

Agenda Item 7.1

Administrative and Budgetary Issues

Financial and Administrative Matters
2012 - 2016

Document 7.1.a Rev.1

**Report of the Secretariat on Financial
and Administrative Matters
2013- 2016**

Action Requested

- Take note
- Comment

Submitted by

Secretariat



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TO BRING THEIR OWN COPIES OF DOCUMENTS TO THE MEETING**

Report of the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Matters 2013-2016

1. Pursuant to Article 4.3 of the Agreement, the Secretariat hereby presents a summary report on progress made and difficulties 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 MOP8/Doc.4.2.

Location and Status of the Secretariat

2. In line with MOP3 Resolution No. 1, the ASCOBANS Secretariat has been formally integrated with the CMS Agreements Unit since 1 January 2001. The Secretariat receives administrative support from the Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU) of CMS. Since June 2006, all Bonn-based UNEP Secretariats have been located in the new UN Campus, a fully refurbished historical high-rise building. Office space is provided free of charge by the German Government. The building also includes in-house conference rooms suitable for up to 150 participants and equipped for simultaneous interpretation, which are available to the Secretariat at low cost.

3. At the 5th Meeting of the Parties to ASCOBANS (2006) it had been decided that "*from 1st January 2007 the UNEP/CMS Secretariat shall serve as the secretariat pursuant to provision No.4 of the ASCOBANS Agreement; and the Executive Secretary of UNEP/CMS shall be the acting Executive Secretary of ASCOBANS*". Since then, the budget provides for 3 per cent of the UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary's time, 15 per cent of the time of the Head of Unit of the CMS Aquatic Team, 75 per cent of the time of a Coordinator at P-2 level, and a part-time administrative assistant at GS-5 level.

4. Following a provisional three-year test period, Parties at the 6th (2009) and 7th Meeting of the Parties (2012) extended the arrangements. CMS Parties in CMS Resolution 11.1 on Financial and Administrative Matters confirmed that the CMS Secretariat will continue to provide Secretariat services to ASCOBANS until the end of their triennium (2015-2017).

Personnel/Staff Arrangements

5. The ASCOBANS Secretariat has undergone several staffing changes since the 7th Meeting of the Parties.

6. Following the departure of the CMS Executive Secretary, Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, in January 2012, and an interim period in which the Deputy Executive Secretary of CMS, Bert Lenten, managed day-to-day operations of both Secretariats in addition to his regular responsibilities, in March 2013 Bradnee Chambers was appointed as the new Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). This function that includes serving as acting Executive Secretary to ASCOBANS.

7. In November 2013, a new structure of the Secretariat was implemented by the CMS Executive Secretary. Designed to allow more even attention to be given to all parts of the CMS Family and mandates, one of the key changes was to abolish the former Science and Agreements Units. Instead, an overarching Implementation Support Team consisting of a Scientific Advisor, Marco Barbieri, and three species teams dealing with avian, terrestrial and aquatic species were created.

8. This led to a handover of responsibility for ASCOBANS from Borja Heredia, who had been serving as CMS Scientific and Technical Support Officer (STSO), to Melanie Virtue, head of the newly formed CMS Aquatic Species team. Besides all of the CMS Secretariat's work on cetaceans, this team also deals with other aquatic mammals, sharks, other fish, marine turtles and cross-cutting marine issues such as bycatch, underwater noise, marine debris and

pollution. This new structure ensures that overlapping interests such as bycatch, ocean noise and marine debris are dealt with effectively.

9. The experience of over nine years since the Secretariat function was entrusted to the CMS Secretariat has shown that the responsibilities of the coordinator position, as well as the expectations of Parties for a smoothly functioning and responsive Secretariat, call for a higher level than the one currently assigned (P-2). Therefore, as outlined in MOP8/Doc.7.2.b, the Secretariat is proposing a change of the coordinator position from a P-2 to a P-3 level, bearing in mind that the responsibilities have previously been assessed by United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON) as possibly even qualifying for a P-4 classification. On the one hand, it is a matter of principle that no one should be permanently required to work significantly above their level. On the other hand, in the event of new recruitment, it is also not necessarily realistic to find suitable applicants to an entry-level job when the actual requirements are significantly higher. In order to ensure the level of service that Parties are used to can be maintained in the long term, the Secretariat therefore recommends that Parties consider raising the level of the coordinator position.

10. The CMS Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU) also has undergone a number of staffing changes. Details can be accessed in the reports submitted to the Advisory Committee as well as the annual mid-year reports. The CMS Administrative and Fund Management Officer, Bruce Noronha, left Bonn in May 2015 to take up a new assignment at the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention Secretariat in Geneva. His successor, Sandra Rucker, entered on duty on 17 August 2015.

11. The Secretariat team enjoyed the support of several interns in the reporting period, most of whom were university students or recent graduates. Details are contained in the reports submitted to the Advisory Committee. Since May 2014 for various reasons it has not been possible to secure interns focused on cetacean-related matters in the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat. Occasional support has been given by interns supporting other colleagues, and interns dedicated to this work area will be recruited again in future through the joint internship programme with CMS and the other co-located Agreement Secretariats in Bonn. More information on internship opportunities can be found on the [ASCOBANS website](#).

Administration

12. The tasks of Secretariat staff include ensuring the smooth operation of administrative and staff-related matters and the administration of the ASCOBANS budget. This includes tasks such as the implementation and management of projects short-listed for support from the ASCOBANS budget. Since MOP7, the Secretariat has administered the following projects:

- Understanding harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) and fisheries interactions in the north-west Iberian Peninsula (University of Aberdeen, final report: [AC20/Doc.6.1.b](#))
- Preparation of a Draft Paper containing background information and proposed objectives and measures for the porpoise population residing in the “gap area” not covered by the original Jastarnia Plan (University of Aarhus). The final product of the project was the Draft Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the Western Baltic, Belt Seas and Kattegat produced for the Advisory Committee’s consideration, which was published as AC19/Doc.4-03. After undergoing further revisions, the Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise Population in the Western Baltic, the Belt Sea and the Kattegat was adopted through Resolution No. 1 of the 7th Meeting of the Parties (October 2012).
- Distribution and relative abundance of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) over the Dogger Bank and surrounding waters, Southern North Sea (Marine Conservation Research International, final report: [AC20/Doc.6.1.c](#))

- Enhanced detection of harbour porpoises prior to ramming, seismic blast and ammunition clearance: design and construction of a PAL-porpoise detector (PPD) (Forschung. Fakten. Fantasie. F³, final report: [AC21/Inf.6.1.a](#))
- Pollutant exposure in coastal top predators: assessing current levels of exposure and toxic effects (Zoological Society of London (ZSL), final report: [AC22/Inf.8.1.a](#))
- Preparations for SCANS-III (University of St. Andrews, final report: [AC22/Inf.8.1.b](#))
- Approaches to an Impact Indicator in the Light of Descriptor 11 (MSFD) (Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS Germany, now Whale and Dolphin Conservation, WDC), main output: paper on Methodologies to Help Determine Levels of Noise Compliant with Environmental Laws, available as [AC22/Inf.8.1.c](#))
- Examine habitat exclusion and long-term effect of pingers (Aarhus University, interim report: [AC21/Inf.6.1.b](#), next project phase not supported by ASCOBANS)
- Baltic Sea harbour porpoise foraging habitats (BALHAB) in the Baltic Region (Aarhus University, contract under preparation)

13. The Secretariat receives support from the Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU) of CMS which is part of UNEP's Office for Operations and works closely with UNON.

14. The Secretariat, with guidance and assistance from AFMU, further undertakes the selection and processing of consultants for tasks requiring specific expertise or additional staff capacity and supervises their work, and also prepares reports on administrative and financial issues to Parties and prepares and services meetings of the MOP, the AC and its working groups, and workshops as required.

15. Detailed reports on administrative matters have been submitted to each meeting of the Advisory Committee, as follows:

- AC20/Doc.15.1 [Report on Administrative Issues 2012/2013](#)
- AC21/Doc.14.1 [Report on Administrative Issues 2013/2014](#)
- AC22/Doc.17.1.b [Report on Administrative Issues 2014-2015](#)

Budget Implementation

16. During the triennium, the Agreement's finances have been maintained at a healthy state.

17. In addition to the Operating Reserve of US\$87,542, the General Trust Fund at the end of 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 had positive balances, which in line with the Parties' wishes were rephased to the following year's budget and made available for conservation projects. The vast majority of these savings are from the personnel budget lines, which constitute more than 60 per cent of the entire budget and for which budget allocations are made using standard UN salary costs for the Bonn duty station. However, throughout the triennium the actual expenditure relating to some of the posts was significantly lower than budget estimates, as the present incumbents' entitlements (depending e.g. on family situation and country of origin) are significantly lower than the average. The operational budget lines tend to have no significant leftovers.

18. A total amount of €94,963 was spent from 2012 to date for projects selected by the Advisory Committee (for details see list above). The balance on the budget line for conservation projects currently stands at an estimated €55,018, of which €14,938 are reserved for the project selected for funding by AC21 (see AC22/Doc.8.1 for details).

19. Details on expenditures, balances, rephasals and their use have been provided in the annual reports to the Advisory Committee, as follows:

- AC20/Doc.15.2 [Report on Budgetary Issues 2012](#)
 - AC20/Doc.15.3 [Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2013](#)
 - AC21/Doc.14.2 [Report on Budgetary Issues 2013](#)
 - AC21/Doc.14.3 [Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2014](#)
 - AC22/Doc.17.2.a [Report on Budgetary Issues 2014](#)
 - AC22/Doc.17.2.b [Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2015](#)
20. The end-of-year report for 2015 is contained in Annex 1 to this document.
21. The mid-year report of 2016 is contained in Annex 2.
22. On 1 June 2015, a new SAP-based enterprise resource (ERP) system was implemented for the offices under the United Nations Environment Programme, with other parts of the UN system starting earlier or joining some months later. The system provides a harmonized and streamlined approach to the following core organization functions: Finance and Budget Management, Human Resources Management, Workforce Management, Organizational Management, Travel Management, Payroll, Programme & Project Management and Supply Chain/ Procurement/ Logistics Management. The new system is called Umoja; *'unity'* in Swahili. For more information on Umoja, please refer to www.unumoja.net.
23. The implementation of Umoja was a major undertaking which had, and to some degree still has, a tremendous impact on the day-to-day work of all staff, and in particular those that are working for the Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU), which services CMS and the co-located Agreements, including ASCOBANS. Besides undertaking mandatory training often provided only several months after implementation in the use and functionality of the new system, staff needed to dedicate much time to preparing the data of the old system (IMIS) for migration into Umoja, into verifying, completing and allocating data, and into processing payments for contracts and purchases relating to the pre-Umoja period.
24. The introduction of the new system has caused many delays in payments and administrative processes, and while bugs in the system are being identified and addressed constantly, still not all functions of Umoja are fully operational. Once fully implemented, the UN will be able to conduct complex and real-time analyses of critical data, a practice known as Business Intelligence.

Annex 1

Report on Budgetary Issues 2015

1. This report has been prepared by the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat with inputs and guidance from AFMU. It is an update with respect to the mid-term report published as [AC22/Doc.17.2.b](#).
2. The report contains figures as recorded in the book-keeping systems as at 31 December 2015. It combines expenditures recorded in both the old (IMIS) and the new system (Umoja). The report contains a few expenditures relating to 2015 which – due to Umoja implementation – could only be entered into the system in early 2016.
3. The report is presented in Euro, which has been converted from the US dollar figures provided by UNON. All figures are rounded to the next full Euro.
4. Voluntary Contributions were received in the reporting period as follows:
Germany: €25,600 (incl. PSC)¹ for various activities as agreed with the donor
Netherlands: €5,000 (incl. PSC) for North Sea Plan Coordination
United Kingdom: £5,000 (incl. PSC) for North Sea Plan Coordination

Income to the General Trust Fund

5. Table 1 below shows contributions to the General Trust Fund for the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) (BA) as at 31 December 2015.

Table 1 – Income

Country	Pledges for 2015	Contributions received for 2015	Outstanding Amount at 31/12/2015
	EUR	EUR	EUR
Belgium	13,679	13,679	0
Denmark	9,366	9,366	0
Finland	7,202	7,202	0
France	39,378	39,378	0
Germany	39,378	39,378	0
Lithuania	827	827	0
Netherlands	23,605	23,605	0
Poland	10,536	10,536	0
Sweden	13,539	13,539	0
United Kingdom	39,378	39,378	0
Total	196,888	196,888	0

¹ Programme Support Costs (13 per cent)

Expenditure of the General Trust Fund

6. Table 2 below shows the approved budget² for 2015 and the status of expenditures on the General Trust Fund for the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) (BA) as recorded in our bookkeeping systems at 31 December 2015. A total of €151,182 expenditure was recorded.³ Details are contained in the annotations to the table below.
7. A total amount of €73,637 at the conversion rate used for this report was available for rephasal at the end of 2015.

Table 2 – Expenditures and Balance

	Budget Item	Approved budget for 2015 in EURO	Status of expenditure as at 31/12/2015 in EURO ⁴	Available balance as at 31/12/2015 in EURO
1101	Executive Secretary (D1); 3%	5,148	6,408 ⁵	-1,260
1102	CMS Professional Staff (P4), 15% (ASCOBANS Senior Advisor)	21,068	21,596 ⁶	-528
1103	Associate Coordination Officer (P2), 75%	66,326	63,838 ⁷	2,488
1220	Professional Consultancies and fractional CMS Staff time	7,000	0	7,000
1301	General Services: Administrative Assistant (GS-5), 50%	42,997	35,247	7,750
1601	Travel Secretariat Staff	5,066	5,817 ⁸	-751
1602	Experts on Mission	1,739	1,739 ⁹	0
1999	Personnel Subtotal	149,344	134,644	14,700
2201	Conservation Projects	52,318 ¹⁰	4,629 ¹¹	47,689 ¹²

² The approved budget consists of the allotment granted in Resolution 7.6 on Financial, Budgetary and Administrative Matters for the Forthcoming Financial Period 2013-2016 and the rephasing of the 2014 fund balance into the 2015 budget, in line with operational paragraph 19 of this Resolution. The exchange rate at the time the rephasals were done was \$1 = €0.850.

³ All Euro figures are approximations due to variations in the exchange rate between Euro and US\$.

⁴ Estimated expenditure in Euro. Conversion rate used was \$1 = €0.906, the average UN exchange rate for the year 2015. Totals may be affected by rounding.

⁵ Cost sharing: 3% was reimbursed to CMS

⁶ Cost sharing: 15% was reimbursed to CMS

⁷ Cost sharing : 25% was reimbursed from the CMS budget

⁸ Travel H. Frisch to opening of Baltic porpoise exhibition in Stralsund, to JG11, to ASCOBANS workshop in London, B. Reinartz to dismantling of Baltic porpoise exhibition, Stralsund, Germany

⁹ Support to I. Carlién travelling to JG11, part of P. Evans' travel to NSG5/AC22/REM workshop

¹⁰ The allotment in this line was increased by € 50,579 rephased from 2014 balance

¹¹ Travel of Berrow, Kind-Larsen, Murphy, Wilson and Evans to NSG5, AC22 and REM workshop in The Hague.

¹² €14,938 need to be set aside for the project selected for funding by AC21 (see AC22/Doc.8.1 for details)

	Budget Item	Approved budget for 2015 in EURO	Status of expenditure as at 31/12/2015 in EURO ⁴	Available balance as at 31/12/2015 in EURO
2999	Subprojects Subtotal	52,318	4,629	47,689
3302	Meeting of the Advisory Committee	3,478	6,156	-2,678 ¹³
3303	Meetings of Working Groups	1,591	0	1,591
3999	Meetings Subtotal	5,069	6,156	-1,087
4101	Miscellaneous Office Supplies	637	0	637
4201	Office Equipment	905	0	905
4999	Equipment and Premises Subtotal	1,542	0	1,542
5101	Operation/Maintenance computers	624	0	624
5102	IT Services	10,000	3,618 ¹⁴	6,382
5103	Operation/Maintenance of printers	568	250	318
5201	Information Material/Outreach and Education Work	1,639	214 ¹⁵	1,425
5202	Reference Material	124	51 ¹⁶	73
5203	Website Maintenance and Development	2,318	286 ¹⁷	2,032
5301	Telephone and Fax	212	209	3
5302	Postage and Miscellaneous	1,061	1,125	-64
5999	Miscellaneous Costs Subtotal	16,546	5,753	10,793
	SUBTOTAL	224,819	151,182	73,637
6000	Programme Support Cost (PSC), 13%	29,226	19,654	9,573
	GRAND TOTAL	254,046	170,835	83,210

¹³ A payment of the AC21 host, Sweden, of €3,352 (incl. PSC) to cover over-expenditure was recorded in 2015. The host of AC22, the Netherlands, has been invoiced concerning over-expenditure relating to that meeting.

¹⁴ Charges by UN Volunteers for server provision and maintenance, Helpdesk service, IT support etc.

¹⁵ ECS 2015 Conference Registration fee, Facebook advertising costs

¹⁶ Membership fee for the European Cetacean Society for 2015

¹⁷ Webhosting, domain services

Annex 2

Mid-Term Report on Budgetary Issues 2016

1. This report has been prepared by the CMS/ASCOBANS Secretariat with input and guidance from AFMU.
2. The report contains figures as recorded in the book-keeping system as at 30 June 2016. The report is presented in Euro, which has been converted from the US dollar figures provided by UNON. All figures are rounded to the next full Euro.
3. Voluntary Contributions were received in the reporting period as follows:
Germany: €25,600 (incl. PSC) for various activities as agreed with the donor

Income to the General Trust Fund

4. Table 1 below shows contributions to the General Trust Fund for the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) (BA) as at 30 June 2016.

Table 1 – Income

Country	Pledges for 2016	Contributions received for 2016	Outstanding Amount at 30/06/2016
	EUR	EUR	EUR
Belgium	13,941	13,941	0
Denmark	9,545	0	9,545
Finland	7,340	7,340	0
France	40,131	40,131	0
Germany	40,131	40,131	0
Lithuania	843	843	0
Netherlands	24,057	24,057	0
Poland	10,738	10,738	0
Sweden	13,799	13,799	0
United Kingdom	40,131	40,131	0
Total	200,656	191,111	9,545

5. Several Parties have requested copies of the invoices sent by the Contributions Unit in Nairobi, since originals had not reached the persons responsible for facilitating the payments. These copies were received by the Secretariat and immediately passed on to National Coordinators in March 2016.

Expenditure of the General Trust Fund

6. Table 2 below shows the approved budget¹⁸ for 2016 and the status of expenditures on the General Trust Fund for the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) (BA) as recorded in our bookkeeping system at 30 June 2016. An expenditure total of €99,154 was recorded in the period January to June 2016.¹⁹
7. A total amount of €73,637 at the conversion rate used for this report was available for rephasal at the end of 2015. Of this amount, €14,938 need to be set aside for the project selected for funding by AC21 (see AC22/Doc.8.1 for details). As a consequence, a total of €58,699 (at the current exchange rate) was available for additional activities to be funded from budget line 2201 (Conservation Projects).

Table 2 – Expenditures and Balance

	Budget Item	Approved budget for 2016 in EURO	Expenditures as at 30/06/2016 in EURO ²⁰	Balance as at 30/06/2016 in EURO
1101	Executive Secretary (D1); 3%	5,251	3,179	2,072
1102	CMS Professional Staff (P4), 15% (ASCOBANS Senior Advisor)	21,489	10,715	10,774
1103	Associate Coordination Officer (P2), 75%	67,652	32,510	35,142
1220	Professional Consultancies and fractional CMS Staff time	7,000	2,208 ²¹	4,792
1301	General Services: Administrative Assistant (GS-5), 50%	43,857	15,410	28,447
1601	Travel Secretariat Staff	5,218	1,877 ²²	3,341
1602	Experts on Mission	1,791	1,070 ²³	721
1999	Personnel Subtotal	152,258	66,968	85,290
2201	Conservation Projects	75,428 ²⁴	20,410 ²⁵	55,018 ²⁶

¹⁸ The approved budget consists of the allotment granted in Resolution 7.6 on Financial, Budgetary and Administrative Matters for the Forthcoming Financial Period 2013-2016 and the rephasing of the 2015 fund balance into the 2016 budget, in line with operational paragraph 19 of this Resolution. The exchange rate applied to the rephasals was \$1 = €0.850.

¹⁹ All Euro figures are approximations due to variations in the exchange rate between Euro and US\$.

²⁰ Estimated expenditure in Euro. Conversion rate used was \$1 = €0.899, the average UN exchange rate for the period January-June 2016. Totals may be affected by rounding

²¹ Contract with Global Centre for International Law (MOP8/Inf.6.2.1)

²² Travel HF to ECS, to JG12

²³ Travel R. Tiedemann to JG12

²⁴ The allotment in this line was increased by €73,637 at the conversion rate used rephased from 2015 balance

²⁵ SSFA 2016-1 for Revision of the Jastarnia Plan (AquaBiota), travel support to speakers Desportes, Evans, Nikolic, Notarbartolo di Sciarra and Ritter for ECS workshop "Conserving Cetaceans in the Seas around Europe through Synergy-building between the Relevant Legislative Frameworks"

²⁶ €14,938 need to be set aside for the project selected for funding by AC21 (see AC22/Doc.8.1 for details)

	Budget Item	Approved budget for 2016 in EURO	Expenditures as at 30/06/2016 in EURO ²⁰	Balance as at 30/06/2016 in EURO
2999	Subprojects Subtotal	75,428	20,410	55,018
3301	Meeting of the Parties	3,582	9,459 ²⁷	-5,877
3303	Meetings of Working Groups	1,639	0	1,639
3999	Meetings Subtotal	5,221	9,459	-4,238
4101	Miscellaneous Office Supplies	656	652 ²⁸	4
4201	Office Equipment	905	0	905
4999	Equipment and Premises Subtotal	1,561	652	909
5101	Operation/Maintenance computers	643	0	643
5102	IT Services	10,000	0 ²⁹	10,000
5103	Operation/Maintenance of printers	585	0 ³⁰	585
5201	Information Material/Outreach and Education Work	1,688	916 ³¹	772
5202	Reference Material	128	51 ³²	77
5203	Website Maintenance and Development	2,388	598 ³³	1,790
5301	Telephone and Fax	219	0 ³⁴	219
5302	Postage and Miscellaneous	1,093	99	994
5999	Miscellaneous Costs Subtotal	16,744	1,664	15,080
	SUBTOTAL	251,212	99,154	152,058
6000	Programme Support Cost (PSC), 13%	32,658	12,890	19,768
	GRAND TOTAL	283,870	112,044	171,826

²⁷ Funds obligated for travel of M. Virtue, H. Frisch, B. Reinartz and R. Vagg to MOP8, as well as report writing contract R. Vagg

²⁸ Funds obligated for the needs of the entire year, actual use to be determined at the end of the year

²⁹ Charges by UN Volunteers for server provision and maintenance, Helpdesk service, IT support etc. will be made later in the year. Estimated at €6,500 for 2016.

³⁰ Reimbursement to CMS for printing costs will be made at the end of the year

³¹ ECS 2016 Conference Registration fee, purchase of ASCOBANS pens

³² Membership fee for the European Cetacean Society for 2016

³³ Webhosting, domain services

³⁴ Charges will be made at the end of the year