



11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands: home and destination”

Bucharest, Romania, 6-13 July 2012

Resolution XI.1

Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat

1. CONFIRMING that the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty deposited with the United Nations and that activities mandated by its Conference of the Parties for the implementation of the Convention are activities carried out under the legal authority of an international treaty and its Contracting Parties;
2. RECALLING the adoption of the Strategic Plan 2009-2015 by Resolution X.1 as the basis for the future implementation of the Convention;
3. RECALLING that Resolution X.5 (2008) of the Conference of the Contracting Parties established an Ad Hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform with the objective of recommending efficient and effective measures to improve the capacity and operation of the Ramsar Secretariat to support and facilitate the implementation of the Convention and serve the interests of the Contracting Parties, and of determining whether the Secretariat should continue to be hosted by IUCN or should be institutionally hosted by UNEP;
4. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform and the Standing Committee, as well as to the Ramsar Secretariat, IUCN, and UNEP, for the significant work that has been carried out on this matter;
5. RECOGNIZING the need to successfully conclude the consultative process on this matter and to take a decision at the latest by the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
6. NOTING the interest of all Parties in enhancing the visibility and stature of the Ramsar Convention and increasing synergies with other MEAs and with UNEP, and seeking to improve the development of the Convention by introducing other UN official languages in the operation of the Convention;
7. ACKNOWLEDGING the strong desire of Arab States to inscribe the Arab language as an official language of the Ramsar Convention and WELCOMING the expression of openness of this Conference of the Contracting Parties with regard to this topic;

8. RESOLVING to facilitate the current and future work of the Ramsar Secretariat without further delay;
9. EXPRESSING appreciation for the quality of the cooperation between the IUCN and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention;
10. NOTING the desire of some Parties to incorporate a high-level political segment in meetings of the Conference of the Parties to improve the visibility of the Convention; and
11. WELCOMING the wish of the Parties to reach a consensus on a dynamic and sustainable solution;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

12. DECIDES to renew its confidence in IUCN and to continue its hosting arrangement for the Ramsar Secretariat;
13. REQUESTS the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention to inform the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of IUCN of the deliberations and INVITES the Secretariat to inform the Parties through diplomatic channels about this Resolution;
14. INVITES IUCN to work towards continued improvement of this cooperation in order, amongst other things, to reinforce the efficiency of the Secretariat's functioning and the status of its staff, as well as the issues of common interest related to the host country;
15. REQUESTS the Standing Committee to establish at its 46th meeting a mechanism of the Contracting Parties that will, taking into account the needs of the Contracting Parties and the Ramsar Secretariat, facilitate negotiations between the Ramsar Secretariat and the Director-General of IUCN, evaluate the work already achieved and seek ways of improving the current operations of the Secretariat and enhancing the implementation of the Ramsar Convention, and to provide the Standing Committee with a report on these negotiations at its 47th meeting;
16. CALLS UPON the Contracting Parties to cooperate with the Ramsar Secretariat, as appropriate, to enhance collaboration and coordination between IUCN and the Convention;
17. INSTRUCES the Standing Committee through an appropriate Working Group representative of Parties to develop strategies that explore:
 - a) accommodation of UN languages into the Convention;
 - b) elevation of Ramsar visibility and stature, including *inter alia* enhancing high-level political engagement in the work of the Convention at national, regional and global level; the working group will among other possibilities look into establishing a ministerial segment at the COP including the topics to be addressed at this level;
 - c) enhancement of synergies with MEAs and other international entities including through Regional Initiatives;
 - d) increased involvement in UNEP's initiatives and programs regarding biodiversity-related MEAs to enhance cooperation and synergies between Ramsar and UNEP;

and INVITES all Parties to participate in this group and its discussions including through electronic means where feasible; and

18. REQUESTS the Working Group to provide each Standing Committee meeting with a progress report including any implications such as financial ones and recommendations, and ALSO REQUESTS the Standing Committee to submit a report, including its recommendations, to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.