

DISCUSSION OF 22 OCTOBER 2018

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES, POLICYMAKING ORGANS & PARTNERSHIPS

- The meeting expressed concern over the decrease of core funding under the Environment Fund.
- The meeting agreed that the proposed budget of the Environment Fund (USD 200 million) is more ambitious than realistic and that the trend of the past biennia should serve as a baseline for the 2020/21 budget, which could translate into a USD 150 million budget, as proposed by one member state.
- The meeting agreed that the Secretariat needs to adhere to the principles for prioritization laid out in paragraph 26 of the draft programme of work and budget already at the stage of budgeting.
- The meeting expressed concern about the proposed growth in funding for Executive direction and management and for the Executive Office in particular. In this regard, one Member State proposed to limit the funding for executive management and management to USD 13.5 million and to limit the staff count of the Executive Office at 35.
- The meeting further stressed that executive direction and management must adhere to and be guided by the programme of work and UNEA decisions.
- The meeting questioned the proposed increase in overall staffing numbers by 30% from 875 to 1133 in 2020/21 and called on the Executive Director to propose a more realistic figure.
- The meeting expressed concern about growing communication activities across all subprogrammes and called on the Executive Office to ensure that an increase in outreach efforts is not done at the expense of programmatic work. Furthermore, outreach should be geared towards all stakeholders and in line with PoW and decisions of UNEA.
- A member state requested more information about the purpose and the past utilization of the programme reserve fund.
- On policy making organs, the meeting expressed the understanding that UNEA is to provide the overarching policy guidance on the environment and the governing bodies support the process according to their mandate.
- The meeting agreed that partnerships can serve as important tools for the implementation for the PoW/B, however, they need to be set up and maintained in a sustainable manner and should include all types of stakeholders. Due diligence is considered key in that respect.
- The meeting questioned the inclusion of partnerships under Chapter II Policymaking organs, which would implicate additional activities and costs under the budget part A (policymaking organs).