



## 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

“Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future”  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 21-29 October 2018

### Conference Report \*

**Monday 22 October 2018**

**17.30 – 21.00 Welcome and opening ceremony**

#### Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

1. A welcome reception hosted by the **United Arab Emirates** was followed by the opening ceremony.
2. The Ramsar flag was symbolically handed over from **Uruguay**, host of COP12, to the **United Arab Emirates**, host of COP13.

#### Agenda item 2: General statements and keynote addresses

3. Opening addresses were made by:
  - H.E. Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates
  - Mr Jorge Rucks, Vice-Minister of Housing, Territorial Planning and Environment of Uruguay, Chair of the Ramsar Standing Committee
4. Opening statements were delivered by:
  - H.E. Eng. Dawoud Al Hajiri, Director General, Dubai Municipality
  - H.E. Razan Al Mubarak, Secretary General, Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi
  - Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean
  - Mr Stewart Maginnis, Global Director of Nature Based Solutions, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
  - Ms Elizabeth Mrema, Director of Law Division, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
  - Ms Jane Madgwick, Chief Executive Officer of Wetlands International
  - Ms Martha Rojas Urrego, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention
5. A video showcasing wetland protected areas in the United Arab Emirates was screened to music played by the Emirates Youth Orchestra.

\* Paragraph 22 was corrected on 15 February 2019, as agreed at COP13.

6. Additional remarks were made by:
  - Ms Florence Fontani, Vice President of Strategy, Communications and Environmental Social Responsibility, Middle East, Central & South Asia and Turkey, ENGIE
  - Ms Assma Gosaibat, Corporate Affairs Director, Total E&P UAE
7. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards 2018.
8. The Ramsar Convention Award for Wetland Wise Use was presented to Fundación Global Nature of Spain, represented by Mr Cosme Morillo Fernández, President of the Board.
9. The Ramsar Convention Award for Young Wetland Champions was presented to Youth Climate Action Network of Samoa (YCAN), represented by Ms Samantha Kwan, President of YCAN.
10. The Ramsar Convention Merit Award was presented to Mr Ma Guangren, Vice Chairman and Secretary General, China Wetland Conservation Association, in recognition of his lifetime achievement.
11. In addition, a special award in recognition of the Danone Group's partnership with the Convention over a period of 20 years was received by Mr Facundo Etchebehere, Global Public Affairs Director, Danone Group.
12. Drawing the event to a close, the **Secretary General** observed that the presentation of the Awards had been a fitting and inspiring curtain-raiser to COP13.

## Tuesday 23 October 2018

### 10.20 – 13.00 Plenary session

#### Agenda item 5: Election of the President and Vice-Presidents and remarks of the President

13. Based on proposals made by the Standing Committee, in conformity with Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure, **H.E. Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates** was elected President of COP13 and **H.E. Eng. Mohamed Al Afkham, Director General, Fujairah Municipality** was elected Alternate President, both by acclamation.
14. For Vice-Presidents of the meeting, Ms **Kristiina Niikonen (Finland)** had been nominated by the European region and Mr **Paul Mafabi (Uganda)** by the African region. These were elected by acclamation. Ms Kristiina Niikonen of Finland was appointed rapporteur.
15. The **President** welcomed delegates and wished them a successful meeting, thanking the outgoing President, Mr Jorge Rucks (Uruguay) for all his hard work.

#### Agenda item 3.1: Adoption of the provisional agenda and working programme: Provisional agenda

16. The provisional agenda in document COP13 Doc.3.1. Rev.1 was adopted without amendment.

**Agenda item 3.2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and working programme: Provisional working programme**

17. The **Secretariat** introduced the provisional working programme in document COP13 Doc.3.2, noting that the Conference Bureau had recommended a small number of amendments:
- that the Bureau meet daily from 08:00 to 09:00, followed by regional meetings from 09:00 to 10:00;
  - that item 15.1 (Wetland City Accreditation: Report of the Standing Committee) be discussed immediately before the lunch break on 25 October; and
  - that under item 18 (Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee), the draft resolution on World Wetlands Day (document COP13 Doc.18.9) be the first to be opened for discussion, and that draft resolutions on wetlands in polar and subpolar regions (document COP13 Doc.18.25), on sea turtle breeding, feeding and nursery areas (document COP13.18.26) and on wetlands and peace (document COP13.18.19) also be opened for discussion early in the meeting.
18. With these amendments, the provisional working programme in document COP13 Doc.3.2 was adopted.

**Agenda item 4.1: Adoption of the Rules of Procedure - Provisional Rules of Procedure**  
and  
**Agenda item 4.2: Adoption of the Rules of Procedure - Proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure**

19. The **Secretariat** introduced the existing Rules of Procedure in document COP13 Doc.4.1, noting that these had been adopted at COP12 and remained in effect, and drawing attention to proposed amendments to these rules submitted by **Japan, Sweden** and the **United States of America**, contained in the Annexes to document COP13 Doc.4.2.
20. **Austria, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU)** and supported by **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Chile** and **Jordan**, expressed its support for adoption of the existing Rules of Procedure, recommending that any discussion of substantive changes to them be deferred until after agreement had been reached on the various draft resolutions that addressed the operations of the Convention and an assessment had been made of the legal implications of any changes resulting from these.
21. The **United States of America** also supported adoption of the existing Rules of Procedure at this stage of the meeting, noting that only one of its proposed amendments dealt with the conduct of plenary meetings of the COP, and that the problem it sought to address had been resolved by the Bureau earlier in the day.
22. **Japan** drew particular attention to its proposed amendment to Rule 51, and explained that its proposal was intended to deal with the records of the Standing Committee meetings, and specifically to allow observer Parties at such meetings to make corrections to these records.
23. The existing Rules of Procedure in document COP13 Doc.4.2 were adopted, noting the amendment to Rule 51 proposed by Japan.

## Agenda item 6.2: Establishment of COP13 committees - Credentials Committee

24. The **Secretariat** reported that the Bureau had received the following regional nominations for membership of the Credentials Committee, in conformity with Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure:
- Africa: Benin
  - Asia: Philippines
  - Europe: Armenia
  - Latin America and the Caribbean: Ecuador
  - North America: Mexico
  - Oceania: Samoa
25. **Mauritania** stressed the importance of transparency in decision-making during the meeting.
26. The Credentials Committee was established by acclamation with membership as listed above.

## Agenda item 7: Admission of observers

27. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP13 Doc.7, drawing attention to paragraph 7, which listed bodies or agencies seeking approval to attend COP13 as observers. Following consultation with the Bureau regarding the strict application of the criteria, in Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure, the following had not met the required criteria and were to be deleted from the list:
- Al Mergeb University, Faculty of Sciences
  - Association de l'Education Environnementale pour les Future Générations
  - Bwindi Forest Community Development Organisation
  - Commissariat Nationale de Littoral
  - International Centre for Environmental Education and Community Development
  - ONG Volontariat Pour L'Environnement
  - Reseau Association Khnifiss
  - Tetra Tech/WA BICC-USAID-funded Programme
28. The Secretariat noted that representatives of these bodies could still attend the meeting as visitors, but would not be able to participate in discussions.
29. In addition, the Secretariat reported that the following organizations listed in paragraph 7 would not be attending the meeting, and would also be deleted from the list:
- Compassion in World Farming
  - Massellaz SA
  - Stockholm Environment Institute
30. The other observers listed in paragraphs 6 and 7 of document COP13 Doc.7 were admitted, subject to the clarifications presented by the Secretariat.

### Agenda item 8: Report of the Chair of the Standing Committee

31. The **Chair of the Standing Committee**, Mr Jorge Rucks (Uruguay), summarized his report as contained in document COP13 Doc.8.
32. The meeting took note of the report.

### Agenda item 2: General statements and keynote addresses

33. The World Wetland Network presented a statement on behalf of the 145 civil society and non-governmental organizations that formed the network, the text of which is included as Annex 1.

### Agenda item 11.1: Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention - Global implementation

34. The **Secretary General** summarized document COP13 Doc.11.1.
35. **Jordan**, supported by **Armenia** and **Sudan**, commended the report but commented on the findings of the analysis, noting that there was still a lack of financial support for implementation of the Convention in developing countries, **Armenia** highlighting in particular the important role formerly played by the Ramsar Small Grants Fund.
36. **Argentina** made a statement for the record of the meeting, which is appended as Annex 2.
37. The statement of Argentina was supported by **Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Peru** and **Uruguay**.
38. Referring to the statement of Argentina, the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** provided a statement for the record of the meeting, which is included as Annex 3.
39. **Uganda** pointed out the importance of ensuring coexistence with communities through sustainable use and provision of livelihoods for people who are the custodians and managers of wetlands.
40. **Ukraine** made a statement for the record of the meeting, which is appended as Annex 4.
41. Referring to the statement of Ukraine, the **Russian Federation** made a statement for the record of the meeting, which is appended as Annex 5.
42. **Uruguay** raised concerns about the weaknesses in implementation identified in the report, and highlighted the importance of political support at governmental level, referring to its own national law on wetlands that had recently been approved by parliament.
43. **Burkina Faso** noted that 48 out of 50 National Reports from the African region had been submitted on time, and enquired about the overall rate of response globally.
44. **Senegal** observed that progress with implementation of the Convention in Africa was not fully reflected in the report.

45. **Cameroon** suggested that it would not be possible to highlight the progress of every Contracting Party in the report, but drew attention to the attendance of the Secretary General at the African regional preparatory meeting for COP13, which had been held in Senegal. This showed the importance attached to Africa by the Secretariat.
46. The **Secretary General** responded that some of the points raised by Parties would be addressed under agenda items 11.2 and 14. She agreed with Cameroon that it was not possible to reflect the progress of every Party in the report, noting that it contained the general overview required under Rules of Procedure 9 a) and 26.3. She added that she had attached great importance to attending the regional preparatory meetings. In response to the statement made by Argentina, she suggested applying the standard nomenclature agreed by the United Nations.

<p><b>Agenda item 11.2: Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention - Work of the Secretariat</b></p>
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47. The **Secretary General** presented a summary of document COP13 Doc.11.2 and drew attention to document SC55 Doc.8.2 *IUCN review of non-core finances*.
48. **Jordan** commended the report but remarked that there was still a lack of focus on capacity building and application of technology for developing countries.
49. The **United States of America**, together with **Colombia**, the **Republic of Korea** and **Uruguay**, expressed their full confidence in the leadership of the Secretary General, noting that this had resulted in increased cohesion, a more advanced skill set among the Secretariat staff, and greater visibility for the Convention.
50. **China**, supported by **Australia**, **Austria** and **Bahrain**, commended the report and the work of the Secretariat, underlining the importance of improving synergy and collaboration with other biodiversity-related conventions and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and noting that the Convention was already supporting other agreements, for example in relation to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
51. **Senegal** observed that the Secretariat had been unable to participate in the High-Level Political Forum on the SDGs as it does not have observer status in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and stressed the importance of resolving this issue.
52. Responding to points raised, the **Secretary General** noted that there was a section in the report that related to the direct support provided to Parties through the Secretariat, including to developing countries. She also noted the increased focus on creating opportunities for Parties, especially developing countries, to access resources, but noted that this depended on the Convention working closely with other agreements and processes, for example the Convention on Biological Diversity in relation to the Global Environment Facility and the 2030 Agenda as the backbone for investments in sustainable development, including those by the private sector. The Standing Committee at its 55th meeting had discussed the participation of the Convention in UN processes and had decided to undertake further work in this area.
53. The meeting approved the reports contained in documents COP13 Doc.11.1 and COP13 Doc.11.2.

**Agenda item 10: Report on implementation of the CEPA Programme 2016-2018 and recommendations on future directions**

54. The **Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel**, Mark Taylor (Australia), presented document COP13 Doc.10, outlining progress on implementation of the communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) programme in the current triennium. He drew attention to Annex B of the document, which contained initial guidance and recommendations by the CEPA Oversight Panel on a new approach for advising on and supporting CEPA in the Convention, noting that aspects of this were included in the draft resolution on review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Convention (document COP13 Doc.18.6).
55. **Austria on behalf of the EU**, as well as **Benin, Jordan** and the **Republic of Korea**, commended progress made in the implementation of CEPA and the work of the CEPA Oversight Panel. The Republic of Korea stressed the importance of the Wetland City Accreditation scheme in raising public awareness and encouraged development of further tools to this end. Benin asked that tools for use in promoting World Wetlands Day be made available as early as possible.
56. The report on implementation of the CEPA Programme 2016-2018 and recommendations on future directions in document COP13 Doc.10 and its annexes were approved.

**Agenda item 9: Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)**

57. The **Chair of the STRP**, Prof. Royal Gardner (United States of America) introduced document COP13 Doc.9, which described the activities and progress of the STRP in the 2016-2018 triennium. He noted that printed copies of the *Global Wetland Outlook: State of the World's Wetlands and their Services to People*, referred to in paragraph 4 of the document, were now available.
58. **Austria, Jordan** and the **United States of America** all commended the work of the STRP and its Chair, the United States of America noting with pleasure that the STRP was thriving under its revised operating methods and with broadened representation.
59. **Jordan** proposed that a clearing house mechanism analogous to that operated under the Convention on Biological Diversity be established under the Ramsar Convention to help with dissemination of STRP outputs.
60. **Cuba** also stressed the need for access to STRP outputs at national level, noting that a Cuban national plan on climate change had been adopted which emphasized the importance of protecting and restoring coastal wetlands.
61. The Report of the Chair of the STRP in document COP13 Doc.9 was approved.

**Agenda item 12: Report of the Secretary General pursuant to Article 8.2 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance**

62. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP13 Doc.12 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, noting that the information was up to date as of 20 June 2018 and that it would be updated for the meeting of the Standing Committee in 2019.
63. The **Republic of Korea** drew attention to the large proportion of Ramsar Sites with outdated Ramsar Information Sheets, and urged Contracting Parties to provide updated information.
64. **Argentina, India and Senegal** stated that they had updates to the report, Argentina noting that it intended to supply the information it had referred to in its statement under agenda item 11, with regard to the use of revised nomenclature in COP documents.
65. The **United Kingdom** noted that the use of such revised nomenclature had not been approved by the Standing Committee and that further discussion would be required.
66. The **Secretariat** asked that all Contracting Parties that had updates send these to the Secretariat for inclusion in the next version of the report, to be prepared for SC57.
67. The report in document COP13 Doc.12 was approved.

**Agenda item 13: Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference of the Parties**

68. The **Secretariat** noted that any issues arising would be addressed under other agenda items.
69. There were no comments from Contracting Parties.

**Agenda item 17: Secretariat's report on administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions**

70. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP13 Doc.17 listing projected administrative and financial implications of substantive agenda items for COP13, compiled by the Secretariat in accordance with Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure. It noted that this document was for information only, as these implications would be expected to be discussed under the agenda items in question.
71. **Switzerland** stated that it had revised the draft resolution it had submitted on improving the efficiency of structures and processes of the Convention (document COP13 Doc.18.2) and that it believed that this revised version, if adopted, would have no financial implications.
72. Document COP13 Doc.17 was noted.

**Agenda item 14: Financial report for 2016-2018 by the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee, with proposed budgets for the 2019-2021 triennium**

73. The **Chair of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee**, Mr Abdou Salam Kane (Senegal), introduced document COP13 Doc.14, drawing attention to the two proposed core



budget scenarios (A and B) for the 2019-2021 triennium that SC54 had decided to forward to COP13. Details of these were provided in paragraphs 14.a. and 14.b. respectively of the document. He noted that decisions regarding the budget for the next triennium would be reflected in a Resolution of the Conference, the draft of which was contained in document COP13 Doc.18.5

74. **Switzerland** believed adequate resources for COPs should be included in the core budget.
75. **Dominican Republic** was concerned by the proposed reduction in the budget available for Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs), noting that they provided an effective mechanism through which to implement the Convention.
76. **Mongolia** expressed concerns that adoption of Scenario A would have a negative impact on the Ramsar Sites Information Service.
77. **South Africa** believed that major budget decisions relating to staffing should be made by the Conference of Contracting Parties, and not devolved to the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee or any other structure.
78. The **President** established a COP13 Committee on Finance and Budget, comprising the members of the Subgroup on Finance, and open to all other Parties, to address budget options for the 2019-2021 triennium, and asked it to report back at a later session.
79. Following the conclusion of the plenary session the **Secretary General**, the **Chair of the STRP** and STRP member Prof. Max Finlayson presented highlights and key messages from the Global Wetland Outlook.

### **Wednesday 24 October 2018**

#### **10.15 – 13.05 Plenary session**

<b>Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee</b>
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80. The Conference established a small group of Contracting Parties, to be nominated by the regional groups, and with participation of the Chair of the STRP, to examine requests to the STRP contained in the draft resolutions and to determine whether these accorded with the STRP's mandate.

<b>18.5 Draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters</b>
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81. The **President** recalled that the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.5 would be considered by the COP13 Committee on Finance and Budget established during the discussion of agenda item 14.

<b>18.9 Draft resolution on World Wetlands Day</b>
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82. The **United Arab Emirates** introduced the draft resolution on World Wetlands Day (document COP13 Doc.18.9).

83. **Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso** on behalf of the Africa region, **Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland** on behalf of the Europe region, **Gabon, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Panama, Peru, Rwanda, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, the United States of America, Uruguay** and **Zimbabwe** all expressed support for the draft resolution.
84. **Thailand** observed that it would be useful if the Secretariat could evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of initiatives undertaken for World Wetlands Day and publish the results of this analysis.
85. The Conference approved the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.9 on the understanding that the **Secretariat** would work with the **United Arab Emirates** and other Contracting Parties to bring the matter forward to the United Nations.

#### **18.1 Draft resolution on enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention**

#### **18.2 Draft resolution on improving the efficiency of structures and process of the Convention**

#### **18.3 Draft resolution on the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention**

86. The **United States of America**, as co-chair of the Facilitation Working Group, introduced document COP13 Doc.18.1, explaining that it was an outcome of the Working Group's deliberations.
87. **Switzerland** introduced document COP13 Doc.18.2, noting that it had informally circulated a revised version of the text to participants.
88. The **United Kingdom** proposed the establishment of a working group to look at documents COP13 Doc.18.1 and COP13 Doc.18.2 and to recommend ways forward to the Conference of the Parties. This was supported by **Australia, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France, Honduras, Jordan, New Zealand, Oman, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates** and **Uruguay**.
89. The Conference established a working group, to be chaired by the **United Kingdom**, to take forward discussion of documents COP13 Doc.18.1 and COP13 Doc.18.2 and to report back to plenary at a later session. Further discussion of document COP13 Doc.18.3 was deferred until this had occurred.

#### **18.4 Draft resolution on language strategy for the Convention**

90. The **Secretariat** introduced the draft resolution on language strategy for the Convention, document COP13 Doc.18.4, explaining the background to its development.
91. **Tunisia** on behalf of the African region, and supported by **Algeria, Djibouti, Libya, Sudan** and **Uganda**, welcomed the draft resolution as an important first step to making Arabic an official language of the Convention.

92. **Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman and Peru** supported the draft resolution, though **Jordan** noted that it would not yet reach the goal of Arabic becoming an official language.
93. **Dominican Republic, Ecuador** and the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** recognized the importance of incorporating Arabic into the work of the Convention, but stressed that this should not be at the expense of resolving gaps in provision for the existing official languages.
94. The **United Arab Emirates** underlined the importance of the draft resolution and advised that it would be forwarding proposed amendments to the Secretariat.
95. **Austria** of behalf of the Member States of the EU recognized the significance of the draft resolution but had concerns about potential financial implications; it would communicate proposed amendments to the Secretariat.
96. The Conference established a working group to finalize the text of document COP13 Doc.18.4, taking into consideration amendments proposed during the plenary discussion, and to report back to plenary at a later session.

#### 15.15 – 18.10 Plenary session

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee** (continued)

**18.19 Draft resolution on the importance of wetlands [for][in the context of] peace and [human security][security]**

97. **Senegal** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.19.
98. **France** and **Rwanda** supported the draft resolution in principle but believed that it would benefit from some amendments.
99. **France**, supported by **Ukraine**, proposed the establishment of a working group to produce a revised version.
100. **Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Thailand, Turkey** and the **United States of America** did not support the draft resolution in its current form, believing that significant parts of it lay outside the scope and competence of the Convention.
101. The **President** established a working group to take forward discussion of the draft resolution. He requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to communicate these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session. These would be made available to the chair of the working group, once appointed.

**18.6 Draft resolution on the review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention**

102. The **Secretariat** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.6.

103. **Australia, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Belgium, Burundi, Canada, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malawi** on behalf of the Africa region, **Thailand** and the **United States of America** supported the draft resolution, with **Austria on behalf of the EU, Belgium, Canada, Thailand** and the **United States of America** noting that they had amendments to propose.
104. **China** drew attention to inconsistencies in the definitions of “wetland” applied by the Ramsar Convention and within the 2030 Agenda.
105. The **President** requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to communicate these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session so that a revised version of the draft resolution could be prepared for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.7 Draft Resolution on enhancing the Convention’s implementation, visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions**

106. The **Secretariat** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.7.
107. **China, Eswatini** on behalf of the Africa region, **France** and **Islamic Republic of Iran** expressed general support for the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.7. **Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, India, the United Kingdom** speaking also on behalf of **Finland**, and the **United States of America** all indicated that they had amendments to propose.
108. **Turkey** stated that, were the existing paragraph 34 to be retained in an adopted Resolution, it would enter a reservation on this paragraph.
109. The observer from the **Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity** encouraged the participation of the Ramsar Convention in the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
110. The **President** requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to communicate these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session so that a revised version of the draft resolution could be prepared for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.25 Draft resolution on wetlands in polar and subpolar regions**

111. **Sweden** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.25, indicating that a revised version had been prepared.
112. **Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa** on behalf of the African region, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States of America** all proposed amendments to the draft resolution, many Parties expressing concern that aspects of the present draft were beyond the scope and mandate of the Ramsar Convention.
113. The **President** established a working group to produce a revised version of the draft resolution for consideration at a later session. He requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to communicate these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session. These would be made available to the chair of the working group, once appointed.

## 18.8 Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021 and their Operational Framework

114. The **Secretariat** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc. 18.8.
115. Interventions broadly in support of the draft resolution, but raising a number of specific observations and proposed amendments, were made by **Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Senegal, Slovenia, Sweden** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Turkey** and the **United States of America**.
116. The **President** established a working group to take forward discussion of the draft resolution and report back to a future session. He requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to communicate these in writing to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session. These would be made available to the chair of the working group, once appointed.

## 18.10 The status of Sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

117. The **Secretariat** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.10.
118. Interventions broadly in support of the draft resolution, but raising a number of specific observations and proposed amendments, were made by **Argentina, Australia, Austria** on behalf of the European region, **Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya** on behalf of the African region, **Liberia, Oman, Peru, South Sudan, Uganda, the United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia** and the observer from **BirdLife International**.
119. The **President** asked all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to submit these in writing to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session so that a revised version of the draft resolution could be prepared for consideration at a later plenary session.

**Thursday 25 October 2018**

**10.20 – 13.00 Plenary session**

### Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

120. The **Conference** received nominations from each of the Ramsar regions for representation on the working group established to review draft resolutions that might have implications for the work of the STRP. The group would be composed of individuals from the following Contracting Parties (together with the Chair of the STRP and STRP members present at COP13):
- Africa: Rwanda
  - Asia: Bangladesh
  - Europe: United Kingdom
  - Latin America and the Caribbean: Chile
  - North America: Mexico and the United States of America
  - Oceania: New Zealand

121. **Senegal**, speaking also on behalf of **Central African Republic**, as proponents of the draft resolution on peace and security contained in document COP13 Doc.18.19, expressed concern over the process followed by Contracting Parties that had met to discuss the text without the presence of the proponents.
122. **Brazil** reported that the working group established by the President during the afternoon plenary session of 24 October had met that evening and that a revised text had been prepared.
123. The **Secretary General** reported that the matter had been referred to the Conference Bureau.

**18.26 Draft resolution on the enhanced conservation of sea turtle breeding, feeding and nursery areas and the designation of key areas as Ramsar Sites**

124. **France** and **Senegal** presented the draft resolution in document Ramsar COP13 Doc.18.26, thanking Contracting Parties that had already provided technical support to improve the text and expressing readiness to take further proposed amendments on board.
125. Support for the draft resolution was expressed by **Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Libya, Myanmar, New Zealand** on behalf of the Oceania region, **Oman, Panama, Seychelles, South Africa** on behalf of the Africa region, **Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand**, the **United Arab Emirates**, the **United Republic of Tanzania**, the **United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam** and the observer from the **Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**. A number of these interventions proposed specific amendments, especially to the list of Ramsar Sites contained in Annex 1 and in order to highlight collaboration and synergies with other relevant international instruments, including the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles and those under the CMS. Contracting Parties also presented information concerning sea turtle conservation at national level, highlighting the need for enhanced capacity, information exchange and access to expertise.
126. The **President** requested all Contracting Parties with proposed amendments to send these in writing to the Secretariat so that they could be made available to the proponents (France and Senegal) for preparation of a revised text to be considered during a later session.

**18.12 Draft resolution on future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2019-2021**

127. The **Chair of the STRP**, Prof. Royal Gardner, presented the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.12 and drew attention to minor amendments relating to two Annexes.
128. **Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Ecuador, New Zealand, Senegal, United Kingdom** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Switzerland**, the **United States of America** and **Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)** all proposed amendments to the draft resolution.
129. **Turkey** made the following statement for the record of COP13:

“Turkey puts its reservation on the acceptance of ‘the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Water Convention’ as an observer to be invited for the meetings and processes of the STRP for the 2019-2021 triennium. Any outcome that is

likely to emerge as a result of a possible cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the UNECE Water Convention does not have a legally binding effect on Turkey.

“Turkey joins the consensus on the draft resolution, however, this is not to be construed as change of the Turkish position regarding the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water Courses and International Lakes, as was expressed in COP12.”

130. The **President** requested the **United States of America** to coordinate an informal group of interested Contracting Parties to incorporate proposed amendments into the draft resolution and present a revised version for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.11 Draft resolution on Ramsar Advisory Missions**

131. **Burkina Faso** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.11.
132. **Algeria, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Benin, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Guatemala, Guinea, Japan, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Peru, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia**, the **United Republic of Tanzania**, the **United States of America, Uganda, Zimbabwe** and the observer from the **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)** all expressed support for the draft resolution, though a number of those intervening indicated that they would be submitting proposed amendments.
133. **Turkey** indicated its intention to enter a reservation concerning the reference to “transboundary context” in Annex 1 of the draft resolution.
134. In response to Contracting Parties that had highlighted the value of Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAMs) and/or requested RAMs, the **Secretary General** concurred that such missions were one of the main functions of the Secretariat and took note of the needs expressed.
135. As several proposed amendments concerned the financing of RAMs, the **President** noted that the Finance Committee should be consulted and he postponed further discussion on the draft resolution until a later session.

#### **Agenda item 15.1 Wetland City Accreditation – Report of the Standing Committee**

136. The **Chair of the Standing Committee** presented a summary of the work undertaken in response to Resolution XII.10 on Wetland City Accreditation, approved by COP12 in 2015. He explained the roles of the Standing Committee and Independent Advisory Committee and the process followed, including discussions at the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee, which had resulted in the final list of nominated cities being presented at COP13.
137. The list was read out by the **Secretariat**:
- China – Changde City, Changshu City, Dongying City, Haikou City, Haerbin City, Yinchuan City
  - France – Amiens, Courteranges, Pont-Audemer, Saint-Omer
  - Hungary – Tata
  - Republic of Korea – Changnyeong County, Inje County, Jeju City, Suncheon City
  - Madagascar – Mitsinjo
  - Sri Lanka – Colombo
  - Tunisia – Ghar el Melh

138. The **Conference** approved by acclamation the awarding of Wetland City Accreditation to those cities listed.
139. **China, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of)** and **Jordan** welcomed the accreditation scheme and congratulated those cities whose nominations had been approved.
140. In response to points raised by **Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of)** and **Jordan**, the **Secretariat** provided further information on the Wetland City Accreditation process, noting the limited role of the Secretariat and drawing attention to a degree of ambiguity in the wording of Resolution XII.10.
141. **Republic of Korea** and **Tunisia**, in their capacity as Co-Chairs of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC), undertook to provide further information concerning the process followed and the selection criteria applied, and drew attention to a side event on 26 October that would address these points. They thanked the IAC members, Contracting Parties, city representatives and the Secretariat for their committed support.

#### 15.00 – 18.15 Plenary session

##### Agenda item 15.2 Wetland City Accreditation – Presentation of certificates

142. The **Secretary General** presented certificates to representatives of the accredited cities to enthusiastic applause.

##### Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

##### 18.13 Draft Resolution on guidance on identifying Wetlands of International importance (Ramsar Sites) for global climate change regulation as an additional argument to existing criteria

143. The **Chair of the STRP** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.13
144. Interventions in support of the draft resolution but requesting some specific amendments were made by **Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Malaysia, Philippines, South Africa, the United States of America**, and **Uruguay**, as well as the observers from the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** and the **China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation**.
145. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and asked Germany to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

##### 18.14 Draft resolution on restoration of degraded peatlands to mitigate and adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity

146. A representative of the STRP (**Germany**) introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.14.



147. **Belarus, Canada, Germany** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Mongolia, New Zealand, South Africa** on behalf of the Africa region, the **Philippines** and the **United States of America**, as well as the observer from **FAO** supported the draft resolution, also proposing minor amendments.
148. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and asked Austria to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

#### **18.15 Draft resolution on promoting conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue carbon ecosystems**

149. **Australia** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.15.
150. Interventions were made by **Algeria** on behalf of the Africa region, **Argentina, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Bahrain, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sudan, United Arab Emirates**, the **United States of America, Uruguay** and **Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**, as well as the observer from **FAO**. Some were supportive, while others believed that at least some aspects of the draft resolution were outside the remit of the Convention or were concerned that there was no settled international definition of “blue carbon ecosystems”.
151. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and asked Australia to coordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

#### **18.16 Draft resolution on cultural values, indigenous peoples and local communities, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands**

152. **Tunisia** presented the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.16.
153. Interventions were made by **Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Lesotho, New Zealand, Slovenia** on behalf of the Europe region, **South Africa, Turkey**, the **United States of America**, and **Uruguay**. Whilst there was broad support for the draft resolution in principle, most Contracting Parties also proposed specific amendments or indicated that they would do so.
154. The **Secretary General** sought guidance on two points: the operative paragraph that requested the Secretariat to present regular reports to the Standing Committee on work undertaken by Contracting Parties in response to the resolution, if approved; and the need for clarity about the Secretariat’s future engagement with the Ramsar Culture Network.
155. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and asked Australia to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

#### **18.17 Draft resolution on sustainable urbanization, climate change and wetlands**

156. The **United Arab Emirates** presented the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.17.

157. Interventions were made by **Australia, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Hungary** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Lesotho, Libya, Norway, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Uganda**, the **United States of America**, and **Uruguay**. While there was broad support for the draft resolution in principle, several of these Contracting Parties also proposed specific amendments or indicated that they would do so.
158. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and asked the United Arab Emirates to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

## Friday 26 October 2018

### 10.20 – 13.10 Plenary session

159. The session was chaired by the **Vice-President from Finland** (Ms Kristiina Niikkonen).
160. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for general comments.
161. **Australia**, as convener of the friends of the chair group on blue carbon ecosystems, **Colombia** on behalf of the Americas regions, **Cuba, Dominican Republic** on behalf of the Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI) on Caribbean Wetlands, **Jamaica, Senegal**, and **United Kingdom** as chair of the COP13 working group on governance, commented on the functioning and progress of working groups and friends of the chair groups.
162. The **Secretary General** confirmed that the Legal Adviser would attend the next meeting of the working group on RRI, as requested by **Colombia** on behalf of the Americas regions.

## 16. Election of Contracting Parties to the Standing Committee 2019-2021

163. The following nominations were received by the **Conference of Parties**:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Member(s)</u>	<u>Alternate Member(s)</u>
<b>Africa</b>		
Central Africa	<b>Chad</b>	<b>Central African Republic</b>
North Africa	<b>Algeria</b>	<b>Libya</b>
East Africa	<b>Uganda</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>
West Africa	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>Senegal</b>
Southern Africa	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Lesotho</b>
<b>Asia</b>		
South Asia	<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>Philippines</b>
East Asia	<b>Japan</b>	<b>China</b>
West Asia	<b>Oman</b>	<b>Kuwait</b>
<b>Europe</b>		
	<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>Austria</b>
	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Estonia</b>
	<b>Armenia</b>	<b>Russian Federation</b>
	<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>



171. The **Vice-President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session and requested **Colombia** to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.21 Draft resolution on agriculture in wetlands**

172. The **Czech Republic** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.21 noting that a number of proposed amendments had already been received.
173. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Mexico, the Netherlands** on behalf of the European region, **New Zealand, Niger, Panama, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, South Africa, Thailand, the United States of America, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe** on behalf of the Africa region, as well as the observers from **FAO and IUCN**. These were broadly in support of the draft resolution but some Contracting Parties believed that the document placed excessive emphasis on agriculture as a driving factor in the decline of wetlands and that a number of other factors should be taken into consideration. A number of those intervening proposed specific amendments or indicated their intention of doing so.
174. The **Vice-President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session and requested the **Czech Republic** to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.22 Draft resolution on promoting the conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically associated habitats**

175. The **Philippines** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.22.
176. Interventions were made by **Australia, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Bahrain, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Libya, Norway, Oman, Republic of Korea, South Africa** on behalf of the Africa region, **Sri Lanka, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States of America**, and by the observers from **FAO and BirdLife International**, the latter speaking also on behalf of **Wetlands International** and the **Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust**. Those making interventions were generally supportive of the draft resolution but some expressed concern that some proposed activities were beyond the scope and capacity of the Convention, and some might have significant cost implications. Many of those intervening proposed specific amendments to the text, or indicated their intention of doing so.
177. The **Vice-President** asked all those with proposed amendments to send these to the Secretariat, and requested **Kenya** to coordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

#### **15.15 – 17.30 Plenary session**

178. The session was chaired by the **Vice-President from Uganda** (Mr Paul Mafabi).

#### **Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)**

### 18.23 Draft Resolution on the conservation and management of small wetlands

179. **China** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.23.
180. Interventions were made by **Bahrain, Bangladesh, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Grenada, Honduras, India, Iran, Jordan, Lesotho** on behalf of the Africa region, **Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Thailand**, the **United Republic of Tanzania**, the **United States of America** and **Zimbabwe**, as well as the observer from **UNESCO**. These were broadly in support of the draft resolution with some Contracting Parties requesting clarity concerning the definition of a small wetland.
181. The **Vice-President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat within two hours of the close of the session and requested **Finland** to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration at a later session.

### 18.24 Draft resolution on wetlands in West Asia

182. **Iraq** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.24.
183. **Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Canada, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Oman, Turkey**, and **United States of America** made interventions. Some were broadly in support of the draft resolution, others strongly opposed, believing that aspects of it were outside the remit of the Convention. Several of those intervening stated that they had amendments to propose.
184. The **Vice-President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat and requested the **United States of America** to co-ordinate the production of a revised draft resolution for consideration later in the meeting.

### 18.3 Draft resolution on the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention

185. The **Vice-President** invited the **United Kingdom**, in its capacity as chair of the working group on the draft resolutions contained in documents COP13 Doc.18.1 and Doc.18.2, to comment on whether the outcomes of the group's work could inform consideration of the draft resolution contained in document 18.3.
186. The **United Kingdom** reported that the working group had engaged constructively and that a compromise text on the draft resolutions in documents Doc. 18.1 and Doc. 18.2, enjoying broad support, had been forwarded to the Secretariat. The working group had briefly discussed the implications of this compromise text for the draft resolution in document Doc.18.3, especially with regard to the Executive Team, but had been unable to reach consensus.
187. The **Secretariat** confirmed that the working group's compromise text was now available online in English as document Inf.6 and would be translated into French and Spanish as soon as it was confirmed as the final outcome from the group.

188. Interventions were made by: **Australia, Austria, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, France, Gabon, Guinea, Japan, Jordan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Senegal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Uruguay** and the **United States of America**.
189. At the conclusion of the debate, the **Vice-President** observed that there appeared to be consensus on the draft resolution contained in document COP13 Doc.18.3, subject to inclusion of an amendment proposed by the **United Kingdom** requesting the Executive Team to define its terms of reference for approval at the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee.
190. The **Vice-President** requested the Secretariat to prepare a revised text of the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.3, taking account of the amendment proposed by the **United Kingdom** as well as other amendments already submitted by Contracting Parties.

**Agenda item 19. Report of the Credentials Committee**

191. The **Chair of the Credentials Committee** (Armenia), gave an interim report, noting that credentials of 20 delegations had been accepted and that some were awaiting translation or clarification.
192. The session concluded with progress reports from working groups and agreement on working arrangements for groups to continue their work during the evening of 26 October.

**Sunday 28 October 2018**

**10.15 – 12.00 Plenary session**

**Agenda item 19: Report of the Credentials Committee (cont.)**

193. The **Chair of the Credentials Committee** (Armenia) provided an update on the state of credentials of Contracting Parties present at the meeting. Delegations of 143 Contracting Parties were participating at the meeting. To date, the Committee had accepted the credentials of 115 Contracting Parties. A further update would be provided in due course.

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)**

**Agenda item 20: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions**

**Agenda item 21: Adoption of resolutions and recommendations**

**18.1 Draft resolution on enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention and**

**18.2 Draft resolution on improving the efficiency of structures and processes of the Convention**

194. The **President** introduced a consolidated draft resolution on governance of the Convention, contained in document COP13 Doc.18.1&2.

195. Interventions were made by **Austria, China, Mali, Oman, Senegal**, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States of America**.

196. The draft resolution on governance of the Convention in document COP13 Doc.18.1&2. was adopted by acclamation subject to the inclusion of an amendment to Annex 1, tabled by **Senegal**.

#### **18.3 Draft resolution on the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categories of countries under the Convention**

197. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.3 Rev.1, which was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.4 Draft resolution on language strategy for the Convention**

198. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.4 Rev.1.

199. Interventions were made by **Algeria, Austria, Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Honduras, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Niger, Norway, Oman, Peru, Sudan**, the **United Arab Emirates** and the **United States of America**.

200. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.4 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation, subject to the inclusion of a minor amendment in Annex 1, tabled by the **United Arab Emirates**.

#### **18.6 Draft resolution on review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention**

201. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.6 Rev.1.

202. An intervention was made by **Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU.

203. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.6 Rev. 1 was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.19 Draft resolution on the importance of wetlands for peace and security**

204. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc. 18.19 was withdrawn by the proponents.

#### **18.26 Draft resolution on the enhanced conservation of coastal marine turtle habitats and the designation of key areas as Ramsar Sites**

205. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.26 Rev.1.

206. Interventions were made by **Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Senegal, South Africa** and the **United Arab Emirates**.

207. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.26 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation, subject to the inclusion of minor amendments tabled by **France** and **South Africa** and on the understanding that the Secretariat would update Annex 1 on the basis of submissions

received from Contracting Parties, including **Benin, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador** and the **United Arab Emirates**.

#### **18.11 Draft resolution on Ramsar Advisory Missions**

208. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.11 Rev.1. Interventions were made by **Austria**, on behalf of the Member States of the EU, and **Burkina Faso**.
209. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.11 was adopted by acclamation, subject to the inclusion of an amendment tabled by **Burkina Faso**.

#### **18.17 Draft resolution on sustainable urbanization, climate change and wetlands**

210. The **President** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.17. Rev.1. An intervention was made by **Hungary**.
211. Consideration of the draft resolution was deferred until a later session.

#### **18.20 Draft resolution on gender and wetlands**

212. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.20. Rev.1. An intervention was made by **France**.
213. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.20 was adopted by acclamation, subject to inclusion of language corrections to the French text, tabled by **France**.

#### **18.21 Draft resolution on agriculture in wetlands**

214. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.21. Rev.1.
215. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand**, the **Netherlands** on behalf of the European region, and the **United States of America**.
216. The **President** asked all those with proposed amendments to forward these to the Secretariat for the production of a further revision of the draft resolution for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.23 Draft resolution on conservation and management of small wetlands**

217. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.23. Rev.1.
218. Interventions were made by **Austria** on behalf of the European region, **Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador** and **Finland**.
219. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.23 was adopted by acclamation, subject to inclusion of minor amendments tabled by **Canada, Ecuador** and **Finland**.



## 15.15 – 17.10 Plenary session

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee** (continued)

**Agenda item 20: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions** (continued)

**Agenda item 21: Adoption of resolutions and recommendations** (continued)

**18.13 Draft resolution on guidance on identifying peatlands as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) for global climate change regulation as an additional argument to existing Ramsar criteria**

220. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.13 Rev.1.

221. An intervention was made by **Canada**.

222. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.13 was adopted by acclamation subject to the inclusion of an amendment to Table 1, tabled by **Canada**.

**Agenda item 24: Adoption of the report of the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties**

223. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP13 Rep.1.

224. **Japan** requested a correction. At the request of **United Kingdom**, the **President** agreed to postpone approval of COP13 Rep.1 until the Annex to the report was available.

225. The daily reports contained in documents COP13 Rep.2, COP13 Rep.3, COP13 Rep.4, COP13 Rep.5 and COP13 Rep.6 were adopted, without amendment, by acclamation.

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee** (continued)

**Agenda item 20: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions** (continued)

**Agenda item 21: Adoption of resolutions and recommendations** (continued)

**18.17 Draft resolution on sustainable urbanization, climate change and wetlands**

226. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.17 Rev.1.

227. The **United Arab Emirates** proposed amendments.

228. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.17 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation subject to the inclusion of amendments to two paragraphs, tabled by the **United Arab Emirates**.

**18.10 Draft resolution on the status of Sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance**

229. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.10 Rev.1, which was adopted by acclamation without further amendment.

**18.14 Draft resolution on restoration of degraded peatlands to mitigate and adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity and disaster risk reduction**

230. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.14 Rev.1.

240. An intervention was made by **Austria** to propose amendments to ten paragraphs.

241. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.10 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation with the amendments tabled by **Austria**.

242. The **Secretary General** provided an update on the status of the 11 draft resolutions for which final approval and adoption by the Conference was still pending.

**Monday 29 October 2018**

**10.15 – 12.30 Plenary session**

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)**

**Agenda item 20: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions (continued)**

**Agenda item 21: Adoption of resolutions and recommendations (continued)**

**18.7 Draft resolution on enhancing the Convention's implementation, visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions**

243. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.7 Rev.1

244. The **United Kingdom**, speaking also on behalf of **Finland**, proposed an amendment to transfer the square-bracketed paragraphs referring to implementation to the already-approved resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.3 Rev.1.

245. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.7 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation, subject to the inclusion of the amendment tabled by the **United Kingdom**.

**18.25 Draft resolution on wetlands in polar and subpolar regions**

246. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.25 Rev.1 which was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.12 Draft resolution on future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2019-2021**

247. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.12 Rev.1.
248. Welcoming the revised text of the draft resolution, the **United Kingdom** strongly urged the rapid drafting and approval of a workplan for 2018-2021 based on the priorities highlighted at COP13, and implementation of a pilot approach based on a review of experience gained since COP12.
249. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc. 18.12 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.8 Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021 and their Operational Framework**

250. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.8 Rev.1, which was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.22 Draft resolution on promoting the conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically associated habitats**

251. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.22 Rev.1.
252. Following a request from the **Philippines**, further discussion was deferred to the afternoon plenary session.

#### **18.16 Draft resolution on cultural values, indigenous peoples and local communities, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands**

253. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.16 Rev.1, which was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.18 Draft resolution on the rapid assessment of wetland ecosystem services**

254. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.18 Rev.1 and drew attention to further proposed changes to the draft as reflected in document COP13 Inf.9.
255. **Austria**, on behalf of the Member States of the EU, and the **Republic of Korea** welcomed the revised draft resolution and thanked those who had participated in its preparation.
256. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.18 Rev.1, incorporating amendments as indicated in document COP13 Inf.9 and subject to a further editorial amendment proposed by the **Republic of Korea**, was adopted by acclamation.

#### **18.5 Draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters**

257. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.5 Rev.1.

258. Interventions were made by **Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria** on behalf of the Member States of the EU, **Bolivia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Senegal**, the **Seychelles, South Africa** on behalf of the Africa region, the **United States of America** and **Uruguay**.
259. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.5 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment.

#### **18.21 Draft resolution on agriculture in wetlands**

260. The **President** introduced a draft resolution on sustainable agriculture in wetlands, contained in document COP13 Doc.18.22 Rev.2.
261. Interventions were made by the **Czech Republic**, thanking those who had contributed to the preparation of the revised draft resolution, and by **Ecuador**, proposing the addition of a footnote to the Spanish version to include the definition of “agriculture” used by FAO.
262. The draft resolution in document COP Doc.18.22 Rev.2 was adopted by acclamation subject to the inclusion of an amendment to the Spanish version tabled by **Ecuador**.

#### **Agenda item 19: Report of the Credentials Committee**

263. **The Chair of the Credentials Committee** (Armenia) presented the Committee’s final report, referring to Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure. Of 170 Contracting Parties to the Convention, 143 had participated in COP13. The credentials of 120 delegations of Contracting Parties had been found to be acceptable; delegations of 10 Contracting Parties had not submitted credentials.
264. There being no comments or observations from the floor, the report of the Credentials Committee was adopted by acclamation.

#### **Agenda item 24: Adoption of the report of the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties**

265. The **Conference of the Parties** adopted by acclamation the draft Daily Report in document COP13 Rep.1, subject to the inclusion of the amendment tabled by **Japan** during the afternoon plenary session of 28 October, and on the understanding that the statements from Contracting Parties contained in document COP13 Inf.8 would be translated and appended to the Proceedings of COP13.
266. The **Conference of the Parties** adopted by acclamation, without amendment, the draft Daily Reports in documents COP13 Rep.7, COP13 Rep.8, COP13 Rep.9 and COP13 Rep.10.
267. The **Conference of the Parties** endorsed by acclamation the proposal of the President that, in line with established practice, he should approve the draft Daily Report for the final day of COP13, Monday 29 October.

## 15.15 – 16.40 Plenary session

**Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee** (continued)

**Agenda item 20: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions** (continued)

**Agenda item 21: Adoption of resolutions and recommendations** (continued)

### **18.15 Draft resolution on promoting conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue carbon ecosystems**

268. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.15 Rev.1.
269. **Australia** drew attention to further amendments that had been negotiated with interested Contracting Parties, as reflected in document COP13. Inf.10.
270. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.15 Rev.1, incorporating amendments as reflected in document COP13. Inf.10, was adopted by acclamation.

### **18.22 Draft resolution on promoting the conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically associated habitats**

271. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.22 Rev.1.
272. The **Philippines** drew attention to further proposed amendments that had been negotiated with interested Contracting Parties, as reflected in document COP13. Inf.11.
273. In response to a request for clarification from **Canada**, the **Philippines** confirmed that the proposed amendments in document COP13 Inf.11 would be integrated into document COP13 Doc.18.22 Rev.1.
274. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.22 Rev.1, together with the proposed amendments in document COP13. Inf.11, was adopted by acclamation.

### **18.24 Draft resolution on wetlands in West Asia**

275. The **President** introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP13 Doc.18.24 Rev.1.
276. **Turkey** announced its reservation regarding paragraphs 1 and 7 of the draft resolution and indicated this would be submitted in writing. The statement of Turkey is attached as Annex 6 to the present report.
277. The draft resolution in document COP13 Doc. 18.24 was adopted by acclamation, without further amendment, but with the reservation of Turkey noted for the record.

### 18.27 Thanks to the Host Country, the United Arab Emirates

278. **Uruguay** introduced the draft resolution in document COP13 Doc. 18.27, which was warmly adopted by acclamation.
279. The **President** confirmed that all draft resolutions had now been dealt with.
280. The **Secretary General** noted that, in line with established practice, the Secretariat would undertake the final editing of the adopted resolutions, ensuring incorporation of all agreed amendments, consistency between language versions and application of editorial standards.

### Agenda item 22: Date and venue of the next ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

281. The **Conference of the Parties** confirmed the proposal of the Conference Bureau that, as no formal offer to host COP14 had been received, a new deadline for offers should be set for one month before the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57). If no offer had been received by that time, COP14 would take place in Switzerland, the country in which the seat of the Secretariat was located, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
282. **Senegal** announced its intention to submit its candidature to host COP14, subject to official written confirmation through diplomatic channels.

### Agenda item 23: Any other business

283. The **President** invited any comments or observations. There were no requests for the floor.

### Agenda item 25: Close of the meeting

284. The **President** thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the meeting, including the Government of the United Arab Emirates, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, the Municipality of Dubai, sponsors, organizers and technical support teams, the Vice-Presidents and the Secretariat.
285. Making closing remarks, a representative of the **World Wetland Network Youth Forum** proposed that the theme of COP14 should be “Youth and Wetlands” – a suggestion supported by Chile, Japan, Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Tunisia.
286. A representative of the Convention’s six **International Organization Partners (IOPs)**, made closing remarks on their behalf, pledging their support at all levels for implementation of the Resolutions adopted at COP13.
287. The **Secretary General** thanked: the Government of the United Arab Emirate; H.E. Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates, President of COP13; H.E. Eng. Mohamed Al Afkham, Director General, Fujairah Municipality, Alternate President of COP13, who had served in the presidency; the Director General of the Municipality of Dubai; the Vice-Presidents; the outgoing Chair of the Standing Committee and President of COP12, Mr Jorge Rucks, Uruguay; the Contracting Parties themselves, the IOPs, the interpreters, rapporteurs and translators, the conference staff and the whole Secretariat team. She looked forward to continuing to work together to reverse the loss of wetlands.

288. Contracting Parties from all six of the Ramsar regions thanked all those who had contributed to the successful outcomes of COP13, many commenting on the extremely constructive spirit of engagement from all delegations. They particularly commended the United Arab Emirates as host and the Secretariat for its effective organization of the meeting.
289. Resuming the presidency of COP13, **H.E. Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates**, renewed his thanks to all those who had supported the hosting of the meeting. He reiterated the importance and significance of all the resolutions adopted for the contribution of wetlands worldwide towards a sustainable future, and declared the meeting closed.

## **Annex 1**

### **NGO statement by the World Wetland Network under Agenda item 2, General statements and keynote addresses (paragraph 33)**

Conference Chair, Ramsar Secretary General, Contracting Parties, colleagues.

The World Wetland Network is grateful for this opportunity to address Ramsar COP13. WWN is a global alliance of Non-Government and Civil Society Organisations, with long-term connection to local wetlands. Our members are a considerable force for conservation and wise use.

Our recent Citizen Science Global Wetland Survey found the statistically most important driver for positive wetland protection and wise use is engagement of Non-Government Organisations and local communities. We provide solutions and want to play our part in making the Ramsar Convention a success.

To this end, we call on the Contracting Parties to engage with Non-Government Organisations, indigenous people, and local communities at all levels, including Ramsar Site assessment and management, National Wetland Steering Committees and through active involvement at the COP. We urge the Contracting Parties to support full participation, transparency, capacity building and learning among the different players in wetland protection. But to ensure this is effective, resources are needed. Small inputs at the local level will yield significant benefits for wetland wise use and conservation.

World Wetland Network is hosting a Youth Forum in the side events. We encourage the Contracting Parties and the Partner Organizations to meaningfully engage young people as key stakeholders in the Ramsar family. They are a powerful force to help prevent, stop and reverse the trend of wetland loss and degradation.

In less than three years, on World Wetlands Day 2021, the Ramsar Convention turns 50. What will be our legacy? There's no Planet B and we're out of time. Let's act boldly together at this meeting and beyond for conservation and wise use of wetlands.



## Annex 2

### Statement by Argentina under agenda item 11.1, Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention – Global implementation (paragraph 36)

1. The delegation of Argentina wishes, first of all, to thank the host country of this meeting, the United Arab Emirates, for its warm welcome, and also to highlight the excellent work done by the Secretariat in the organization of this conference.
2. The Argentine Republic wishes to recall that, at the time of ratification of the Convention on 4 May 1992, it rejected the extension of the scope of application made by the United Kingdom with respect to the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. Also, when the United Kingdom designated “Bertha’s Beach” and Sea Lion Island (Isla Leon Marino) as Ramsar Sites, Argentina reiterated its rejection of the territorial expansion by the United Kingdom and rejected the designation of such territories.
3. Consequently, Argentina wishes to reiterate the request that double nomenclature be used in documents prepared by the Secretariat of the Convention or in any mention of or map made with respect to the area in dispute, in printed or electronic media.
4. With regard to the maps used in the Ramsar Sites Information Service and on which the Ramsar Sites designated by the United Kingdom are recorded, Argentina requests that the Secretariat use source maps that apply the double nomenclature to refer to the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.
5. Details of the Sites that do not include the double nomenclature or references to the claim of Argentina will be sent to the Secretariat.
6. With regard to the National Report submitted by the United Kingdom, we wish to point out that, on page 8h, it refers to the organizations consulted for the preparation of the document, among which it cites “Falkland Island Government” and “Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands”. Likewise, on page 23, no. 1104 mentions “Sea Lion Island, Falkland Island”.
7. In this regard, the Argentine Republic recalls that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas are an integral part of the national territory of Argentina and that they, being illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, are the subject of a sovereignty dispute between both countries, which has been recognized by the United Nations. Consequently, the Argentine Republic rejects any reference to the alleged authorities of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.
8. Argentina requests that the aforementioned statement be included in the COP report.

(Original text submitted in Spanish)

### **Annex 3**

#### **Statement by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under agenda item 11.1, Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention – Global implementation (paragraph 38)**

The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and surrounding maritime areas, nor about the principle and the rights of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination as enshrined in the UN Charter and in article one of the two UN Covenants on human rights, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. We do not, therefore accept the proposal by Argentina for dual nomenclature on any maps or documents provided to or by the Ramsar Secretariat or in any formal documents of the Convention.

## Annex 4

### **Statement by Ukraine under agenda item 11.1, Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention – Global implementation (paragraph 40)**

Statement of Ukraine with respect to Ramsar COP13 agenda item 12 (Report of the Secretary General pursuant to Article 8.2 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance)

Dear Mr President, Vice-Presidents and Distinguished Delegates,

The implementation of the Ramsar Convention in Ukraine is an important part of the state environmental policy aimed at preserving natural areas and biodiversity.

Ukraine has 39 wetlands of international importance with a total area of 771 thousand hectares. During this plenary, we took note of the information on the status of Wetlands of International Importance.

In this regard the delegation of Ukraine would like to draw the attention of the Parties and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to the fact that the Russian Federation launched armed aggression against Ukraine and occupied part of the territory of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and parts of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolutions “Territorial integrity of Ukraine” (A/Res/68/262) of 27 March 2014, “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” (A/Res/71/205) of 19 December 2016, and “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” (A/Res/72/190) of 19 December 2017, condemned the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (hereinafter “Crimea”) by the Russian Federation and reaffirmed the non-recognition of its annexation.

The Russian Federation blatantly violated the Ramsar Convention principles. Namely, the Convention recognizes the exclusive sovereign rights of the Contracting Party, in this case Ukraine, to protect, restore and sustainably use the Ramsar wetlands and their flora and fauna.

The Russian Federation occupying power makes it impossible to implement conservation, management and wise use measures, as set out in Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Ramsar Convention, with respect to 6 Ukrainian Ramsar Sites located in Crimea and 1 site in the Donetsk region (located on the Sea of Azov coast).

The Russian temporary occupation of the part of the territory of Ukraine and the illegal economic activities in Crimea, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov make it impossible to work effectively within the framework of BlackSeaWet Regional Ramsar Initiative.

The systematic violation of environmental legislation in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea basins by the Russian Federation has a negative impact on the ecological status of wetlands, including those of international importance.

The delegation of Ukraine would like to note that 22 Ramsar sites are located along the coast of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea in Ukraine and all of them under the risk due to Russia’s armed aggression and its flagrant violation of the environmental legislation of Ukraine.

With a view to a joint and efficient management of wetlands of the Black Sea basin Ukraine fruitfully cooperates with Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Turkey and Georgia.

Ukraine is ready for further development of cooperation with all the Black Sea riparian countries except for the Russian Federation.

I would like to emphasize that the restoration of full-fledged cooperation in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea basin is possible only after de-occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, complete restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Ukraine requests the Ramsar Secretariat to urgently organize a Ramsar Advisory Mission to Crimea to evaluate the conservation and the management conditions and corresponding ecological status of 7 Ramsar Sites, located on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine, and to advise on the way forward regarding the updating process for their respective Ramsar Information Sheet.

I ask to include this statement in the Conference final report.

Thank you for your attention!

## Annex 5

### **Statement by the Russian Federation under agenda item 11.1, Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention – Global implementation (paragraph 41)**

#### The exercise of the right of reply

Russian delegation takes the floor to respond to the statement made by the representative of Ukraine in the exercise of right of reply.

Unfortunately the Ukrainian delegation couldn't resist the temptation to repeatedly use this international fora to state its false allegations of the so-called "illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and its further military invasion in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions" as well as of "ongoing military aggression" by the Russian Federation.

In this regard, the Russian Federation clearly states that the declaration of independence of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Crimea's joining the Russian Federation constitute modes of implementing one of the fundamental UN principles - the principle of equal rights and self-determination by peoples and fully correspond to the Declaration on principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970).

Let us also remind that UN General Assembly mentioned resolutions are not unanimous and consensual and have advisory nature, standing outside the framework of this meeting.

We'd like to underline that Russian Federation fully meets all the obligations under Convention on Wetlands and we are convinced that a pragmatic and non-politicized approach to the work of Ramsar Convention is an essential condition for successful development of the international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Chair, in order to save our precious time and avoid further deliberations, we would like to remind our distinguished Ukrainian colleagues, that our meeting is an inappropriate place for political disputes.

Thank you.

## Annex 6

### **Statement of Turkey under agenda item 18.24, Draft resolution on wetlands in West Asia (paragraph 276)**

Turkey has been attaching utmost importance to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention since its accession. Turkey has given due regard to the application of the two major principles of the Convention, namely conservation and wise use of wetlands

The Ramsar Convention has been successful so far. Today, Ramsar Sites network constitutes the largest network of officially recognised internationally important areas in the world. Turkey believes that its success comes from its focused scope.

Unfortunately, Turkey has been observing with great concern that there are attempts to integrate some controversial issues into the work of the Convention.

As all we know, sand and dust storms mostly occur because of the natural biogeochemical cycles of the earth. Along with the natural causes, adverse impacts of climate change, unsustainable agriculture, land management, mining and oil extraction practices are also considered triggers of sand and dust storms.

In this respect, there are reliable scientific studies on sand and dust storms phenomenon and they demonstrate that there is no relevance between wetlands and sand and dust storms at all. In this vein, Turkey requests its reservations to the paragraphs 1 and 7 of the Draft resolution 18.24\_Rev1.

In our deliberations, it is important to take into account the distinct mandates, principles and provisions and independent legal status of every multilateral convention and be cautious in integrating the work of other Conventions into that of the Ramsar Convention. The Ramsar bodies can collaborate with relevant international conventions and organizations, within their respective mandates, where and when appropriate.

We request the Secretariat to have this statement of the Turkish Delegation as well as the other statements made during the COP 13 to be reflected in all related documents as well as the Report of the 13th COP to the Ramsar Convention.