

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
62nd meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 4 – 8 September 2023

Decisions of the 62nd meeting of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda

Decision SC62-01: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional agenda in document SC62 Doc.2 Rev.1.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the provisional working programme

Decision SC62-02: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional working programme in document SC62 Doc.3.

Agenda item 4: Admission of observers

Decision SC62-03: The Standing Committee admitted the observers listed in document SC62 Doc.4.

Agenda item 5: Report of the Executive Team and Chair of the Standing Committee

Decision SC62-04: The Standing Committee took note the Report of the Executive Team and Chair of the Standing Committee published as document SC62 Doc.5.

Agenda item 6: Report of the Secretary General

Decision SC62-05: The Standing Committee welcomed the Report of the Secretary General published as document SC62 Doc.6.

Agenda item 7: Report of the Management Working Group

Decision SC62-06: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Management Working Group.

Agenda item 20: Preparation of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15)

Decision SC62-07: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Secretariat on COP15.

Decision SC62-08: The Standing Committee accepted the proposed dates 23-31 July 2025 for COP15.

Decision SC62-09: The Standing Committee approved the provisional agenda for COP15 with the addition of Wetland City Accreditation as an agenda item.

Decision SC62-10: The Standing Committee approved the composition of the Subgroup on COP15.

Agenda item 10: Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group

Decision SC62-11: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group.

Agenda item 25: Report of the Secretariat on the Ramsar Regional Initiatives

Decision SC62-12: The Standing Committee took note of the annual reports submitted by the Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs) for 2022 in accordance with Resolution XIV.7 on *Ramsar Regional Initiatives*.

Decision SC62-13: The Standing Committee noted the allocation of funds from the 2023 Ramsar core budget line D “Support to Regional Initiatives” proposed in document SC62 Doc.8.1, to provide start-up funding of CHF 30,000 to the Southern African Ramsar Regional Initiative.

Agenda item 13: Work plan of the Secretariat for 2023-2025

Decision SC62-14: The Standing Committee took note of and approved the Secretariat’s integrated Annual Plan for 2023 and Triennial Plan for 2023-2025, subject to the additions proposed by the STRP Chair.

Agenda item 11: Secretariat report on institutional strengthening to support the implementation of the Convention

Decision SC62-15: The Standing Committee took note of the Secretariat’s report on institutional strengthening to support the implementation of the Convention in response to Resolution XIV.6, paragraph 22.

Decision SC62-16: The Standing Committee took note of the recommendations of the interested Contracting Parties and the Secretariat reflected in Annex 2 of the report.

Decision SC62-17: The Standing Committee established a Working Group to lead the process to achieve organizational robustness to support the implementation of the Convention, including through the preparation of a draft resolution for the consideration of the Standing Committee at its 63rd meeting.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Secretariat on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention

Decision SC62-18: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to follow approach 1 as defined in document SC62 Doc.12, using existing tools in preparing a plan to be presented to the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee, recognizing that the implementation of those tools should not replace in-person negotiations, and noting that further discussions to refine the process will be held.

Agenda item 14: Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies in partnership with multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

Decision SC62-19: The Standing Committee took note of the progress in implementing Resolutions XIV.6 and XIII.7 on enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions.

Agenda item 15: Review and consolidation of current Resolutions

Decision SC62-20: The Standing Committee took note of the action taken by the Secretariat as reported in document SC62 Doc.15.

Decision SC62-21: The Standing Committee agreed to the three-step process outlined in paragraph 23 of document SC62 Doc.15 for maintaining the list of current Decisions of the Standing Committee, with the proviso that older Decisions which are excluded from the list do not become defunct, but remain accessible on the Convention website and can be included in the list if they are identified as still current.

Agenda item 25: Report of the Secretariat on the Ramsar Regional Initiatives (continued)

Decision SC62-22: The Standing Committee endorsed the International Mangrove Centre as a new Ramsar Regional Initiative within the framework of the Convention, with the terms of reference in Attachment 1 to Annex 2 of document SC62 Doc.25 Rev.2.

Decision SC62-23: The Standing Committee took note that a call for proposals for new Ramsar Regional Initiatives had been made in accordance with Resolution XIV.7, with a deadline for responses of 30 September 2023; and that the Secretariat will report the result of the call to the Standing committee at its 63rd meeting.

Agenda item 15: Review and consolidation of current Resolutions (continued)

Decision SC62-24: The Standing Committee agreed to the allocation of CHF 33,000 of surplus funds for consultancies to support the process of consolidation and revision of Resolutions.

Decision SC62-25: The Standing Committee selected "Inventories", "CEPA", "Water, water-related, and water-management-related" and "Assessment of wetland values and services" as categories for which draft consolidations will be prepared for consideration at SC63.

Agenda item 16.1: Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA): Report of the Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel

Decision SC62-26: The Standing Committee took note of the report of the CEPA Oversight Panel presented in document SC62 Doc.16.1.

Agenda item 16.2: Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA): CEPA Oversight Panel work plan, 2023-2025

Decision SC62-27: The Standing Committee took note of the work plan for 2023-2025 of the CEPA Oversight Panel presented in document SC62 Doc.16.2.

Agenda item 16.3: Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA): Report of the Secretariat on World Wetlands Day

Decision SC62-28: The Standing Committee took note of the report of the Secretariat on World Wetlands Day 2023.

Agenda item 17: Report of the Youth Working Group

Decision SC62-29: The Standing Committee took note of the report of the Youth Working Group as presented in document SC62 Doc.17.

Agenda item 18: Resource Mobilization Work Plan 2023-2025

Decision SC62-30: The Standing Committee approved the Resource Mobilization Work Plan for 2023-2025 as presented in document SC62 Doc.18.

Agenda item 19: Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, including work plan for 2023-2025

Decision SC62-31: The Standing Committee noted the report of the STRP Chair.

Decision SC62-32: The Standing Committee noted the intersessionally approved STRP 2023-2025 workplan contained in Annex 1 of document SC62 Doc.19 Rev.1.

Agenda item 9: Urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands to receive enhanced attention: Update on wetlands inventories

Decision SC62-33: The Standing Committee noted the progress of Contracting Parties in completing national wetland inventories and the lessons learned.

Decision SC62-34: The Standing Committee noted the next steps in the support provided by the Secretariat to Contracting Parties on the completion of national wetland inventories, taking into account the amendments proposed.

Agenda item 8.2: Financial and budgetary matters – Report of the Subgroup on Finance: Status of annual contributions

Decision SC62-35: The Standing Committee took note of the status of annual contributions.

Decision SC62-36: The Standing Committee noted the actions listed in paragraphs 12 and 13 of document SC62 Doc 8.2 on group confirmation of outstanding contributions as part of the audit process.

Decision SC62-37: The Standing Committee noted the actions listed in paragraphs 15, 17, 18 and 19 of document SC62 Doc 8.2 to continue encouraging the payment of annual contributions by the Contracting Parties.

Decision SC62-38: The Standing Committee noted the changes in annual contributions receivable and in the annual provision against contributions receivable.

Decision SC62-39: The Standing Committee noted the status of the voluntary contributions received from the Contracting Parties in the Africa region outlined in paragraph 22 of document SC62 Doc.8.2.

Agenda item 8.1: Financial and budgetary matters – report of the Subgroup on Finance:
Report on financial matters for 2022 and 2023

Decision SC62-40: The Standing Committee accepted the 2022 audited financial statements as of 31 December 2022.

Decision SC62-41: The Standing Committee noted the core budget results for 2022.

Decision SC62-42: The Standing Committee noted the status of the non-core balances and voluntary contributions for 2022.

Decision SC62-43: The Standing Committee approved the carry forward of the pre-committed funds totalling CHF 701,000 from 2022 to 2023, as included in column D of the table in Annex 1 Core budget 2023 of document SC62 Doc 8.1.

Decision SC62-44: The Standing Committee approved the repurposing of unspent balance for Ramsar Advisory Missions, as described in paragraph 11 of document SC62 Doc.8.1.

Decision SC62-45: The Standing Committee approved the allocation of 2022 surplus of CHF 140,000 to complement voluntary funding for COP14 delegate travel, as described in paragraph 18 of document SC62 Doc.8.1.

Decision SC62-46: The Standing Committee approved the allocation of CHF 30,000 from the core budget to the Southern Africa Ramsar Regional Initiative (SARRI) for activities in 2023, as described in paragraph 32 of document SC62 Doc.8.1.

Decision SC62-47: The Standing Committee approved allocation of 2022 surplus amounting to:

- CHF 33,000 for review of previous Resolutions and decisions;
- CHF 7,000 for approaches and online systems to enhance collaboration between Contracting Parties intersessionally; and
- CHF 90,000 for technical support during the 2023-2025 triennium to ensure that key data is available in the Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) for Wetlands of International Importance in all regions, with a focus on Site boundaries, noting that updating Site data is primarily the responsibility of Contracting Parties, and should be encouraged before utilizing the service.¹

Agenda item 26: Wetland City Accreditation: Establishment of the Independent Advisory Committee

Decision SC62-48: The Standing Committee confirmed the membership of the Independent Advisory Committee, as described in Table 1 of document SC62 Doc.26 Rev.1, for the 2023-2025 triennium.

¹ For the resulting core budget for 2023, see Annex 1 of [document SC62 Com.1 Rev.2 Report of the Subgroup on Finance, 4 September 2023](#).

Agenda item 11: Secretariat report on institutional strengthening to support the implementation of the Convention (continued)

Decision SC62-49: The Standing Committee requested the Management Working Group to prepare a document that identifies the process for recruiting a new Secretary General, for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 63rd meeting, noting that this Decision supersedes Decision SC59-40.

Agenda item 19: Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, including work plan for 2023-2025 (continued)

Decision SC62-50: The Standing Committee requested the Scientific and Technical Review Panel to discuss the application of the current Ramsar wetland classification system at its 26th meeting and to report back to the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee, including if required the outline of a proposed approach for a technical review in consultation with Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners and other multilateral environmental agreements, and requested the STRP to consider the use of a survey of STRP National Focal Points to collate technical feedback on the classification system from different regions.

Agenda item 11: Secretariat report on institutional strengthening to support the implementation of the Convention (continued)

Decision SC62-51: The Standing Committee took note of the terms of reference agreed by the Working Group presented to SC62 in document SC62 Com.2.

Agenda item 22: Update on the status of Sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC62-52: The Standing Committee took note of the updated report on the status of Sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Decision SC62-53: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit a report to SC63 on the challenges and opportunities related to the submission and updating of Ramsar Information Sheets, including:

- systemic, procedural and other technical challenges and options; and
- financial challenges, needs and opportunities.

In doing so the Secretariat will obtain and collate inputs in consultation with Contracting Parties, the STRP and other stakeholders. The Secretariat will develop the approach to undertake the task in consultation with Contracting Parties through written procedures and online session(s).

Decision SC62-54: The Standing Committee decided that the global report on the status of the List of Wetlands of International Importance is to be prepared by the Secretariat only once per triennium, for presentation to the COP, and repealed Decision SC35-28 on the same matter.

Agenda item 23: Report on the process undertaken by the Secretariat to include a site on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC62-55: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to send a notification to National Focal Points inviting the submission of proposals on strengthening the process to include

a Site on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, and prepare a report compiling these inputs, accompanied by the opinion of the Legal Advisor, for consideration at SC63.

Agenda item 21: National Report for COP15 (continued)

Decision SC62-56: The Standing Committee approved the COP15 National Report form as presented in document SC62 Com.3.

Agenda item 24: Update of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution XIV.20

Decision SC62-57: The Standing Committee took note of the update of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution XIV.20 on *The Ramsar Convention's response to environmental emergency in Ukraine relating to the damage of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression.*

Agenda item 27: Dates of the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee

Decision SC62-58: The Standing Committee decided that the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee will take place from 3 to 7 June 2024, noting that dates for the 64th meeting will be decided at SC63.