

Secretariat efforts to make efficiency gains, absorb work and reduce costs

1. Efforts in the current biennium

Absorption of work

- **Support to the CMA and the APA**

The support to the CMA has been absorbed by the team which is already supporting the COP and CMP.

At the time of the ADP, support to that body was provided mainly through supplementary resources, with only managerial oversight provided from the core budget. With the conclusion of the work of the ADP, the team was dismantled and support needs related to the APA were absorbed by existing core staff resources (part of the time of a P-5 manager, a P-3 focal point and general services support).

- **Support to the constituted bodies**

The workload under the constituted bodies has increased steadily over the past few years. This includes work related to the organization of new technical meetings, additional substantial analytical work and further outreach and collaboration with stakeholders. One example with details of the increase in work has been provided in the secretariat note on evolving functions and operations of the secretariat in the light of decision 1/CP.21 (contained in document FCCC/SBI/2016/INF.13). Another example is new work related to the Indigenous Peoples Platform. Most of this additional work related to support to constituted bodies has been absorbed by existing staff capacity.

- **Support to MRV/enhanced transparency framework**

After 2010, with the implementation of the measurement, reporting and verification provisions of the Cancun Agreements, the number of mandated activities implemented by the secretariat almost tripled compared with in the previous review period. By way of example, review/analysis events increased in the period from 2014-15 to 2016-17 by 68 per cent whereas staff capacity to support this work went up by 2 per cent. Similarly, there was a significant increase in that period in the need for training of experts, while resources for this area of work went down. More details are contained in document FCCC/SBI/2016/INF.13. While the existing regime for measurement, reporting and verification constitutes a key element of the climate architecture agreed by Parties (and shall serve as a basis for the enhanced transparency framework established by the Paris Agreement), its implementation is increasingly dependent on supplementary income, critically affecting the mandated functions and operations of the secretariat.

Streamlining of services

In 2015, the secretariat undertook an assessment of its ICT operations, led by an external consultancy firm. Following the ICT (new name for the ITS programme) restructuring, resource optimization and improvements in ICT processes have been achieved. The estimated costs to deliver services (excluding

projects) decreased by 37% from 2015 to 2016. In addition, the ICT total budget in 2016 was significantly reduced by 39% as compared to the ITS budget in 2015.

In addition, framework contracts with a range of providers have been set up to outsource work where appropriate and allow for flexible and cost-efficient up- and down-scaling of activities according to needs.

2. Efforts foreseen for the biennium 2018-19

Reduction of staff travel

In the proposed budget and the zero growth scenario, the staff travel budget has been reduced by 16% and 11% respectively. Efforts are being made to resort to virtual participation where this is feasible.

Streamlining of administrative services

In 2016, the secretariat undertook a review of its administrative operations with a view to identifying opportunities for streamlining and reduction of costs. The results of this review will be realized in the course of the biennium 2018-19.

Absorption of work

The secretariat will continue to identify opportunities to absorb more work. The cluster approach provides increased opportunities for collaboration between programmes and provides the opportunity for increased efficient use of resources.