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Item 8 (b) of the provisional agenda

Follow-up to the assessment of the Global Mechanism by the Joint Inspection Unit

Evaluation of existing and potential reporting, accountability and institutional arrangements for the Global Mechanism

The report of the Executive Secretary on office space availability and eventual costs

Summary

The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (COP), at its fourth intersessional meeting (Bonn, 25 February 2011), requested the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to provide information on office space and eventual costs in the event that Parties would consider the proposal to relocate the Global Mechanism to the secretariat headquarters in Bonn.

This document was first submitted to the COP Bureau. It is made available to Parties in the context of their deliberations and decision-making process as they relate to the evaluation of the Global Mechanism (ICCD/COP(10)/4).

1. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, at its fourth intersessional meeting on 25 February 2011, requested the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to provide information on office space in the event that Parties would consider the proposal to relocate the Global Mechanism (GM) to the secretariat headquarters in Bonn, according to a timeframe to be set by the Conference of the Parties (COP).
2. The secretariat's initial paper (sent on 15 February 2011) on the estimated cost of relocating the GM to Bonn, Germany, was built upon the decision of the COP related to the core budget positions of the GM as well as information provided in the consultancy report commissioned by the COP Bureau, "Assessment of the Global Mechanism" of 20 February 2011, whereby only staff members at the professional level or above and approved by the Conference of the Parties would be relocated to Bonn.¹ This estimate was further established under the understanding that the only financial incidence to be faced by the COP was the one originating from its own decisions regarding the authorization of staff positions. Professional staff members were assumed to have been internationally recruited, hold a fixed-term appointment and had at least one dependent. Termination indemnities for General Service staff against the core budget would have been settled through the core budget of the GM. The associated costs of relocation, repatriation, or termination indemnities of staff members funded by extra-budgetary contributions would have been covered by the respective source of funding.
3. Once a decision to relocate the GM to Bonn is taken by Parties, it would be necessary from a purely managerial point of view to undertake a desk-to-desk workload analysis of the GM existing staff to clarify all job duties and responsibilities through the assessment of human resources needs, review of all job descriptions so as to determine the appropriateness of the duties and to ensure that the positions are designed to meet the expectation of Parties. With such an exercise, more accurate information on the costs of relocating the GM staff to Bonn could be obtained. Information on GM staff members' type of contract, expiration date of contract, grade, step and nationality would be accessible. For example, when assessing termination indemnity, a staff member, who holds a temporary or a fixed-term appointment that is completed on the expiration date specified in the letter of appointment, is not eligible to this entitlement.²
4. Nevertheless, based on a request put forward by the European Union and received on 19 April, the secretariat has expanded the scope of the estimated relocation costs to include those GM staff members who are funded from extra-budgetary contributions using the information of the sole reference paper at COP Bureau level, which is the final consultancy report. Table 6, page 38 of the report shows a total of 10 GM staff members (2 P-5, 6 P-3 and 2 P-2) in addition to the posts approved by the COP. Applying the same calculations for these staff as with the COP approved staff members, the revised calculation would be in the amount of EUR 588,700 as indicated in the table below.

¹ Consultants' report to the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session on the evaluation of the Global Mechanism, section II.A.3.c, table 6 and box 5.

² Staff Regulations of the United Nations and provisional Staff Rules (ST/SGB/2010/6), annex III, item (d) ii.

Table
Revised summary of relocation costs for eligible staff members (core and extra-budgetary) and their dependents of the GM
(United States dollars)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Relocation Grant</i>	<i>Assignment grant 30 + 15 DSA</i>	<i>1 month salary^a</i>	<i>Travel^b</i>	<i>Total USD</i>	<i>Total EUR^c</i>
D-2	1	15,000	13,995	15,170	4,000	48,165	35,249
D-1	1	15,000	13,995	13,942	4,000	46,937	34,350
P-5	1	15,000	13,995	11,745	4,000	44,740	32,742
P-4	4	60,000	55,980	39,397	16,000	171,377	125,420
P-1	2	30,000	27,990	10,927	8,000	76,917	56,290
Subtotal (core)	9	135,000	125,955	91,181	36,000	388,136	284,051
P-5	2	30,000	27,990	23,489	8,000	89,479	65,484
P-3	6	90,000	83,970	49,241	24,000	247,211	180,917
P-2	2	30,000	27,990	13,658	8,000	79,648	58,289
Subtotal (XB ^d)	10	150,000	139,950	86,388	40,000	416,338	304,690
TOTAL	19	285,000	265,905	177,569	76,000	804,474	588,741

^aBase salary, plus post adjustment for the month of April 2011, at step 3.

^bCalculation includes eligible staff members and their dependents.

^cAt the average United Nations operational rate of exchange from October 2010 to April 2011.

^dXB = Extra-budgetary

5. It is worth mentioning that the amount shown in table 1 has been provided for information purposes only and does not imply from the part of the secretariat that the COP should be held financially liable for positions it has not expressly authorized nor financially contributed to.

6. With respect to the five General Service staff members approved in the core budget, the secretariat would anticipate no cost, other than the standard administrative cost involved with the United Nations Office at Geneva, associated with the hiring of new, locally recruited staff members through the normal hiring process of the secretariat. These include classifying job descriptions, preparing documents for the consideration of the Central Review Body of the secretariat, advertising posts for 30 days and conducting interviews.

7. In due consideration of a possible desk to desk analysis referred to under paragraph 3 above and if the secretariat was to accommodate 19 Professional and 5 General Service level staff members, the secretariat would expand options assessed so as to include office sharing or staff positioning in separate premises within the United Nations Campus, similar to the experience of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

8. With the assumption that equipment and material of additional staff would be transported to Bonn, the secretariat would increase its estimate to the amount of EUR 35,000.

9. In summary, the cost of relocating professional staff under the core budget authorized by the COP would amount to approximately Eur 257,400 at the April 2011 exchange rate as delineated in the secretariat initial submission. If the relocation would be extended to all Professional staff, including both core and extra-budgetary, the cost would amount to EUR 623,700 (EUR 588,700 for staff relocation and EUR 35,000 for equipment transportation). The secretariat would anticipate that the total costs of moving the GM to Bonn, Germany as described above could be split between the 13 percent overhead charged to the core budget of the GM and extra-budgetary resources, depending on the source of funding of the staff members.
