



United Nations
Climate Change Secretariat

Executive Secretary

Nations Unies
Secrétariat sur les changements climatiques

Secrétaire exécutive

Date: 2 June 2014
Reference: CF/RK/SD/MEN
Direct line: +49 228 815-1523
Page 1 of 2

INFORMATION NOTE

Introduction of cost recovery through side events and exhibits

I would like to inform Parties and observer organizations of the introduction of a cost recovery solution that will address issues surrounding conference support costs of observer engagement, in particular, side events and exhibits at UNFCCC sessions.

Background

Observer engagement is a crucial and integral part of the UNFCCC process. It manifests itself in a vibrant and dynamic connection between organizations, with limited speaking opportunities in the formal negotiations, and Parties, who benefit from the views, findings and expertise that these organizations offer. Side events and exhibits, for instance, have emerged as a valuable space for knowledge sharing, capacity building, networking and exploring actionable options for meeting the climate challenge. They have become so popular that the average number of applications per year over the last six years has quadrupled compared to the preceding decade.

The Problem

While this success is a welcome development, the rise in the number of applications demands more support for servicing them. Unfortunately, budget constraints have led the secretariat to rely on supplementary funding that has not always been available or timely, leaving the small team responsible overstretched and under-resourced. This issue is an ongoing problem the secretariat is working to address. Clearly, a sustainable approach to funding is needed to continue to provide this valuable service.

Distribution: To Parties and observer States, through national focal points for climate change and diplomatic missions accredited to the Federal Republic of Germany.
To United Nations Secretariat units and bodies, specialized agencies and related organizations.
To all intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted as observers by the Conference of the Parties.



The Solution

To resolve this continuous funding instability, it is with regret that the secretariat must introduce a partial cost recovery solution, a fee for side events and exhibits. There is no other option if we are to maintain a high quality side event and exhibit system. Starting at COP 20/CMP 10¹, a fixed flat rate of USD 1,000 will be charged for each side event and exhibit.

Operational Details

The operational details of the new side event and exhibit system are as follows:

- The 1,000 USD fee will be applied to each approved side event and exhibit; there is no cost for submitting an application.
- Cost recovery will not affect the selection criteria and the eligibility of Party applicants, which are available on the unfccc.int website <<https://seors.unfccc.int/>>
- Co-organizers of approved side events and exhibits can split the cost among them.
- The fee will be waived for NGO Constituencies that are registered as Indigenous peoples' organizations and youth NGOs, to safeguard their representation.
- Representational balance of these two constituencies will be maintained in accordance with their historical participation.

Commitment to Transparency

The secretariat understands that this change is significant. To keep Parties informed, I will speak to this cost recovery solution at the upcoming SBI session under agenda item 18, administrative, financial and institutional matters. To keep observer organizations informed, the secretariat will also hold a briefing during the SB sessions to answer questions. Those who cannot attend the briefing or would like more information are invited to contact the Side Event and Exhibit Team at <see@unfccc.int>.

I am confident that seamless support to observer engagement in the UNFCCC process helps advance the negotiation process. And, I am confident that this partial cost recovery solution will ensure seamless funding into the future. Your understanding is appreciated and the secretariat welcomes your participation at upcoming UNFCCC sessions.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed by)

Christiana Figueres

¹ The application period for side events and exhibits at COP 20/CMP is from Tuesday, 15 July 2014 at 11am Central European Time (CET) to Friday, 18 July 2014 at 5pm CET.