On Wednesday, COP13 met in plenary throughout the day.

In the morning, delegates began working through the 26 draft resolutions and recommendations with discussions on:

- inviting the UN General Assembly to designate 2 February as World Wetlands Day;
- suggested changes to the Convention’s governance, as outlined in three proposed resolutions; and
- the language strategy for the Convention, including adding Arabic as the fourth official Convention language.

In the afternoon, delegates considered draft resolutions on:

- the importance of wetlands for peace and security;
- the review of the fourth Strategic Plan;
- enhancing implementation, visibility and synergies with other MEAs and international institutions;
- wetlands in polar and subpolar regions;
- Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021 and their operational framework; and
- sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Contact groups met in the afternoon and evening on: credentials; finance and budgetary matters; governance issues; language strategy; wetlands for peace and security; and wetlands in polar and subpolar regions. A contact group on regional initiatives was also established.

Key takeaways included:

- agreement that changes to Ramsar’s governance are needed, but divergent views about the best approach will likely require extended discussions throughout the week; and
- with six working groups established, it is evident that the parties are fully engaged in key substantive issues, but time and space limitations may pose scheduling challenges and create burdens for small delegations.

Source: IISD reporting

Source URL: https://www.ramsar.org/news/cop13-highlights-for-wednesday-24-october-2018