

Agenda item 17.1

Report of the STRP Oversight Committee

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to note the report of the STRP Oversight Committee.

Introduction

1. The Oversight Committee for the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) was established by Resolution IX.11 (2005) of the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP9) and its role and responsibilities reaffirmed by COP10 Resolution X.9 (2008).
2. The STRP Oversight Committee reports to the Standing Committee and its composition is: the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee, the Chair and Vice Chair of the STRP, and the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General *ex officio*. The Oversight Committee is chaired by the Chair of Standing Committee.
3. The responsibilities of the STRP Oversight Committee are to:
 - i) appoint the members, Chair and Vice Chair of the STRP;
 - ii) provide intersessional advice, guidance and support for the operations and work of the Panel;
 - iii) keep under review, and advise the Standing Committee on, the operations of the Panel under the revised *modus operandi*; and
 - iv) provide advice to the Secretariat on expenditures under the STRP budget line.
4. As reported to the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee (DOC. SC40-16), the STRP Oversight Committee made the appointments of the members, Chair and Vice-Chair of the STRP in early 2009.

Activities undertaken since the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee

5. The main task for the STRP Oversight Committee since COP10 has been to provide advice to the Secretariat on expenditures under the STRP budget line. In particular, the Oversight Committee has approved the allocation of funds within the STRP's core budget line, which for 2010, as throughout this triennium, is CHF 205,985.
6. This budget line needs to cover the participation and logistics costs of STRP's meetings, the salary and social costs of the STRP Support Officer (Monica Zavagli), and the STRP Chair's travel costs to represent the STRP in other processes such as meetings of the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies of Biodiversity Conventions (CSAB). If funds permit, an

allocation is also made towards the implementation costs of the STRP's high priority tasks as approved in its 2009-2012 Work Plan.

7. Following assessment of the full costs of holding the 15th meeting of the STRP in March/April 2009, which owing to increases in travel and accommodation costs were higher than anticipated, the STRP Oversight Committee has approved the following budget line allocations for 2010:

STRP mid-term workshops (February 2010):	CHF 60,000
STRP Support Officer (salary & related costs):	CHF 120,000
STRP Chair's travel:	CHF 8,000
Contribution to priority task implementation:	CHF 17,985
TOTAL:	CHF 205,985

8. The contribution to priority task implementation remains provisional until the full costs of the STRP mid-term workshops become known.
9. The STRP's mid-term workshops took place in the Secretariat offices in Gland, Switzerland, from 22-26 February 2010, with participation of all STRP appointed members, along with several of the 2009-2012 Invited Experts, some through the provision of air tickets through the "Biosphere Connections" agreement with Star Alliance airlines, and a number of representatives of observer organizations and other experts invited by the STRP to contribute to specific tasks in its Work Plan.
10. The report of the outcomes of the STRP mid-term workshops, including an updated Work Plan for task delivery, will be transmitted to the Standing Committee at its 41st meeting for its consideration and approval, under Agenda item 17.2.
11. The very limited funding available from the STRP core budget line for priority task implementation means that to progress its tasks a very significant amount of work ends up being undertaken by Panel members on a *pro bono* or in-kind support basis, and the commitment of Panel members is strongly appreciated for this, as are the in-kind contributions of the host institutions of Panel members. Nevertheless to fully progress many of its tasks, additional funds need to be found from other sources, including through voluntary contributions from Parties and others.
12. In that context, the STRP Oversight Panel is most grateful to the governments of Finland, Norway, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom for their provision in 2009 and 2010 of additional voluntary contributions for specific STRP priority tasks, amounting to CHF 83,692. There remains, however, a major shortfall between available funds and the costs estimated by the Panel at its 15th meeting in 2009 as needed for full delivery of its Work Plan.
13. Updated and revised costs for task delivery prepared by the Panel during its mid-term workshops will be provided in the Report of the STRP Chair to SC41. The Standing Committee may wish to renew its call to Parties to consider the provision of additional funds for the STRP's priority work during the remainder of the 2009-2012 cycle, noting that for any materials destined for COP11 consideration all preparatory work needs to be

undertaken by the Panel and its Thematic Work Area and task groups during the remainder of 2010.

14. At their mid-term workshops the Panel members set the dates for their 16th meeting as Monday 14 to Friday 18 February 2011 in the Secretariat offices, in order to ensure that they will be able to make timely delivery to the Standing Committee of the materials the STRP is preparing for COP11 consideration.