

Co-chairs' summary of the outcomes from contact group 3 on the programme of work and budget*

Co-Chairs: Isabelle Mayr (Canada) and Johan Ormond (Antigua and Barbuda)

Meetings: 24 June 2025, 4.30 to 6 p.m.; 25 June 2025, 5 to 7 p.m.

Participants were invited to reflect on:

- The current funds available for staffing the secretariat and consider its composition to deliver the full Programme of Work mandated by ICCM5.
- Ways to identify a systemic approach that leverages funding to support a fully functioning secretariat and deliver its programme of work.
- Ways to identify a systemic approach that leverages funding to support the implementation of Fund ambition.

First meeting

Building on interventions already made in plenary, and after a detailed presentation of document OEWG 1/11, the Contact Group could not advance the discussion much on the first item of the mandate. Clarifications on the task at hand were sought and the group requested the Secretariat to develop a table linking the expected Secretariat staff contributions to the different activities mentioned in the document. This was to assist in informing a discussion on the prioritisation of activities to be carried out by the Secretariat. The table was agreed to be prepared for the next session of the CG.

On the following mandate points: on ways to identify systemic approaches to leverage funding to support a fully functioning secretariat and deliver its programme of work and support the implementation of Fund ambition, different viewpoints were presented including the use of a Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contribution (VISC), developing defined work packages to seek matching funds, the necessity to engage the private sector actors outside of the chemical industry associations such as textiles, electronics, etc., and development of a resource mobilization strategy (the secretariat noted this is already underway).

The co-chairs requested another session for the contact group to allow for continued and further discussions based on the information prepared by the Secretariat to provide guidance on the first point of the mandate and for further reflections on the points two and three of the mandate.

Second meeting

The CG discussed the information included in the table linking the expected Secretariat staff position to contributions to the different activities undertaken by the secretariat. This table had been requested from the secretariat in session 1 of the GC to support the reflection, as per the mandate of the CG, on the current funds available for staffing the secretariat, and consider its composition, to deliver the full Programme of work mandated by ICCM5.

The Group suggested that the plenary considers recommending the Secretariat to:

- Provide a more complete version of the staffing table, outlining where the secretariat received support on the priorities it has established for staffing positions, as well as identifying gaps in staffing, to support the Programme of Work mandated by ICCM5, and provide an updated budget in Q4 of 2025 to stakeholders to indicate what is the budget situation going into 2026.
- Dispatch a resource mobilization letter to stakeholders in the interim between now and the 1st International conference with the hope of addressing the funding shortfall for the Secretariat.

Taking into consideration the table presented by the Secretariat and being more conscious of the staffing and financial challenges currently being faced by the Secretariat, the contact group was asked to table any additional ideas on ways to identify systemic approaches to leverage funding to support a fully functioning secretariat and deliver its programme of work and support the implementation of Fund ambition.

* The summary has not been formally edited.

A further exchange of views and suggestions took place and is reflected as follows:

- Using a Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions, and considerations regarding its application in a multistakeholder framework.
- Seeking additional and strengthening synergies and collaboration with other MEAs and UN agencies on services and common objectives.
- Foster direct engagement with all stakeholders and not just government stakeholders, particularly considering the change in the funding climate.
- Foster direct engagement with foundations.
- Dispatch periodic correspondences to stakeholders, as a reminder to stimulate priorities and contributions.
- Foster more involvement of industry on mutually beneficial objectives and programmes.
- Prepare sharing of information with stakeholders in a manner that stimulates sensitization and ultimately support and contributions.
- Collaboration and form synergies with academic institutions on common objectives and programmes.
- Co-host meeting with stakeholders and governments to share cost.
- Explore secondments of staffing from governments and other agencies, particularly for time bound or time sensitive activities.
- Engaging consultants

After exhausting contributions from the room, the Co-chairs reflected on the ideas presented and submitted a proposal to the Contact Group for consideration as a possible outcome of this meeting. There was no opposition to the Co-chairs' proposed outcome, however some delegates raised concern about the process, for which satisfactory responses were provided. It was reiterated that this was a recommendation to the plenary as an outcome of the groups discussions and that the plenary would be the decision-making body.

The agreed-upon outcome is as follows:

- suggest that the plenary considers recommending the Secretariat to prepare an option paper for consideration by the 1st International Conference, on identifying systemic approaches that leverage funding to ensure financial sustainability and development of both the Secretariat and the Fund of the GFC, taking into consideration but not limited to elements raised at the OEWG1.

The Co-chairs would like to thank the delegates for the healthy, fruitful and collaborative discussions resulting in what the Co-chairs believe to be a positive outcome, and the secretariat for providing clarification when needed.