



## 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 Rep.1

### Draft Daily Report Day 1 – Monday 22 October (Opening ceremony) Day 2 – Tuesday 23 October (Morning plenary session)

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.
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**

### **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 observers at such meetings to make corrections to these records.

23. The existing Rules of Procedure in document COP13 Doc.4.2 were adopted, with 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'Éducation 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
- Réseau 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 00**.

## 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 00**.
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 00**.
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 00**.
41. Referring to the statement of Ukraine, the **Russian Federation** made a statement for the record of the meeting, which is appended as **Annex 00**.
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.

<b>Agenda item 11.2: Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention - Work of the Secretariat</b>
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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.