

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.4.2

Proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure

Note from the Secretariat

Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure adopted at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties states the following:

1. *These Rules shall take effect upon adoption by the Conference of the Parties, and shall remain valid for each of its meetings unless amended by majority vote of the Conference of the Parties.*
2. *Any Party may propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure by submitting a proposal to the Secretariat at least four months before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties at which they are to be adopted. Any such proposal shall be distributed in accordance with Rule 10.*

Proposals to amend the Rules of Procedure were received from Japan, Sweden and the United States of America. The texts of submissions, including justifications for the proposed amendments, are indicated in Annex 1 (Japan), Annex 2 (Sweden) and Annex 3 (United States of America).

The Secretariat has inserted the proposed amendments into the current text of the Rules concerned to facilitate comparison of the proposals received. The present document contains only the Rules that are subject to amendment proposals. In each case, to provide context, the entire text of the affected Rule is included, and not only the paragraph to be amended. Italic font is used to indicate the proponent and comments from the Secretariat.

Amendment to Rule 2. g) proposed by Japan:

Rule 2 Definitions

For the purposes of these Rules:

- a) The “Conference Bureau” means the body established under Rule 21 which provides oversight and guidance during meetings of the Conference of the Parties and during the intersessional period;
- b) “Conference of the Parties” means the Conference of the Contracting Parties established in accordance with Article 6 of the Convention;

- c) “Contracting Party” or “Contracting Parties” means a State or States that have consented to be bound by the Convention and for which it is in force;
- d) “Convention” means the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, adopted in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971, as amended by the Protocol signed in Paris, France, on 3 December 1982, and by the Extraordinary Conference of the Contracting Parties held in Regina, Canada, on 28 May 1987;
- e) “Meeting” means any ordinary or extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties convened in accordance with Article 6 of the Convention;
- f) “President” means the President elected in accordance with Rule 21, paragraph 1, of the present Rules of procedure;
- g) “Proposal” means a draft resolution or recommendation submitted by one or more Contracting Party, subsidiary body, or the Standing Committee or the Conference Bureau;
- h) “Ramsar regional groups” means each of the regional groups in which the Contracting Parties to the Convention have been grouped in order to facilitate the work of the Convention;
- i) “Secretariat” means the professional and administrative staff of the Secretariat of the Convention established under Article 8 of the Convention and any other staff under the authority of the Secretary General who serve a meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- j) “Standing Committee” means the body established by a Resolution 3.3 of the 3rd Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
- k) “Subsidiary body” means all committees or working groups established by the Conference of the Parties, including the Standing Committee;

Amendments to Rules 4.3 and 4.4 proposed by Sweden:

SESSIONS

Rule 4 Dates of meetings

1. Ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall be held every three years.
2. Each ordinary meeting shall determine the year and venue of the next ordinary meeting. The exact dates and duration of each ordinary meeting shall be established by the Standing Committee at its first substantive meeting after each Conference of the Parties, on the basis of consultations between the Secretariat and the host country of the meeting.
3. Extraordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall be convened at such times as may be deemed necessary by the Conference of the Parties, or at the written request of any Contracting Party communicated to the other Contracting Parties via the Secretariat, and provided that, within ~~three~~ six months of such communication, the request is supported by at least one third of the Contracting Parties in a voting ballot organized, preferably in an online system, by the Secretariat.

4. The voting should also include the question if the Contracting Parties think the meeting could take place in an online system or if a physical meeting is necessary and the time for that. In the case of a digital extraordinary meeting it shall take place not more than 60 days after the date at which the request is supported by at least one third of the Contracting Parties in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Rule. In the case of a physical ~~an~~ extraordinary meeting, it shall be convened during or back-to-back with the next [open-ended working group] [Standing Committee] meeting or if that is considered to be too far in the future not more than 90 days after the date at which the request is supported by at least one third of the Contracting Parties in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Rule.

Amendments to Rule 5.1 proposed by Japan and the United States of America¹:

Rule 5 Notification

1. The Secretariat shall notify all Contracting Parties of the dates, venue, and provisional agenda of an ordinary meeting at least 12 months before the meeting is due to commence. The notification shall include the draft agenda for the meeting and the deadline for submission of proposals by the Contracting Parties, which normally shall be 120 ~~60~~-calendar days prior to the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which recommendations are made for documents for consideration by Contracting Parties at the Conference of the Parties. Only Parties, subsidiary bodies, the Standing Committee and other bodies envisioned in Rule 25 and the Conference Bureau shall be entitled to submit proposals.

Amendments of Rules 5.1 and 5.2 proposed by Sweden:

Rule 5 Notification

1. The Secretariat shall notify all Contracting Parties of ~~the dates, venue, and provisional agenda of~~ an ordinary meeting at least 12 months before the meeting is due to commence. The notifications shall include information about dates, venue and if a high-level segment is planned or not and, if that is the case, the dates for such segment. The notification shall also include the draft agenda for the meeting and the deadline for submission of proposals by the Contracting Parties and the timetable for all important deadlines until the COP. The notification should also include the instructions for the possibility to make comments make amendments and vote, etc., online before the meeting if such system has been established for the use of the Ramsar Convention by that time, ~~which normally shall be 60-calendar days prior to the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which recommendations are made for documents for consideration by Contracting Parties at the Conference of the Parties.~~ Only Parties, the Standing Committee and the Conference Bureau shall be entitled to submit proposals.
2. The Secretariat shall notify all Contracting Parties of the dates, venue, and provisional agenda of an extraordinary meeting within one month of establishing through a ballot that one-third of the Contracting Parties support the hosting of the meeting as provided by Rule 4.3. Notification

¹ *The change of "60" to "120" and the addition of "and other bodies envisioned in Rule 25" is proposed by the United States of America. The addition of "subsidiary bodies" is proposed by Japan. Each of the proposed amendments to the last sentence has the same effect. Therefore if the need for such an amendment is agreed, only one of these two amendments would be necessary.*

will include instructions on where any supporting documents relating to the issues proposed for consideration at the extraordinary meeting can be found online as required by Rule 13.

Amendments to Rules 7.1, 7.4 and 7.5 proposed by Sweden:

OBSERVERS

Rule 7 Participation of other bodies or agencies

1. Any body or agency, national or international, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, which has informed the Secretariat of its wish to be represented at meetings of the Conference of the Parties may be represented at the meeting by observers, unless at least one third of the Parties ~~present at the meeting~~ object.
2. Bodies or agencies desiring to receive recognition as observers for the purposes of attending meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall submit appropriate documentation to the Secretariat for consideration three months prior to any ordinary meeting and ~~one~~ two months prior to an extraordinary meeting.
3. Bodies or agencies recognized as observers who desire to be represented at the meeting as observers shall submit the names of these representatives to the Secretariat at least one month prior to the opening of the meeting.
4. ~~Such Accepted~~ observers may, ~~upon the invitation of the President,~~ participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any meeting, ~~unless at least one third of the Contracting Parties present at the meeting object.~~
5. Proposals about resolutions etc. made by observers may be put to the vote only if sponsored by a Contracting Party. Observers cannot propose a resolution by themselves.
6. Seating limitations may require that no more than two observers from any State not a Contracting Party, body, or agency be present at a meeting. The Secretariat shall notify those concerned of any such limitations in advance of the meeting.
7. The Secretariat will maintain a list of bodies or agencies recognized as observers and shall notify those previously approved to be observers pursuant to Rules 6 and 7 of the date and venue of any session scheduled by the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented.
8. The list of observers shall be provided by the Secretariat to the Contracting Parties not later than 14 days before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties at which they are proposed to be admitted. The list of observers shall indicate the name of the representative and the organization, body or agency that they represent.

Amendment to Rule 10 proposed by Sweden:

AGENDA

Rule 10 Distribution of documents

The documents for each ordinary meeting, as per Rule 50, and including an annotated provisional agenda based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee, shall be distributed online in the official languages by the Secretariat to the Contracting Parties at least three months before the opening of the meeting.

Amendment to Rule 13 proposed by Sweden:

Rule 13 Scope of provisional agenda for extraordinary meetings

The provisional agenda for an extraordinary meeting shall consist only of those items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the extraordinary meeting. ~~The provisional agenda and any necessary supporting documents shall be distributed to the Contracting Parties at the same time as the notification to the extraordinary meeting.~~

Amendment to Rule 14 proposed by Japan:

Rule 14 Secretariat's report on administrative and financial implications of agenda items

The Secretariat shall report, ~~within 24 hours of~~ at least 60 days before the opening of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, on the projected administrative and financial implications of all substantive agenda items submitted to the meeting and before decisions on these items are taken by the Conference of the Parties.

New Rule 22.4 proposed by Sweden:

OFFICERS

Rule 22 Role of the President

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon the President elsewhere by these Rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of the meeting, preside at the sessions of the meeting, ensure the observance of these Rules, rule on points of order, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions.
2. The President may propose to the Conference of the Parties the closure of the list of speakers, limitations on the time to be allowed to speakers and the number of times each Contracting Party or observer may speak on a question, the adjournment or the closure of the debate, and the suspension or the adjournment of a session.
3. The President, in the exercise of the functions of that office, remains under the authority of the Conference of the Parties.

4. The President may invite observers to the COP, but they will have to be accepted by the Contracting Parties by the same procedure described in Rule 7, as the ones that want to participate as observers on their own initiative.

Amendment to Rule 24 proposed by Sweden:

Rule 24 Replacement of an officer (unable to complete term)

If an officer of the Conference Bureau resigns or is otherwise unable to complete the assigned term of office or to perform the functions of the office, a representative of the same Contracting Party shall be named by the Contracting Party concerned to replace the said officer for the remainder of that officer's mandate. If that is not possible, the region that officer comes from will have to choose a replacement.

Amendments to Rule 25:

Amendment to the section title proposed by Sweden²:

~~THE STANDING COMMITTEE,~~ THE CONFERENCE BUREAU AND SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Addition to Rule 25.1 proposed by Sweden³:

Rule 25 Establishment of subsidiary bodies

1. In addition to the Standing Committee of the Convention,⁴ the Scientific and Technical Review Panel,⁵ and the Conference Bureau, the Conference of the Parties may establish other committees and working groups if it deems it necessary for the implementation of the Convention. Where appropriate, meetings of these bodies shall be held in conjunction with meetings of the Conference of the Parties. Contracting Parties that are not voting representatives in the Standing Committee, its subgroups and working groups, or other subsidiary bodies, may attend and participate in all sessions of such bodies, including any session that may be closed to observers from non-Contracting Party countries, International Organizations Partners, or others.

The aim of the other committees and working groups should be thoroughly described and a time limit for the existence of such committee or working group. The time limit can be an actual date or be connected to a certain delivery.

² Proposed with the following note: "We suggest that this text is split in the following rules (and that the information is sorted accordingly);

1. The rules for the work of the COP bureau,
2. The rules for the work of the for the time-being permanent subsidiary bodies.
3. The rules for the establishment and work of temporarily subsidiary bodies."

³ Proposed with the note: "To be included in the rule for the work and establishment of temporarily subsidiary bodies."

⁴ Established by COP Resolution 3.3 (1987).

⁵ Established by COP Resolution 5.5 (1993).

- a) The Conference Bureau shall meet at least once daily over the duration of the meeting to review progress of the meeting, including the draft of the report of the previous day prepared by the Secretariat, and to provide advice to the President in order to ensure the smooth development of the rest of the proceedings.

Amendment to Rule 25.1.b) proposed by Sweden:

- b) Permanent observers to the Standing Committee may attend meetings of the Conference Bureau unless any Contracting Party objects. The President may invite other accepted observers that are not Contracting Parties to attend meetings of the Conference Bureau, or other closed meetings if required to assist proceedings.
- c) The Conference Bureau shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Standing Committee during the period previous to the current meeting.⁶

Amendment to Rule 25.2 proposed by Japan:

2. The Conference of the Parties may decide that any subsidiary body may meet in the period between ordinary meetings. Intersessional work should normally conclude their work at the last meeting of the Standing Committee preceding a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Any Party wishing to join or withdraw from an intersessional working group should make the request in writing to the Chair of the Standing Committee through the Secretariat.

Amendment to Rule 25.3.a) proposed by Japan:

3. a) ~~Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties or the Standing Committee, which established the subsidiary body, the chair for each subsidiary body shall be elected by the Conference of the Parties and shall normally be subject to rotation among the regional groups that subsidiary body shall elect its own officers including the chair, whenever possible from among any interested Parties who were present at the session.~~
- b) The Conference of the Parties shall determine the matters to be considered by each subsidiary body and may authorize the President, upon the request of the chairperson of a subsidiary body, to make adjustments to the allocation of work.
- c) Subsidiary bodies may not take decisions that would normally be taken by the Conference of the Parties, nor may subsidiary bodies alter or otherwise amend decisions or resolutions of the Conference of the Parties without the express prior authorization of the Conference of the Parties.
4. Subject to ~~paragraph 4~~ paragraph 3.a)⁷ of this Rule, each body shall elect its own officers. No officer may be re-elected for a third consecutive term.

⁶ As elected at the first SC meeting immediately after the close of the COP, as established by Resolution XI.19 (COP 11 2012), at Annex I at paragraph 17.

⁷ Note from the Secretariat: Sweden pointed out that the reference to paragraph 4 was a mistake. The Secretariat has inserted the correct number, on the basis of the Rules adopted at COP11.

5. Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties, these Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of subsidiary bodies, except that:
 - a) Additional Rules of Procedure for subsidiary bodies may be adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
 - b) A simple majority of the Contracting Parties designated by the Conference of the Parties to take part in any subsidiary body shall constitute a quorum, but in the event of the body being open-ended, one quarter of the Contracting Parties present shall constitute a quorum;
 - c) The chair of a subsidiary body may exercise the right to vote;

Amendment to Rule 25.5.d) proposed by Japan:

- d) Interpretation into the official Convention languages shall be provided in sessions of the Standing Committee. ~~The Secretariat shall endeavour to provide interpretation in other Committee or Working Group sessions, including meetings of the Conference Bureau, subject to available resources.~~
- e) In addition to subsidiary bodies, the Conference of the Parties may establish small informal working groups, such as contact groups or friends of the President, to assist it with its work during meetings of the Conference of the Parties. Such groups shall report and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties.

Amendment to Rule 26.1 proposed by Sweden:

SECRETARIAT

Rule 26 Duties of the Secretary General

1. The Secretary General of the Convention shall be the Secretary General of the Conference of the Parties. The Secretary General or a representative of the Secretary General shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference of the Parties and of permanent subsidiary bodies.
2. The Secretary General shall, within available resources, arrange for the provision of staff and services required by the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, manage and direct such staff and services, and provide appropriate support and advice to the presiding and other officers of the Convention.
3. The Secretary General shall report to the Conference on progress made to further the goals on the Convention at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Amendment to Rule 32 proposed by Sweden:

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 32 Point of order

During the discussion of any matter, a Contracting Party may at any time raise a point of order, signalling that it is a matter of point-of-order by using the sign of time-out, which shall be decided immediately by the President in accordance with these Rules. A Contracting Party may appeal the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a simple majority of the Contracting Parties present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Amendments to Rule 34:

Rule 34 Proposals and amendments to proposals

Amendments to Rule 34.1 proposed by Sweden:

1. A proposal ~~submitted~~ by a Contracting Party should be submitted to the Secretariat at least eight months ~~60 days~~ before the opening of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Secretariat will make the proposals available for the Contracting Parties online in a system where further development of the proposal can be suggested by amendments and comments in the English version until five months before the COP. The proposer may during this consultation accept suggested changes when they are of minor importance for the continued consultation (spelling, obvious errors, etc). Considering suggested changes, the responsible for the draft resolution prepares a Rev 1 and it should be finalized and submitted to the Secretariat at least four months before the COP. Standing Committee meeting at which approvals are made of documents for consideration by the Conference of the Parties, as required by Rule 5, may be changed or amended on advice from the Standing Committee with the consent of the Contracting Party that submitted the proposal. If that Contracting Party does not so consent or is absent from the meeting, Standing Committee members and other Contracting Parties attending the meeting may request that any proposals for changes or amendments are shown in brackets and if appropriate with explanatory comments.

Amendment to Rule 34.1 proposed by United States of America:

1. A proposal submitted by a Contracting Party to the Secretariat at least 120 ~~60~~ days before the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which approvals are made of documents for consideration by the Conference of the Parties, as required by Rule 5, may be changed or amended on advice from the Standing Committee with the consent of the Contracting Party that submitted the proposal. If that Contracting Party does not so consent or is absent from the meeting, Standing Committee members and other Contracting Parties attending the meeting may request that any proposals for changes or amendments are shown in brackets and if appropriate with explanatory comments.

Deletion and replacement of current Rule 34.2 proposed by Sweden:

- ~~2. The Standing Committee may also decide that differences of opinion on a proposal drafted by a subsidiary body or the Secretariat may be shown in brackets and if appropriate with explanatory comments.~~
2. If an online system is not available, a proposal should be submitted by a Contracting Party to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which approvals are made of documents for consideration by the Conference of the Parties, as required by Rule 5, and may be changed or amended on advice from the Standing Committee with the consent of the Contracting Party that submitted the proposal. If that Contracting Party does not so consent or is absent from the meeting, Standing Committee members and other Contracting Parties attending the meeting may request that any proposals for changes or amendments are shown in brackets and if appropriate with explanatory comments.

Amendment to Rule 34.3 proposed by Sweden:

3. The Secretariat will edit and finalize the proposals, ~~on the basis of the recommendations of the Standing Committee,~~ for distribution in the official languages to the Contracting Parties at least three months before the opening of the Conference of Parties, as required by Rule 10.

Amendments to Rule 34.4 proposed by Sweden:

4. A new proposal that was not submitted to the Secretariat at least ~~eight months~~ 60 days before the opening of the ~~Conference of the Contracting Parties Standing Committee meeting at which recommendations are made of documents for consideration by the Conference of the Parties,~~ Conference of the Contracting Parties ~~and amendments to proposals,~~ as required by Rule 5, shall be introduced in writing by the Contracting Parties and handed to the Secretariat in at least one of the official languages, for submission to the Conference Bureau.

Amendments to Rule 34.4 proposed by the United States of America:

4. A new proposal that was not submitted to the Secretariat at least ~~120~~ 60 days before the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which recommendations are made of documents for consideration by the Conference of the Parties, as required by Rule 5, ~~and amendments to proposals,~~ shall be introduced in writing by the Contracting Parties and handed to the Secretariat in at least one of the official languages, for submission to the Conference Bureau.
5. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any session unless copies of it, translated into the official languages of the Conference of the Parties, have been circulated to delegations not later than the day preceding the session. Nevertheless, the President may in cases of urgency, permit the discussion and consideration of proposals, amendments to proposals or of procedural motions even though these documents may have been circulated only the same day or have not been translated into all the official languages of the Conference of the Parties.

Amendments to Rule 34.6 proposed by Sweden:

6. A new proposal shall deal only with matters that could not have been foreseen in advance of the meeting or arise out of the discussions at the meeting. The Conference Bureau shall decide

if the new proposal meets this requirement, so as to introduce it formally for consideration by the meeting. If a new proposal is rejected by the Conference Bureau, the proposer(s) sponsor(s) shall be entitled to request the President to submit the question of its admissibility to a vote, as per Rule 33. The sponsor(s) shall be given the opportunity to make one intervention to present the arguments in favour of the introduction of the new proposal, and the President shall explain the reasons for its rejection by the Conference Bureau.

Addition of a new Rule 34.7 proposed by Sweden:

7. During the meeting, the on-line system is used for making new versions of the draft resolutions. Amendments and comments can be made in all official languages and translation is made by the Secretariat.

Amendments to Rule 51 proposed by Japan:

LANGUAGES, DOCUMENTS AND SOUND RECORDINGS

Rule 51 Executive summary and summary records ~~Sound recording of the meetings~~

1. A concise executive summary of the decisions of the meetings shall be prepared by the Secretariat for endorsement by the Parties before the closure of the meeting. However, the executive summary of the last day of each meeting shall be sent by email to participating Contracting Parties for endorsement after the meeting.
2. A consolidated summary record of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat and made available on the Ramsar website within 40 days. This shall be presented in the order of the agenda and comprise three parts for each agenda item: a short statement indicating the main points of the discussion; the text indicating the decision that was made, as it appears in the executive summary; and the text of any statement provided by the representative of any Party that was read into the record during the meeting. The list of Parties and observers participating in the debate shall be included in the summary record as well. The Secretariat shall take into account the comments received within 20 days of the circulation and – upon approval of the Chair of the meeting – the Secretariat shall make the final summary record available on the website of the Convention.
3. Sound recordings of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and whenever possible of its subsidiary bodies, shall be kept by the Secretariat, which shall make the recordings available to any Party upon request.

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Annex 1

Submission of Japan regarding proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure

The Government of Japan would like to request the following modifications, *highlighted in red*⁸, to the existing Rules of Procedure for adoption at the upcoming COP13.

(1) Rule 2 Definitions

(g) "Proposal" means a draft resolution or recommendation submitted by one or more Contracting Party, *subsidiary body*, or the Standing Committee or the Conference Bureau;
and

Rule 5 Notification

2. Only Parties, *subsidiary bodies*, the Standing Committee and the Conference Bureau shall be entitled to submit proposals.

Rationale: The Facilitation Working Group (a "subsidiary body" as defined in Rule 2 k) of the Rules of Procedure) submitted a proposal to the SC54 for consideration at the upcoming COP13, but this was not taken up at SC54, due to claims by certain Parties, that under the current Rules of Procedure, working groups cannot submit proposals. The proposal was drafted by FWG as a result of Decision 53-04. To reconcile the Rules of Procedure with SC decisions, historical practice of the Convention, and the fact that these working groups were established by the COP or SC with specific terms of reference, we therefore advise the modifications in red above to encourage Resolutions being drafted by working groups.

(2) Rule 14 Secretariat's report on administrative and financial implications of agenda items

The Secretariat shall report, *within 24 hours of at least 60 days before* the opening of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, on the projected administrative and financial implications of all substantive agenda items submitted to the meeting and before decisions on these items are taken by the Conference of the Parties.

Rationale: The Secretariat has sufficient time to consider financial implications of resolutions, as all resolutions that are to be considered by the COP are submitted to the SC six months prior to it. As such, there should be sufficient time to draft above documents well in advance of the COP (Note: Rule 10 states that the Secretariat shall distribute COP documents at least 3 months before the opening of the meeting).

(3) Rule 25 Establishment of subsidiary bodies

2. The Conference of the Parties may decide that any subsidiary body may meet in the period between ordinary meetings. *Intersessional work should normally conclude their work at the last meeting of the Standing Committee preceding a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Any Party*

⁸ Note from the Secretariat: As the document may be printed in black and white, the Secretariat has put the text that was provided in red into *italic font*.

wishing to join or withdraw from an intersessional working group should make the request in writing to the Chair of the Standing Committee through the Secretariat.

3. a) Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties *or the Standing Committee, which established the subsidiary body, the chair for each subsidiary body shall be elected by the Conference of the Parties and shall normally be subject to rotation among the regional groups that subsidiary body shall elect its own officers including the chair, whenever possible from among any interested Parties who were present at the session.*

Rationale: This insertion in red is based on Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of CITES, which in our view, clarifies procedures for interested Parties to become involved in working groups (for example, under current rules, large donors who are not SC members for the triennium cannot be members of the Finance Subgroup and be involved in intersessional budgetary work, potentially hampering financial assistance).

(4) Rule 25

5. d) Interpretation into the official Convention languages shall be provided in sessions of the Standing Committee. *The Secretariat shall endeavour to provide interpretation in other Committee or Working Group sessions, including meetings of the Conference Bureau, subject to available resources.*

Rationale: At the SC54, the SC adopted the report from the Subgroup on Finance, which recommended not to fund interpretation / translation of any documents pertaining to working group reports. The rules need to be consistent with this decision.

(5) Rule 51 Executive summary and summary record *Sound recording of the meetings*

1. A concise executive summary of the decisions of the meetings shall be prepared by the Secretariat for endorsement by the Parties before the closure of the meeting. However, the executive summary of the last day of each meeting shall be sent by email to participating Contracting Parties for endorsement after the meeting.

2. A consolidated summary record of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat and made available on the Ramsar website within 40 days. This shall be presented in the order of the agenda and comprise three parts for each agenda item: a short statement indicating the main points of the discussion; the text indicating the decision that was made, as it appears in the executive summary; and the text of any statement provided by the representative of any Party that was read into the record during the meeting. The list of Parties and observers participating in the debate shall be included in the summary record as well. The Secretariat shall take into account the comments received within 20 days of the circulation and – upon approval of the Chair of the meeting – the Secretariat shall make the final summary record available on the website of the Convention.

3. Sound recordings of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and whenever possible of its subsidiary bodies, shall be kept by the Secretariat, *and shall make the recordings available to any Party upon request.*

Rationale: This insertion in red is based on Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure of CITES, which in our view, leads to greater transparency and accuracy in drafting meeting summaries.

Annex 2

Submission of Sweden regarding proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure

The contracting Parties of the Ramsar Convention has been given the opportunity to suggest amendments in the Rules of Procedure for the next Ramsar triennium. Sweden suggest the changes done by track-changes in the annexed file⁹. Sometimes when we lack enough knowledge about procedures and other documents about the Convention or what the best time-table would be from the secretariats point of view. There is also the question about how to write Rules of Procedures if an introduction of an on-line system for certain parts of the procedure, (see suggestion below) is to be established during the triennium and no one can be sure it will take place or not. In those cases, have we just made comments, combined with a preliminary suggested change and hope that the Secretariat may evolve this in into a suitable amendment. Such changes are marked in yellow.

Sweden would like to make a major change about how the draft resolutions are processed both before and during the COP. We suggest that comments and suggested amendments is done digitally direct in a system developed for such purpose. The IUCN has a good one that the Ramsar Convention may be allowed to use, but other systems may also be considered. In such a system it may also be possible to register a first opinion about each draft and a Contracting Party may vote that this resolution should be forwarded to the COP or not. As a result, the regional meetings and the Standing Committee don't have to use so much meeting time for the resolutions and may focus on the difficult ones/parts. Since we don't know if such a system can be used or not during the next triennium we have written alternate procedures, with the digital one as the first choice.

A digital system may also be used for objections when it comes to allowing organisations as observers at the COP. The present one when deciding at the COP if observers are welcome or not is not very nice. With a decision a month ahead of the COP, the observers will know if they are to be accepted or not and may not travel in vain. It may also be used for extra-ordinary meeting or when voting if an extra-ordinary meeting is necessary or not, how it is to be done and when such meeting shall take place.

There is also the question if there still will be necessary to have the possibility for extraordinary meetings if the Convention is restructured according to the Swiss draft resolution about the Efficiency of the Convention, maybe a lot of negotiations can take place during an equivalent to the Open-ended Working group instead.

We also suggest that the rules under the headline "The Standing Committee, The Conference Bureau and The Subsidiary Bodies" are split into three Rules and that the information is distributed accordingly. The three Rules are; "The rules for the COP bureau", "The rules for the work of the for the time-being permanent subsidiary bodies" and "The rules for the establishment and work of temporarily subsidiary bodies". Everything about the Standing committee should be described in the resolution of the Role of the Standing Committee only.

⁹ Note from the Secretariat: The amendments proposed by Sweden were submitted in an electronic document showing tracked changes. The Secretariat has transferred these to the present document to facilitate comparison of all amendments proposed by Parties for consideration at COP13.

Annex 3

Submission of the United States of America regarding proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure

In accordance with Rule 52.2 of the Rules of Procedure, the United States is pleased to submit a proposal to the Secretariat for edits to the Rules of Procedure to be adopted and in effect for the 13th Conference of the Parties in Dubai in October 2018 and thereafter.

The United States considers the Rules of Procedure to be a critical tool to ensure the work of the Convention proceeds efficiently and effectively. We do not support reopening the Rules for substantive or extensive edits at this time; however, Parties' recent discussions revealed that some phrasing in the Rules has caused confusion. We believe that enhancing the text's precision would benefit Parties' work, and therefore we are proposing some small technical corrections.

The proposed edits are as follows. (1) In Rule 5.1, 34.1, and 34.4 replace "60 calendar days/60 days" with "120 days". This schedules Parties' submissions of draft resolutions prior to the deadline for the Secretariat to distribute documents so they will be translated and distributed alongside the other meeting documents instead of a month or so later, thereby ensuring there is time for adequate consideration by Parties prior to the Standing Committee meeting. (2) In Rule 5.1 insert "or other bodies envisioned in Rule 25" in the final sentence following "the Standing Committee". This ensures that the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and other bodies can continue to submit draft resolutions for Parties' consideration. (3) In Rule 34.4 delete "and amendments to proposals,". This addresses an apparent typographical error that would inadvertently generate an unnecessarily burdensome process to amend draft resolutions being considered during meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Again, we do not believe the time is right for major changes to the Rules but hope that a majority of Parties will agree to reopen them solely to make these proposed technical corrections. We believe doing so will foster smoother Party deliberations at COP-13 and in the future.