

Governance Contact Group – Compromise Draft Decision – 26th October 2018

1. ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of providing an adequate institutional set-up for Ramsar, a global convention with 170 Parties;
2. RECALLING the Convention’s mission of conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world;
3. FURTHER RECALLING Contracting Parties’ commitment to work towards achievement of the Convention’s mission, both within their own territories and through cooperation globally and with other Contracting Parties;
4. ALSO RECALLING the vision of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024 that wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognized and valued by all, and the Plan’s goals of addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation, effectively conserving and managing the network of Ramsar sites, wisely using all wetlands, and enhancing implementation of the Convention;
5. NOTING WITH APPRECIATION the extensive and continuing work by Contracting Parties and the Secretariat to support the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan through efforts undertaken by the bodies of the Convention;
6. RECOGNIZING that the Convention has a crucial role to play and contribution to make to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and relevant conventions;
7. REITERATING the obligation on all Contracting Parties to contribute to Convention deliberations and processes in a manner that ensures the effective and efficient use of Ramsar Convention and Contracting Party resources in order to support the best outcomes for wetlands and the Convention;
8. RECOGNIZING that 2021 will be the 50th Anniversary of the Convention, the intended mandates, reporting arrangements, and bodies of the Convention should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention, increase its visibility and foster synergies;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

9. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to all bodies of the Convention for the accomplishments and benefits to the Convention realized as a result of their work;

10. DECIDES to retire the subsidiary bodies listed in Annex 1 and invites the Chairs of these subsidiary bodies to, as appropriate, provide the final report on the outcome of their body's work to the Standing Committee to be posted by its 57th session;
11. ESTABLISHES the Effectiveness Working Group under Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure;
12. DIRECTS that the Effectiveness Working Group be composed of one Standing Committee representative from each Ramsar region as well as any other interested Contracting Parties, keeping in mind the desirability of equitable participation and keeping the group to a manageable size;
13. DIRECTS that the members of the Effectiveness Working Group designate two of its members as Chair and Co-Chair/vice-Chair, acting as a Rapporteur;
14. REQUESTS the Effectiveness Working Group to review the governance structure of the Convention with the assistance of an independent consultant, as that structure exists at the close of the 13th Conference of the Parties, for the purpose of:
 - a. Recommending revision(as necessary) that further enhance the effectiveness, including cost effectiveness, and efficiency of the Convention in order to reduce administrative burden and speed up the process to achieve the mission of the Ramsar Convention, and
 - b. proposing a process to implement its recommendations;
15. REQUESTS the Effectiveness Working Group to define its terms of reference for presentation to the Standing Committee at its 57th meeting and to report at that meeting and each Standing Committee thereafter, with final recommendations at its 59th meeting which should include a draft resolution for consideration by the Standing Committee;
16. DECIDES to allocate funding from the current identified core budget surplus to support the work of the Working Group including, but not limited to, meetings or other support required to accomplish its tasks;
17. FURTHER DECIDES the Effectiveness Working Group is to complete the above outlined work by Standing Committee 59, at which time the group will be retired unless otherwise decided at COP14.
18. CONFIRMS that the present Resolution supersedes the decisions relating to each body in the Resolutions listed in Annex 1, and that any ongoing responsibilities of these subsidiary bodies now reverts to the Standing Committee to address or delegate further.

ANNEX 1

Ramsar Convention subsidiary body	Resolutions/decisions relating to the body
CEPA Working Group	Resolution XII.9 The Ramsar Convention's Programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016-2024
Facilitation Working Group	Resolution X.5 Facilitating the work of the Ramsar Convention and its Secretariat
Language Strategy Working Group	Resolution XII.3 Enhancing the languages of the Convention and its visibility and stature, and increasing synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions SC52 (2016) agreed to establish an open-ended informal working group.
Resource Mobilization Working Group	Resolution XII.7 Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention
Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group	Decision SC51-11: "The Standing Committee agreed to establish a new Working Group to examine the implications of the proposed new Operational Guidelines for Regional Initiatives and asked the Secretariat to support the setting up of this group."
Staffing Working Group	Mandate completed at SC52 ¹
Transition Committee	Resolution X.4 Establishing a Transition Committee of the Management Working Group

¹ http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sc53-05_review_wgs_e.pdf