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Call for Nominations for the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) presents its compliments and has the honour to refer to the following:

Resolution 5.5 adopted at the 5th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention in 1993 established a Scientific and Technical Review Panel. This Resolution decided that the Panel “*shall be made up of seven members with appropriate scientific and technical knowledge, appointed on an individual basis for a three year term by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the recommendation of the Standing Committee, with due regard for equitable representation of each region.*” Further, the Secretary General was instructed “*to inform the Contracting Parties of the timetable for submission to the Standing Committee of nominations for the membership of the . . . Panel and to provide information to the Contracting Parties as to the disciplines which should be reflected on the Panel.*”

At the 6th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in 1996, Resolution VI.7 introduced the concept of “alternate” members of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, to be appointed by the same process as the full members. Alternate members do not attend meetings of the Panel unless the representative of that region is unable to do so. Representatives from developing countries, or those with economies in transition, are assisted from the Convention budget to attend meetings of the Panel.

In accordance with Resolutions 5.5 and VI.7, Contracting Parties are invited to submit to the Bureau nominations (accompanied by a brief curriculum vitae of the nominees - maximum five pages) for the members, and alternates, of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel for the triennium 1999-2002. These nominations should reach the Bureau by 14 August 1998, so that they may be reviewed by the 21st Meeting of the Standing Committee, to be held in Gland, Switzerland from 19 - 24 October 1998.

In terms of the qualities and disciplines which should be reflected in the members of the Panel for the 1999-2002 triennium, the following advice is offered:

Members should enjoy an international reputation based on experience in implementation of wetland conservation and wise use or relevant research activities. They should be leading specialists in their field, selected on the basis of their international knowledge with complete independence of judgement. They need not necessarily be drawn from a Contracting Party. The members must be available to attend at least one meeting of the Panel each year and be willing to act as a focal point for soliciting the assistance of other experts in pursuing the work programme. As all business of the STRP is conducted in English, including the annual meeting, it is important that the nominees be able to operate effectively in this language.

As to the appropriate fields of expertise, it is expected that in the 1999-2002 triennium the Scientific and Technical Review Panel would benefit from having among its members experts in the following fields; integrated water resources management, hydrology, economic valuation and incentive instruments, monitoring

techniques, alien species, toxic chemicals, rehabilitation/restoration and human socio-ecology. It is also important that the Panel have experts familiar with the management challenges of inland freshwater wetlands and those of the coastal zone.

Resolution VI.7 also invited the Scientific and Technical Review Panel to establish close working relations with the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other similar bodies. This is consistent with Resolutions VI.9 and VI.10 from the same Conference of the Contracting Parties, which urged closer collaboration between the Panel and SBSTTA and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility, respectively. In response to these Resolutions, the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention urges Contracting Parties to consider nominating suitably qualified persons (reflecting the above areas of expertise) who also have knowledge of, or are members of, these others technical advisory bodies.

When it meets in October of this year, the Standing Committee will prepare a recommendation on the membership of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel for consideration by the 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. For information, the names of the current members and alternates on the Panel is attached.

The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands respectfully requests that the content of the present Note be communicated to the competent national authorities and avails itself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of its highest consideration.

Gland, 18 March 1998