The Secretariat is pleased to announce that, in line with the procedure in Resolution XII.5, the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee has appointed Dr Lei Guangchun of China as new Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Convention for the remainder of the 2019-2021 triennium.

The Secretariat would also like to recognize the STRP Vice-Chair’s interim leadership to date. As outlined in Resolution XII.5, Dr Lisa-Maria Rebelo has taken up on an interim manner the Chair’s functions including inter alia providing oversight and working closely with the Secretariat and task leads to progress the highest priority tasks of the Panel. Many thanks to Dr Rebelo for her commitment and effective leadership during this period.

Dr Lei is Dean of the School of Nature Conservation at Beijing Forestry University, professor in wetland ecology and Vice-Chair of the National Wetland Science Committee of China. He is a specialist in wetland science, ecosystem services, nature reserve management and metapopulation ecology, with numerous publications in international peer reviewed journals. Previously, he served as Senior Regional Advisor for the Asia-Oceania region at the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands. His awards include the China National TV Documentary Award (Golden Prize), the WWF International Global Conservation Innovation Award, the China National Forestry Science and Technology Prize, and the Wetlands International Luc Hoffmann Medal for Wetland Science and Conservation. He has been an STRP member since 2016, as a scientific expert and, currently, as a technical expert.

Dr Lei’s experience as a scientific and as a technical expert of the STRP, his academic and scientific record and his previous work as Senior Regional Advisor for Asia-Oceania at the Secretariat gives him solid knowledge about wetlands and the Convention and a deep understanding of Parties’ needs which would be very helpful to advance the work of the Panel. With China hosting the next COP14, his leadership of the scientific work of the Convention would be an additional contribution to making the outcomes of the STRP and COP14 a success.