



CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
CONVENTION SUR LES ZONES HUMIDES
CONVENCIÓN SOBRE LOS HUMEDALES
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

Diplomatic Note 2021/6

Extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands

The Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions and Administrative Authorities of the Contracting Parties to the Convention, and has the honour to convey a request from the Chair of the Standing Committee, H. E. Mohamed Alafkham of the United Arab Emirates, regarding the convening of an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention (COP), for the purpose of considering and approving a budget for the operation of the Convention in 2022 and the postponement of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14).

This has become necessary due to a proposal by the host country to postpone COP14 to 2022, and the fact that the current budget of the Convention ends on 31 December 2021, in order to keep the Secretariat operating and to enable Contracting Parties to pay their contributions in 2022.

Given the COVID-19 situation and the difficulty of convening a face-to-face meeting with full representation of Contracting Parties in the fourth quarter of 2021 as originally planned, the host country of COP14 proposed postponing COP14 until 21-29 November 2022. Subsequently, during its 59th meeting held the week of 22-25 June 2021 (SC59), the Standing Committee approved 21-29 November 2022 as the proposed dates for COP14 through Decision SC59-10, and agreed to submit the dates to an extraordinary meeting of the COP to be held in 2021.

According to Rule 4.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, extraordinary meetings of the COP can be convened as may be deemed necessary by the Conference of the Parties or at the request of any Contracting Party, if they are supported by at least one third of the Contracting Parties.

In the event that the above request made by H.E Mohamed Alafkham, Chair of the Standing Committee, is accepted, the Secretariat will notify all Contracting Parties of the dates and provisional agenda of the extraordinary meeting, and distribute the budget for 2022 approved by the Standing Committee at SC59 and the draft resolution on the postponement of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14), at the same time as the notification to the extraordinary meeting as required by Rule 13. It is envisaged that the extraordinary COP would consider only these two draft resolutions for approval, in a virtual meeting that would take place within the period 25-29 October 2021.

Should the proposal for an extraordinary meeting be accepted, Contracting Parties would need to submit credentials in accordance with Rule 18 to participate in the meeting. It is important that Contracting Parties initiate national processes in a timely manner. In this regard, information on the modalities for the submission of credentials is attached along with a sample template.

Contracting Parties to the Convention are invited to provide their support for the proposal of an extraordinary meeting through an official letter signed by the Head of the Administrative Authority addressed to the Secretary General. The official letter should be sent by email to sc@ramsar.org as soon as possible and no later than 9 August 2021.

The Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands respectfully avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions and Administrative Authorities of the Contracting Parties to the Convention the assurance of its highest consideration.

Gland, 9 July 2021



Requirements and modalities on the submission of credentials

1. According to Rule 18.1 of the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, “credentials of the Head of the Delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives and advisers (specifying the individual named as the Head of Delegation) shall be submitted to the Secretary General, no later than 48 hours after the opening of the meeting. Submission of the statement of credentials may be done digitally, conditional upon compliance with the terms set out in Rule 18.3” (see item 3 below). “Any later change in the composition of the delegation shall also be submitted to Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General.”

2. According to Rule 18.3, the credentials must “be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or his/her equivalent. If other authorities in a Contracting Party are entitled to issue credentials for international meetings, this should be notified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with an original letter to the Secretary General at the time of submitting their credentials. Submission of credentials may be done in either hardcopy or digital form, with digital submission requiring authentication by a valid digital signature”.

3. The credentials should indicate the date and place where it was issued and, according to Rule 18.4, “must bear the name and position of the person who signs the credentials as well as the full signature of the appropriate authority or else be sealed and initialled by that authority. The seal and/or letterhead should clearly indicate that the credentials have been issued by the appropriate authority. When submitted digitally, the aforementioned criteria apply to the electronic copy of the credentials, and shall be accompanied by the electronic signature of the appropriate authority listed in the document.”

4. According to Rule 18.5, “A representative may not exercise the right to vote unless his/her name is clearly and unambiguously listed in the credentials.”

5. According to Rule 18.6, “If credentials are submitted in a language other than one of the official languages of the Convention, they shall be accompanied by a translation into one of the official languages, and the translation shall be produced and sealed or otherwise duly authorized by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or its diplomatic representation, or the office of the Head of Delegation or the office of one of the delegates whose name is listed in the credentials.”

6. A sample template of a statement of credentials is included below.

Sample statement of credentials for the third extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands

CREDENTIALS

I, the undersigned [*Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs*], hereby make known that the following delegation has been duly appointed, authorized and empowered to represent [*Country*] at the **third extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands** to be held from the xxx to the xxxx of xxx, in the year 2021 .

Head of Delegation [*Name of Head of Delegation*]

Alternate Head of Delegation [*Name of Alternate Head of Delegation*]

Representative(s) [*Name of Representative(s)*]

DONE in [*City*] on the [*Day*] of [*Month*] in the [*Year*]
Seal and Signature