



Modalities for the Utilization of ECO Special Support Fund

Presentation by the ECO Secretariat

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I. Current Modalities in a nutshell:

Purpose

I. 10th COM Meeting (June 2000):

SG Report to COM:

“The new arrangement for supporting participation of the representatives of new Member States in ECO events/meetings through the Special Support Fund (SSF), introduced for the first time in the budget of ECO for the year 2000.”

COM observations:

“i. The relevant national authorities in the Member States may extend maximum cooperation to the Secretariat to fully achieve the targets fixed in the priority sectors such as Transport & Communications, Trade & Investment, Energy, Minerals & Environment and Agriculture, Industry & Health, as enunciated in the 10th RPC’s Report.

ii. Participation of the relevant experts from all the Member States in the approved ECO Events/Meetings should be ensured for attaining maximum benefits of such activities.”

II. 111th CPR (April 2006)

The SSF arrangements were revised to cover all Member States:

“the Revised Modalities for Utilization of SSF were approved by the CPR which envisages utilization of SSF by all ECO member states,”

I. Current Modalities in a nutshell:

Text

Modalities for the Utilization of ECO Special Support Fund

- i. The amount allocated for Special Support Fund would be approved by the CPR as a part of the annual budget of ECO Secretariat.
- ii. The CPR shall approve the meetings, which would utilize the Fund for their participants in advance. Every year, the Secretariat after the RPC (Regional Planning Council) meeting will propose a list of meetings from amongst the Annual ECO Calendar of Meetings/Events and submit it to the CPR for its approval. The use of SSF shall be limited to meetings in the main priority areas, i.e. Trade, Transport & Energy. Priority shall be given to Trade related meetings. However, other important areas to be proposed may also be given priority. To the extent possible, workshops, training courses etc. which do not involve decision making will not be included in the list. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting, Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meeting, Sectoral Ministerial Meetings and their related SOMs shall not use the Fund.
- iii. The SS Fund may be utilized by the ECO Secretariat for round trip air ticket (least expensive economy class) expenses up to US\$900/- for one participant from all Member States of ECO.
- iv. Those member states that are in the arrears of their assessed contribution to the ECO budget for more than two years will not be entitled to utilize SSF.
- v. The Secretary General is authorized in exceptional cases, to pay up to US\$1,200/- to one participant each from a maximum of three Member States for each meeting who have to pay more due to higher cost of air ticket or non-availability of direct connecting flights to the venue.
- vi. If so required due to unexpected developments within the subject year, the Secretariat may submit a revised list to CPR for re-approval.



I. Current Modalities in a nutshell:

Decisions on allocation of resources/list of meetings

- Resources are approved by the CPR as a part of the annual budget of ECO Secretariat
 - No defined percentage
 - Practically US\$ 60,000 per annum (since 2010)
- Every year following the RPC meeting, the Secretariat proposes a list of meetings from amongst the Annual ECO Calendar of Events and submit it to the CPR for its approval
- Revising the list of events is possible



I. Current Modalities in a nutshell:

Scope

- From amongst the Annual ECO Calendar of Events
- Limited to meetings in the main priority areas, i.e. Trade, Transport & Energy
- Priority shall be given to trade related meetings
- Other important areas may also be given priority
- To the extent possible, workshops, training courses, etc. should not be included in the list
- COM, Senior Officials (SOM), RPC and sectoral Ministerial Meetings as well as their SOMs shall not use the Fund



I. Current Modalities in a nutshell: Coverage

- Round trip air ticket (least expensive economy class) for one participant from all Member States of ECO
- Up to US\$900 (In exceptional cases, up to US\$1,200 to one participant from maximum of three Member States for each meeting who have to pay more)
- Member States in arrears of their assessed contribution to the ECO budget for more than two years are not entitled



Current Modalities in a nutshell: Implementation

1. The Modalities have been implemented flexibly and SSF, by CPR decisions, :
 - Has not been limited to trade, transport and energy events
 - Has funded, recently, workshops and training courses
 - Has covered some RPC meetings
2. Other resources have been used (Feasibility and General Purpose Fund)
3. In some cases, SSF current coverage has not ensured wider participation (also frequent lack of quorum)



II. Previous Amendments

1. April 2006 (111th CPR Meeting)

- To cover all Member States (from original coverage of new Member states)

2. June 2010 (160th CPR Meeting)

- i. Coverage increased from US\$500 to US\$900
- ii. Exceptions increased from US\$900 to US\$ 1200/ and from maximum 2 Member States to 3 Member States
- iii. Reference to possibility of covering other expenses with prior approval of CPR was deleted

III. Scenarios for improvement: Allocation of the resources

- A fixed percentage of the annual budget
 - EPG recommendation: 7% of the annual budget
- An estimated amount of money with the possibility of later adjustment:
 - From unused resources
 - From other resources

III. Scenarios for improvement:

Scope

- Meetings, workshops, training courses, etc., which are being held in the context of the implementation of the ECO annual work programmes developed by RPC
- Priority may be given to events where there are no other available resources through relevant projects/programmes or by host country
- COM and Sectoral Ministerial Meetings continue to be excluded
- If deemed necessary for widest participation of the Member States, Secretary General may have discretion to finance participation of maximum three Member States in sectoral Ministerial Meetings
- Participation in RPC meetings may have its own funding mechanism (based on the experiences of the last two RPC meetings)
- If so required and in case some approved events do not realize due to any reason, the Secretariat may submit alternative events to CPR for approval

III. Scenarios for improvement:

Coverage

- Round trip air ticket (least expensive economy class) up to US\$900 for one participant from each Member State
- Accommodation for one participant from each Member State in workshops and training courses (in case of non-hospitality)
- Accommodation for other meetings in case of the importance of the subject meeting and absence hospitality by the host country
- EPG has recommended to cover air tickets and per diem to the delegates as well as assistance to the host authorities



III. Scenarios for improvement: Coverage (continued)

- Coverage for participation of the Member States in arrears may be left to Article 11.5(iii) of ECO Financial Regulations:

*“The above measures [including SSF ineligibility] may be applied **progressively** by the Secretary General informing the CPR in each case”*



IV.SSF and EPG Recommendations

- **EPG Recommendation 18**

“In order to ensure active involvement and participation by all the Member States in ECO events/meetings, allocation to the Special Support Fund (SSF) must be increased to 7 % of the annual budget to cover cost of air tickets, per diem to the delegates as well as provide assistance to the host authorities, if required. The status of the SSF must be like that of the Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FSGPF) in that 7 % of annual budget may be automatically allocated to the SS Fund.”

IV.SSF and EPG Recommendations

(Continued)

- **Working Group on Implementation of the EPG Recommendations**

“The Working Group while acknowledging the need for increase in the SSF budget recommended that the final decision for gradual increase, including its utilization, will be made in the light of overall decisions on budgetary issues. The SSF modalities should be amended accordingly.”

V. CPR Guidance for New Revised Modalities

i. Resources

- More allocation in the annual budget (percentage or fixed amount)
- Flexibility to transfer money to SSF from unused resources

ii. Scope

- Inclusion of meetings, workshops, training courses, etc., which are being held in the context of the implementation of the ECO annual work programmes developed by RPC
- Expansion to all sectors (currently limited to trade, transport and energy sectors)
- Member States in arrears (Article 11.5 iii)

iii. Coverage

- Flexible to cover accommodation



Thank you