

Secretariat responses to requests from Parties for information and clarification received at the budget contact group meeting on 6 June 2023¹

1. **Request:** Does the secretariat have a partnership policy that addresses the issues related to partnerships and voluntary contributions raised by the auditors?

➤ **Response:**

The UNFCCC secretariat Guidelines for Partnership are available on the UNFCCC website at:

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/b_2017_1_unfccc_guidelines_for_partnership_final.pdf. They provide partnership policy guidance on how to scope, review and engage in partnerships. They outline the due diligence process, including eligibility criteria and exclusionary criteria when partnering with non-Parties.

Presently, the secretariat is engaged in the drafting process for its first resource mobilization and partnership strategy that will aim to ensure adequate, predictable and flexible funding and mutually beneficial partnerships for the secretariat. The new strategy will address the issues raised by auditors, as well as ensure that the current guidelines for partnership and voluntary contributions are updated and strengthened.

2. **Request:** Please share information on any ongoing work on due diligence relating to partnerships.

➤ **Response:**

The secretariat is currently finalizing a new due diligence framework relating to partnerships. This new framework will strengthen the secretariat's current approach to due diligence: It will review and strengthen the eligibility and exclusionary criteria for non-Parties, expand the current due diligence guidelines to include all contributions, including receiving grants from non-Parties and professionalize the due diligence function in the secretariat.

The secretariat has already taken several steps earlier this year on strengthening due diligence relating to partnerships:

- A new accountability clause on net zero has been added to all new partnership agreements;
- The due diligence function is being professionalized and institutionalized in the secretariat with the ongoing recruitment of a due diligence specialist;
- The secretariat has held consultations with several UN agencies and the UN Global Compact on bolstering the due diligence approach and overall alignment.

¹ Excluding requests for information addressed to the Board of Auditors at the contact group meeting

3. Request: Are salaries of United Nations staff automatically adjusted for inflation?**➤ Response:**

Salaries, post adjustment and entitlements of United Nations staff are regularly reviewed by the United Nations and the International Civil Service Commission. However, cost increases resulting from inflation have an impact on salaries. A summary of relevant information is available on the website of the United Nations Secretariat at: https://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/salaries_allowances/salary.htm. The UNFCCC secretariat applies the United Nations rules governing salaries and employee benefits. Any relevant adjustment approved by the appropriate United Nations entities is automatically implemented at UNFCCC.

4. Request: What are the differences between the authority given to the UNFCCC Executive Secretary in terms of issuing administrative instructions as compared with other entities in the United Nations System?**➤ Response:**

For the UN Secretariat, the UN Secretary General promulgated a bulletin (SGB) on the delegation of authority in the administration of the Staff Regulations and Rules and the Financial Regulations and Rules as contained in ST/SGB/2019/2. Through the SGB, the UN Secretary General delegates authority to managers of UN Secretariat departments, offices, missions and other bodies. ST/SGB/2019/2 does not apply to executive heads of separately administered and funded subsidiary organs, institutions, funds and programmes of the UN. Consequently, it does not apply to UNFCCC.

For specialized and related organizations, the delegation of authority is regulated in their founding instruments. Typically, the head of the organization is tasked by member states to discharge the administrative and executive functions of the organization. The UNFCCC secretariat has a specific legal status. The UNFCCC secretariat is institutionally linked to the United Nations. However, it's an independent organization. The Institutional Arrangements Paper (FCCC/CP/1995/5/Add.4 of 6 April 1995), which was endorsed by the COP through decision 14/CP.1 and by the UN General Assembly through resolution 50/115 of 20 December 1995, sets forth the agreed framework for the authority of the UNFCCC Executive Secretary over the administration of the resources of the secretariat of the UNFCCC. The Office of Legal Affairs of the UN Secretariat has confirmed the broad authority of the UNFCCC Executive Secretary to promulgate administrative issuances, provided they are consistent with the UN Staff Regulations and Rules and the Financial Regulations and Rules.