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**First Meeting of the Bureau of the
Contracting Parties to the Convention on
Cooperation for the Protection, Management
and Development of the Marine Environment
and Coastal Areas of the Atlantic Coast of the
West, Central and Southern African Region
(Abidjan Convention)**

On-line, 30 July 2026

SECRETARIAT OF THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

Agenda Item 4.2

**PROPOSAL FOR STRENGTHENING THE MONITORING AND RECOVERY OF ASSESSED
CONTRIBUTIONS**

Context

1. To sustainably improve the collection of assessed contributions from Contracting Parties, it is necessary to combine incentive, administrative, diplomatic, and regulatory measures.
2. In this regard, the Secretariat proposes the following measures for the Bureau's consideration.

Measures for consideration by the Bureau

3. **Strengthen monitoring and follow-up** to improve the visibility of outstanding contributions and reduce delays caused by administrative constraints or delayed information by:
 - Enhancing the follow-up with more regular contribution reminders, namely through the implementation of a quarterly reminder schedule.
 - Providing Contracting Parties with updated statements of their financial status.
 - Organizing bilateral meetings or high-level missions with Contracting Parties that have the largest arrears.
4. **Implement arrears repayment plans for States with significant outstanding contributions.** To this end, apply Procedure 4 of document ABC-WACAF/COP12/INF.3, *Financial Rules and Procedures of the Abidjan Convention Trust Fund*, to establish repayment plans that enable the gradual settlement of arrears without creating an excessive financial burden for the States concerned, by:
 - Negotiating repayment schedules over two to three years.
 - Signing memoranda of understanding specifying the amounts and payment deadlines.
 - Requiring the systematic payment of current assessed contributions while arrears are progressively cleared.
5. **Apply the provisions relating to sanctions**, within the legal framework of the Convention and in accordance with Procedure 4 of document ABC-WACAF/COP12/INF.3, to encourage compliance with financial obligations, namely:
 - Suspend certain voting rights of Parties in arrears.
 - Apply the relevant provisions governing eligibility for election to the Convention's governing bodies.
 - Make public cases of non-payment during statutory meetings and regional gatherings.
6. **Establish incentive mechanisms to promote a culture of financial compliance** rather than a punitive approach:
 - Recognize States that are up to date with their contributions.
 - Establish a recognition system at each COP.
 - Giving priority for certain initiatives or funding opportunities, where appropriate, to Contracting Parties that are fulfilling their obligations.
7. **Intensify high-level diplomatic efforts.** Payment delays often result from decisions made at the ministerial or governmental level. Therefore, it is advisable to:
 - Involve the Ministers of the Environment and those in charge of Finance.
 - Send joint correspondence from the president of the Bureau and the Executive Secretary.
 - Include the issue of contributions on the agenda of regional convenings.

8. Strengthen and diversify funding sources to reduce the Secretariat's exposure to payment delays. Even with improved collection, excessive reliance on statutory contributions remains a risk. To this end:
 - Develop projects and programs to mobilize funding from the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the World Bank, the European Union, and other partners.
 - Foster stronger partnerships with UN agencies and development banks.
 - Gradually build a reserve fund.
9. **Develop a special recovery plan for 2026-2027.** Given the high level of arrears (USD 5.64 million as of June 30, 2026), a targeted plan would be appropriate. The countries concerned are:

Priority Level	Countries Concerned
Very high	Angola, Nigeria, Gabon, Cameroun, RDC
High	Gambie, Liberia, Togo, Guinée, Guinée-Bissau
Medium	Sénégal, Congo, Ghana, Sierra Leone
Low	All States with limited arrears

10. These top five debtors alone account for nearly 57% of total arrears and should be the priority target for recovery efforts.
11. **Strategic Recommendation.** This Bureau meeting should recommend that the COP adopt a Decision on the Recovery of Contributions based on Procedure 4 of document ABC-WACAF/COP12/INF.3, setting the following objectives:
 - Reduce arrears by 20% by the end of 2027;
 - Implement repayment plans for major debtor Contracting Parties;
 - Systematically apply the measures provided for in the event of prolonged non-payment;
 - Submit a recovery progress report at each meeting of the Bureau;
 - Establish a reserve fund covering at least six months of the Secretariat's operating expenses.
12. This approach would address both the immediate cash flow crisis and the structural causes of the current financial crisis simultaneously.

CONTRIBUTIONS PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Procedure 4 of document ABC-WACAF/COP12/INF.3

- (b) Contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full. Parties should be notified of the amount of their contributions for a given year by 15 October of the previous year or immediately after the COP whichever is last
- (c) Each Party shall, as far in advance as possible of the date due for the contribution, inform the Coordinator of the projected timing of its contribution;
- (d) If contributions of any parties have not been received by the first semester of the relevant year, the Coordinator shall write to those parties to impress upon them the importance of paying their respective contributions for the year as well as arrears for prior periods;
- (e) The Coordinator shall propose to any Party, whose contributions are in arrears for two or more years, a payment schedule to enable such a Party to clear all outstanding arrears within a maximum of six years, depending on the financial circumstances of the Party, and to pay future contributions by their due dates. The Coordinator shall report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties at their next meetings on progress under any such schedule;
- (f) With regard to contributions due from 1 January 2015 onwards any party whose contributions are in arrears for two or more years shall not be eligible to become a member of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties or any of its subsidiary bodies. This provision shall not apply to Parties that have agreed on and are respecting a schedule of payments implemented in accordance with paragraph (e) above;