

Arrangements for COP15: Running order and process for reviewing draft resolutions

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- i. consider the draft running order of draft resolutions presented in Annex 1 and amend it as necessary, for submission as a recommendation to COP15; and
- ii. endorse the proposed process for managing the revisions of draft resolutions at COP15, as presented in Annex 2, for the information of the Parties at COP15.

Introduction

1. The provisional agenda for the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) includes 28 agenda items, one of which encompasses the consideration of 25 draft resolutions. As the draft resolutions should all be adopted before the close of plenary on 31 July at 17:00 there is a need for the process of consideration of draft resolutions to be efficient throughout the duration of the COP and in particular during the first four to five days when draft resolutions are first considered.
2. The present document addresses two issues to help ensure that the work can be accomplished within the time available and that Parties can access the documentation they require in good time and in the three working languages of the Convention:
 - the running order for consideration of draft resolutions; and
 - the process for managing draft resolutions (and other documents).

Running order for consideration of draft resolutions

3. From the discussion of draft resolutions at the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC64, January 2025), it is possible to identify the draft resolutions that are likely to require more time for Parties to reach agreement on the outcome. These items can be taken up early in the agenda of COP15 to allow the maximum amount of time for discussions.
4. On this basis, the Secretariat has prepared a suggested running order of draft resolutions, for consideration by the Standing Committee. The Committee is invited to consider the draft running order in Annex 1 and to amend it as necessary, for submission as a recommendation to COP15.

Process for reviewing draft resolutions and other documents

5. The Secretariat presents, in Annex 2, the proposed process for managing the revisions of draft resolutions at COP15. This is based on the process successfully followed at COP13 and COP14.

Annex 1

Draft running order for consideration of draft resolutions at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

Agenda item	Agenda title	Document number
23.1	Draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters	COP15 Doc.23.1
23.2	Draft resolution on the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention on Wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.2
23.3	Draft resolution on the Strategic Plan of the Convention 2025-2034	COP15 Doc.23.3
23.8	Draft resolution on the process for recruiting a new Secretary General	COP15 Doc.23.8
23.4	Draft resolution on enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions	COP15 Doc.23.4
23.13	Draft resolution on [updates to] Ramsar Information Sheets	COP15 Doc.23.13
23.24	Amended draft resolution on the Ramsar List	COP15 Doc.23.24
23.10	Draft resolution on future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention 2025-2028	COP15 Doc.23.10
23.11	Draft resolution on establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership and delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates	COP15 Doc.23.11
23.12	Draft resolution on application of Criteria 6 and 9 to new and existing Wetlands of International Importance	COP15 Doc.23.12
23.15	Draft resolution on restoration of degraded freshwater ecosystems to support ecological character biodiversity and ecosystem services	COP15 Doc.23.15
23.18	Draft resolution on achieving the equitable governance and effective conservation of wetlands as protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)	COP15 Doc.23.18
23.16	Draft resolution on strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of [waterbird flyways] [critical waterbird flyway sites]	COP15 Doc.23.16
23.9	Draft resolution on implementing the institutional strengthening of the Convention on Wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.9
23.21	Draft resolution on recognition of river dolphins as key species for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in South America and Asia	COP15 Doc.23.21
23.20	Draft resolution on promoting sustainable lifestyles for the wise use of wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.20

Agenda item	Agenda title	Document number
23.19	Draft resolution on youth empowerment and integration: driving engagement in and the longevity of the Convention on Wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.19
23.17	Draft resolution on promoting incorporation of new technology and traditional knowledge in wetland conservation, restoration, management, and wise use	COP15 Doc.23.17
23.22	Draft resolution on education and participation as a basis for the management of urban and peri-urban wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.22
23.14	Draft resolution on strengthening action on culture and wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.14
23.23	Draft resolution on assessing pressures on and risks to wetlands	COP15 Doc.23.23
23.7	Draft resolution on the status of Sites in the List of Wetlands of International Importance	COP15 Doc.23.7
23.6	Draft resolution on CEPA	COP15 Doc.23.6
23.5	Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2025-2028	COP15 Doc.23.5
23.25	Draft resolution on thanks to the host country, the Republic of Zimbabwe	COP15 Doc.23.25

Annex 2

Proposed process for managing the revision of draft resolutions

1. When a draft resolution is introduced in a plenary session of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, it may be:
 - adopted without amendment;
 - rejected; or
 - amended.

Draft resolutions adopted without amendment or rejected

2. If a draft resolution is adopted without amendment, or if it is rejected, no further action is required of the Secretariat.

Draft resolutions to be amended

3. When a draft resolution is introduced and discussed, Parties may propose amendments.
4. Rule 34.4 provides that “... amendments to proposals, shall be introduced in writing by the Contracting Parties and handed to the Secretariat in at least one of the official languages, for submission to the Conference Bureau.” The rules are silent regarding the role of the Conference Bureau.
5. Under the current Rules and practice, if amendments are proposed to a draft resolution introduced in a plenary session, the document may be, either:
 - a. referred to the Secretariat for the production of a revised document; or
 - b. referred to a “friends of the Chair” group or a contact group.
6. Accordingly, in order to ensure that documentation can be provided in time for consideration in the three working languages, the Secretariat suggests that, if the COP agrees:
 - a. if a document is referred to the Secretariat for revision:
 - i. Parties that have proposed an amendment should, within two hours of the end of the session at which the amendment was introduced, send to the Secretariat, by email, an electronic copy of the document concerned, with the proposed amendment shown using “tracked changes”; (to avoid confusion, please provide a separate email for each draft resolution);

the Secretariat will then:

 - ii. prepare a revision of the draft resolution in the official languages, on the basis of the proposed amendments received, using square brackets where necessary to highlight alternative texts;
 - iii. present the revised draft to the Conference Bureau for approval to forward to the plenary session; and
 - iv. translate and publish the revised draft on the Convention website for all participants to view, for final discussion and adoption in a plenary session;

- b. if a document is referred to a contact group:
- i. one person from the group should be nominated as responsible for communicating the final recommendations of the group to the Secretariat;
 - ii. the contact group will discuss the document and prepare a revision in Microsoft Word format showing, in tracked changes, the proposed deletions and additions that the group recommends for adoption, using square brackets to highlight alternative texts where the contact group does not achieve consensus;
 - iii. only when the contact group has completed its considerations, the designated rapporteur or chair of the contact group will transmit to the Secretariat, by email, the revised version of the document;
 - iv. the Secretariat will convert the tracked changes to markup and present the revised draft to the Conference Bureau for approval to forward to the plenary session; and
 - v. the Secretariat will translate and publish the revised draft on the Convention website for all participants to view, for discussion and adoption in a plenary session during the final days of the meeting.

Note: Contact groups operate in English, with no translation or interpretation provided. As documents submitted to a contact group may be in any of the three working languages of the Convention, groups are responsible for ensuring that they have members who can translate them as needed.

- 7. To ensure that all documentation can be processed and translated in time for discussion in the final days of COP15, the outputs of each contact group should be submitted to the Secretariat before 18:00 on 28 July . This will enable revision, translation and publishing to be completed in accordance with Rule 34.5, that is by the end of 29 July , which is set aside for free time and excursions.
- 8. The Secretariat will publish revisions of draft resolutions, drafts of daily summary reports and other information for meeting participants on the COP15 event page on the Convention's website.

PROCESS FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS AT COP15

