

Annex 3

Staffing Working Group to Standing Committee

SC54, April, 2018

The Staffing Working Group (SWG) met April 24, 2018.

Members present were: Austria, Canada (chair), Finland, France, Japan, Romania, Senegal, Slovenia, Switzerland, and United States of America.

The working group discussed 3 topics. They are as follows:

1. Regional Officer for Africa
2. Vacancies at the Ramsar Secretariat
3. The Ramsar Secretariat's organizational chart

Regional Officer for Africa

1. The SWG reminds the Standing Committee of Annex 4 of Resolution XII.1 and the amendment to this Annex that was approved by Standing Committee at SC52 in June, 2016 noting that this amended Annex identifies the number of staff and their position (according to the IUCN Human Resources Function Group) for the Secretariat during the current triennium. The SWG would like it noted that the previous COP decision was respected despite a change in the Terms of Reference for the Regional Officer for Africa. Similarly, other staffing actions that have occurred since COP12 have respected the COP12 decision.
2. The SWG recognizes that the Secretariat often has challenges in meeting the needs and demands of Contracting Parties due to its limited size and resources. The SWG further recognizes that to facilitate efficiency gains, tap into expertise, offer opportunities to learn new skills, breakdown silos, promote teamwork, assist colleagues in times of increased workload, and enable better implementation of the convention, all staff, not just Regional Officer for Africa, may be called upon to assist with other tasks outside the scope of their normal day to day activities. The SWG recommends that the Standing Committee ask the Secretariat to ensure that all Terms of Reference to reflect this need to be flexible in their activities.
3. Specific to the Regional Officer for Africa, the SWG reminds the Standing Committee of the Staffing Working Group report (Annex 3 of the Report and Decisions of the 52nd Meeting of the Standing Committee) accepted by the Management Working Group (MWG) presented and noted by the Standing Committee in June 2016, namely:
 - The SWG recommends to the MWG in terms of where a regional officer is located, that for all core-funded regional officers the region, in discussion with the Secretariat, determines the best location for their respective regional officer. This will be in line with IUCN employment processes and rules and considers Ramsar's financial constraints; and
 - The SWG requests that the MWG ask the Secretariat to review the job description of the Regional Officer for Africa to ensure it reflects their primary focus on the geographic region of Africa.

4. In terms of next steps for the Regional Officer for Africa, the SWG recommends to the Standing Committee that it requests the Secretary General to revert the title of the position back to Regional Officer for Africa from the Regional Capacity Building Officer. At the same time, the Terms of Reference for the position should be amended, taking into account the previous discussions on this position from SC52, noted above, and also reflecting that the majority of the time of the Officer will be dedicated to the Region; however, to varying degrees the position will support the Secretariat as a whole, across all regions. This support will include, but is not limited to providing coordination within the Secretariat for capacity building to support Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024.
5. The SWG recommends to the Standing Committee that the revised Terms of Reference for the Regional Officer for Africa serve as a model for the Terms of Reference of other Regional Officers to avoid similar concerns raised in the future by other regions.

Vacancies within the Ramsar Secretariat

1. The SWG recommends to the Standing Committee to ask the Secretariat to post all vacancies, in a timely manner, on the Ramsar website in addition to the IUCN website. This will facilitate attracting high quality candidates with an interest in wetland conservation.
2. The SWG further recommends to the Standing Committee to ask the Secretariat to post its HR staffing/ recruiting rules and regulations on the Ramsar website to ensure clarity about all staffing-related rules and procedures.

Secretariat Organizational Charts

1. Recognizing the need to keep all Contracting Parties and external partners up to date on who's who in the Secretariat, the SWG requests that the Standing Committee ask the Secretariat to post its organogram on the website along with who is in each position. The SWG suggests that a modification to the current section on the Ramsar website dedicated to staff could be modelled after the IUCN organogram and would meet this request.