THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS 64th meeting of the Standing Committee Gland, Switzerland, 20-25 January 2025

SC64 Doc.9.1

Financial and budgetary matters: Report on financial matters for 2024 and 2025 (as of 30 September 2024)

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- i. note the interim estimates of the core budget results for 2024;
- ii. note the interim estimates of the status of non-core funding and voluntary contributions for 2024;
- iii. note the estimated carry forward of funds from 2024 to 2025, as described in paragraph 8 and presented in column C of the table in Annex 3;
- iv. approve the temporary use of reserve funds as a loan to supplement voluntary funding for COP15 sponsored delegate support as described in paragraphs 13, 14 and 20;
- v. take note of the estimated surplus balances described in paragraph 15; and
- vi. take note of the estimated 2025 budget, as described in paragraph 23.

Background

- 1. This report addresses the estimated results for 2024 for the core and non-core budgets of the Convention on Wetlands, and the core budget for 2025.
- 2. Through Decision SC63-28, item vii, the Standing Committee noted that the report on financial matters for 2024 and 2025, along with the report on annual contributions, would be prepared as of 30 September 2024 for consideration by Standing Committee at its 64th meeting (SC64).
- 3. The Secretariat anticipates that the audited financial statements for 2024 will be finalized and published on the website in April or May 2025. Consequently, the final updated document on financial matters for 2024 and 2025, including the audited statements, will be submitted to SC65, immediately preceding the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) in July 2025.

Interim 2024 results (as at 30 September 2024): core budget

4. A summary of the 2024 core budget estimated results is included at Annex 1. The table shows:

- column A, the budget for 2024 of CHF 5,081K approved through Resolution XIV.1 on Financial and budgetary matters¹;
- column B, the allocation of CHF 196K of 2021 budget savings, approved through the same Resolution;
- column C, the 2023 carry forward to 2024 for a total of CHF 1,232K, approved by SC63;
- column D, the resulting amended budget for 2024 for a total of CHF 6,509K;
- column E, the actual expenditure as of 30 September 2024 for a total of CHF 3,857K;
- column F, the estimated expenditure for the period from 1 October until 31 December 2024 for a total of CHF 1,663K; and
- column G, the Secretariat's estimated adjustments to 2024 balances between approved budget lines (the overall approved 2024 core budget remains unchanged).
- 5. The income and expenditure for 2024 confirmed by the audited financial statements will be submitted for the Standing Committee's review and acceptance at SC65. The full auditor's report will be published on the Convention website as soon as it is issued by the auditor.
- 6. The estimated core budget balance as of the end of 2024 is CHF 978K. This includes CHF 535K of carry forward to 2025, and CHF 443K of estimated savings. Table 1 below provides a summary of these estimated sub-totals.
- 7. The following points are highlighted for the Standing Committee's consideration:
 - a. Projected income is generally estimated as budgeted except for income tax, which is expected to be CHF 81K under budget due to vacancies, while interest income is expected to be CHF 33K higher than budgeted;
 - b. Overall salary costs are estimated to be CHF 3,561K, corresponding to a budget implementation rate of 94% and 65% of overall expenditure;
 - The provisions are estimated to be as budgeted, while the actual details will be provided in the document on financial matters submitted to SC65 in July 2025, following the close of 2024 accounts and their audit;
 - d. More details on 2024 provisions for outstanding contributions will be provided in the updated revision of document SC64 Doc.9.2 *Status of annual contributions* to be published prior to SC64 in January 2025.
- 8. The final carry forward for 2025 will be reported to SC65 in July 2025, in line with Decision SC57-50 in which the Standing Committee decided that uncommitted/unspent balances for budget lines can be carried forward to the next year within the triennium and presented to the following meeting of the Subgroup on Finance.

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¹ See https://www.ramsar.org/document/resolution-xiv1-financial-budgetary-matters.

Table 1: Summary of estimated 2024 core budget funds to be carried forward (in '000 CHF, includes

possible rounding differences), as of 30 September 2024

Category / Department	Estimated pre- committed/ planned 2024 to be spent in 2025 (A)	Estimated uncommitted /unspent 2024 carry forward to 2025 (B)	Estimated carry forward 2025 (C=A+B)	Comments for estimated carry forward 2025
Resource Mobilization and Outreach	67	0	67	Pre-committed/planned: (i) 47K CEPA Programme; (ii) 11K Communications, Translations, Publications and Reporting Implementation and (iii) 9K Web/IT-support.
Regional Advice and Support	77	225	302	Pre-committed/planned: 77K implementation of Ramsar Advisory Missions postponed to 2025. Uncommitted/unspent: 225K vacancies and benefits.
Support to Ramsar Regional Initiatives	0	155	155	Uncommitted/unspent: 155K unallocated from 2023 and 2024 RRI budgets.
Scientific and Technical Services	189	44	233	Pre-committed/planned: (i) 4K travel, (ii) 14K STRP implementation, (iii) 27K for SP5, (iv) 30K implementation for inventories continues in 2025, (v) 64K Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) maintenance and development and (vi) 50K RSIS technical support for the triennium. Uncommitted/unspent: 44K staff benefits.
Administration/ Web	151	0	151	Pre-committed/planned: (i) 64K staff hiring and departure costs, (ii) 27K office supplies and equipment and (iii) 60K capacity building plan implementation continues.
Standing Committee Services	24	11	35	Pre-committed/planned: 24K review of resolutions. Uncommitted/unspent: (i) 4K Effectiveness Working Group, implementation and (ii) 7K enhancing efficiency and collaboration.
IUCN Administrative Service Charges	0	8	8	Uncommitted/unspent: 8K IUCN administrative charge.
Legal Services	27	0	27	Pre-committed/planned: 27K legal fees.
Total estimated core carry forward 2025	535	443	978	

Estimated 2024 reserve and surplus

9. The core fund balance at the end of 2023 was CHF 3,783K. At the time of writing of the present report, it was estimated that the core balance at the end of 2024 will be CHF 3,138K.

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- 10. The 2024 core balance above includes the reserve fund of CHF 762K. This corresponds to 15% of the annual core budget, the maximum level approved by the Contracting Parties at COP14, in paragraph 32 of Resolution XIV.1.
- 11. The core balance also includes a total of CHF 196K approved by COP14 from the 2019-2021 triennium core budget surplus (Resolution XIV.1, paragraphs 15 and 16²) to be used in 2025. This total includes CHF 76K to cover the gap created in the core budget and CHF 120K to increase the provision for outstanding contributions in 2025.
- 12. This balance also includes a carry forward estimated in the amount of CHF 978K, as detailed in Table 1 above, to be spent in 2025 and so included in the estimated 2025 budget (see Annex 3).
- 13. In line with standard practice applied for prior meetings of the COP, the Secretariat would like to bring to the Standing Committee's attention the need for the temporary use of reserve funds, as a loan to complement voluntary funding for COP15 delegate support, while the Secretariat continues its fundraising efforts.
- 14. As explained in paragraphs 19 and 20 below, the Secretariat requests that the Standing Committee authorize, on an exceptional basis, the temporary use of reserve funds of up to CHF 534K for this purpose. After COP15, the Secretariat will provide a report of the actual funds raised and repayment of the loan.
- 15. The core 2024 surplus thus available for consideration and allocation by the Standing Committee is an estimated total of CHF 688K. Table 2 below summarizes the details.

Table 2: 2024 core surplus to be allocated (in '000 CHF) – estimated as of 30 September 2024

(I) Fund balance at 31 December 2023 per audited statements	3,783
(II) Estimated net expenditure over income in 2024	645
(III=I-II) Estimated fund balance at 31 December 2024	3,138
Reserve, approved and pre-committed:	
Reserve fund at 15% (Resolution XIII.2, paragraph 33)	762
COP14-approved use of savings for 2025 (Resolution XIV.1, paragraph 15)	76
COP14-approved use of savings for 2025 (Resolution XIV.1, paragraph 16)	120
Estimated carry-forward balances (Table 1)	978
Estimated temporary use of reserve funds as a loan to complement voluntary funding for COP15 delegate support	534
(IV) Total estimated reserve, approved and pre-committed	2,470
(V= III-IV) Estimated 2024 core surplus after reserve, approved and precommitted – to be allocated	668

16. As reported in document SC63 Com.1, Report of the Subgroup on Finance, 3 June 2024, paragraph 5:

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² See https://www.ramsar.org/document/resolution-xiv1-financial-budgetary-matters.

"Members of the Subgroup agreed to request an October deadline for proposals for allocation of surplus funds and further hold a virtual intersessional meeting around early December 2024, once draft resolutions for COP15 had been published and in advance of the regional pre-COP meetings foreseen for the beginning of 2025, to consider:

- proposals for allocation of surplus funds; and
- the Secretariat's proposed budget plan for the next triennium, which should take into account the inflationary pressures on core budget activities and the increase in Secretariat activities".³

The Subgroup will meet virtually in December 2024 and put forward suggestions for the allocation of surplus funds to SC64 in January.

Estimated 2024 results: non-core funding status and voluntary contributions

- 17. The details of non-core funding as of 30 September 2024 can be found in Annex 2. The final report will be presented to SC65 in July 2025 at COP15.
- 18. The voluntary contributions received up to 30 September 2024 are outlined in Table 3 below. As instructed by the Standing Committee through Decision SC53-32, the table provides an overview of the contributions received and their designated use.

Table 3: Project income from voluntary non-core contributions received in 2024 (as per 30 September 2024) (in '000 CHF, includes possible rounding differences)

Donor	Income Amount	Description
Canada	36	Women in wetlands
Danone	66	Danone project activities
Nagao Wetland Fund	58	NEF Japan
Norway	12	STRP workplan 2023-2025
Germany	185	Wise use of Caribbean wetlands
Switzerland	50	COP14 sponsored delegate support
Switzerland	40	Pre-SC64 regional meeting
Switzerland	50	National wetlands inventories
Zimbabwe	599	COP15 meeting
United Kingdom	22	STRP workplan 2023-2025
United States	13	Ramsar Site assessment
Total voluntary non-core contributions 2024 (received until 30 September 2024)	1,131	

19. In 2024 Contracting Parties and other potential donors were approached regarding funding of other budgeted non-core priority items identified in Annex 4 of Resolution XIV.1. A main priority in this regard for Parties to be aware of in 2024 and 2025 is funding for COP15, especially for the participation of sponsored delegates. The Secretariat would welcome guidance from Parties

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³ See https://www.ramsar.org/document/sc63-com1-report-subgroup-finance-3-june-2024.

- on potential donors to cover travel costs to ensure participation of all Contracting Parties at COP15.
- 20. The estimated budget for all Contracting Parties to participate fully in COP15 is CHF 584K. Up to 30 September 2024, the amount of CHF 50K was received. Thus, the current shortfall to fully cover participation of 124 eligible delegates at the time of writing was CHF 534K. It should be noted that this amount does not include voluntary funding for pre-COP15 regional meetings.
- 21. The Secretariat would like to express its sincere appreciation to Contracting Parties and donors for their voluntary contributions to non-core activities of the Convention.

African voluntary contributions

22. In 2024, a voluntary contribution of CHF 1,000 was received from Contracting Parties in the Africa region until 30 September 2024, as reported in document SC64 Doc.9.2 *Status of annual contributions*. The year-end figure will be published in the revised version of the document in January 2025.

Core budget 2025 (estimated)

- 23. An overview of the 2025 budget is provided in Annex 3. It includes the COP14-approved budget of CHF 5,081K; the authorized use of the 2021 budget savings of CHF 196K; and the carry forward from the 2024 budget funds to be spent in 2025 estimated in total of CHF 978K. The total estimated core budget for 2025 is thus CHF 6,254K. The final report will be presented to SC65 in July 2025 at COP15.
- 24. The Secretariat would like to note that the allocation of funds to Ramsar Regional Initiatives proposed in the 2025 core budget will be considered at SC65 in July 2025, based on the report of the Secretariat on the RRIs that will be published following receipt of all RRI reports, the deadline for which is 17 January 2025.

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Annex 1
2024 Core results for the period estimated for 1 January to 31 December 2024 – as of 30 September 2024
(CHF '000s, includes possible rounding differences)

2024 Ramsar Budget COP14 Approved CHF '000s	Approved budget (COP14-approved)	COP14- authorized use of 2021 budget savings	Pre-committed 2023 to be spent in 2024 (SC63 approved)	Total 2024 budget (D) =A+B+C	Actual income and expenditure until 30 September 2024 (E)	Estimated expenditure from 1 October to 31 December 2024 (F)	Secretariat proposal budget adjustment (G)	Balance (H) =(E)-(F)+(G)
INCOME								
Parties' Contributions	3,779	0	0	3,779	3,779	0	0	0
Voluntary contributions	1,065	0	0	1,065	1,065	0	0	0
Income Tax	225	0	0	225	71	73	0	81
Other Income (including Interest Income)	12	0	0	12	39	6	0	(33)
TOTAL INCOME	5,081	0	0	5,081	4,953	79	0	49
EXPENDITURE								
A. Secretariat Senior Management and Governance	1,062	5	0	1,067	959	300	192	0
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	1,022	0	0	1,022	866	273	117	0
Travel	40	5	0	45	93	27	75	0
B. Resource Mobilization and Outreach	508	45	263	817	490	185	(75)	67
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	352	0	6	358	286	97	24	0
CEPA Programme	30	0	109	139	32	11	(50)	47
Comms, Translations, Publications and Reporting Implementation	60	40	110	210	132	60	(7)	11
Web/IT support and Development	56	0	38	94	40	18	(27)	9
Travel	10	5	0	15	0	0	(15)	0
C. Regional Advice and Support	1,316	10	292	1,618	797	303	(217)	302
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	1,249	0	177	1,426	766	278	(157)	225
Travel	67	10	19	96	20	16	(60)	0
Ramsar Advisory Missions	0	0	96	96	11	8		77

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2024 Ramsar Budget COP14 Approved	Approved budget (COP14- approved)	COP14- authorized use of 2021 budget savings	Pre-committed 2023 to be spent in 2024 (SC63 approved)	Total 2024 budget	Actual income and expenditure until 30 September	Estimated expenditure from 1 October to 31 December	Secretariat proposal budget adjustment	Balance
CHF '000s	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D) =A+B+C	2024 (E)	2024 (F)	(G)	(H) =(E)-(F)+(G)
D. Support to Regional Initiatives	100	0	120	220	22	43	(0)	155
Regional networks and centres - available budget not allocated in 2023 and 2024*	71	0	84	155	0	0		155
Danube WILDisland Ramsar Regional Initiative 2024	29	0	0	29	17	12		0
Southern African RRI 2023 activities carry over	0	0	12	12	0	12		0
Amazon Basin 2023 carry over	0	0	24	24	5	19		0
E. Scientific and Technical Services	817	5	373	1,195	692	324	54	233
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	649	0	37	686	485	156		44
Travel	18	0	21	39	25	10		4
Travel STRP Chair	5	0	3	8	8	2	3	0
STRP implementation	35	5	61	101	30	54	(3)	14
STRP meetings *	50	0	6	56	67	43	54	0
Strategic Plan SP5 (2022 - 2024)	0	0	50	50	23	0		27
SDG 6.61 (Inventories)	0	0	42	42	3	9		30
Ramsar Sites Information Service (maintenance and development)	60	0	63	123	35	25		64
Ramsar Sites Information Service (technical support for the triennium 2023-2025)	0	0	90	90	15	25		50
F. Administration/RSIS/Web	478	11	137	626	316	121	(38)	151
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	331	0	8	339	265	90	16	0
Staff hiring and departure costs	52	0	36	88	3	20		64
Travel	0	0	0	0	0			0
Equipment/Office Supplies	95	0	28	123	33	9	(54)	27
Planning and Capacity building	0	11	65	76	15	2		60

^{*} This line is overspent due to two meetings of the STRP taking place in 2024, with the 2025 budgeted meeting to be held in December 2024.

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2024 Ramsar Budget COP14 Approved	Approved budget (COP14- approved)	COP14- authorized use of 2021 budget savings	Pre-committed 2023 to be spent in 2024 (SC63 approved)	Total 2024 budget	Actual income and expenditure until 30 September	Estimated expenditure from 1 October to 31 December	Secretariat proposal budget adjustment	Balance
CHF '000s				(D)	2024	2024		(H)
	(A)	(B)	(C)	=A+B+C	(E)	(F)	(G)	=(E)-(F)+(G)
G. Standing Committee Services	150	0	41	191	178	63	84	35
Standing Committee delegates' support	45	0	0	45	54	0	9	0
Standing Committee meetings	10	0	0	10	37	0	27	0
SC translation	60	0	0	60	50	60	50	0
Simultaneous interpretation at SC meetings	35	0	0	35	33	9	(54)	27
Effectiveness Working Group	0	0	4	4	0			4
Enhance efficiency and collaboration (Res. XIV.3)	0	0	7	7	0	0		7
Resolutions review (Res. XIII.4)	0	0	30	30	3	3		25
H. IUCN Administrative Service Charges (maximum)	541	0	1	542	401	134		1
Administration, Human Resources, Finance & IT services	541	0	1	542	401	134		8
I. Miscellaneous - Reserve Fund	109	120	5	234	3	191		39
Staff Provisions	20	0	0	20	0	20		0
Provision for outstanding contributions	30	120	0	150	0	150		0
Exchange rate gains / losses	0	0	0	0	(6)	(6)		12
Legal Services	59	0	5	64	9	27		27
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,081	196	1,232	6,509	3,857	1,663	0	989
Rounding					1			
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)					(12)			978

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Annex 2
Projects financed by non-core funds for the period 1 January 2024 - 30 September 2024
(CHF '000s, includes possible rounding differences)

Project Number	Project Name	Balance (deficit) at 31 December 2023	Income until 30 September 2024	Expenditure until 30 September 2024	Project transfers and cross charges	Balance (deficit) at 30 September 2024
		(DR)/CR	(DR)/CR	(DR)/CR	(DR)/CR	(DR)/CR
Internation	nal Cooperation					
R100265	SGA-Pre-2016	148	-	(7)	-	141
R100267	SGA-RSIS	90	-	(9)	-	81
R100364	WFF-2014	26	-	-	-	26
R100365	WFF - 2015-2021	150	-	-	-	150
R100408	Nagao Wetland Fund (NEF Japan)	131	59	(40)	-	149
R100409	ROK 2023-2025	182		(31)	-	152
Total of In	ternational Cooperation	726	59	(86)	-	699
Listed Sites	s					
R100110	RAM	18	_	-	-	18
R100108	RAM (CH 2016)	45	_	-	_	45
Total of Lis		63	-	-	-	63
Other	Advata	222		(7)	12	220
R100100	Admin	333	-	(7)	13	339
R100102	RSIS redevelopment	38	-	(5)	-	33
R100103	Web redevelopment	21 22	-	-	-	21 22
R100104	Development Science review	33	-	-	-	33
R100105			-	-	-	
R100106	Strategic Plan 2016	18	-	- (0)	-	18
R100190	Water cycle Rio Cruces	11 52	-	(8)	-	3 52
R100311 R100642	COP15 – Zimbabwe	52 (7)	- 599	(9)	-	52 584
R100642	COP15 – Zimbabwe COP15 sponsored delegates		90	(9)	-	90
R100817	Danone 2022-2024	63	90 66	(52)	-	90 77
R100917	STRP non-core	145	-	(32)	-	145
R100904	Gender work	2	36	(35)	(3)	0
R100915	Capacity building non-core	33	-	(9)	(3)	24
R100917	National wetland inventories	251	50	(47)	_	254
R100918	Youth and wetlands	139	(62)	(47)	_	77
R100919	Ukraine Assessment	160	13	(75)	(1)	97
R101006	Climate change	50	-	(16)	(± <i>)</i> -	34
R101007	Tropical peatlands	15	12	(15)	_	12
R101007	STRP workplan 2023-2025	27	22	(27)	(2)	20
Total of Ot	•	1,406	826	(302)	7	1,936
Regional Ir				(552)		
R100146	Caribbean Wetlands	(7)	185	(189)	(7)	(17)
R100200	AVC, African Regional Initiatives	42	1	-	-	43
	egional Initiatives	36	186	(189)	(7)	26
	-				, ,	
Grand Tota	al	2,231	1,071	(577)	0	2,724

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Annex 3
Proposed estimated core budget 2025⁴
(CHF '000s, includes possible rounding differences)

2025 Ramsar Budget COP14 Approved CHF '000s	Approved budget (COP14-approved)	COP14 authorised use of 2021 budget savings (B)	Estimated 2024 carry- forward to 2025 (C)	Total estimated 2025 budget (D)= (A)+(B)+(C)
INCOME				
Parties' Contributions	3,779	0	0	3,779
Voluntary contributions	1,065	0	0	1,065
Income Tax	225	0	0	225
Other Income (including Interest Income)	12	0	0	12
TOTAL INCOME	5,081	0	0	5,081
EXPENDITURE				
A. Secretariat Senior Management	1,062	5	0	1,067
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	1,022	0	0	1,022
Travel	40	5	0	45
B. Resource Mobilization and Outreach	508	45	67	620
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	352	0	0	352
CEPA Programme	30	0	47	77
Comms, Translations, Publications and Reporting Implementation	60	40	11	111
Web/IT support and Development	56	0	9	65
Travel	10	5	0	15
C. Regional Advice and Support	1,316	10	302	1,628
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	1,249	0	225	1,474
Travel	67	10	0	77
Ramsar Advisory Missions	0	0	77	77
D. Support to Regional Initiatives	100	0	155	255
Regional networks and centres (NOTE: for consideration by SC65)	100	0	155	255
E. Scientific and Technical Services	817	5	233	1,055
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	649	0	44	693
Travel	18	0	4	22
Travel STRP Chair	5	0	0	5
STRP implementation	35	5	14	54
STRP meetings	50	0	0	50
Strategic Plan SP5 (2022 - 2024)	0	0	27	27
SDG 6.61 (Inventories)	0	0	30	30
Ramsar Sites Information Service (maintenance and development)	60	0	64	124
Ramsar Sites Information Service (technical support for the triennium 2023-2025)	0	0	50	50

 $^{^{4}}$ Updated proposed core budget 2025 will be submitted to SC65 in July 2025 at COP15

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2025 Ramsar Budget COP14 Approved CHF '000s	Approved budget (COP14- approved)	COP14 authorised use of 2021 budget savings (B)	Estimated 2024 carry- forward to 2025 (C)	Total estimated 2025 budget (D)= (A)+(B)+(C)
F. Administration/Web	478	11	151	640
Salaries, social costs and other benefits	331	0	0	331
Staff hiring and departure costs	52	0	64	116
Travel	0	0	0	0
Equipment/Office Supplies	95	0	27	122
Planning and Capacity building	0	11	60	71
G. Standing Committee Services	150	0	35	185
Standing Committee delegates' support	45	0	0	45
Standing Committee meetings	10	0	0	10
SC translation	60	0	0	60
Simultaneous interpretation at SC meetings	35	0	0	35
Effectiveness Working Group	0	0	4	4
Enhance efficiency and collaboration (Res. XIV.3)	0	0	7	7
Resolutions review (Res. XIII.4)	0	0	25	25
H. IUCN Administrative Service Charges (max.)	541	0	8	549
Administration, Human Resources, Finance & IT services	541	0	8	549
I. Miscellaneous - Reserve Fund	109	120	27	256
Staff Provisions	20	0	0	20
Provision for outstanding contributions	30	120	0	150
Exchange rate gains / losses	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	59	0	27	86
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,081	196	978	6,254

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