

TO: Ms. Emer Herity
A: Chief ECOSOC Affairs Branch
Secretary of ECOSOC and the Second Committee
Department for General Assembly and Conference
Management

DATE: 20 July 2021

THROUGH:
S/C DE:



FROM: Johannes Huisman, Director
DE: Programme Planning and Budget Division, OPPFB

SUBJECT: **Oral statement by the Secretariat in connection with draft resolution**
OBJET: **E/2021/L.23/Rev.1 entitled “Follow-up to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean”**

I would be grateful if the text of the attached oral statement could be read and distributed prior to the adoption of draft resolution E/2021/L.23/Rev.1 entitled “Follow-up to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

cc: Ms. Pollard
Ms. Barcena
Mr. Ramanathan
Mr. Garcia-Buchaca
Ms. Malango

**Oral statement by the Secretariat in connection with draft resolution
E/2021/L.23/Rev.1 entitled “Follow-up to the Regional Agreement on Access to
Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin
America and the Caribbean”**

1. The present statement is made in accordance with rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council.
2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 3 and 4 of draft resolution E/2021/L.23/Rev.1, the Economic and Social Council would:
 - (a) Request the Secretary-General to provide, within existing resources and in line with regular budgetary procedures, adequate, stable and predictable resources to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to perform its functions as secretariat of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, pursuant to article 17 of the Agreement, ensuring mandate implementation; and
 - (b) Invite ECLAC to continue seeking voluntary contributions to cover any necessary, immediate costs arising from the entry into force of the Escazú Agreement in 2021, and encourage all Member States in a position do so to contribute in that regard.
3. Article 17 of the Escazú Agreement¹ designates the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as Secretary and mandates it to carry out the secretariat functions, which, inter alia, include: (a) convening and organizing the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies and providing the necessary services; (b) providing assistance to the Parties upon their request for capacity-building; (c) determining the administrative and contractual arrangements needed to carry out its functions effectively; and (d) performing any other secretariat functions specified in the Agreement and any other functions determined by the Conference of the Parties. Further, ECLAC operates the Clearing House established under article 12, which is currently housed in the Observatory on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean.²
4. To execute the secretariat functions requested in the draft resolution, additional deliverables would be required under programme 18, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean subprogramme 7, Sustainable development and human settlements.
5. In the absence of any certainty with regard to the availability of voluntary resources at this stage, additional adequate, stable and predictable regular budget resources would be required in 2022 to ensure the additional deliverables and thus ensure mandate

¹ https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/43583/1/S1800428_en.pdf

² <https://observatoriop10.cepal.org/en>

implementation, as requested in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. Further, as invited in operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, ECLAC will continue to seek voluntary resources to cover the costs arising from the entry into force of the Escazu Agreement in 2021.

6. Accordingly, for 2022, additional regular budget resources would be required under budget section 21, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, as follows:

- (a) Other staff costs - General temporary assistance resources under subprogramme 7, Sustainable development and human settlements:
 - (i) One P-4 GTA position, Legal Officer, for 12 months, to carry out the following duties: serving as lead officer in the planning, organizing and servicing of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies; providing legal and governance advice and support on matters pertaining to the interpretation, implementation and further development of the Agreement, its rules and regulations, as appropriate; providing guidance and oversight of document preparation and management for the Conference of the Parties; overseeing the governance and coordination arrangements between the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance and the Conference of the Parties; liaising with relevant intergovernmental entities and stakeholders on the matters of the Agreement; supporting the ratification and accession of States to the Agreement, providing outreach and assistance to non-Parties in their national processes, including coordination with the Depositary; providing assistance to the Parties upon their request on legislative aspects pertaining to the Agreement and other capacity-building, including the organization of activities in accordance with articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Agreement; conducting training workshops and seminars; making presentations on assigned topics/activities; overseeing the preparation of publications, press releases, public relation bulletins and other media work; preparing reports, speeches and other inputs for presentations by senior staff; and performing any other secretariat functions specified in the Agreement and any other functions as determined by the Conference of the Parties and the Executive Secretary of ECLAC as Secretary of the Agreement, as required;
 - (ii) One P-2 GTA position, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, for 12 months, under the supervision of the Legal Officer, to carry out the following duties: supporting the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance, established in article 18 of the Agreement, and other bodies established by the Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement, including drafting documents, thematic background documents, reports of meetings, and other material; providing substantive support on environmental matters, as required, to other work areas as well as providing support to the secretariat in general; organizing the development and

maintenance of tools for information and communication in relation to the Agreement, including the website, clearing house and the Regional Public Mechanism; supporting the Secretariat's work in relation to promotion and awareness-raising of the Escazú Agreement through participation in relevant international events and processes on issues relevant to the Agreement; maintaining contacts with members of the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance and other stakeholders, and drafting correspondence and providing information as required; and performing other duties as assigned; and

- (iii) One Local level GTA position, Administrative Assistant, for 12 months, to perform the full range of office management and administrative support functions, including providing direct assistance to the Secretariat; providing assistance in the organization and implementation of Secretariat activities; responding or drafting responses to a wide range of correspondence and other communications of the Secretariat; performing administrative arrangements related to official travel of staff, meeting participants and experts; maintaining files of rules, regulations, administrative instructions and other related documents related to the Conference of the Parties and the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance; monitoring the status of expenditures and allotments through Umoja; performing a variety of administrative duties (e.g. meeting organization, conference services, human resources, contracts, procurement, among others), including preparing and/or processing administrative requests through Umoja; and assisting with other day-to-day administrative procedures and performing other duties as assigned; and
- (b) Other non-post resources under:
 - (i) Policymaking organs (\$65,000) for the organization of the Conference of the Parties, including:
 - a. Other staff costs: an amount of \$30,000 would provide general temporary assistance in support of the annual meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including the preparation of substantive support documents and relevant reports and other pre-session and in-session activities;
 - b. Travel of staff: an amount of \$10,000 would provide for travel of staff to undertake official missions in connection with servicing the Conference of the Parties, including other necessary official missions related to pre-session and post-session activities;
 - c. Contractual services: an amount of \$20,000 would provide for contractual interpretation services (including international signal language and close captioning for the hearing and visual impaired)

during the Conference of the Parties, and related pre-session and side events; and translation and editing services of pre-sessional and other documentation to be submitted to the session;

- d. General operating expenses: an amount of \$2,000 would provide for communication costs for postage, courier, diplomatic pouch services and temporary connection of meeting's facilities to the internet; and miscellaneous services related to the Conference of the Parties; and
 - e. Supplies and materials: an amount of \$3,000 would cover for expendable supplies necessary for the Conference of the Parties, including information notes to the participants, identity badges and luggage tags, meeting room notepads, reproduction paper and consumable supplies, audio/video disks, small storage devices (pen drives), and information kits; and
- (ii) Subprogramme 7, Sustainable development and human settlements (\$35,000) to provide support to the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance, including:
- a. Experts: an amount of \$30,000 would provide for the participation of experts in the Conference of the Parties, pre-session and side events; and meetings of the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance; and
 - b. Contractual services: an amount of \$5,000 would provide for editing, translation, and desktop publishing services of electronic documentation in support of the functioning of the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance.

7. The above additional resources, including related staff assessment, are estimated at \$500,400 for the year 2022, for which no provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for 2022 (A/76/6 (Sect.21) and A/76/6 (Sect.36)). Accordingly, should the Economic and Social Council adopt the draft resolution, the additional resource requirements would be brought to the attention of the General Assembly at its 76th session, in the context of the Secretary-General's report on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2021 session, under section 21, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean (\$454,300) and section 36, Staff assessment (\$46,100), of the proposed programme budget for 2022. Details of the additional resources are provided in the Annex to this statement.

8. With regard to the provisions of paragraph 3 of draft resolution E/2021/L.23/Rev.1, the attention of the Council is drawn to the provisions of section VI of General Assembly resolution 45/248 B and subsequent resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 75/252, in which the Assembly had reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate

Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, and also reaffirmed the role of the Fifth Committee in carrying out a thorough analysis and approving human and financial resources and policies, with a view to ensuring the full, effective and efficient implementation of all mandated programmes and activities and the implementation of policies in this regard (section VI, paragraph 1 of A/RES/45/248 B and paragraph 1 of A/RES/75/252 refer).

ANNEX

Additional resource requirements by budget section/component/subprogramme

(United States dollars)

<i>Budget section/component/subprogramme</i>	<i>Additional resource requirements</i>
	<i>2022</i>
Section 21, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean	
<i>Polymaking organs</i>	
Other staff costs	30 000
Travel of staff	10 000
Contractual services	20 000
General operating expenses	2 000
Supplies and materials	3 000
<i>Subprogramme 7, Sustainable development and human settlements</i>	
Other staff costs	
1 GTA position (equivalent to 1 P-4)	166 000
1 GTA position (equivalent to 1 P-2)	114 300
1 GTA position (equivalent to 1 LL)	74 000
Experts	30 000
Contractual services	5 000
Subtotal, section 21	454 300
Section 36, Staff assessment	
Other staff costs	46 100
Subtotal, section 36	46 100
Total additional requirements for 2022	500 400