
Decision 4/1. Programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020–2021

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Having considered the proposed programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020-2021,

1. *Approves* the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020–2021;

2. *Also approves* appropriations for the Environment Fund in the amount of 200 million United States dollars, of which a maximum of 122 million dollars is allocated to defraying post costs for the biennium for the purposes indicated in the following table:

Environment Fund programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020–2021

(thousands of United States dollars)

A. Policymaking organs	4 000
B. Executive direction and management	7 200
C. Programme of work	
1. Climate change	22 200
2. Resilience to disasters and conflicts	15 600
3. Healthy and productive ecosystems	28 000
4. Environmental governance	26 200
5. Chemicals, waste and air quality	23 400
6. Resource efficiency	28 400
7. Environment under review	23 000
D. Fund programme reserve	10 000
E. Programme support	12 000
Total	200 000

3. *Stresses* the importance of early, extensive and transparent consultations between the Executive Director, Member States and the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the preparation of the programme of work and budget, including initiatives of a significant, substantive and strategic nature that could require substantive resources affecting existing priority programmes or the outreach of the United Nations Environment Programme, and the need for timely scheduling of meetings and the provision of information to allow the full participation of all Member States throughout the consultation process, and in that regard welcomes the progress made to date;

4. *Recalls* paragraph 13 of Governing Council decision 19/32, and requests the Executive Director to ensure that the secretariat provides the documentation and information related to the programme of work and budget to Member States and the Committee of Permanent Representatives at least four weeks in advance of its annual subcommittee meeting and other meetings at which it is to be considered;

5. *Emphasizes* the need for comprehensive information and full justification regarding proposed expenditures and contributions from all sources of funding, including staffing information, to be provided to the Committee of Permanent Representatives well in advance of its consideration of the programme of work and budget, and requests the Executive Director to continue to hold timely consultations on the preparation of all future programmes of work and budgets prior to their transmittal to other appropriate bodies, and continue to work expeditiously towards increasing transparency and accountability on costs and budgets to enable the Committee to provide guidance on implementation;

6. *Stresses* the need for the programme of work and budget to be based on results-based management;
7. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to reallocate resources between subprogramme budget lines up to a maximum of ten per cent of the subprogramme appropriations and to inform the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and in duly justified exceptional circumstances to reallocate in excess of 10 per cent and up to 20 per cent of the appropriations from which resources are reallocated after prior consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives;
8. *Also authorizes* the Executive Director to adjust, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the level of Environment Fund allocations to subprogrammes, bringing them into line with possible variations in income compared to the approved level of appropriations, while taking into account expected incomes from other sources;
9. *Further authorizes* the Executive Director to enter into forward commitments not exceeding 20 million United States dollars for Environment Fund activities, to implement the programme of work for the biennium 2020–2021;
10. *Decides* that overall staffing of the executive office may not exceed 30 posts in the biennium 2020–2021, unless otherwise authorized by the Committee of Permanent Representatives;
11. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to apply a prudent approach to the management of resources from all sources, including the Environment Fund, including through the careful management of contractual arrangements;
12. *Also requests* the Executive Director to continue to monitor and manage the share of the Environment Fund devoted, respectively, to post costs and non-post costs, while clearly prioritizing the application of the resources of the Environment Fund to programme activities;
13. *Further requests* the Executive Director to improve the achievement of programme objectives and the efficient and transparent use of resources to that end, subject to United Nations processes of oversight, review and independent evaluation;
14. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to report to Member States through the meeting of the annual subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme at its biennial sessions, on evaluation findings and the progress made in respect of the performance of each subprogramme and its expected accomplishments and on the execution of the budget of the Environment Fund, including voluntary contributions, expenditures and reallocations of appropriations or adjustments of allocations;
15. *Also requests* the Executive Director to continue to report to Member States through the quarterly reports of the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives in a streamlined manner through the merging of progress reporting on administrative and budgetary matters with programme performance reporting;
16. *Further requests* the Executive Director, in that regard, to include in the reporting to the Committee of Permanent Representatives information on how the United Nations Environment Programme has implemented the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
17. *Requests* the Executive Director to undertake an assessment of internal policies, guidelines and regulations that need to be adjusted in order to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 71/243 and 72/279, to present a plan with timelines for their implementation to the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its 146th meeting, to present an update for consideration at the annual subcommittee meeting and to reflect the findings of the assessment in the implementation of the approved medium-term strategy and programme of work as well as in the design of future planning documents;
18. *Also requests* the Executive Director to continue to organize, in a timely and predictable manner, regular briefings to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the programme and budget performance of each subprogramme, to enable the Committee to adequately perform its monitoring task;
19. *Further requests* the Executive Director to ensure that the delivery of the programme of work supports and brings together regional and national programmes and activities in the

medium-term strategy and the biennial programme of work and takes into account regional priorities and regional frameworks, where they exist, and requests the Executive Director to include information on regional programmes and activities in the progress report on the implementation of the programme of work;

20. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue implementing the programme of work and budget at the regional and subregional levels, including by supporting regional ministerial conferences and forums for which the United Nations Environment Programme serves as secretariat;

21. *Also requests* the Executive Director to ensure that all the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme at the country level are aligned with and included in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, where applicable, as the most important instrument for planning and implementation of United Nations development activities in each country, and are reported on to the respective United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a regular basis;

22. *Further requests* the Executive Director to ensure that all earmarked contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme are used to fund activities that contribute to the effective implementation of the programme of work, apart from those funds administered by the United Nations Environment Programme on behalf of other intergovernmental bodies;

23. *Urges* Member States and others in a position to do so to increase voluntary contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme, notably the Environment Fund, taking into account the universal membership of the Environment Assembly;

24. *Notes* the positive effect of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions in broadening the base of contributions to and enhancing the predictability of the voluntary financing of the Environment Fund and requests the Executive Director to continue adapting the voluntary indicative scale of contributions, inter alia, in accordance with Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 and any relevant subsequent decisions;

25. *Encourages* the Executive Director, in close consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to further improve the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy and requests the Executive Director, in accordance with the partnership policy rules and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, to mobilize increased voluntary funding to the Programme from all Member States and others in a position to do so, and to continue to broaden the contributor base;

26. *Requests* the Executive Director to develop robust and transparent due diligence procedures prior to accepting funds from sources other than Member States and to keep the Committee of Permanent Representatives informed about the procedures and their application;

27. *Welcomes* the indication in the programme of work and budget of core activities for the subprogrammes and requests the Executive Director to provide adequate priority to those activities when implementing the programme of work;

28. *Requests* the Executive Director to ensure that South-South, South-North and triangular cooperation initiatives are effectively implemented in the spirit of accountability and transparency;

29. *Expresses concern* that some projects, partnerships and new initiatives, including those affecting the Programme's nomenclature, which potentially negatively affect its reputation and distract from its core mandates as contained in the programme of work, were undertaken and launched without prior consultation with Member States;

30. *Requests* the Executive Director, in the spirit of transparency and inclusivity and in a proactive manner, to fully utilize the existing governance structures and processes in order to address the concerns raised in paragraph 29 of the present decision;

31. *Also requests* the Executive Director, further to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 72/266 of 24 December 2017, on shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations, to revise the strategic planning cycles and format, in close consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives and in accordance with resolution 72/266, which includes the development of an annual budget and performance document;

32. *Further requests* the Executive Director to submit for consideration and approval by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and building on lessons learned from previous bienniums,

a results-oriented and streamlined medium-term strategy and programme of work that is in line with General Assembly resolution 72/266;

33. Takes note of the information contained in the report on funding implications of the policymaking organs in the context of the programme of work and budget 2020–2021,¹ and further notes the funding gap for the provision of conference services, information technology and communication services, security and medical services at sessions of the Environment Assembly since its first session and welcomes the request of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in its resolution 73/260 entitled “Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme”, to make proposals, as appropriate, concerning the sustainability, predictability, and stability of the funding of the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme.