253,367 was recorded (spent or obligated) in the period from January to December in 2019. Factoring in the carry-over from 2018 of EUR 135,165, a total amount of EUR 82,996 was subsequently available at the end of 2019 and was rephased into the year 2020.

Table 2. Expenditure and balance (in Euro)

Budget Item	MOP-approved budget for 2019	Carry-over from 2018	Expenditure as at 31 Dec 2019 ¹	Balance as at 31 Dec 2019
STAFF PERSONNEL				
Executive Secretary, 3%	6,512	1,309	4,888	2,933
Senior Advisor, 15%	23,729	3,221	22,784	4,166
Associate Coordination Officer, 75%	81,146	32,939	123,874 ²	-9,789
Administrative Assistant, 50%	35,429	26,980	32,824	29,585
Consultants	2,000	295	1,554 ³	741
STAFF PERSONNEL TOTAL	148,816	64,744	185,924	27,636
TRAVEL				
Staff Travel	5,202	681	5,336 ⁴	547
Experts Travel	1,873	658	1,127 ⁵	1,404
TRAVEL TOTAL	7,075	1,339	6,463	1,951
GRANTS OUT				
Conservation Projects	0	34,082	13,651 ⁶	20,431
GRANTS OUT TOTAL	0	34,082	13,651	20,431

¹ Estimated expenditure in Euro. Conversion rate used was USD 1 = EUR 0.893, the average UN exchange rate for the period from January to December 2019. Totals may be affected by rounding.

² Includes relocation costs related to recruitment.

³ Report writer's travel to JG15 (Turku, Finland).

⁴ Coordinator's travel to Scientific Symposium on Harbour Porpoise (Wilhelmshaven, Germany), ACCOBAMS Workshop on Sonars and Cetacean Interactions (Toulon, France), ACCOBAMS MOP7 (Istanbul, Turkey), EC Marine Expert Group Meeting (Brussels, Belgium), Meeting of the European Cetacean Society & World Marine Mammal Conference and associated workshops (Barcelona, Spain).

⁵ Travel of the Co-chair of Joint Bycatch Working Group of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS to a meeting of the ICES Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (Faro, Portugal).

⁶ Instalment for SSFA with Sea Watch Foundation on coordination of the North Sea Plan; travel of three experts to the Workshop of the Intersessional Working Group on National Reporting (Bonn, Germany); travel of five invited experts to the Joint ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS Workshop on Harmonisation of the Best Practices for Necropsy of Cetaceans and for the Development of Diagnostic Frameworks (Padua, Italy); travel of two invited experts to AC25 (Stralsund, Germany); travel of the Co-chair of the Steering Group of the Common Dolphin SAP to the OSPAR-HELCOM workshop to examine possibilities for developing indicators for incidental bycatch of birds and marine mammals (Copenhagen, Denmark) and to the First Meeting of the ASCOBANS Common Dolphin Group (Stralsund, Germany).

Budget Item	MOP-approved budget for 2019	Carry-over from 2018	Expenditure as at 31 Dec 2019 ¹	Balance as at 31 Dec 2019
MEETINGS				
Meeting of Parties	0	0	0	0
Meeting of the Advisory Committee	3,801	-2,547	6,916 ⁷	-5,662
Meeting of Working Groups	1,000	595	1,323 ⁸	272
MEETINGS TOTAL	4,801	-1,952	8,239	-5,390
EXPENDABLE & NON-EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT				
Office Supplies	520	873	0	1,393
Office Equipment	900	1,474	1,572 ⁹	802
EXPENDABLE & NON-EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT TOTAL	1,420	2,347	1,572	2,195
OPERATING COSTS				
Operation/Maintenance Computers	208	404	0	612
IT Services	10,612	12,325	7,456	15,481
Operation/Maintenance of Printers	312	119	0	431
Information Material / Outreach and Education Work	1,561	1,685	244 ¹⁰	3,002
Reference Material	125	242	0	367
Website Maintenance and Development	2,081	3,196	670 ¹¹	4,607
Tel and Fax, Postage and Miscellaneous	1,040	1,085	0	2,125
OPERATING COSTS TOTAL	15,939	19,055	8,370	26,625
SUB-TOTAL	178,051	119,615	224,219	73,448
UN PSC, 13%	23,147	15,550	29,148	9,548
GRAND TOTAL	201,198	135,165	253,367	82,996

⁷ Secretariat staff travel to AC25 and associated meetings (Strasund, Germany), including the report writer and his fees. Expenditure was posted here temporarily and reversed in 2020 (see Annex 2).

⁸ Coordinator travel to JG15 (Turku, Finland).

⁹ Laptop for the new Coordinator.

¹⁰ Courier charges.

¹¹ Website hosting and domain costs, and software license purchase.

Annex 2: Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2020

1. This report has been prepared using information provided by CMS AFMU and UNON.
2. The report contains figures as recorded in the UN book-keeping system as at 30 June 2020. The report is presented in Euro, after conversion from the US dollar figures provided by AFMU/UNON. All Euro figures are approximations due to variations in the exchange rate between Euro and US dollar. All figures are rounded to the next full Euro.
3. No voluntary contributions were received between January and June 2020.

Income to the General Trust Fund

4. Table 1 below shows contributions to the ASCOBANS General Trust Fund as at 30 June 2020. Pledges are based on Annex 2 of [Resolution 8.13](#).

Table 1. Income to the General Trust Fund (in Euro)

Country	Pledges for 2020	Contributions received for 2020	Outstanding Amount at 30 June 2020
Belgium	13,915	0	13,915
Denmark	9,183	0	9,183 ¹²
Finland	7,170	7,170	0
France	41,479	41,479	0
Germany	41,479	41,479	0
Lithuania	1,132	0	1,132
Netherlands	23,302	0	23,302 ¹³
Poland	13,224	0	13,224 ¹⁴
Sweden	15,032	0	15,032
United Kingdom	41,479	41,479	0
Total	207,394	144,831	62,564

¹² Denmark's contribution was received on 23 July 2020.

¹³ The Netherlands' contribution was received on 13 July 2020.

¹⁴ Poland's contribution was received on 1 July 2020.

Expenditure of the General Trust Fund

5. Table 2 below shows the approved budget for 2020 (as per [Resolution 8.13](#)) and the status of expenditures as recorded in the UN book-keeping system at 30 June 2020. The table also factors in the carry-over from 2019 of EUR 82,996.
6. A total expenditure of EUR 109,723 has so far been recorded (spent or obligated) for the period January to June 2020.
7. The balance on the budget line for conservation projects stands at an estimated EUR 17,045.

Table 2. Expenditure and balance (in Euro)

Budget Item	MOP-approved budget for 2020	Carry over from 2019	Expenditure as at 30 June 2020 ¹⁵	Balance as at 30 June 2020
STAFF PERSONNEL				
Executive Secretary, 3%	6,642	2,399	3,503	6,072
Senior Advisor, 15%	24,204	4,166	11,759	16,611
Associate Coordination Officer, 75%	82,769	-9,787	44,859	28,121
Administrative Assistant, 50%	36,137	29,585	24,233	41,489
Consultants	4,000	741	3,484 ¹⁶	1,257
STAFF PERSONNEL TOTAL	153,753	27,636	87,838	93,550
TRAVEL				
Staff Travel	5,306	547	1,312 ¹⁷	4,541
Experts Travel	1,910	1,404	1,430 ¹⁸	1,884
TRAVEL TOTAL	7,216	1,951	2,742	6,425
GRANTS OUT				
Conservation Projects	0	20,431	3,386 ¹⁹	17,045
GRANTS OUT TOTAL	0	20,431	3,386	17,045
MEETINGS				
Meeting of the Parties	3,877	0	0	3,878
Meeting of the Advisory Committee	0	-5,662	-4,598 ²⁰	-1,064
Meetings of Working Groups	1,000	272	0	1,272
MEETINGS TOTAL	4,877	-5,390	-4,598	4,086

¹⁵ Estimated expenditure in Euro. Conversion rate used was USD 1 = EUR 0.903, the average UN exchange rate for the period from January to June 2020. Totals may be affected by rounding.

¹⁶ Anticipated report writer services until February 2021 (part of CMS Family contract).

¹⁷ Coordinator travel to ACCOBAMS SC13 (Cap d'Ail, France).

¹⁸ Travel of the Co-chair of Joint Bycatch Working Group of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS to a meeting of the ICES Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species regarding emergency measures (Den Helder, the Netherlands).

¹⁹ Instalment for SSFA with Sea Watch Foundation on coordination of the North Sea Plan.

²⁰ Expenditure from 2019 reversed in 2020.

Budget Item	MOP-approved budget for 2020	Carry over from 2019	Expenditure as at 30 June 2020 ¹⁵	Balance as at 30 June 2020
EXPENDABLE & NON-EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT				
Office Supplies	531	1,393	0	1,924
Office Equipment	900	802	0	1,702
EXPENDABLE & NON-EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT TOTAL	1,431	2,195	0	3,626
OPERATING COSTS				
Operation/Maintenance Computers	212	612	117 ²¹	707
IT Services	10,824	15,481	7,539 ²²	18,766
Operation/Maintenance of Printers	318	431	0	749
Information Material / Outreach and Education Work	1,592	3,002	76 ²³	4,518
Reference Material	127	367	0	494
Website Maintenance and Development	2,122	4,607	0	6,729
Tel and Fax, Postage and Miscellaneous	1,061	2,125	0	3,186
OPERATING COSTS TOTAL	16,258	26,625	7,732	35,149
SUB-TOTAL	183,534	73,448	97,100	159,881
UN PSC, 13%	23,859	9,548	12,623	20,785
GRAND TOTAL	207,394	82,996	109,723	180,666

²¹ Spare parts for Administrative Assistant's laptop.

²² Annual invoice from UNV.

²³ Postage for books to WMMC 2019 Student Award winners.