Convention on Biological Diversity

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
  CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Thirteenth meeting
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Item 18 of the provisional agenda[**]

REPORT OF THE INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMME POST ANALYSIS

1.	At its twelfth meeting, the Conference of the Parties, in its decision COP XII/32, paragraph 5, requested the Executive Secretary to submit the final report of the in-depth functional review of the Secretariat, including individual post analysis, in time for discussion at the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, with a view to preparing a decision for the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

2.	The Secretariat, in response to the decision, contracted a consultant to conduct a desk review to examine the functions of the various programme staff posts at the Secretariat within the overall framework of the Secretariat's core functions as envisaged in Article 24 of the Convention as well as the adopted Medium Term Operation Results Framework of the Secretariat. The exercise involved a review of the terms of reference of various posts at the Secretariat with a view to adjusting them in the light of the new expanded responsibilities of the Secretariat and the challenges facing the Convention and its Protocols; and to also ensure the effective functioning of the Secretariat. The review helped to reorient and update the Secretariat to provide the much needed support to the Parties in realizing their obligations to the treaties.

3.	This analysis does not reflect the new structure and is without prejudice to the final staffing structure or to changes and reassignments.

4.	The final report of the consultant on the individual programme post analysis is being made available to the Conference of the Parties as an information document.

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[*] Previously circulated as UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/24.
[**] UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1.

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DESK REVIEW OF PROGRAMME POSTS - FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF THE SECRETARIAT

Report of the consultant

INTRODUCTION

1.   In the context of its functional review, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) requested a desk review of all Professional core posts in order to assess the impact of the functional review on its establishment and grading structure.

2.   This review included all 41 Professional core posts (from P-2 to D-1 inclusively). It consisted of a comparison between the tasks described in the official job descriptions and those recorded in the Performance Appraisal system (ePAS) of the last two reporting cycles (2013-2014 and 2014-2015), as well as a preliminary (prospective) evaluation of the functions through the application of ICSC Master Standards for the classification of posts in the Professional and higher categories.

METHODOLOGY

3.   At the outset, it is underlined that the analysis and comparison of tasks was based solely on the description of goals, related actions and success criteria contained in the ePAS of staff, without consideration to the quality of the work, the volume or the assessment of supervisors. The names of incumbents were erased from the documentation. The purpose of the exercise is to identify potential impact on the grading of jobs and not to substitute itself to the job classification process of the Organization.

4.   The quality and relevance of ePAS – Section 1 should be mentioned, as it was evident from an outsider point of view that care and diligence had been given to completing this section by the vast majority of staff and managers. Of course, the information provided therein is backward-looking but it presents evidence of change where appropriate.

5.   The uneven quality and chronology of the base documentation (official job descriptions or vacancy announcements) also presented some challenges. Organizations are living systems and the world of work is constantly evolving. Sometimes changes are evident to all and come through a major re-organization but mostly they are imperceptible in the short-term due to numerous factors (incremental mandates, technology, individual skills etc.). The update of job descriptions and job evaluation on a cyclical basis should be considered in the post management.

MAJOR FINDINGS

6.   The proposed matrix organization will result in some staff having dual reporting relationship, either permanently or sporadically. Some adaptations to the performance appraisal system will be required in order to enable multiple sources of evaluation. These changes should be discussed with UNEP and OHRM and clear guidelines should be developed prior to finalization of the review.

7.   The Professional posts of Secretariat can be divided into five major occupational streams, which correspond more or less to the major functions identified by the functional review:

> (a)   Programme management: Scientific and administrative;
>
> (b)   Legal advisers: Political and institutional development;
>
> (c)   Knowledge Management: Organization, presentation and dissemination of information on biodiversity issues;
>
> (d)   Political, Social, and Resource Mobilization: Awareness raising capacity-building and outreach to various institutional and non-governmental stakeholders;
>
> (e)   Technology management: Information and computer systems.

3.1 Programme management

8.   Since the inception of the Convention, a number of secretariat's posts are dedicated to the provision of substantive and technical support to the Conference of Parties and its Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice. This support includes, inter alia, the coordination and interaction with the scientific community on the conservation and sustainable management of specific areas of biological diversity; the research, gathering, assessing, synthetizing and dissemination of information through technical reports, conference papers and other documents; the servicing of expert groups; the mainstreaming of biodiversity in other UN agencies and programmes dealing with sustainable development, as well as other environmental organizations.

9.   Whereas the majority of official job descriptions of Programme Officers in the Scientific, Assessment and Monitoring Division (SAM) are more than 15 years old, the main thrust of these posts remain valid today – The analysis of ePAS identified some shifts in the focus from one year to another, however, the primary purpose and roles remain unchanged. Thus, no change in grades of the Programme Officer posts (ID# 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 and 31).

10.   The leadership and coordinating role has been expanded in the area of **programme monitoring and reporting**. In addition to upgrading the level of the post (ID# 29), thought should be given to the organizational location of the related posts (ID#32 and support staff). Given the evolution of the Convention (from agenda setting to implementation), the monitoring function should be positioned more prominently. Currently located in the Scientific, Assessment and Monitoring Division where it has access to first-hand information on the state of knowledge in various areas of biodiversity, it could also be easily positioned, however, in the Technical Support for Implementation Division (TSI) where the information is collected and organised and where support to countries is centralised or in Mainstreaming, Partnerships and Outreach (MPO).

3.2 Legal advisers

11.   At present, there are four legal posts (ID# 1, 8, 12, 35). The creation of a cluster in the area of Legal and Intergovernmental Affairs is not yet clearly reflected in the individual work plans. However, no impact on the grades of the related posts is foreseen.

3.3 Biosafety Protocol (BS)

12.   Posts currently assigned to the Biosafety Protocol Unit, cover the full range of occupations.

13.   One post, ID# 09 was given the added responsibility of leading the work of the cluster on Capacity Building, in addition to its role of informing parties on the funding mechanism (GEF) and other programmatic responsibilities related to implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. This post could be updated and upgraded to P5 on the basis of the following assumptions: the new functions are: integral in nature; provide a catalytic environment (oversight and policy guidance to other programme areas); work across all programmes of the Convention and Protocols and have programme representation role; resulting recommendation of global priorities,. Thought should be given to the appropriate location of this post (BS or TSI) on the basis of the main trust of the post (project or programme manager in capacity-building).

3.4 Nagoya Protocol (NP)

14.   The status of the Nagoya Protocol (ongoing ratification process and development) will call for a general review of all Professional posts within the organizational unit in the future. Also, the inclusion of the Traditional Knowledge programme team (ID# 34 and 36) introduces a certain "imbalance" both from the role and grading perspectives. At this time, however, there is no strong rationale that would justify the need to modify the grading structure.

3.5 Mainstreaming, Partnership and Outreach (MPO)

15. The posts located in this organizational unit have been analysed independently from each other as the link between them is not yet apparent. In the words of a staff member: "disperse lines of work 'will' coalesce into programmatic MPO approaches". This coalescence of approaches is not yet evident from the documentation reviewed. The need to update the job descriptions of the Principal Officer (ID# 39) and Senior Programme Officer (ID# 3) is thus strongly recommended. Similarly, the secretariat lead expert role of the Information Officer is not supported by the documentation presented.

3.6 Knowledge Management and Technical Support for information (TSI)

16. The integration of all Information Technologies (IT) Officers (ID# 11, 17, 21, 22, 23) and Clearing-House (ID# 7, 14, 20, and 24) related Professionals within TSI will necessitate a review of managerial lines. The new vacancy in post ID# 7 – Biosafety Clearing-house presents an opportunity to create a mid-management position that would more clearly distribute the roles and responsibilities, enhance coordination, effectiveness and efficiency, as well as provide unified leadership.

17. Notwithstanding the above, post ID#21 should be reclassified upward to P-4 as leader of the IT teams responsible for IT infrastructure, Internet, security and systems development.

CONCLUSION

18. In summary, the analysis of the 41 Professional and higher category posts have yielded the following four types of recommendations – see table in annex 1 for more details:

    (a)   Update and upgrading of posts: three (3) cases;

    (b)   Update job description to reflect significant changes in duties and responsibilities, however, no change in grade is foreseen (Major update): ten (10) cases;

    (c)   Review the job description and evaluation with a view to reflecting minor changes such as change in reporting relationships or change in emphasis (Minor update): eleven (11) cases;

    (d)   No significant change: seventeen (17) cases.

Annex I

DESK REVIEW OF PROGRAMME POSTS - FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF THE SECRETARIAT

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
1	Senior Legal Officer	P-5	Change in reporting relationship from SEL to OED PAS 2014, 30% on socio-economic considerations PAS 2015 – generally consistent with 2004 Job Description	Added leadership function to legal post	Update TOR
2	Special Assistant to ES	P-3	Generally consistent with Job Description	No direct impact	No change
3	SPO Implementation (Reports)	P-5	Not consistent with 2001 Vacancy Announcement - CHM	Added Leadership function - capacity-building	Update TOR
4	PO, Sustainable use & Tourism	P-4	Change in reporting relationship from SEL to MPO Generally consistent with 2000 Job Description		No change
5	Information Officer	P-4	Change in reporting relationship from TSI (2009 Job Description) to MPO Generally consistent with 2009 Job Description		Update TOR
6	Associate Information Officer	P-2	Change in reporting relationship from TSI (2013 Job Description) to MPO Generally consistent with 2013 Job Description.	Shift of emphasis from internal publications to media relations	Review TOR
7	Scientific and Technical Information Officer /Biosafety Clearing House for Cartagena Protocol	P-4	Generally consistent with Job Description; Increased scope beyond Biosafety;	Led KM-IT phase I	Update - redefine

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
8	Programme Officer Legal, policy and institutional aspects	P-4	Vacant post No PAS provided for the reporting period		Update TOR
9	Environmental Affairs Officer	P-4	Increased responsibility for coordination of secretariat-wide capacity-building activities		Update and change in grade
10	Environmental Affairs Officer, Risk Assessment	P-3	Generally consistent with 2010 Job Description		Review
11	Computer Information Systems Officer	P-3	Change in reporting relationship	PAS 2012-13	Review
12	Legal Affairs Officer (Biosafety)	P-3	Post vacant - 2012 Job Description		No change
13	Outreach Officer	P-2	Generally consistent with 2006 Job Description		No change
14	Associate Systems Officer	P-2	Change in reporting relationship from BS to TSI	Increase in scope of work	Review
15	Editor	P-4	Consistent with 2013 Vacancy Announcement	No direct impact	No change
16	Meetings Services Officer	P-3	Consistent with 2013 Vacancy Announcement and 1998 Job Description	No direct impact	No change

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
17	Associate Information System Officer	P-2	Recently staffed? – No PAS Consistent with Vacancy Announcement 2012	No direct impact	No change
18	Senior Programme Officer Mobilization strategies: financial, economic, trade and businesses	P-5	Change in reporting relationship from SEL to TSI		Update
19	Programme Resources Analyst	P-4	Generally consistent with 1996 Job Description	Limited impact	Review
20	PO, Clearing House Mechanism	P-4	Generally consistent with vacancy announcement 1996, however significant change work environment and focus		Update
21	Internet and Electronic Systems	P-3	Leadership and management of CBD IT Team		Update and change in grade
22	Website Officer	P-3	Generally consistent with 2009 Job Description		No change
23	Computer information systems	P-3	Generally consistent 2004 Job Description		No change
24	Documentation Officer	P-3	Generally consistent with 2009 Job Description		No change

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
25	PO, in situ and ex situ conservation (evolution from protected areas)	P-4	As of 2013, took on the role of SPO ABS with focus on ratification process and team building		Review TOR but no change in grade
26	Environmental Affairs (inland waters)	P-4			No change in grade
27	Environmental Affairs (Conservation ecology – Forest. mountains)	P-4			No change in grade
28	Environmental Affairs (Marine and coastal areas)	P-4			No change in grade
29	Programme Officer, (reporting)	P-4	Significant change in leadership responsibilities		Update and change in grade
30	Programme Officer (Dry and sub-humid lands)	P-4			No change in grade

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
31	Programme Officer (Taxonomy and Invasion Alien species)	P-4			No change in grade
32	Programme Officer (Reports)	P-3	Generally consistent with 2000 Job Description		No significant change,
33	Senior Programme Officer	P-5	2011-12 PAS Generally consistent – except for increased number of ratifications of Nagoya Protocol	OPEN -ENDED Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee NP on ABS	Update TOR
34	Senior Programme Officer (New 2013)	P-4	Change in reporting relationship from MPO to NP	Article 8J Article 10c Traditional Knowledge Leadership Partnership	Review, No change
35	Programme Officer	P-3	Change in reporting relationship from MPO to NP	ABS Genetics : Food-Agri Marine OEWG – Review of implementation	Review TOR
36	Associate Programme Officer	P-2	Change in reporting relationship from MPO to NP Generally consistent with vacancy announcement	Article 8J and ABS	No change

ID	Post title	Post grade	Comments of the consultant	Impact of functional review/ focus	Conclusions
37	Programme Officer – Awareness raising and capacity building	P-3	New Project post (2013) –	Generic	
38	Principal Officer, SAM	D-1	Generally consistent with Job Description 1998 and vacancy announcement 2010		No change
39	Principal Officer, MPO	D-1		Increased role in outreach and public information	Update TOR
40	Principal Officer, TSI	D-1	Generally consistent with Job Description 2006	Additional responsibility re: IT Team and KM/IT strategy	Review
41	Principal Officer, BS	D-1	Generally consistent with Job Description 2010	Secretariat-wide initiatives re: planning and restructuring	Review

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