



9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods”

Kampala, Uganda, 8-15 November 2005

Report of the Meeting

Opening Ceremony and First Plenary Session

Tuesday 8 November 2005, 18.00-21.00 (Agenda Items I/II)

Wednesday 9 November 10.00-13.00 (Agenda Items III-VIII and X)

Agenda Item I: Opening of the Meeting

Agenda Item II: General Statements

a) Opening ceremony

1. The Opening Ceremony commenced with the symbolic handover of the Ramsar flag from **Mr Antonio Fernandez de Tejada**, on behalf of the Kingdom of Spain, host of COP8, to **His Excellency Kahinda Otafiire**, Minister of Water, Lands and Environment of the Republic of Uganda, host of COP9.
2. Opening statements were made by **Dr Peter Bridgewater**, Secretary General; **Mr Bakary Kante**, Director of the Division of Environmental Conventions, UNEP, speaking on behalf of UNEP's Director General Dr Klaus Toepfer; **Mr Achim Steiner**, Director General of IUCN – The World Conservation Union, speaking on behalf of the Ramsar Convention's International Organization Partners (BirdLife International, IUCN, Wetlands International, and World Wide Fund For Nature); **Ms Dorothy Gwakka**, speaking on behalf of the Civil Society Forum held in Kampala on 3rd and 4th November; **Ms Kathelyne Creaner**, Belgium, speaking on behalf of the Donor Group for Environment and Natural Resources in Uganda; and **His Excellency Kahinda Otafiire**, Minister of Water, Lands and Environment, Uganda.
3. Children from different regions of the world presented messages to the COP conveying the perceptions, concerns and priorities of young people in relation to the meeting's agenda.

b) Presentation of the Ramsar Awards

4. **Mr Philippe Jacob** made a statement on behalf of the Danone Group and presented the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards, comprising the Evian Special Prize of USD 10,000 per award category, a sculpture and the newly created 'Ramsar Jewel' to the following recipients:

- Management category: **Dr Nezami Baloochi, Islamic Republic of Iran**

- Science category: Professor **Shuming Cai, China**
 - Education category: the Award in this category was presented jointly to **Ms Reiko Nakamura, Japan**, and **The Wetlands Centre, Australia**.
5. The **Secretary General** presented Mr Philippe Jacob with the Ramsar Jewel and concluded the Opening Ceremony by reiterating his thanks, on behalf of all participants, to the Host Country, and in particular to Minister Otafiire and to Mr Paul Mafabi, Uganda's National Coordinator for COP9.

Agenda Item III: Adoption of the Agenda

6. The Agenda, circulated as conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 1, Rev. 2, was adopted by consensus.

Agenda Item IV: Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

7. **The Chair** invited participants to adopt the Rules of Procedure, circulated as conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 2.
8. In response to a suggestion from **Argentina**, the **Secretary General** agreed that adoption of the proposed amendments to Rule 27 would be subject to the consideration and adoption of DR11 'Use of the term *Ramsar Secretariat*'.
9. The **UK** pointed out that adoption of the proposed amendments to Rule 5 would require minor consequential amendments to Rule 10 and Rule 35.
10. Subject to the points raised by Argentina and the UK, the COP adopted the Rules of Procedure by consensus.

Agenda Item V: Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and remarks by the Chairperson

11. The **Secretary General** reported that the 32nd Meeting of the Standing Committee (SC32), held on 7 November 2005, had decided to nominate the Minister for Water, Lands and Environment of the Republic of Uganda as President of COP9. SC32 also nominated Australia and Mexico as Vice-Presidents of the COP.
12. The Standing Committee's nominations were endorsed by acclamation.
13. **Switzerland** announced that it would be making available to each COP9 participant a copy of a new book prepared by WWF and entitled 'Freshwater Ecoregions of Africa and Madagascar'. This would hopefully inspire delegates from all regions and help focus attention on wetland conservation priorities in Africa.
14. **Dr Yaa Ntiamoa Baidu** welcomed the publication on behalf of all African participants and thanked WWF, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and USAID for their technical and financial support, and Switzerland in particular for generously enabling distribution free of charge to COP participants. Dr Ntiamoa Baidu presented copies to Minister Otafiire, to the Secretary General, and to Anada Tiéga, former Senior Adviser for Africa in the Ramsar Secretariat.

15. The **UK, speaking on behalf of the EU Member States and the Candidate Countries of Bulgaria and Romania**, reflected on the challenges confronting the COP and urged the meeting to focus on generating strong outcomes, in particular decisions that contribute to meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals, articulating the role of the Convention in sustainable development, delivering the CBD 2010 biodiversity target, and strengthening synergies with other relevant conventions and processes at international, national and regional levels. However, COP decisions must also take account of the capacity of the Secretariat, STRP and Contracting Parties to deliver. In this regard, it was important that the principle of Additional Voluntary Contributions be maintained.

Agenda Item VI: Appointment of the Credentials Committee and any other committees

a) Credentials Committee

16. Based on nominations agreed at SC32 and in conformity with Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure, the COP endorsed the constitution of a Credentials Committee as follows:

AFRICA – Benin (Dr Mamn-Sani Issa)
ASIA – Thailand (Ms Nirawan Pipitsombat)
EUROPE – Switzerland (Ms Nathalie Boesch)
NEOTROPICS – Peru (Ms Cynthia Cespedes)
NORTH AMERICA – Canada (Mr Ken Brock)
OCEANIA – New Zealand (Mr Nik Kiddle)

17. The Committee would be supported in its work by Ms Ursula Hiltbrunner, IUCN, on behalf of the COP Secretariat.

b) Finance Committee

18. Based on the recommendation of SC32 and in conformity with Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure, the COP endorsed the constitution of a Finance Committee as follows:

The members of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance (Argentina, Canada – Chair, Ghana, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Romania), together with the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, China, Colombia, Japan, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Switzerland, UK, USA, plus a further African Contracting Party to be nominated by the Africa Region.

19. The **Secretary General** recalled that meetings of COP Committees are generally open to observers, but that the Chair of each Committee may decide to hold sessions open to Contracting Parties only.

Agenda Item VII: Admission of Observers

20. The observers listed in Ramsar COP9 DOC. 31 were admitted by consensus, subject to a reservation made by **Argentina**.
21. **Argentina** made a formal statement and requested its inclusion in the Report of the Meeting:

“The Argentine delegation wishes to introduce a reservation to the admission as an observer of the British NGO ‘UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum’ and requests that this be recorded in the report of the Conference and in any list of participants or other appropriate document with the following text:

‘A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgias Islands (Islas Georgias del sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del sur), and the surrounding maritime areas’.

The Argentine delegation likewise requests that the following statement be recorded in the Report of the Conference:

“The Argentine Republic reminds that the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del Sur) and the surrounding maritime areas are an integral part of the territory of the Argentine Republic and are illegitimately occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, being subject to a sovereignty dispute between both countries which is recognized by various international organizations.

In this respect, the General Assembly of the United Nations has adopted Resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25, in which it recognizes the existence of a sovereignty dispute referring to the ‘Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)’ and urges the governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to resume negotiations in order to find, as soon as possible, a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute.

On its part, the Special Decolonization Committee of the United Nations has expressed the same request, more recently through the resolution adopted on 15 June 2005. Likewise, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States adopted on 7 June 2005 a new statement on similar terms.

The Argentine Government reiterates the terms of the declaration it formulated in the instrument of ratification to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, signed in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971, and submitted on 4 May 1992, in which the Argentine Republic rejects the extension of the application of this Convention by the United Kingdom to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgias Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del Sur) and reaffirms its sovereignty over these islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of its national territory. It also reaffirms the declaration formulated in the instrument of accession to the amendments of Articles 6 and 7 of the Ramsar Convention, adopted in Regina, Canada, on the 28 May 1987, submitted on 2 May 2001, rejecting the extension of its application to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del Sur) by the United Kingdom.

Likewise, the Argentine Republic reiterates the terms of the note of 24 October 2001, which expresses its rejection of the British designation as Ramsar sites of the territory named ‘Sea Lion Islands’ and ‘Bertha’s Beach’, due to the fact that these belong to the

archipelago of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) that are an integral part of the Argentine territory.

In consequence, the Argentine Republic rejects the references made in the documents of this meeting and in the CD-ROM entitled 'Ramsar sites – Directory and Overview September 2005' to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del Sur) separately from the Argentine Republic. Furthermore, these references do not comply with the guidelines established by the Editorial Directive ST/CS/SER.A/42 used by the UN Secretariat.

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the Argentine Republic requests that in all documents of the Ramsar Convention in which the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del Sur) and the surrounding maritime areas are mentioned, a footnote be incorporated with the following text: 'A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del sur), and the surrounding maritime areas.'

22. **Argentina** further stated: "The Argentine Republic reaffirms its right of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia Islands (Islas Georgias del sur) and South Sandwich Islands (Islas Sándwich del sur), and the surrounding maritime areas."
23. **The UK** made a formal statement and requested its inclusion in the Report of the Meeting:

"The UK, firstly, agrees to the list of observers provided in DOC. 31, including the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF). The UKOTCF has a legitimate interest in all the UK's overseas territories including the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding marine areas. The UK has no doubt about its sovereignty over the islands and has stated this on many occasions in the United Nations. The principle of self-determination underlies our position of sovereignty of the islands, and there can be no negotiation on the sovereignty of the islands unless and until such time as the islanders so wish. In response to the request for a footnote to be added to the Ramsar document, if this is to occur the UK would like the above sentiments also inserted using the following text: "The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands'."
24. **The President** ruled that this Agenda item be kept open for daily updates from the Secretariat in relation to newly registered observers.

Agenda Item VIII: Report of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee

25. The **Chair of the Standing Committee (SC), Dr Gordana Beltram (Slovenia)**, presented her report contained in conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 3.
26. **Japan** expressed its great appreciation of the SC's work and announced the designation on 8 November 2005 of 20 new Japanese Ramsar sites, including those with under-represented wetland types, in response to the global target set at COP8.

27. The **Russian Federation** attached special importance to the SC's work on collaboration with other environmental conventions, especially the CBD, and considered that close cooperation should be established between Ramsar and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as with the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).
28. **Argentina** and the **USA** expressed gratitude to the Chair of the SC for her leadership, commitment and good humour.
29. **Bosnia & Herzegovina** thanked the SC for approving a project submitted by Bosnia & Herzegovina for support under the Ramsar Small Grants Fund (SGF) in 2005.
30. **Kenya** urged the SC to place greater emphasis on communication and feedback of decisions to Contracting Parties, especially during the period between meetings of the COP.
31. COP9 adopted the report of the Chair of the Standing Committee.

Agenda Item X: Report of the Secretary General and overview of the implementation of the Convention at the global level

32. The **Secretary General** presented a summary of his report, contained in conference documents Ramsar COP9 DOC. 5 and Ramsar COP9 DOC. 6.
33. **Bangladesh** requested that greater attention be given to direct sharing of wetland management experience between countries, especially neighbouring countries.
34. **Mexico** stressed the importance of improving synergies between conventions.
35. **Papua New Guinea** reported on its national implementation activities and announced the impending designation of its third Ramsar Site. The Government of Papua New Guinea was committed to the establishment of a representative protected area system covering 10% of its territory by 2010 for terrestrial ecosystems and by 2012 for marine ecosystems. Thanks were due to WWF, Wetlands International, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Ramsar Secretariat for their assistance. Provision of a Ramsar Support Officer for Oceania had greatly enhanced the Convention's work in the region.
36. **Zambia** fully supported the need to forge synergistic relationships between conventions and underscored the need to promote economic valuation of wetlands as part of the poverty reduction agenda. Zambia had designated a third Ramsar Site since COP8 and four more were currently under consideration.
37. **Thailand** endorsed the six imperatives for the next triennium highlighted in the Secretary General's report, especially the need for a fully effective CEPA programme.
38. **Trinidad & Tobago** paid tribute to Uganda as a pioneering force in wetland conservation and thanked Paul Mafabi for his contribution to Trinidad & Tobago's Wetland Management Programme. Trinidad & Tobago concurred with the Secretary General's

observation that many Contracting Parties had found the COP9 National Report format difficult to use. Trinidad & Tobago renewed its commitment to promoting Ramsar in the Caribbean subregion and congratulated Antigua & Barbuda on recently becoming the 147th Contracting Party.

39. **Australia** expressed general satisfaction with the operation of the Convention and its relatively small and effective Secretariat, adding that the treaty's success was due to its sound fundamental principles. Australia looked forward to continuing to be an active and constructive Contracting Party. One new Ramsar site had recently been designated, with a further four in the pipeline.
40. **Argentina** supported the Secretary General's emphasis on simplification of reporting and planning. Since COP8, three new Argentinian Ramsar Sites had been designated, with three more under consideration.
41. **Kenya** encouraged harmonization of the Ramsar National Report format with that of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and urged the SC to analyse the reasons why only 8% of the global targets set at COP8 had been achieved. Kenya had finalized designation of Lake Elmenteita as a Ramsar Site and was currently completing Ramsar Information Sheets for two new coastal sites.
42. **India** reported that of 68 wetlands identified for special attention at national level 27 are Ramsar sites. Six more had just been added to the list. India wished to benefit from the wetland management experience of other countries.
43. **Guinea** described work on transboundary wetlands and added that it had designated 14 Ramsar sites. Guinea would particularly welcome international support to develop management plans and a national wetland policy.
44. As a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), **Malawi** was working with other SADC States to establish many more Ramsar sites in the region. Malawi also welcomed proposals for a simplified and shortened Ramsar National Report format.

Second Plenary Session

Wednesday 9 November 15.00-18.00

Agenda Item X: Report of the Secretary General and overview of the implementation of the Convention at the global level (continued)

45. **Congo** referred to the enormous amount of work carried out in the Congo Basin over the past three years. Five new Ramsar sites, covering a total of 2.2 million hectares were, in preparation.
46. **Lesotho** reported on its establishment of a Joint National Committee to build synergies at national level among the five biodiversity-related MEAs.
47. **Barbados** noted that the Secretary General's report underlined the significant potential for increasing the Convention's membership in the Caribbean subregion. Barbados was

- committed to completing accession formalities before the end of 2005 and work had commenced on an inventory of possible Ramsar sites.
48. **Nepal** announced its recent designation of three new Ramsar sites and expressed commitment to maintaining the ecological status of these sites in spite of conflict-related difficulties and to adding further sites from the country's mountain areas. Nepal wished to hear more about how sites can be effectively managed and how constraints in the field can be dealt with.
 49. **China** reported on its national wetland conservation achievements since COP8, detailing a number of specific initiatives and noting that the total number of wetland nature reserves in China had reached 473. The designation of nine new Ramsar sites had brought the total to 30. Capacity building had been enhanced, including through the hosting of two international workshops, as had inter-agency cooperation and coordination. Nevertheless, China still faced great challenges in balancing ecosystem conservation with economic development.
 50. **Djibouti** stated that it was sparing no effort to implement the main provisions of the Convention in spite of a dearth of human and financial resources.
 51. **Chile** reported on its efforts to develop national policies and strategies for wetland conservation and to build strong ties with both the public and private sectors.
 52. **Cambodia** updated the COP on progress with its national wetland policy formulation and national wetland action plan, noting the management assistance received from a range of partners, restating its commitment to transboundary cooperation, and announcing that a new Ramsar site designation was in preparation.
 53. **Armenia** announced that it would be designating its third Ramsar site in the coming days and that it was also establishing a National Park at Lake Arpi Ramsar site, thanks to financial support from Germany.
 54. **Burkina Faso** noted that it had designated three Ramsar sites in 1990 and was planning to designate 13 new sites before the end of 2005. All 13 sites had been described and the relevant document was ready for sending to the Secretariat. Burkina Faso was also in the process of setting up a task force to coordinate MEA efforts nationally as a means of fostering better implementation.
 55. **Togo** acknowledged the support received from IUCN for conducting a wetland inventory and from WWF for the designation of two new Ramsar sites.
 56. **Peru** reflected on the progress of the Convention since COP8 and joined other Parties in underlining the need for the kinds of synergies with other treaties called for in DR5.
 57. **Malaysia** supported the six imperatives for future actions proposed by the Secretary General and reported on the development of national policies and plans for integrated water management and integrated coastal zone management. Four new Malaysian Ramsar sites had been listed since COP8 and the Administrative Authority was seeking the resources to add further sites in the coming triennium.

58. The **Islamic Republic of Iran** referred to the outcomes of the most recent Asian Regional Meeting and the implementation of COP8 Resolution VIII.41 that had resulted in the establishment of the Ramsar Regional Centre for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia (RRC-CWA) in Iran. The Centre was ready to support the activities of Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties in the region, with public awareness, training, and information exchange being given the highest priority.
59. **Samoa**, speaking as a new Contracting Party, expressed its commitment to the Convention and reminded the COP that linkage of peoples' lives to wetlands is vital in developing countries, particularly in Oceania. Samoa was in the process of designating its second site.
60. **Paraguay** was concerned by the complexity of the National Report format and considered that streamlining the process would be beneficial. Paraguay also pledged to designate two further Ramsar sites by COP10 and reported on consultations with Argentina and Brazil on shared wetlands.
61. **El Salvador** thanked the Secretariat for supporting designation of its second Ramsar site and noted that a wetland inventory process had identified 15 priority wetlands. El Salvador was currently rolling out a programme with UNEP/GEF support, focusing on forging synergies between conventions. Thanks were also due to Spain and to the IUCN Regional Office for Mesoamerica for assistance provided.
62. **Jamaica** supported the Russian Federation in calling for the development of strong links with UNFCCC and felt that the importance of CEPA could not be overstated. Jamaica was grateful to the SC for approving its SGF project proposal to undertake further wetland inventory and assessment work. The STRP should be mandated to assess means of streamlining national reports in conjunction with other conventions. Finally, Jamaica had implemented its COP8 pledge to designate Port Royal as a Ramsar site and committed to two further designations by COP10.
63. **Antigua and Barbuda**, speaking as the newest Contracting Party, pledged its support and full commitment to the Secretary General and shared many of the concerns raised in his report. While there were many challenges ahead, Antigua and Barbuda would do its best.
64. **Seychelles** recalled that it was also one of the youngest members of the Ramsar family, having been an observer at COP8, and pledged to designate three more Ramsar sites in the coming year.
65. **Saint Lucia** underlined the importance of involving local communities in the Ramsar implementation process and raised concerns over the loss of biodiversity due to rapid development of tourism.
66. **Côte d'Ivoire** was pleased to announce that it had fulfilled its COP8 pledge to list at least four new sites by COP9, and thanked Switzerland for its support. However, significant obstacles had been encountered in trying to establish cross-border designations and Côte d'Ivoire therefore welcomed the fact that DR6 was on COP9's agenda.
67. The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** expressed the wish to share experience with other countries and referred to the conflict-related difficulties in managing its two Ramsar sites. The DRC would welcome support to undertake a broad-ranging wetland inventory

with the aim of increasing the number of Ramsar sites. DRC was active in the Nile Basin Initiative, which had a strong emphasis on poverty reduction.

68. **Egypt** urged the COP to prepare a Draft Resolution urging a precautionary approach in responding to the emerging issue of avian influenza. Egypt also pledged to work with the Secretariat in updating its Ramsar site information.
69. The **Secretary General** undertook to refer Egypt's suggestion for a Draft Resolution on avian influenza to the next meeting of the Conference Committee.
70. **Pakistan** reported on its designation of additional Ramsar sites since COP8 and on a major GEF project supported by the Netherlands, UNDP, WWF and the Pakistan Poverty Reduction Fund.
71. **Costa Rica** had designated a new Ramsar site since COP8, bringing the national total to 11. Over the next triennium, priority would be given to development of management plans for these sites and to establishing international agreements relating to transboundary wetlands.
72. **Guatemala** reported on the recently finalized process to formulate a national wetland policy. Three new sites would shortly be designated in addition to the four already listed, while cross-border cooperation with El Salvador and Belize was also being explored.
73. **Madagascar** acknowledged the support that the WWF Madagascar Programme had provided in facilitating Seychelles' accession to the Convention.

Agenda Item IX: Report of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

74. The **Chair of the STRP, Dr Max Finlayson (Australia)**, presented his report contained in conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 4 and introduced the Panel's main outputs contained in DR1 'Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept' and its Annexes A–E .
75. **Argentina** thanked the STRP for its work and recognized that a great deal had been done on a very limited budget. With regard to DR1 and its Annexes, the Americas Region was still working towards a common position on DR1 and requested additional time before the plenary considered this document further. The need for additional time was supported by **Brazil** and **Spain**.
76. The **Secretary General** noted that DR1 was partly a response to Resolution VIII.45 from COP8 and that Annexes A and B had different formulations to C, D and E. The latter three were largely technical, while Annexes A and B suggested changes to the conceptual framework and to the definitions of wise use and ecological character, both of which raised issues of policy.
77. **Norway** supported basing the STRP's work on the outcomes of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA). This would help to increase understanding across conventions. With regard to Annex D, Ramsar reporting and monitoring should be

harmonized with other processes, including reporting on the Millennium Development Goals.

78. **Canada** proposed the establishment of a contact group to deal with DR1 and noted that the grouping of STRP outputs as Annexes to a single DR was a very helpful approach that should be followed in future. **Chile** endorsed the interventions of Argentina and Canada.
79. The **UK, on behalf of the EU Member States present**, recorded its general support for the STRP's work and considered that it would be helpful to prepare for possible contact group discussions if the broad areas of concern among Contracting Parties could be outlined briefly in plenary.
80. Following extensive discussion with contributions from **Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Fiji, France, India, Japan, New Zealand, Paraguay, Russian Federation, Trinidad & Tobago**, and the **UK**, the **Secretary General** advised that he would raise the issue at the next meeting of the Conference Committee, with the most likely outcome being the establishment of a contact group on Annexes A and B to be chaired jointly by Norway and Trinidad & Tobago, both of whom had informally volunteered. However, the final decision on establishment of a contact group and its *modus operandi* would lie with the Conference Committee. The Secretary General requested that informal consultations be held with regard to the concerns expressed by some Contracting Parties in relation to Annexes D and E. This would enable the extent of such concerns to be assessed, bearing in mind the practical constraints on establishing multiple contact groups.

Agenda item XI: Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference and of the Contracting Parties

81. There were no issues arising that participants considered were not otherwise covered under other Agenda items.

Special presentation and Host Country reception

82. **Uganda** made a special presentation on its national wetland conservation activities. This was followed by a reception hosted by the Government of Uganda.

Third Plenary Session

Thursday 10 November 10.00-13.00

Administration/Implementation matters

Agenda Item XII: The Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008: a review of progress

83. The **Secretary General** referred to conference documents Ramsar COP9 DOC. 5 'Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention at the global level' and Ramsar COP9 DOC. 9 to DOC. 13, the overviews of implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan in each Ramsar Region. He pointed out that most issues arising from these documents had already been discussed under Agenda item X. He recalled a lesson emerging from these discussions; namely that the Strategic Plan to be adopted at COP10

would need to consider more realistic global targets than those adopted at COP8. He also noted positive developments in terms of growing cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

84. There were no interventions by Contracting Parties under this item.

Agenda Item XIII: The Convention's Work Plan 2006-2008: introduction and first general discussion, introduction of Ramsar COP9 DR9

85. The **Secretary General** introduced DR9 'Streamlining the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention 2003-2008'. He clarified that the main essence of the Draft Resolution was to trial a framework for the implementation of the existing Strategic Plan through the coming triennium and, in so doing, to gain experience for building a new Strategic Plan to be adopted in 2008 for implementation from 2009 onwards. He apologised that the Secretariat had not made this point sufficiently clear in the COP9 documentation. The Annex to DR9 was not meant to usurp or change the Strategic Plan adopted by COP8 and was not a definitive document, but rather a dynamic one on which the Secretariat would work closely with the Standing Committee to deliver a better strategic approach for the Convention by COP10. The Secretary General noted that the capacity to implement the activities contained in the Annex to DR9 would be framed to a great extent by the outcome of budgetary deliberations under DR13.
86. During debate, **Argentina, India, New Zealand, Spain, Thailand** and the **USA** tabled proposed amendments to DR9 and submitted these in writing to the Secretariat.
87. **Australia** and **Canada** indicated that they would bring forward drafting proposals in due course.
88. **Egypt, India** and **Indonesia** cautioned that the document remained very ambitious and that its implementation might be beyond the capacity of many Contracting Parties.
89. **Trinidad & Tobago** supported the approach followed in preparing DR9, noting that simplified treatment of the Strategic Plan's Operational Objectives would make it much easier for Contracting Parties to monitor implementation on a national basis.
90. **Canada** also felt that the structure of the Annex to DR9 was a useful step forward, but had difficulty in accepting the document in its current form. Over the past few months, Canada, as Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, had been working with the Chair of the Standing Committee and the Director General of IUCN in conducting an appraisal of the Secretary General's performance. The Secretary General had not been given any measurable performance indicators and while DR9 had not been constructed as a basis for measuring the Secretary General's performance, Canada felt it could evolve in that manner.
91. **New Zealand** raised concerns about the implications of DR9 for national reporting, in line with concerns already expressed during discussion of DR1 Annex D. New Zealand would work with the Secretariat on this point.
92. **Wetlands International**, supported by **WWF**, voiced concerns over DR9 as the document currently stood, as it did not set a clear vision for the work of the Convention as

a whole. The strategic plan should inspire and guide not just the Secretariat, but all those who work on wetlands.

93. The **USA** urged that a clear process should be put in place for developing the next Strategic Plan, but that the existing Strategic Plan, as adopted at COP8, should not be considered as the baseline tool to be used in that process.
94. The **UK, on behalf of the EU Member States present**, supported the principle of streamlining the Strategic Plan and welcomed the work done on this since SC31. However, the UK shared the concerns raised by other delegations about how helpful the document would actually be as a management tool. The US suggestion to focus attention on the process for developing the next Strategic Plan was very helpful.
95. **El Salvador**, supported by **Costa Rica**, stressed the need for the Convention to clarify the linkages between key Convention planning and reporting documents; otherwise there would be growing confusion, especially at local level.
96. **Sudan** urged that subregional priorities be recognized.
97. The **Chair** ruled that the Secretary General should establish a drafting group to deal with the issues raised and to prepare a revised version of the text. All interested Contracting Parties should contact the Secretary General. Any substantive points of difference would be reported back to plenary for further discussion.

Agenda Item XIV: Financial report by the Chairperson of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee and proposed budget for the triennium 2006-2008

98. The **Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance**, speaking initially on behalf of the Canadian delegation and the Canadian Wildlife Service, paid tribute to Mr Robert Martel who had tragically been killed shortly after the 31st Standing Committee meeting in June 2005. Mr Martel had led the Canadian delegation as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance and guided the week of budgetary debates with enormous skill, intelligence and good humour and made many good friends in a few short days.
99. **Canada** reported that a new Ramsar site had recently been designated in the heart of British Columbia.
100. The **Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance** then proceeded to present his report, recalling that the members of the Subgroup during the last triennium had been Argentina, Canada, Ghana, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Romania. A number of observers had contributed to the Subgroup's deliberations and there had been close liaison with the Chairs of the SC and STRP, as well as with the Secretariat.
101. The Subgroup had focused on budget management. In 2002 there had been a considerable deficit in the Secretariat's operating budget. Following substantial discussions on expenditure cuts and reallocation of resources, the SC, acting on the Subgroup's advice, had decided to reduce expenditures in many areas, especially in relation to support for the STRP.

102. The Subgroup had concluded that the system for tracking and reporting on expenditure was inadequate, and significant improvements had been made as a result. The audited financial reports were available for consultation and the Subgroup Chair expressed his personal satisfaction that the systems in place were now transparent and easy to follow.
103. The Subgroup had been directed to develop a *modus operandi* for the Ramsar Endowment Fund, but it had not been possible to reach consensus, in spite of considerable effort to do so. DR14 proposed a way forward.
104. DR13 set out the proposed budget for the coming triennium, which represented a 4% increase to address inflationary costs relating to salaries, travel, and operational expenditure. Both the overall budget and allocations within it would be the subjects of discussion for the COP9 Committee on Finance and Budget during the coming days.
105. **The Subgroup Chair** highlighted the adverse impact on the Convention's finances of the high level of outstanding Annual Contributions to the core budget, currently totalling some CHF 661,417.
106. In spite of the challenges, the Secretariat had brought the budget into balance and had excelled in doing so. However, there were still insufficient funds to do all that was being asked of the Secretariat, and there was no alternative but to set priorities and make difficult choices on expenditure.
107. The **Chair of the Subgroup on Finance** recorded his thanks to the Chair of the Standing Committee, who he believed had served the Convention extremely well. He echoed some of her comments under Agenda item VIII concerning the need for stronger links between the Convention's various governance processes and mechanisms. Finally he thanked all Subgroup members and observers, as well as the invaluable support received from the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Paulette Kennedy (Secretariat) and Steven Viric of Canada.
108. The **Vice-President (Australia)**, assuming the Chair, associated all present at the COP with Canada's tribute to Robert Martel and asked for this to be reflected in the Report of the Meeting.
109. The **USA** thoroughly agreed with the need to set expenditure priorities. The position of the US Government was for zero nominal growth in the budgets of all international conventions and organizations.
110. **Nicaragua** looked forward to discussing specific allocations in further detail, given that this would determine the basic functioning of the Convention over the coming triennium.
111. **Mexico** supported the US position that there should be no increase in core budget contributions over the coming triennium.
112. **Japan's** position was also for zero nominal growth, but there was room for a little flexibility and Japan would cooperate closely with the Finance Committee.
113. **Australia** believed that the Convention should be adequately resourced and supported the budget outlined in DR13.

114. The **UK, on behalf of the EU Members States present**, took the general view that the starting point would be zero nominal growth, but the EU Member States shared the position of Japan and stood ready to work with the Finance Committee to see what could be done.
115. **Ecuador** drew attention to the fact that the costs of organizing COP10 were not reflected in the proposed budget and suggested these costs should be taken into account.
116. **Argentina** referred to national budgetary restrictions and was unable to support an increase at this point.
117. **Brazil** also commented on national budgetary constraints; the Brazilian delegation did not have instructions to accept a 4% increase but rather to maintain the current level of expenditure.
118. **Papua New Guinea** and **Samoa** both spoke in support of the proposed budget, noting that new initiatives would require greater resources. Samoa took the opportunity to acknowledge the Ramsar Small Grants Fund, WWF and other partners for financial and technical support.
119. The **Chair** requested participants to take forward discussion of the budget in meetings of the COP9 Finance Committee.

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee

DR1 Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept

120. The **Secretariat** outlined the process agreed by the Standing Committee for further consideration of DR1. A contact group had been constituted and would review Annexes A and B, as well as DR22 Rev.1. The Secretariat would work bilaterally with Contracting Parties to incorporate any proposed amendments to Annexes C, D and E.

DR2 Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention

121. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced DR2.
122. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa**, and the **UK speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present**. Written proposals for amendments were received from **Argentina** and **Austria**.
123. The **Vice-President** asked the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text of DR2 taking into account all of the contributions received, both oral and written, as well as further proposals that might arise from the regional meetings planned for later in the day.

DR3 Engagement of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in ongoing multilateral processes dealing with water

124. The **Secretary General** introduced DR3.
125. Interventions were made by **Australia, El Salvador, Japan, and the UK on behalf of the EU Member States**. Proposed amendments were received in writing from **Japan**, and from the **UK on behalf of the EU Member States present**.
126. The **Secretary General** confirmed that the Secretariat would take note of all these contributions, as well as possible additional inputs from the regional meetings, and would work on preparation of a revised text for the Plenary to consider in due course.

Fourth Plenary Session

Friday 11 November 10.00-13.00

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

DR8 Rev.1 Regional initiatives in the framework of the Ramsar Convention

127. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced DR8 Rev.1 and the associated conference documents Ramsar COP9 DOC. 21 'Proposals for regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention' and COP9 DOC. 8 'Report of the MedWet Coordination Unit'. DR8 Rev.1 included amendments arising from the Oceanian COP9 Preparatory Meeting.
128. During discussion, interventions were made by **Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, France, Ghana, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, New Zealand, Paraguay, PNG (speaking on behalf of the Oceania Region), Romania, Samoa, Spain, Sudan, Uganda, UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**. A number of written amendments were submitted to the Secretariat.
129. **The Chair** requested the Secretary General to bring forward a Rev.2 of the document taking into account all of the amendments received.

DR4 'The Ramsar Convention and the conservation and sustainable use of fish resources'

130. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
131. Interventions were made by **Argentina** (noting that an informal contact group on this DR had been established for the Americas and would bring forward a consolidated written proposal in due course), **Australia, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Saint Lucia, South Africa** (noting that an informal contact group on this DR had been established for the Africa Region and would bring forward a consolidated written proposal in due course), **Thailand, Uganda, and UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**. A number of written amendments were submitted to the Secretariat.

132. **The Secretary General** invited the informal regional contact groups for the Americas and Africa to communicate their conclusions to one another and to come forward with a consolidated text that could either be tabled in plenary or deferred to a formal contact group if substantive issues remained unresolved.

DR5 Synergies with other international organizations dealing with biological diversity; including collaboration on, and harmonization of, national reporting among biodiversity-related conventions and agreements

133. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
134. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Australia, Burundi, Canada, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Guinea, India, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), Uganda, USA** and the **Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity**. A number of written amendments were submitted to the Secretariat.
135. **The Chair** concurred with the Secretary General's proposal that the USA and UK be invited to coordinate an informal working group to bring forward revised text to the Secretariat.

DR6 Designation and management of [transnational] [transboundary] Ramsar sites

136. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**, who drew attention to the use of bracketed terminology in the title and elsewhere in the document.
137. The text was supported by **Argentina** (subject to inclusion of proposed amendments), **Austria, Islamic Republic of Iran and Switzerland**. **Brazil, Chile, El Salvador and Russian Federation** expressed serious reservations. Brazil proposed deferral of the issues covered by DR6 to COP10.
138. The **Chair** concurred with the Secretary General's proposal that Austria, Brazil, El Salvador, Switzerland and other interested parties be invited to seek a mutually acceptable way forward.

Fifth Plenary Session

Friday 11 November 15.00-18.00

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

DR7 Guidance for addressing Ramsar sites or parts of sites which no longer meet the Criteria for designation

139. This Draft Resolution and the associated conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 15 were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
140. Interventions were made by **Malawi** and the **UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.

141. Noting that this was an essentially uncontroversial DR, the **Secretary General** committed to preparing a Rev.1, incorporating the comments made.

DR10 The Role of the Convention in natural disaster prevention, mitigation and adaptation

142. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
143. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Bangladesh, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mali** (on behalf of the informal contact group on this issue for the Africa Region), **Mauritius, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**, and the **USA**. Written statements and proposed amendments were received by the Secretariat.
144. The **Deputy Secretary General** indicated that the Secretariat would prepare a Rev.1 of the Draft Resolution, taking into account the interventions made and amendments proposed.

DR11 Use of the term “Ramsar Secretariat”

145. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
146. Interventions were made by **Japan, Mali, and the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**. Proposed amendments were submitted in writing to the Secretariat.
147. **The Chair** asked the Secretariat to prepare a Rev.1, taking into account the interventions made and amendments proposed.

DR12 Revised *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel

148. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Chair of the STRP** and the **Secretary General**.
149. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Switzerland, UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), Uganda, USA**. There was general support for the Draft Resolution, subject to the inclusion of proposed amendments, which were submitted in writing to the Secretariat. However, **Austria** raised several substantive concerns over the text.
150. **The Chair** concurred with the Secretary General’s suggestion that Austria be invited to form a small informal working group and to liaise with interested Parties and the Secretary General, in order to find a mutually acceptable way forward and to report back to plenary on the results of these deliberations.

DR14 Evaluation of the Ramsar Endowment Fund as a mechanism to resource the Small Grants Fund

151. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.

152. Interventions were made by **Armenia, Ghana, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**. Proposed amendments were submitted in writing to the Secretariat.
153. The **Secretary General** committed to tabling a Rev.1 taking into account the proposed amendments received.

DR15 Wetlands and poverty reduction

154. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
155. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho** (speaking on behalf of the informal regional group for Africa that had dealt with this issue), **Mali, Norway, and UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**. Proposed amendments were submitted to the Secretariat in writing.
156. The **Secretary General** committed to bringing forward a Rev.1, taking into account the comments received and amendments proposed. He noted that there had been no consensus on whether the DR should incorporate use of the term “poverty reduction” or “poverty eradication”. Consequently, both terms would appear in Rev.1 in square brackets.

DR16 The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance

157. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
158. Interventions were made by **Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, Congo, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Japan, Lao PDR, Morocco, Netherlands, Niger, Paraguay, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Zambia, BirdLife International, Wetlands International and WWF**. Many proposed amendments, most dealing with recent or planned site designations, or specific site management measures, were submitted in writing to the Secretariat.
159. **WWF** congratulated Spain for the efforts it had made in response to Resolution VIII.10 paragraph 42 (d) concerning the Spanish National Hydrological Plan. This sentiment was also expressed by the **UK and Wetlands International**.
160. The **Secretary General** committed to bringing forward a Rev.1, taking into account the comments made and proposed amendments received.

DR6 Designation and management of [transnational] [transboundary] Ramsar sites (continued)

161. **Brazil** reported that a group consisting of Austria, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Switzerland, UK and IUCN had met at the end of the 4th Plenary Session. The following text had been agreed as a mutually acceptable way forward:

“In regard to DR6, COP9 requests the Secretariat to consult with IUCN in order to prepare, resources permitting, a list of the existing models of cooperation between countries with adjacent wetlands. Such a list should incorporate explanatory notes on how countries deal with management, legal and immigration issues arising from the cooperation mechanisms. When possible, it should also include the views of Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the involved Parties in regard to these arrangements. This list should be presented to the Standing Committee at its meeting in 2007 as well as to all interested Contracting Parties. The issue should then be brought up once more at COP10”.

Sixth Plenary Session

Saturday 12 November 10.00-13.00

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

DR17 The Convention’s International Organization Partners (IOPs)

162. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
163. Interventions were made by **Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, BirdLife International, and WWF**.
164. The **Secretary General** noted Bangladesh’s concern that special attention should be given to coordination and communication between international NGOs and national NGOs. This concern would be recorded in the Report of the Meeting. He also undertook to raise this point in discussions with the Convention’s International Organization Partners.
165. At the **Chair’s** invitation, DR17 was adopted by acclamation.

DR18 Review of the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

166. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
167. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Japan, Kenya, Mali, UK on behalf of the EU Member States present, and Wetlands International**. Written amendments were submitted to the Secretariat.
168. The **Secretary General** committed to producing Rev.1 taking into account all the comments made and interventions submitted.

DR19 Establishment of an Oversight Panel for the CEPA activities of the Convention

169. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
170. Interventions were made by the **Argentina, Australia, Canada, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kenya, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, UK (on behalf of the EU Member States present), Venezuela and Wetlands International**. Written amendments were submitted to the Secretariat.

171. The **Secretary General** committed to producing Rev.1 taking into account all the comments made and interventions submitted.

DR20 The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention

172. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General** and **Japan** (as the Contracting Party that originally submitted the DR for consideration by the COP).
173. Interventions were made by **Cuba, Korea, Thailand, and UK (on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.
174. **The Chair** asked Japan to lead an informal working group to agree an amended text that would be communicated to the Secretariat for preparation and distribution of Rev.1.

DR21 Integrated, cross-biome planning and management of wetlands, especially in small island developing states

175. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General** and **Samoa** (as the Contracting Party that originally submitted the DR for consideration by the COP, on behalf of Contracting Parties in the Oceania Region).
176. **Samoa** reported on intensive informal discussions that had led to a revised version of the text.
177. In response to clarification sought by **Cuba, the Chair** asked Samoa to consult with Cuba and to transmit an agreed text to the Secretariat for preparation of a Rev.1.

DR23 Rev.1 Extending the effects and benefits of the Ramsar Convention to the wetlands of the Antarctic

178. This Draft Resolution was briefly introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**, who noted that the original text had been submitted by Switzerland.
179. **Switzerland** made the following statement for the record:
- “In a spirit of compromise and openness, Switzerland withdraws the draft resolution DR23 Rev.1 on developing synergies and mutual support between the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Antarctic Treaty. Switzerland will continue to work towards international environmental governance in order to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the multilateral environmental agreements. Nevertheless, Switzerland hopes that the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands will have the opportunity to exchange information with the Arctic Council and the Antarctic Treaty on the issue of polar wetlands and their conservation. Switzerland believes that the upcoming International Polar Year (2007-2008) will offer excellent opportunities in before COP10”.
180. In response to a question from **Denmark**, on behalf of Greenland, the **Deputy Secretary General** stated that the Secretariat did not have direct involvement in the upcoming International Polar Year but had discussed developing links with the Arctic Council and

Conservation of Arctica Flora and Fauna (CAFF), subject to there being no cost implications.

DR24 Ramsar sites and national systems of protected areas

181. This Draft Resolution was briefly introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General** who noted that it had originally been submitted by Nigeria. He also reported on the comments made on the DR by members of the STRP.
182. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Mali, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Russian Federation, Sudan, USA,** and the **CBD Secretariat**.
183. A contact group, under the leadership of Nigeria, was established to take forward discussion of the issues raised and to report back to plenary as soon as possible.

DR25 Managing wetlands and waterbirds in response to highly pathogenic avian influenza

184. This Draft Resolution was introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**. He noted it had been submitted by the Conference Committee, in response to current world events.
185. Interventions were made by **Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Samoa, Senegal, Suriname, Switzerland, the UK (on behalf of the EU Member States present), USA,** and **Wetlands International**.
186. **The Chair** asked the UK to lead a contact group on this DR, noting that many delegations would need to consult their capitals before this issue came back for consideration in plenary session.

DR26 Improving governance of the Ramsar Convention

187. **The Chair** ruled that discussion of this new DR, tabled at the request of the Conference Committee, be deferred until delegations had the opportunity to consider the text more fully.

Seventh Plenary Session

Saturday 12 November 17.15-18.00

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

DR1 Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept

188. The **Secretary General** noted that the contact group on DR1 Annex A & B and DR22 was continuing its deliberations but the co-chairs would be asked to make a progress report later during the session.

189. The **Chair (Australia, Vice-President)** invited comments on Annex C or Ci or Cii.
190. **Australia** tabled amendments to Annex C paragraphs 36 and 37. **El Salvador** tabled text for a new paragraph 38 in section 4.2 of Annex C. **Argentina** raised concerns over paragraph 11 of Annex Ci and from paragraph 77 onwards in Annex Cii.
191. The **Chair** ruled that Australia and El Salvador's amendments were accepted and that these, as well as Argentina's amendments when specific text was available, would be issued as a one-page document. The Annexes would not be reissued in their entirety.
192. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced the suggested amendments to DR1 Annex D, which had been circulated to all Contracting Parties.
193. There being no further comments, the **Chair** ruled that the amendments would be incorporated into Annex D, which was approved for inclusion as an element welcomed by DR1.
194. The **Deputy Secretary General** recalled the earlier plenary discussions on Annexes E and Ei.
195. There being no further interventions, the **Chair** ruled that Annexes E and Ei were approved for inclusion as an element welcomed by DR1.
196. **Norway**, as co-chair of the contact group on DR1 Annexes A & B and DR22, presented a brief progress report, highlighting remaining areas of difficulty, especially in relation to DR22.
197. The **Chair** requested the contact group co-chairs to continue striving for a way forward acceptable to all Parties and asked the contact group to report further to Conference Committee on 13 November.

DR2 Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention

198. The **Deputy Secretary General** briefly reintroduced the text of this DR, which had been tabled originally during the third plenary session, and drew attention to the amendments already introduced at that time.
199. **Canada** proposed deletion of paragraph 120.
200. In response to a proposal from **Brazil** and **Ecuador** to delete the reference in paragraph 17 of Annex 2 to the "*Principles for a Code of Conduct for the Management and Sustainable Use of Mangrove Ecosystems*", the **Secretary General** suggested that while the deletion would be made, the status of the *Code of Conduct* should be kept under review by the Secretariat and the reference reinserted if the *Code of Conduct* was eventually agreed by the countries concerned.
201. The **UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)** wished to put on record that, without prejudice to discussions in the Finance Committee or in relation to DR13, the UK/EU Member States' preference would be for 'Immediate' priorities to be fundable from the Convention's core budget.

202. The **Deputy Secretary General** committed to circulating a Rev.1 including these and amendments, as well as those already introduced during the Third plenary session.

Eighth Plenary Session

Monday 14 November 10.00-13.00

Agenda Item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

203. **Turkey** made a formal statement and requested its inclusion in the Report of the Meeting. The statement included the following reservation concerning Draft Resolutions 1, 3 and 6:

“The Turkish delegation does not approve or adopt DR1 and DR3, which go against the concept of equal footing implementation of the three pillars of sustainable development. The Turkish Delegation also put a reservation on all of DR6 of which the issue of designation and management of transboundary wetlands or sites cannot be the work domain of the Ramsar Convention as clearly stated by the Turkish Delegations participating in COP7 and COP8. Those issues can be tackled by riparian countries only.

The Turkish delegation would like to state that DR1, DR3 and DR6 will have no legal or other kind of binding character whatsoever for Turkey. Turkey will not accept or approve those three resolutions in their entirety.”

204. The full text of the statement is included as Annex IV to the Report of the Meeting.

DR26 Improving management of the Ramsar Convention

205. This Draft Resolution, submitted by the Conference Committee, was introduced by **Canada**. The proposed Governance Working Group was intended to be a small, ad hoc group that would not meet frequently. It would not have any decision-making authority and would not continue to exist beyond COP10. Canada clarified that the Secretary General should be added to the list of proposed members of the Governance Working Group.
206. Interventions were made by **Australia, Bahamas, Ecuador, Japan, Lesotho, Mexico, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.
207. The **Secretary General** noted for the record that the Working Group should draw on the results of the work undertaken by the Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45. He also pointed out that if the Working Group’s work were to be without financial consequences, it would have to work in English only and to meet in association with meetings of the Standing Committee. The Secretariat would produce a Rev.1 taking into account the comments and amendments received.

Agenda Item XVI: Report of the Credentials Committee

208. The **Chair of the Credentials Committee** (Canada) presented the Committee's report. At the time of report writing, the credentials of 115 Contracting Parties had been approved. Since then, Turkey's original credentials had been received, bringing the total to 116. Several Parties had just submitted their credentials. Certain difficulties had been encountered with the credentials of four Central Asian countries. The Secretary General was requested to explore before COP10 options to resolve these difficulties. The Committee also proposed an amendment to Rule 18.1 of the Rules of Procedure. Finally, the Committee expressed its thanks for the efforts made by Contracting Parties and for the support provided by the Secretariat and especially through IUCN.
209. With the agreement of the Meeting, the **Chair** ruled that Contracting Parties would be able to submit their credentials until noon on 15 November. The Credentials Committee report would be submitted for formal adoption during the afternoon of 15 November.

Agenda Item XVIII: Reports and recommendations arising from the Technical Sessions

210. Brief reports on the Technical Sessions on 'Applying the Wise Use principle in Integrated Water Management' and 'Culture and Knowledge in Wetland Management' were presented by **Wetlands International** and the **Secretariat**, respectively.
211. The **Deputy Secretary General** placed on record thanks to all chairs, rapporteurs, facilitators, presenters and participants involved with the Technical Sessions.
212. The **Secretary General** confirmed that all of the presentations, notes, and conclusions of the Technical Sessions would be made available through the Ramsar Web site.
213. The **Deputy Secretary General** referred to the Special Intervention on the Wetlands Synthesis Report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), given by Ms Rebecca D'Cruz, at the start of the Technical Sessions. The STRP had been closely involved in the MA process, providing input and guidance. The MA Secretariat and UN University had facilitated input of additional experts into the work of the STRP. It had been suggested that it might be helpful to highlight the STRP's thinking on the main findings of the MA. Consequently, 14 'key messages' from the STRP had been distributed for delegates' consideration, and are included Annex III of this Report of the Conference.

Agenda Item XVII: Report of the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the Administration/Implementation sessions

Agenda item XIX: Adoption of Resolutions

214. With the agreement of the Meeting, the **Chair** ruled that these two Agenda items would be opened in parallel, so that certain Draft Resolutions might be formally adopted if Contracting Parties were content to do so.

DR6 Designation and management of [transnational] [transboundary] Ramsar sites
(continued)

215. The **Secretary General** noted that the first line of the final paragraph under this DR in the Draft Report of the Fifth Plenary Session should be amended to read:

“COP9 directs that DR6 be forwarded through due process to COP10. In the meantime, COP9 requests the Secretariat to consult with IUCN in order to prepare, resources permitting, a list of the existing models of cooperation between countries with adjacent wetlands. Such a list should incorporate explanatory notes on how countries deal with management, legal and immigration issues arising from the cooperation mechanisms. When possible, it should also include the views of Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs of the involved Parties in regard to these arrangements. This list should be presented to the Standing Committee at its meeting in 2007 as well as to all interested Contracting Parties. The issue should then be brought up once more at COP10”.

216. **El Salvador** placed on record its reservation concerning the form and content of this DR, noting that it dealt with issues that should be submitted to the competent national authorities for approval.
217. In response to clarification sought by **Argentina**, the **Secretary General** responded that the text of the DR would be placed in square brackets and that the interventions of all COP9 delegations would be noted in the documentation submitted to the intersessional process set up to deal with this issue before COP10.

DR7 Rev.1 Guidance for addressing Ramsar sites or parts of sites which no longer meet the Criteria for designation

218. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced the amended text of this DR.
219. **Argentina** drew attention to language corrections required in the Spanish text.
220. **India** made the following statement for the record:

“In relation to the guidance annexed to this DR, while all necessary steps should be taken by Contracting Parties to promote the aims and objectives of the Convention, we must be careful to make sure that the guidance does not impinge on the sovereign rights of a Contracting Party and are not seen as overly intrusive, restrictive or prescriptive.”

221. Subject to the language corrections introduced by Argentina, DR7 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus.

DR11 Rev.1 Use of the term “Ramsar Secretariat”

222. The revised text of this DR was introduced by the **Secretary General**.
223. Interventions were made by **Japan, Mali, Namibia, Switzerland**, and the **UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.
224. The **Secretary General** committed to bringing forward a Rev.2 of this DR, taking into account the comments and amendments received.

Ninth Plenary Session

Monday 14 November 15.00-18.00

Address of His Excellency the President of Uganda

225. The **Chair (Mexico, Vice-President)** introduced the **Secretary General** who reflected on the work of COP9 to date. **His Excellency Kahinda Otafiire**, Minister of Water, Lands and Environment, introduced **His Excellency Yoweri Museveni**, President of the Republic of Uganda, who delivered his address. Noting that 13% of Uganda's territory was covered by wetlands, and that these essentially constituted the headwaters of the River Nile, the President highlighted some of the threats to Uganda's wetlands and his reflections on how those threats might be addressed.

Agenda Item XVII: Report of the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the Administration/Implementation sessions

Agenda item XIX: Adoption of Resolutions (continued)

DR14 Rev.1 Evaluation of the Ramsar Endowment Fund as a mechanism to resource the Small Grants Fund

226. The **Secretary General** introduced the revised text of this DR.
227. Interventions were made by **Armenia, Canada, Ghana, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, and Japan**.
228. In relation to paragraph 10, **Ghana** proposed that the phrase "other organizations within the Asian region to support the establishment of such a mechanism, recognizing that no such mechanism exists for the region" be replaced by "other organizations to support the establishment of such a mechanism for all regions".
229. The **Secretary General** requested that the record show the strong concern expressed by the Asian region and the region's request for assistance from the Secretariat in seeking additional funding.
230. DR14 Rev.1 was adopted, subject to the inclusion of the amendment proposed by Ghana..

DR13 Financial and budgetary matters

231. The **Chair of the Finance Committee** (Canada) presented an update on the Committee's deliberations. Two major issues had been under consideration;
- i) the overall budget (in which two options, a zero growth budget, which would have involved significant cuts in activities; and a 4% increase in dues which would result in a balanced budget in 2006 and a modest surplus in 2007 and 2008, were considered), and
 - ii) allocations within the budget.
232. During the day it had been discovered that an error had been made in calculating the contributions of one Contracting Party resulting in even the 4% option showing significant deficits in all three years of the coming triennium. Discussions had changed focus on where to make cuts to bring the budget back into balance. The Ramsar Database, STRP, and CEPA costs had been looked at in particular. An intervention by the Secretary General had resulted in a proposed reduction in communications activities and certain operating

costs, while retaining the previously proposed allocations for STRP and Ramsar Database, with no proposed reductions elsewhere. A revised version of DR13 would be available for the COP's consideration on 15 November. This would put forward proposals for a 4% increase in dues and a balanced budget.

DR18 Rev.1 Review of the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

233. The revisions to this DR were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
234. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Australia, Japan, the UK and Wetlands International**.
235. The COP adopted DR18 Rev.1 subject to the inclusion of amendments to paragraphs 5 and 5 bis and the deletion of paragraphs 6 and 7.

DR20 Rev.1 The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention

236. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced the revisions to this DR.
237. The COP adopted DR20 Rev.1 by consensus, without further amendment.

DR 17 original version, The International Organization Partners

238. The COP confirmed the adoption by acclamation during the Sixth Plenary Session of DR17.

DR5 Rev.1 Synergies among conventions

239. In response to a request from the **USA**, the **Chair** ruled that consideration of this DR be deferred.
240. **New Zealand**, supported by **Jamaica**, noted that parts of DR5, DR9 and Annex D of DR1 all dealt with the streamlining of national reporting in differing ways. New Zealand would prefer to see these references brought together in the text of DR9, using the following proposed wording:

“REQUESTS the Standing Committee to design a simplified COP10 National Reporting format based on the ‘Framework for Implementation of the Convention’s Strategic Plan 2003-2008 in the 2006-2008 period’ and in so doing ensure that the new format will reduce the overall reporting burden on Contracting Parties by:

- i) reducing duplication in reporting required and/or requested in relevant Resolutions adopted by this and previous COPs;
- ii) ensuring that any new reporting requirements are compensated for by removal of existing requirements, to ensure at least no net increase in reporting; and
- iii) considering reporting requirements of other relevant conventions and agreements and ways to use the information collected for these purposes rather than require collection of additional information.”

241. The **Deputy Secretary General** confirmed that this proposal would be revisited under discussion of DR9 Rev.1.

DR16 Rev.1 Status of Ramsar sites

242. Introducing the revised text of this DR, the **Deputy Secretary General** noted that paragraph 23bis had been introduced in error by the Secretariat (since it had been proposed by an observer but not supported by any Contracting Party), and that paragraphs 25 ix and 25 x should be deleted following updates presented in the Fifth Plenary Session by the **UK** and the **Netherlands**, respectively. These issues were reported in plenary as having been resolved.
243. In response to questions raised by **Lesotho** and **Portugal** concerning interpretation of the Annex, the **Secretary General** suggested that individual Contracting Parties should seek any necessary clarifications from the relevant Senior Regional Adviser in the Secretariat.
244. In response to concern expressed by **Argentina** in relation to paragraph 25 xiii, the **Secretary General** requested that the report show that the Secretariat did want to continue receiving the information concerned, since it was in the interests of both the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat to have the earliest possible notification of possible issues at Ramsar sites. When receiving information from third parties, the Secretariat's first course of action was always to refer the report to the Contracting Party concerned.
245. **Argentina** noted that it was awaiting a clear response from the Secretariat in relation to a request for further information about a report that had been submitted to the Secretariat by a third party, and which concerned an Argentinian Ramsar site.
246. The **Secretary General** confirmed the view he had expressed earlier during the Meeting that there should be a strong focus on strengthening the management of existing Ramsar sites during the next triennium as well as designation of new sites.
247. DR16 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of the corrections outlined by the Deputy Secretary General, corrections to paragraph 29 made by **Algeria, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Norway, Romania**, the **Russian Federation**, and the **UK**, a correction to the Annex made by **Jamaica**, and deletion of paragraph 11, proposed by **Argentina**.

DR19 Rev.1 CEPA Oversight Panel

248. The revisions to this DR were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
249. **Australia** introduced a text change to the first line of Annex 1 which was accepted. **Mexico** also identified the need to check consistency and intended meaning of the various language versions in the first line of Annex I.
250. **Mexico** proposed further amendments to Annex I: in point v., insert at the end "and taking into consideration appropriate and balanced geographical representation"; the final part of the last paragraph should read: "...involved in deliberations and the results shall be translated into the official and other languages and posted on the Ramsar Web site, as well as through the CEPA electronic network".

251. The latter proposal was supported by **China** and the **Islamic Republic of Iran**.
252. DR19 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of the amendments outlined above.

DR21 Rev.1 Integrated cross-biome planning

253. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced the revisions to this DR.
254. DR21 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus without further amendment.

Agenda Item XX: Election of the Contracting Parties that will serve on the Standing Committee

255. Following nominations determined by each Ramsar region during the course of COP9, the following Contracting Parties were elected by acclamation to serve on the Standing Committee for the triennium 2006-2008:

Africa: Benin, Gabon, Kenya and Malawi
Asia: China, Iran and Thailand
Europe: Austria, Czech Republic, Georgia and Slovenia
Neotropics: Bahamas, El Salvador and Ecuador
North America: United States
Oceania: Samoa

256. **The UK**, on behalf of the European region, thanked Armenia for its effective representation on the Standing Committee for the previous two triennia.

Tenth Plenary Session

Tuesday 15 November 10.00-13.00

Agenda Item XIX: Adoption of Conference Resolutions (continued)

DR2 Rev.1 Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention

257. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
258. There being no interventions from the floor, DR2 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, without further amendment.

DR3 Rev.1 Engagement of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in ongoing multilateral processes dealing with water

259. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
260. Interventions were made by **Australia, India, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland** and **Wetlands International**.

261. **India** noted for the record its conviction that Contracting Parties should be assessing progress and resources invested in implementing an ecosystem approach to integrated water resources development and management over the next triennium, as well as facilitating resources for promotion and implementation of integrated water resources development and management nationally.
262. DR3 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of agreed amendments.

DR4 Rev.1 The Ramsar Convention and conservation, production and sustainable use of fisheries resources

263. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
264. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Colombia, Israel, Japan, Norway, New Zealand, South Africa, Suriname, Switzerland, Thailand, the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), BirdLife International** and **WWF**.
265. **Argentina** noted that in finalizing wording of the fifth box under “Issue 3: Management of Fisheries”, care should be taken to ensure that its scope was clearly within the remit of the Convention.
266. DR4 Rev. 1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of agreed amendments and language corrections to the Spanish text.

DR8 Rev.2 Regional initiatives in the framework of the Ramsar Convention

267. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**, who noted that some square bracketed text was pending final adoption of DR13 on Financial and Budgetary Matters.
268. Interventions were made by **Albania, Brazil, China, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, India, Lesotho, and the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.
269. DR8 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of agreed amendments, and subject to the adoption of DR13.

DR9 Rev. 1 Streamlining the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention 2003-2008

270. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**. He noted that the annexed Framework would continue to evolve over the coming triennium.
271. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Colombia, India, Japan, The Netherlands New Zealand, the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), the USA, and Wetlands International**.
272. **New Zealand** noted that the National Reporting elements of DR 1 Annex D, DR5 and DR9 should be harmonized by using the following text in DR9, with appropriate cross-references in the other two documents:

“REQUESTS the Standing Committee to design a simplified COP10 National Report format based on the framework for the implementation of the Convention’s Strategic Plan 2003-2008 in the 2006-2008 period, taking into account reporting issues in DR5 and DR1 Annex D, and, in so doing, to ensure that the new format will reduce the overall reporting burden on Contracting Parties by:

- i) reducing duplication required and/or requested in relevant resolutions adopted by this and previous COPs;
- ii) ensuring that any new reporting requirements are compensated for by removal of existing requirements, to ensure at least no net increase in reporting requirements;
- iii) considering reporting requirements of other relevant conventions and agreements and ways to use the information collected for these purposes rather than require collection of additional information; and
- iv) assessing the contribution of Ramsar reporting to other conventions’ equivalent processes, including inter alia the 2010 Biodiversity Target.”

273. **The Netherlands** stated that, in its view, the proposed striking out in the Annex of references to the Kyoto Protocol was a policy-related amendment and not simply an editorial change. While understanding the reason behind the proposal, the Netherlands wished to replace the deleted text with a reference to the role of wetlands in implementing the UNFCCC.
274. The **USA** proposed that the deletions should stand without further amendment.
275. The **Secretary General** recalled that COP8 had taken a decision on climate change issues and that this was clearly an area on which the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat would continue to work, and which could be reflected on between COP9 and SC34.
276. **The Netherlands** thanked the Secretary General for his helpful explanation and agreed to drop its proposal, provided that the discussion was noted in the Report of the Meeting.
277. **Colombia**, supported by **Brazil**, raised concerns over use in the Annex of the phrase “transboundary wetlands”. The **Secretary General** recalled that this wording was a direct quote from the existing Strategic Plan, but that Colombia’s concern would be noted in the Report of the Meeting and reflected during the first revision of the Annex after SC34.
278. DR9 Rev.1 was adopted subject to inclusion of agreed amendments, and subject to adoption of DR5 (to take account of New Zealand’s proposal).

DR10 Rev.1 The role of the Ramsar Convention in the mitigation of impacts associated with natural phenomena

279. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
280. Interventions were made by **Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Ghana, Japan, Mali, Mexico, Paraguay, Russian Federation, The Netherlands, Suriname, Switzerland, USA, Wetlands International and WWF**.

281. Many delegations wished to comment on the relative merits of the phrases “services” and “benefits”. The **Chair** ruled that this debate be held over until discussion of DR1 Annex. At that time, a generic decision on terminology would be made and the Secretariat would incorporate the agreed text into all relevant Draft Resolutions when COP9 outputs were being finalized.
282. DR10 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of agreed amendments and pending adoption of DR1 Annex A with regard to a generic decision on the language to be used for the ‘benefits/services’ issue.

DR11 Rev.2 Use of the term and status of the “Ramsar Secretariat”

283. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
284. There being no interventions from the floor, DR11 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus, without further amendment.

DR12 Rev.1 Revised *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

285. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
286. Interventions were made by **Malawi, the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), and the Chair of the STRP**.
287. DR12 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus subject to inclusion of the minor amendments agreed.

Agenda item XVI: Report of the Credentials Committee

288. The Credentials Committee Report, as presented during the 8th Plenary Session on 14 November, was adopted by consensus. The Committee Report is included as Annex I of the Report of the Conference.

Eleventh Plenary Session

Tuesday 15 November 14.00-19.00

Agenda Item XIX: Adoption of Conference Resolutions and Recommendations (continued)

DR15 Rev.1 Wetlands and [poverty reduction] [poverty eradication]

289. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
290. Interventions were made by **Burkina Faso, Gabon, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, The Netherlands, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, the UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present), and Wetlands International**.

291. Following considerable debate over the relative merits of using the phrases “poverty reduction” or “poverty eradication” in the title of this DR (and elsewhere in the text), the **Chair** observed that there seemed to be an emerging preference for “reduction”.
292. **Indonesia** indicated a preference for the use of “eradication”, this being more in line with UN terminology.
293. The **Secretary General** stated that while “reduction” seemed to enjoy greater support among Contracting Parties, the Report of the Meeting would make Indonesia’s position clear.
294. DR15 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of agreed amendments, and to incorporation by the Secretariat of generic language on benefits/services, to be determined during discussion of DR1 Annex A.

DR24 Rev.1 Ramsar sites and systems of protected areas

295. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**, who noted that the Secretariat was engaged in discussions with the Chair of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) with a view to developing a programme of cooperation over the coming three years.
296. Interventions were made by **Benin, Gabon, Sudan, the UK, and the USA**.
297. DR24 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus subject to the deletion of paragraphs 1 and 4 (shown in square brackets), incorporation of corrections identified by the Secretariat, and editorial amendments submitted in writing by the UK.

DR25 Rev.2 Managing wetlands and waterbirds in response to highly pathogenic avian influenza

298. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General** and by the **UK** as the focal point for the informal contact group on this text.
299. The **UK** thanked all Contracting Parties and Observers who had contributed constructively to the contact group and bilateral discussions. The square brackets in paragraph 11 had been included in error and should be removed.
300. Interventions were made by **Belgium, Canada, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Viet Nam** and the **Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species**.
301. Following discussion of the need to amend the title of the Draft Resolution, consensus was reached on the use of: “Highly pathogenic avian influenza and its consequences for wetland and waterbird conservation and wise use”.
302. DR25 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus, subject to the above-mentioned amendment to the title.

DR26 Rev.1 Improving management of the Ramsar Convention

303. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Secretary General**.
304. The **State Minister, Ministry of Environment and Physical Development of the Republic of Sudan**, presented a general statement to the COP, which concluded with an expression of support for DR26 Rev.1.
305. **Ecuador** noted the need for language corrections to the Spanish text.
306. DR26 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of language corrections in the Spanish version.

DR22 Rev.2 Taking into account the cultural values of wetlands

307. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General** and by **Norway**, as co-chair (with Trinidad & Tobago) of the relevant contact group. **The Deputy Secretary General** noted that the contact group had worked long and hard on DR22 as well as on DR1 Annexes A & B. He also indicated the need for minor corrections in paragraph 10 bis (all language versions) and paragraph 13 of the French text.
308. **Norway** reported that the contact group had held three days of early morning, lunchtime and evening sessions, so that the Rev.2 text represented the result of considerable efforts. There had been general agreement within the contact group that cultural values were very important for the identification and designation of Ramsar sites. Rapid agreement had been reached on the preambular text, but not on the operative paragraphs. One key point had been whether or not cultural values could be included under Article 2.2 of the Convention and if the ability to do this was provided by Resolution VIII.10. The Rev.2 text reflected a delicate balance of views and enjoyed consensus in the contact group. As co-chair, Norway urged its adoption. Thanks were due to all contact group participants and especially to Trinidad & Tobago as co-chair.
309. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Benin, Chile, Fiji, Senegal, Sudan, and Suriname**.
310. **Suriname** made the following statement: "In Suriname we have two tribal groups, who are the Indigenous Peoples and the Marroons, and both rely on wetlands. Therefore the delegation of Suriname requests the Conference of Parties to mention both groups. That means that everywhere, in all Resolutions, where Indigenous Peoples are mentioned, Marroons must be added".
311. The **Secretary General** responded that while it was not feasible to adapt all Resolutions to the specific situation of individual Contracting Parties, Suriname's intervention would be included in the Report of the Meeting.
312. By way of further responding to Suriname's concerns, the **Chair** ruled that paragraph 1 should be harmonized with paragraph 2 by use of the wording "local communities and indigenous peoples" in both paragraphs.
313. **Chile** noted for the record its view that, "notwithstanding the cultural importance of wetlands, the primary objective of Ramsar is the conservation of the ecological character of

wetlands as habitat for wildlife. In Chile there are Ramsar-listed wetlands that do not have any special cultural values associated with them, but which are of great ecological importance”.

314. **Argentina** noted for the record its position that this Resolution should be understood in the context of Article 2.2 of the Convention. **Chile** and **Argentina** also pointed out the need for harmonization between the English and Spanish texts, especially in paragraphs 10 bis and 13.
315. **Fiji** thanked all members of the contact group on behalf of **Samoa**, the original sponsor of this Draft Resolution, for agreeing to paragraph 14 on the additional characteristics that could be considered, alongside the criteria set out in Article 2.2, when designating Ramsar sites. Fiji hoped to be present at COP10 as a Contracting Party.
316. DR22 Rev.2 adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of one minor amendments and harmonization of the English and Spanish texts.

DR1 Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept

317. The revisions to the Annexes of this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Deputy Secretary General**.

DR1 Annex C, Rev.1, Annex Ci Rev.1, Annex Cii Rev.1

318. The **Deputy Secretary General** recalled that the COP had already approved the amendments shown in Annexes C Rev.1, Ci Rev.1 and Cii Rev.2, but that it was necessary to confirm this approval under the present Agenda item.
319. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Austria, Mexico** and **Switzerland**.
320. Annex C Rev.1, Annex Ci Rev.1 and Annex Cii Rev.1 were approved by consensus to be formally welcomed through DR1, subject to the inclusion of further agreed minor amendments, incorporation of generic language on benefits/services according to the decision reached on DR1 Annex A, and harmonization of the English and Spanish texts.

Ramsar COP9 DR1 Annexes D, E and Ei

321. The **Deputy Secretary General** recalled that the COP had already approved these three Annexes but that it was necessary to confirm approval under the present Agenda item.
322. Annex D, Annex E and Annex Ei were approved by consensus, without further amendment, to be formally welcomed through DR1.

Ramsar COP9 DR1 Annex A Rev.1

323. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced DR1 Annex A Rev.1, recalling that the text had been subject to lengthy negotiation in a contact group co-chaired by Norway and Trinidad & Tobago. The same contact group had dealt with DR1 Annex B and DR22.

324. **Norway**, as co-chair (together with Trinidad & Tobago) of the contact group, thanked participants in the contact group and acknowledged the support provided by the STRP and Secretariat. The group had focused on definitions and was recommending an amended definition of ‘ecological character’ on the understanding that once this amendment had been made it would apply to all subsequent resolutions referring to ‘ecological character’. Two issues of particular concern had been: (a) to avoid insertion of ambiguity in the points following paragraph 18; and (b) to reach consensus on the ecosystem services/benefits issue. The resulting Rev.1 text struck a delicate balance among interested delegations. The consensus had been to substitute “services” with “benefits” but only subject to inclusion of a footnote showing clearly the linkages to the terminology used in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA). Finally, a new paragraph 7 reflected the decision already made by COP9 that the STRP would continue to work on harmonizing definitions and terms used in Ramsar Convention documentation.
325. Interventions were made by **Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Switzerland**.
326. Responding to concerns raised by Mexico and Switzerland, the **Secretary General** cautioned against reopening lengthy discussions. He noted that the contact group had been quite large, with a good cross-section of Contracting Parties represented, and that it had reached a consensus. He recalled a proposal made by Ghana that the wording “benefits/services” could be used throughout as a compromise means of keeping the document alive. He stressed that the international debate on this topic would go on. Given the clear understanding from the contact group that “benefits” should be used, subject to inclusion of a footnote linking to the MA, whereas Switzerland and others pointed out, rightly, that “services” was the term used in other international fora, this seemed a possible way forward. The Secretary General urged Contracting Parties to adopt this compromise, otherwise an enormous amount of time, effort and money risked being wasted. Finally, he clarified that the Secretariat would incorporate this compromise language, if adopted, into all COP9 Resolutions and their Annexes, unless the context was clearly wrong.
327. DR1 Annex A Rev.1 was approved by consensus to be formally welcomed through DR1, subject to harmonization of “benefits/services”.

Ramsar COP9 DR1 Annex B Rev.1

328. The **Deputy Secretary General** introduced DR1 Annex B Rev.1.
329. **Norway**, as co-chair of the relevant contact group, renewed its thanks to participants and to the STRP and Secretariat. There had been extensive debate on the use of “near natural” versus “most natural”. The contact groups also wished to draw the plenary’s attention to three new paragraphs on artificial wetlands; the Secretariat had been asked to place these appropriately within the document.
330. Interventions were made by **Brazil and Ecuador**. Citing its great concern in regard to artificial wetlands, **Brazil** made the following statement for the record: “Taking into account that in some cases artificial wetlands could have replaced natural wetlands with different biodiversity values that had been lost historically, we would like to suggest that STRP would develop a revision on the procedure of including sites in the List, including the possibility of using multicriteria, in order to avoid that artificial sites whose process of conversion caused negative environmental impact are included and we may lose credibility

on the List". In this context, Brazil requested advice from the Secretariat on how to proceed and whether it would be appropriate to amend DR2 to include a corresponding instruction to the STRP.

331. The **Deputy Secretary General** recalled that the STRP had been mandated with an ongoing task to keep under review the criteria and guidelines for designation. Taking this point into consideration, alongside Brazil's intervention, the STRP would undoubtedly pay special attention to this issue at its next meeting. Therefore, it was not necessary to amend DR2.
332. DR1 Annex B Rev.1 was approved by consensus to be formally welcomed through DR1, subject to appropriate placing of the paragraphs on artificial wetlands.

DR1 Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept

333. The **Chair** invited the COP to adopt the whole of DR1, including the welcoming of its Annexes A, B, C, Ci, Cii, D, E and Ei.
334. DR1 was adopted by acclamation.

DR13 Rev.2 Financial and budgetary matters

335. The revisions to this Draft Resolution were introduced by the **Chair of the COP9 Finance and Budget Committee (Canada)**.
336. **The Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee** noted that STRP funding had been rolled-up into a single budget line (2b), with no provision for an STRP support officer *per se*, or for STRP travel support. Some reductions, in comparison to the original text of DR13, had been made in the budget lines relating to the Ramsar Database, operating costs, and communications/reporting. The projected budgetary shortfall for 2006 would be covered from the existing Reserve. Regional initiatives were detailed in a footnote. There were also two new Annexes relating to arrears and annual contributions. Thanks were due to all participants in the Committee's deliberations for the constructive cooperation shown, and to the Finance Subgroup of the Standing Committee for its work over the last triennium.
337. Interventions were made by **Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Ghana, Japan** and the **UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)**.
338. The **Chair** ruled that Annexes II and III should become Information Documents, in line with the practice followed by other MEAs, and should be made available on the Ramsar Web site.
339. **Argentina** reminded the COP of its earlier statement relating to national budgetary difficulties. While Argentina would not stand in the way of consensus, it reserved the right to ask for changes to the way in which the scale of contributions was determined.
340. **Brazil** stated for the record that it would not block consensus but that its strong preference would have been for a zero growth budget.

341. In response to a concern raised by **Ghana**, the **Secretary General** noted that the information contained in Annex III was derived from the Convention's database and that inevitably errors sometimes occurred. Any Contracting Party concerned that the information shown was incorrect or out-of-date was invited to contact the Secretariat.
342. The **UK (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present)** noted for the record that agreement to transfer funding for an STRP support officer into budget line 2b) had been conditional on this budget line incorporating annual indexation of 1.5% and not being subject to cuts during the triennium. The UK also recalled its position during discussion of DR8 that there should be a footnote relating to SC34's decision on a budget for the High Andes initiative.
343. **Japan** welcomed DR13 Rev.2, supporting the conversion of Annexes II and III to Information Documents, and thanking Canada for its excellent work over the past triennium.
344. The **Secretary General** echoed Japan's thanks to Canada.
345. DR13 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus subject to transfer of Annexes II and III to Information Documents. The adoption of the Draft Resolution was welcomed by acclamation.

DR5 Rev.1 Synergies with other international organizations dealing with biological diversity; including collaboration on, and harmonization of, national reporting among biodiversity-related conventions and agreements

346. The **Chair** invited the UK and the USA, as focal points for informal contacts on this Draft Resolution, to report on progress.
347. The **UK** was content to accept the text as it stood, subject to a further addition to paragraph 8 bis.
348. The **USA** made the following statement: "The US, in the interest of consensus in the Ramsar Convention, reluctantly accepts the word 'harmonization' in the context of this Resolution. However, we wish to strongly note, for the record and insertion into the conference report, that the US defines 'harmonization' as the reduction of duplication in national reporting".
349. Additional interventions were made by **Australia, the Russian Federation,** and the **UK**.
350. DR5 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of agreed amendments and taking into consideration the statement made by the US.

DR27 Thanks to the host country

351. This Draft Resolution was briefly introduced by the Secretary General and adopted by acclamation.

Agenda Item XXI: Date and venue of next Ordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

352. The **Secretary General** introduced conference paper COP9 DOC 27: 'Date and venue of next Ordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP10)', noting that a formal and properly defined invitation had been submitted by the Republic of Korea.

Presentation by Republic of Korea

353. **The delegation of the Republic of Korea** invited the **Governor of Gyeongsangnam-do Province** to present the Republic of Korea's formal invitation for COP10.
354. The illustrated presentation highlighted Korea's wetland heritage, the strong community support for hosting COP10, and formation on 1 Feb 2005 of the Government Committee for Ramsar COP10. Special thanks were accorded to NGOs for their cooperation, including adoption of a special resolution on 2 February, World Wetlands Day, 2005. The actions to date of the Government of Korea were summarized, including the establishment of an official dialogue with the Ramsar Secretariat in March 2005, and official submission in July 2005 of a formal proposal to host COP10. Holding COP10 in the Republic of Korea would raise awareness of environmental issues, strengthen wetland policies and foster international cooperation. The venue would be the City of Changwon, in Gyeongsangnam-do Province, specifically the new Changwon Exhibition and Conference Centre, capable of hosting 5,000 participants. Accommodation options were reviewed, the city's natural environment highlighted, and plans for the period between COP9 and COP10 summarized. The Republic of Korea was committed to organizing a memorable event in full partnership with diverse stakeholders. Furthermore, the Republic of Korea would contribute domestic costs of USD 2.5 million, as well as covering the Secretariat's costs in relation to COP10. All COP9 participants were warmly welcomed to Korea and its beautiful wetlands.
355. The **Governor's** presentation was greeted by applause and was followed by screening of a video on Korean wetlands.
356. The **Chair** warmly thanked the Republic of Korea for its invitation and opened the floor to comments.
357. **Japan** fully supported the offer of the Republic of Korea to host COP10. Japan had hosted COP5 in Kushiro 1993. At that time, there had been only 11 Contracting Parties in the Asian region and recognition of the importance of wetlands and the Ramsar Convention was low in Asia. The Kushiro Conference was a strong driving force to raise public awareness for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and to increase the number of Contracting Parties in the region to the current total of 26. Nevertheless, there were still 17 non-Parties in Asia, representing the largest gap in Ramsar's global coverage. Japan also appreciated the Republic of Korea's efforts for the conservation and wise use of wetlands at national and local government levels, as well as at NGO and local community levels. For these reasons, Japan expected that all Contracting Parties would support Korea's offer and looked forward to meeting in Gyeongsangnam-Do Province in 2008.
358. COP9 indicated by warm acclamation its acceptance of the Republic of Korea's offer to host COP10 in 2008.

359. **A representative of the Republic of Korea** stated that it would be a great privilege to host COP10 in the Republic of Korea and wished to express heartfelt thanks for the kind support shown by COP9. Korea had made significant progress towards sustainable development through wetland conservation and wise use. As host nation for COP10 even greater efforts would be made. Wetlands had great ecological and cultural values and importance in Korean life, but were nevertheless decreasing due to industrialization and urban development. COP10 would be a great opportunity to raise public awareness in Korea, but would also contribute significantly to the wider international environment agenda. Working in partnership would be the key principle. Hosting COP10 would mean a great deal to the Republic of Korea, which was striving for a balance between environment and development. Sincere thanks were due to the governments and other participants attending COP9; Korea wished all delegates a safe journey home and hoped to meet again at COP10 in Korea. The address by the representative of the Republic of Korea was received by applause.
360. **Romania** announced that it had submitted to the Secretary General an official letter, signed by the appropriate Minister, expressing the intention of the Romanian Government to host COP11.
361. Expressing thanks on behalf of the COP, the **Chair** assured Romania that its offer would receive careful consideration.

Agenda Item XXII: Any other business

362. **Iraq** made a statement noting that it was attending COP9 as an observer, but would soon accede to the Convention and participate at COP10 as a Contracting Party. The eastern part of the famous Mesopotamian Marshes would be submitted as the country's first Ramsar site. Iraq wished to recognize the assistance provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UNEP, the US Mission in Baghdad, and the Italian Ministry of Environment. Iraq considered its presence at COP9 to be an indicator of reintegration with the international community after decades of tragic circumstances. Iraq's statement was received by applause.
363. Thanks to the Ugandan hosts of COP9, and to all those involved in making the COP possible, were extended by **Ghana, speaking on behalf of African delegations**; by **Japan, speaking on behalf of the Asian region**; by the **UK, speaking on behalf of European countries**; and by **Grenada**.

Agenda Item XXIII: Adoption of the report of the 9th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

364. The **Chair** recalled that the Draft Report of the Meeting, up to and including Monday 14 October, had been distributed in the official languages.
365. The **Rapporteur** noted that paragraphs 20-22 should remain in square brackets, given that consultations with capitals were ongoing. The relevant paragraphs would be finalized subject to agreement between the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties concerned. The final version would include Argentina's response to the UK's intervention.

366. The **Rapporteur** also noted that, in line with normal Convention practice, the Draft Report for the final day, i.e. Tuesday 15 November, would be approved by the Chair of the Standing Committee.
367. There were no oral amendments, though a few minor editorial corrections were submitted in writing to the Rapporteur.
368. The Report of the Meeting was adopted by acclamation, subject to finalization of paragraphs 20-22, editorial polishing and incorporation of editorial corrections, and approval of the Draft Report for the final day by the Chair of the Standing Committee.

Agenda Item XXIX: Close of the meeting

369. Closing remarks were made on behalf of the **national NGO community** (represented by Ruth Mubiru, Director, Uganda Women's Tree Planting Movement); the world's **indigenous peoples** (represented by Onel Masardule A., Fundación para la Promoción del Concimiento Indígena – FPCI, Panama); and Ramsar's **International Organization Partners** (represented by David Pritchard, BirdLife International). Both the national NGOs' and indigenous peoples' representatives called for greater participation at COP10: in particular, national NGOs should be included in official delegations, while indigenous peoples were looking for concrete follow-up to Resolutions adopted at COP7 and COP8. The five IOPs reflected on the outcomes of COP9, pointing to successes, but underlining the need for the Convention to renew its efforts for greater high-level political impact.
370. The **Secretary General** noted that COP9 marked the last Ramsar COP for both Eckhart Kuijken (Belgium) and Torsten Larsson (Sweden), who had been involved with the Convention since its inception since 1971. He thanked Gordana Beltram (Slovenia) as outgoing Chair of the Standing Committee, as well as all members of the Secretariat, and extended special thanks to the Government of Uganda, particularly the Minister of Water, Lands and Environment and his staff, the Minister of State, and the National Coordinator for COP9 Paul Mafabi.
371. The **Minister of Water, Lands and Environment of the Republic of Uganda** thanked delegates for honouring Uganda by attending COP9. The Government of Uganda was committed to fulfilling its Ramsar obligations and had consequently designated several new Ramsar sites, and thanks were due to WWF, BirdLife International, DANIDA and others for their support in enabling these designations. Uganda would continue to work with all parties for successful implementation of the Convention and for preparation of COP10. Thanks were due to the Secretary General and to the Secretariat, as well as to the Wetland Inspection Division of the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, for a job well done in ensuring the success of COP9.
372. Looking forward to meeting again at COP10, the **Chair** declared COP9 closed.

Annex I

Report of the Credentials Committee

presented to the Plenary of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties
on 14 November 2005

1. Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure provides for a Credentials Committee composed of one Party from each of the Ramsar regions, elected at the first session of each ordinary meeting on the basis of a proposal from the Conference Committee, which shall examine the credentials and submit its report to the Conference of the Parties for approval.
2. On the basis of Rule 19, the Conference elected the following members to the Credentials Committee:

For Africa: Benin (Dr Maman-Sani ISSA); for Asia: Thailand (Ms Nirawan PIPITSOMBAT); for Europe: Switzerland (Ms Nathalie BOESCH); for the Neotropics: Peru (Ms Cynthia CESPEDES); for North America: Canada (Mr Ken BROCK); for Oceania: New Zealand (Mr Nik KIDDLE). Canada was named Chair. The Ramsar Bureau assigned Ms Ursula Hiltbrunner as Secretary to the Committee.

3. The Committee referred to Rule 18.1 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides that “the original of the statement of credentials of the head of delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives, and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary General of the Convention or to his/her designated representative if possible not later than twenty-four hours after the opening of the meeting. Any later change in the composition of the delegation shall also be submitted to the Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General. After the opening of the COP, any further changes, in particular of the Head of Delegation, shall be submitted to the Secretary General or to the Regional Representative on the Credentials Committee”. Moreover, the Committee referred to Rule 18.4 of the Rules of Procedure which provides that “a representative may not exercise the right to vote unless his/her name is clearly and unambiguously listed in the credentials”.
4. In accordance with these requirements, the Committee confirms the credentials submitted by delegates of 116 Contracting Parties:

Albania, Algeria, Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Serbia & Montenegro, Seychelles, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland,

Syrian Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Viet Nam, and Zambia.

5. Four Central Asian countries (Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) were unable to produce valid credentials due to the fact that Ministers of Foreign Affairs of these countries only sign documents addressed to Heads of State and the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Kyrgyz Republic has presented an original with a seal, however without the required signature. On 18 October 2005, the Secretariat had drawn the attention of the relevant authorities to Rule 18, paragraph 2 of the Rules of Procedures pointing out that the signature of the Minister of Foreign Affairs or his or her equivalent is an essential requirement in order to validate the credential of the Kyrgyz Republic. It appears that Central Asian countries are encountering similar problems with other Conventions. The Credentials Committee requests the Secretary General to explore before COP10 options to resolve this situation with the Parties concerned.
6. Several Parties have promised to deliver their credentials today, Monday, 14 November 2005. The Committee would like to request permission from the Plenary to keep this agenda item open until as near as possible to the close of COP9.
7. The Committee encountered a series of problems and would like to thank the Contracting Parties concerned for their efforts in resolving them.
8. The Committee recommends that the following language be added to Rule 18.1:

“Any changes to the head of the delegation during the COP may be made by the current head of delegation, alternate head of delegation, or the embassy of the party in question, provided that the newly designated head of delegation is properly identified as a delegate in the original credentials duly authorized by the appropriate official. If a person not identified in the initial letter of credentials is proposed as a new head of delegation, that change would need to be done through issuance of new credentials in accordance with rule 18.2”.

Annex II



9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods”

Kampala, Uganda, 8-15 November 2005

The Kampala Declaration

WE the Ministers and high level representatives present at the informal ministerial dialogue¹ on November the 12th on the Sidelines of the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) gathered in Kampala, Uganda, from 8 to 15 November 2005,

RECALLING that the **Ramsar Convention** was created in 1971, in response to a then growing global concern that wetland losses were rapidly increasing and causing, *inter alia*, lack of opportunities for staging, feeding and breeding sites for many species of migratory waterfowl, and

NOTING the **Millennium Development Goals 1 & 7** in which the world leaders decided to

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and,
- Ensure environmental sustainability

FURTHER NOTING that the Ramsar Convention actively supported the **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment of 2005**, which found, for wetland ecosystems, that:

- Wetlands encompass a significant proportion of the area of the planet; the global estimate is 1280 million hectares and is recognized as an under-estimate.
- A cross-sectoral focus is urgently needed from policy- and decision-makers that emphasizes securing wetland ecosystem services in the context of achieving sustainable development and improving human well-being.
- The degradation and loss of wetlands is more rapid than that for other ecosystems. Similarly, the status of both freshwater and coastal species is deteriorating faster than those of other ecosystems. Wetland-dependent biodiversity in many parts of the world is in continuing and accelerating decline.

¹ The meeting was attended Ministers of Benin, China, Congo Brazzaville, Georgia, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Latvia, Lesotho, Mexico, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia, as well as high level representatives of Algeria, France, Germany, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, The Netherlands and Tanzania amongst others.

- The projected continued loss and degradation of wetlands will result in further reduction in human well-being, especially for poorer people in less developed countries where technological solutions are not as readily available.
- The priority when making choices about wetland management decisions is to ensure that the ecosystem services of the wetland are maintained. This can be achieved by application of the wise use principle of the Ramsar Convention.

And RECALLING the principles enshrined in the Decade for Water and the Commission for Sustainable Development.

WE STRONGLY FEEL it is becoming critical thus to redress this situation of continuing loss and degradation of wetland ecosystems globally and the impacts of these losses on people and livelihoods, and:

1. **UNDERTAKE** to enhance conservation, develop communication and increase capacity in Contracting Parties to the Convention, as well as in nations not yet Contracting Parties in order to achieve a full balance between people and wetlands;
2. **EMPHASISE** that the role of wetlands in supporting people's livelihoods is best achieved through the active participation and involvement of local communities, although governments and the international community have a key role in influencing the wise use and conservation of wetland resources and **CALL** upon the private sector and civil society to collaborate and play an active role in mobilizing funding for wetlands, to promote and sustain the wise use concept;
3. **UNDERTAKE** to implement concrete actions to address the commitment in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation which urges countries to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010 and **FURTHER UNDERTAKE** to strengthen the list of Wetlands of International Importance as a contribution to the global network of protected areas initiated at the World Summit for Sustainable Development;
4. **EMPHASISE** that wetlands, with surrounding ecosystems, are essential in mitigating against natural disasters (such as hurricanes, typhoons and tsunamis) and adapting to global climate change including the negative impacts of desertification;
5. **ENCOURAGE** the rehabilitation and restoration of wetlands, especially in coastal systems and lake shores, in order to enhance and sustain benefits for people;
6. **CALL** for appropriate valuation of wetland resources, adding value to wetland products and services, and for smart marketing of wetland products by the involvement of private sector or through Public, Private Partnerships in order to promote wetland wise use and conservation; We emphasize the need for innovative economic incentives;
7. **AFFIRM** that there is a need for synergistic relationships between the Convention on wetlands and other relevant conventions in field of sustainable development to obtain the best ecological outcomes for wetlands. For this we **ADVOCATE** harmonizing and de-sectoralising the development and implementation of policies at all levels, international, regional, national to local, and integrating water and

biodiversity policies including in integrated water resource management (IWRM). We also CALL for cross agency and cross donor cooperation;

8. ADVOCATE and URGE development and implementation of transboundary and cross national systems and approaches to the management of wetland ecosystems is necessary;
9. REAFFIRM that the international support given by the World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD) for the implementation of the NEPAD Environment Action Plan is essential and we URGE the Ramsar Secretariat and its IOPs to liaise with development partners, and multilateral organizations and facilities (GEF, Regional Development Banks, EU etc) to identify sustainable funding mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention in Africa. We recognize the Arusha Call of April 2005 as valuable cornerstone for the coordinated work on wetlands in Africa and EMPHASISE the need for stronger coordination of environment, water and wetlands related initiatives;
10. EXPRESS our concern about the incidences of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and the risks to people, migratory birds and poultry farming, and highlight the necessity of developing good monitoring systems. We also EMPHASISE the need for further research and exchange of information and knowledge on HPAI in relation to wetlands within and between member states.

Annex III

Wetlands and water, ecosystems and human well-being

Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP): Key Messages from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

The Ramsar Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) has prepared this list of Key Messages² as a statement to Contracting Parties at COP9 on its view concerning the key findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) for the Ramsar Convention and its future implementation.

The STRP urges all Contracting Parties to disseminate these important messages to their colleagues in other sectors (eg land use, water use) in order to enhance understanding and cross-sectoral co-operation towards wise use of wetlands.

The STRP commends to Contracting Parties the work of the MA, and in particular its report to the Ramsar Convention (*Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water. Synthesis*) being launched at this Conference.

The STRP's 14 Key Messages for the Ramsar Convention and the future of wetlands are:

1. A cross-sectoral focus is urgently needed from policy- and decision-makers that emphasizes securing wetland ecosystems and their services in the context of achieving sustainable development and improving human well-being.
2. Management of wetlands and water resources is most successfully addressed through integrated management at the river (or lake or aquifer) basin scale that is linked to coastal zone management for coastal and near-shore wetlands and that takes into account water allocations for the ecosystems.
3. Wetlands deliver a wide range of critical and important services (e.g. fish and fiber, water supply, water purification, coastal protection, recreational opportunities, and increasingly, tourism) vital for human well-being. Maintaining the natural functioning of wetlands will enable them to continue to deliver these services.
4. The principal supply of renewable fresh water for humans comes from an array of wetland types, including lakes, rivers, swamps and groundwater aquifers. Up to 3 billion people are

² At its February 2005 meeting, the Ramsar Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) reviewed the draft MA synthesis report for the Ramsar Convention ("Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Wetlands and Water. Synthesis"), and recommended that a short set of "Key Messages" should be prepared to go at the front of the report, given that not all decision-makers would necessarily read the longer Summary for Decision Makers. These Key Messages were developed during the STRP meeting by the Co-leads of the MA Wetlands Synthesis Team and were endorsed by the STRP. Subsequent significant modifications to the Summary for Decision Makers of the MA report to the Ramsar Convention also resulted in a revised and lengthened Key Messages list. In the light of this, the STRP has reviewed and updated its Key Messages for the Convention.

dependent on groundwater as a source of drinking water, but such abstractions increasingly exceed their recharge from surface wetlands.

5. The services delivered by wetlands have been arguably valued at US\$14 trillion annually. Economic valuation now provides a powerful tool for placing wetlands on the agenda of conservation and development decision-makers.
6. Wetlands encompass a significant proportion of the area of the planet; the global estimate is 1280 million hectares (equivalent to approximately 9% of land surface) and is recognized as an under-estimate.
7. The degradation and loss of wetlands is more rapid than that for other ecosystems. Similarly, the status of both freshwater and, to a lesser extent, coastal species is deteriorating faster than that of species in other ecosystems. Wetland-dependent biodiversity in many parts of the world is in continuing and accelerating decline.
8. Wetland loss and degradation has primarily been driven by land conversion and infrastructure development, water abstraction, eutrophication and pollution and over-exploitation. Losses tend to be more rapid where populations are increasing most and where demands for increased economic development are greatest. There are a number of broad, interrelated economic reasons, including perverse subsidies, why wetlands continue to be lost and degraded.
9. Global climate change is expected to further exacerbate the loss and degradation of wetland biodiversity including species that cannot relocate and migratory species that rely on a number of wetlands at different stages of their life cycle.
10. The continuing loss and degradation of wetlands are leading to reduction in the delivery of wetland ecosystem services, yet at the same time demand for these same services is projected to increase.
11. Current use of two wetland ecosystem services – freshwater and capture fisheries dependent on natural reproduction - in some regions is now in excess of levels that can be sustained even at current demands, much less future ones.
12. The projected continued loss and degradation of wetlands will result in further reduction in human well-being, especially for poorer people in less developed countries where technological solutions are not as readily available.
13. Progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depends on maintaining or enhancing wetland ecosystem services.
14. The priority when making choices about wetland management decisions is to ensure that the ecosystem services of the wetland are maintained (and, where appropriate, restored). This can be achieved by application of the wise use principle and guidelines of the Ramsar Convention.

Annex IV

Full text of statement by Turkey

made in the 8th Plenary of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties on 14 November 2005

Mr. Chairman/ Mr. Secretary General,

At the outset, on behalf of the Turkish Government, I should first like to thank the Government of Uganda for its excellent organization of the 9th Conference of Parties of the Ramsar Convention in this magnificent country. I would also like to appreciate the efforts of the Secretariat deployed to prepare the draft resolutions and decision and other documents. Last but not least, I should like to express my delegation's heartfelt sympathy and gratefulness toward the hospitality shown to us by the people of Uganda.

Mr Chairman,

Turkey's efforts for the realization of implementation of the wise use principle in its Ramsar sites having international importance as well as some other sites within its borders are endless. We regard the implementation of the wise use principle as a sine-quo-non for the sustainable development of our Ramsar sites as far as only the ecosystems of these sites or wetlands are concerned. We cannot try to place the implementation of the said principle right into the center of water management or river basin management.

River basin management is multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral, and multi-institutional. It would be far-fetched and inappropriate to try to prescribe specific formula for application or to derive some uncommon terminology to put into use under the Ramsar Convention by taking disputed elements from a range of unidentified sources, none of which has been accepted, adopted or approved in any intergovernmental negotiation process.

In this regard, the Turkish Delegation would like to draw the attention of the distinguished delegates to the reservations of this Delegation made in COP7 which was held in San Jose, Costa Rica in 1999 and the COP8 which was organized in Valencia, Spain in 2002, and would like to reiterate that the issues regarding river basin management are handled by UN Commission for Sustainable Development not by the STRP of the Ramsar Convention. Those issues are out of context with respect to the scope and definitions laid out in the text of the Ramsar Convention.

Consequently, the Turkish delegation does not approve or adopt DR1 and DR3 which go against the concept of equal footing implementation of the three pillars of sustainable development. The Turkish Delegation also put reservation on all of DR6 of which the issue of designation and management of transboundary wetlands or sites cannot be the work domain of the Ramsar Convention as it is clearly stated by the Turkish Delegations participating in COP 7 and COP8. Those issues can be tackled among the riparian countries only.

The Turkish delegation would like to state that DR1, DR3 and DR6 will have no legal or other kind of binding character whatsoever for Turkey. Turkey will not accept or approve those three resolutions in all their entirety. We request the Secretariat to have this statement of reservation of the Turkish Delegation reflected in all related documents as well as the Report of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention.”