

Agenda item 14

Actions under Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27 on the status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this report requested for this meeting, to consider the issues listed below, to advise on activities to be undertaken by regional members of the Standing Committee and those Contracting Parties directly concerned, and to instruct the Secretariat on specific measures to be taken.

1. In the opening operational paragraph 20 of Resolution IX.15, the Contracting Parties reaffirmed their commitment “to fully implement the terms of Article 3.2 [of the Convention] on reporting change and to maintain or restore the ecological character of their Ramsar sites, including utilizing all appropriate mechanisms to address and resolve as soon as practicable the matters for which a site may have been the subject of a report pursuant to Article 3.2; and, once those matters have been resolved, to submit a further report, so that both positive influences at sites and changes in ecological character may be fully reflected in reporting under Article 3.2 and in the reporting to meetings of the COP in order to establish a clear picture of the status and trends of the Ramsar site network at three-year intervals.”
2. At COP9, the Conference of the Parties made specific recommendations to a number of Contracting Parties in paragraph 27 of Resolution IX.15, pursuant to Article 8.2 (e) of the Convention, with respect to alterations to the List or changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites and other wetlands included in the Report of the Secretary General to the Conference of the Parties (COP9 DOC.6) or otherwise brought to the attention of COP9.
3. After COP9, the Standing Committee reiterated the above commitment by the Parties and took Decision SC34-1, requesting “the Secretary General to follow up on Resolution IX.15, para 27, with requests that the Parties concerned report on their actions in response to those recommendations, and that he report on their responses to SC35.”

Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites (*Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27 i-xi*)

4. The Secretariat contacted the governments listed below during 2006 and made formal requests, as spelt out in Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27, i-xi. The current situation concerning these eleven cases can be summarized as follows:
 - i) The Government of **Australia** informed the Secretariat that in November 2006 the Australian Senate called for a review of the health and management of Ramsar wetlands in Australia. To address this, a rapid assessment of the current status of

management of all of Australia's Ramsar sites is being undertaken. This assessment is about to commence and will inform the development of a fuller and ongoing, regular review process. There is also significant government investment in programmes to improve water management and enhance environmental flows in the Murray-Darling Basin. These actions will all assist in improving the ecological character of the Gwydir Wetlands: Gingham and Lower Gwydir (Big Leather) Watercourses, the Macquarie Marshes, and The Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert). [Revised paragraph at the request of Australia.]

- ii) The government of **Germany** has not yet responded to the request to submit an updated Ramsar Information Sheet and map for the Mühlenberger Loch Ramsar site showing the reduced boundaries of the site and a consolidated report on the compensation measures taken under Article 4.2 and their effectiveness in line with Resolution VIII.20.
- iii) The government of **Georgia** advised the Secretariat in April 2006 that it will submit an updated Ramsar Information Sheet and map for the Wetlands of Central Kolkheti Ramsar site, showing reduced boundaries of the site, and a consolidated report on the compensation measures taken under Article 4.2 and their effectiveness in line with Resolution VIII.20, after having implemented the compensation measures proposed in an expert report requested by the Ministry of Environment. Earlier, the Secretariat was invited to comment and contribute to the proposed compensation measures and did so by undertaking Ramsar Advisory Mission No. 54 in August 2005.
- iv) The government of **Ukraine** has not provided any information to the Secretariat regarding the development of the deep water Bystroe navigation channel in the Danube Delta and the specific points listed in Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27:
 - “a) suspend further works pending a full environmental impact assessment being conducted and its findings acted upon;
 - b) make available full documentation including the findings of the environmental impact assessment for Phase II of the project to all stakeholders, including the government of Romania as a potentially affected state;
 - c) ensure that compensatory provision is made for any damage to the ecological character of designated Ramsar sites and other wetlands caused by the works which have already been carried out;
 - d) establish, in cooperation with relevant international organizations and the government of Romania, a programme of international monitoring of the ecological character of the Ramsar sites and Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, in line with the Convention’s guidance on wetland monitoring (Annex to Resolution VI.1; Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 8); and
 - e) in line with Article 5 of the Convention, apply international norms in the provision of information, consultation and involvement in decision-making processes of all stakeholders concerning Phase II of the process.”
- v) Reminders were sent to the national Ramsar Administrative Authority of **Peru** in May, August, and November 2006 to advise the Secretary General of steps taken to maintain the ecological character of the Paracas Ramsar site in relation to the

construction of the port facility in Lobería beach within the buffer zone of the Ramsar site. To date the Secretariat has not received a response.

- vi) The Secretariat received documentation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of **Colombia** in May 2006, indicating that although the authorizations needed to carry out this project were denied by the federal government in August 2004, and by the local government in February 2005, four new proposals for the Sistema Delta Estuarino del Río Magdalena, Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta Ramsar site for the development of a multi-purpose port facility in Palermo had also been received by the government during this time. In addition to the enactment of new legislation to promote the conservation and wise use of this wetland, the government of Colombia agreed to keep the Secretariat informed of any further developments in this regard.
- vii) The government of **Kenya** has not yet provided information to the Secretariat on the implications for the maintenance of the ecological character of the Lake Naivasha Ramsar site of the court action halting implementation of the management plan for the site, and the steps being taken to resolve this matter.
- viii) **Chile** included the Carlos Anwandter Sanctuary Ramsar site in the Montreux Record on 6 October 2006. Further information about its status is included in the report of the Secretary General to this meeting (DOC. SC35-2).
- ix) Reminders were sent by the Secretariat to the national Ramsar Administrative Authority of the **Dominican Republic** in May and November 2006 to provide information on the current situation concerning the enactment of legislation weakening the status of protected areas, including Ramsar sites. To date the Secretariat has not received a response.
- x) The government of the **Republic of Korea** has not yet advised the Secretary General of the current situation concerning the sea-wall construction and reclamation of the Saemangeum coastal wetlands and the impact of the construction works undertaken to date on the internationally important migratory waterbird populations dependent upon these wetlands.
- xi) The government of **Greece** has not yet advised the Secretariat on general steps being taken to restore the ecological character of the seven Greek Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record with a view to removing these sites from the Record, and the steps taken to maintain the ecological character of the three sites removed from the Montreux Record in 1999.

Administrative Authority responses concerning third-party reports of negative changes at Ramsar sites (*Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27 xii*)

5. The last subparagraph (xii) requested “that the governments listed in Annex 3b of COP9 DOC.6, and which have not already done so, make a report to the Ramsar Secretariat without delay under Article 3.2 concerning reports of change or likely change to the ecological character of those Ramsar sites listed in this Annex”. A small number of such reports have been received by the Secretariat since COP9, but for most of these cases a response from the Administrative Authority is still outstanding.

6. The table below shows Ramsar sites for which, since COP8, first reports of human-induced negative changes having occurred, occurring or likely to occur (Article 3.2) were received by the Secretariat from third parties before COP9. The list is based on the table in Annex 3b of COP9 DOC.6.
7. Information provided by the national Ramsar Administrative Authorities to the Secretariat since COP9, under Article 3.2, is summarized in the right-hand column. Where reports were sent, they either had to indicate that it was possible to find a solution avoiding negative changes, or that negative changes were unavoidable and that the country therefore evoked “urgent national interest” under Article 2.5 and is preparing compensation measures in compliance with the requirements of Article 4.2.
- 8) The term “OK” in the Status column indicates that the Administrative Authority reported that the danger of negative changes no longer exists. “Change” in the Status column indicates that the Administrative Authority has reported ongoing work to find lasting solutions or a remaining need to define or implement mitigation or compensation measures. “Status unknown” indicates the numerous cases (40 of the 69 sites) where the Administrative Authority has not yet provided a definite report to the Secretariat.

Country	Sites	Status	Negative Changes
Albania	Butrint	OK	potential changes avoided
Argentina	SR Parque Nacional Laguna Blanca	OK	variety of measures have been taken
Australia	Moreton Bay	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Austria	Lafnitztal Untere Lobau	Change Change	need to compensate for planned road constructions remains
Belgium	Marais d'Harchies	Change	potential impacts of the reopening of a canal are monitored
Bulgaria	Belene Islands Complex	Change	wetland restoration project is under way
Chile	Santuario Carlos Anwandter	Change	on Montreux Record 6 October 2006
Costa Rica	Caño Negro	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Croatia	Crna Mlaka	OK	land-use problems were solved
	Delta Neretve	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Kopacki Rit	Status unknown	no final report by AA
France	Etangs de la Petite Woëvre	OK	negative changes not significant
	Camargue	OK	potential negative changes not significant
	La Petite Camargue	OK	potential negative changes not significant
	Rives du Lac Léman	OK	negative changes were compensated for
Georgia	Ispani II Marshes	OK	planned road construction was stopped
Hungary	Lake Balaton	Change	potential of water quality deterioration
India	East Calcutta Wetlands	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Kolleru Lake	OK	water flow in wetland restored
	Keoladeo National Park	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Sasthamkotta Lake	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Iceland	Myvatn-Laca region	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Thjörðsarver	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Ireland	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Italy	Stagno di Cagliari	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Stagno di Molentargius	Status unknown	no final report by AA
	Torbiere d'Iseo	OK	potential changes not significant
Kenya	Lake Naivasha	Status unknown	no reaction from AA

Kyrgyz Republic	Isyk-Kul State Reserve with the Lake Isyk-Kul	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Malaysia	Pulau Kukup Sungai Pulau Tanjung Piai	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Mauritania	Banc d'Arguin Parc National du Diawling	OK OK	development project modified no formal report by AA yet
Netherlands	Bargerveen Waddenzee Ramsar sites	Status unknown OK	no final report by AA new legislation was put in place
Niger	Parc national du "W"	OK	negative changes removed
Norway	Froan Nature Reserve & Landscape Protection Area Ilene & Pesterödkilen Kurefjorden	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Poland	Biebrza National Park	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Portugal	Ria Formosa	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Republic of Moldova	Lower Prut Lakes	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Romania	Small Island of Braila	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Russian Federation	Kurgalsky Peninsula	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Serbia and Montenegro	Skadarsko Jezero	Change	Ramsar Advisory Mission in October 2006, no final report by AA
Slovenia	Secoveljske soline	OK	potential negative change avoided
South Africa	Verloren Valei Wilderness Lakes	OK	mining project withdrawn
Spain	Albufera de Valencia Delta del Ebro Mar Menor Pantano de El Hondo S'Albufera de Mallorca Txingudi	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	RAM in December 2006 no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Sweden	Umeålv delta	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Switzerland	Fanel et Chablais de Cudrefin Les Grangettes	OK OK	negative impacts not significant negative impacts not significant
Turkey	Gediz Delta Göksu Deltası	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Ukraine	Kartal Lake; Kugurlui Lake; Kyliiske Mouth	Change	potential impacts by the Bystroe navigation channel (cf. above)
United Kingdom	Chesil Beach & The Fleet Dengie (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) Lewis Peatlands Solent and Southampton Water South West London Waterbodies Thames Estuary and Marshes The Swale	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown OK OK OK Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA potential negative change avoided negative change not significant potential negative change were avoided no final report by AA
USA	Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve	Status unknown	no final report by AA