



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

Ramsar COP13 Doc.18.1

Draft resolution on enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention

Note from the Secretariat

Through Decision SC54-16, the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting decided to submit both the draft resolutions in documents Doc. SC54-9 and Doc. SC54-21.8, as originally drafted, for consideration at COP13. The Standing Committee noted that both proposals were based on the recognition of a need to review the mechanism for providing governance and guidance for the Convention. The Committee discussed both proposals without reaching a conclusion on how to bring them together. The Committee encouraged interested Parties to continue multilateral discussions on this issue in preparation for COP13 to seek mutually agreeable solutions to achieve a common goal. The Committee also noted that COP13 could benefit from considering these two draft resolutions together.

The present document contains the draft resolution contained in document Doc. SC54-9. The draft resolution contained in document Doc. SC54-21.8 is presented at COP13 in document COP13 Doc. 18.2.

1. RECALLING Resolutions IX.24, X.4, XII.3, XII.4, XII.7, and XII.9, as well as Decisions SC51-11 and SC51-16;
2. NOTING WITH APPRECIATION the extensive and continuing work by Parties and the Secretariat to support the implementation of the Convention through efforts undertaken by the bodies of the Convention;
3. REITERATING the obligation on all Parties to minimize waste and duplication of processes, and to ensure the effective and efficient use of Convention and Party resources to support the best outcomes for wetlands and the Convention;
4. RECOGNIZING that, over time, some confusion has arisen regarding the intended mandates, reporting arrangements, and duration of some bodies of the Convention and the need to leverage the bodies to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention;
5. FURTHER RECOGNIZING that implementation of the Convention and its governance and efficient use of its resources can be improved by retiring some working groups and other bodies currently supporting the Convention; and

6. ALSO NOTING the benefits to the Parties and the Convention of, as appropriate, deploying Friends of the Chair and working groups to undertake work to foster implementation of the Convention in the most efficient and effective manner possible;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to all Parties that have supported the bodies of the Convention for their service in these groups, and highly values the accomplishments and benefits to the Convention realized as a result of their work;
8. DECIDES to retire the CEPA Working Group, Facilitation Working Group, Language Strategy Working Group, Resource Mobilization Working Group, Staffing Working Group, Transition Committee, and Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group, with immediate effect;
9. ALSO DECIDES to revise and update the mandate of the Management Working Group (MWG) to focus on reviewing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and oversight of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, noting that the Standing Committee or the Executive Team may delegate to the MWG additional administrative tasks as needed in order to support their work; and FURTHER DECIDES to revise and update the MWG's membership to include one Standing Committee representative from each Ramsar Convention region, as well as any other interested Contracting Parties, keeping in mind the desirability of equitable regional participation and keeping the group to a manageable size;
10. INVITES the Chairs of these retired bodies to, as appropriate, provide a final report on the outcome of their body's work to the Standing Committee at its 56th session;
11. DECIDES to redouble its efforts to leverage the bodies of the Convention in a streamlined manner in order to enhance the effectiveness of its governance and ensure that the work of the Convention is always undertaken in the most efficient and effective manner possible;
12. INVITES the Chairs of the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and of Standing Committee to make use of "Friends of the Chair" processes, as appropriate, to seek to enhance efficiency and promote effective meetings by delegating matters requiring urgent immediate attention, in order to facilitate and expedite work in service of the Parties during meetings and, when so doing, to foster inclusiveness, with a view to advancing implementation of the Convention and its governance and making best use of its resources; and REQUESTS the Secretariat support the Chairs in these efforts;
13. ALSO INVITES Parties to make use of working group processes, as appropriate, to enhance efficiency and foster effective meetings by delegating matters requiring longer-term attention, in order to facilitate and expedite work in service of the Parties intersessionally, reporting to the Standing Committee, with a view to advancing implementation of the Convention and its governance and making best use of its resources; and REQUESTS that the Secretariat support the working groups in these efforts when asked to do so;
14. URGES Parties to ensure that working group processes have clear mandates and scopes, are regionally representative and open to any interested Party, specify the anticipated conclusion to the work (expressed as a measure of time, conclusion of an event, or development of a work product) generally no later than by the following meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and sooner when possible, and regularly report their progress to the Standing

Committee, recognizing that the Standing Committee Chair may, as needed, subsequently add tasks, potentially impacting the originally anticipated scope, mandate, and/or timeline;

15. ALSO URGES Parties to fully, effectively, and ethically engage in working groups and Friends of the Chair groups, and to respect the results of those groups, recognizing that the ultimate decision-making authority rests with the Standing Committee and/or COP to which the group is reporting and presenting its results; and
16. CONFIRMS that the present Resolution supersedes the Resolutions and Decisions referenced in paragraph 1 or the relevant provisions thereof, and that any ongoing responsibilities of the groups retired in paragraph 8 above revert to the Standing Committee to address or delegate further.