

High-level Ministerial Segment
of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to
the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
Concept Note from the People's Republic of China

I. Background

Over recent years, global warming has been intensifying, and extreme weather events, including heatwaves, floods and droughts, are becoming more frequent. Especially in 2022, several of the world's major rivers are drying, suffering from the worst drought in hundreds of years. The sharp decline in wetland ecosystem services has seriously affected sustainable development and people's livelihoods and well-being in all countries.

Wetlands are important natural resources and unique ecosystems that not only provide rich and diverse physical and cultural benefits, goods and services for people, but also play an irreplaceable role in maintaining global security in terms of ecology, climate and freshwater, as well as biodiversity, and enabling sustainable development.

Thirty-five percent of the world's natural wetlands have been lost since 1970, three times faster than the loss of forests, placing many wetland-dependent species in a threatened state or at risk of extinction. Faced with this situation, it is urgent that we further build consensus, and demonstrate strong political will, to promote wetland conservation and wise use, so as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals globally. As the host of COP14, China is willing to actively engage all Parties to strengthen high-level commitment and agree on actions to conserve and wisely use wetlands, and to strengthen further the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands.

To this end, China will host a High-Level Ministerial Segment at COP14, with support from the Secretariat. Senior officials will discuss issues related to the COP14 theme "Wetlands Action for People and Nature", and will be invited to adopt the *Wuhan Declaration* (see the annex).

II. Time and venue

The High-Level Ministerial Segment will be held in a hybrid modality at 16:00-18:00 (UTC/GMT+8)/9:00-11:00 (UTC/GMT+1) on 6 November, in Wuhan (China) at the East Lake International Conference Center and in Geneva (Switzerland) at the International Conference Centre Geneva.

The segment will last approximately two hours. A list of speakers will be established in

consultation with the Secretariat. All speakers are kindly requested to limit their statements to no more than 5 minutes.

III. Theme

The theme of the High-Level Ministerial Segment will be the COP14 theme “Wetlands Action for People and Nature”, in the context of developing the new Strategic Plan for the Convention.

IV. Topics

Participants are invited to make a statement on selected topics as follows:

1. *Wetlands for sustainable development*: major challenges faced by wetland conservation and wise use at present and in the future, and how wetlands support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. *Wetlands for human well-being*: how to create effective mechanisms to strengthen wetland conservation and wise use, invest directly, and reduce negative impacts on wetlands and, in so doing, contribute to poverty eradication, job creation and economic prosperity;
3. *Wetlands in response to climate change*: how to achieve global goals related to climate change mitigation and adaptation with inclusion of ecosystem-based approaches, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

V. Expected outcome

Following extensive consultation with all Parties, the Participants in the High-Level Ministerial Segment will be invited to adopt the *Wuhan Declaration*.

VI. Participation

The session is open to the participation of Ministers, Ministerial-level officials and Ambassadors of Contracting Parties to the Convention. All other participants at COP14 are invited as observers to the High-Level Ministerial Segment.

Please note that only one intervention will be arranged per country.

VII. Registration

Ministers and other high-level officials wishing to participate in the High-Level Ministerial Segment are invited to express their interest to participate via the registration form ([link](#)) at their earliest convenience, but not later than 6 October 2022.

Contact person:

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VIII. Provisional agenda

COP14 High-Level Ministerial Segment Provisional agenda

Time: 16:00-18:00 (UTC/GMT+8), November 6, 2022, Wuhan Venue
9:00-11:00 (UTC/GMT+1), November 6, 2022, Geneva Venue

Venue:

East Lake International Conference Center, Wuhan, China, and
International Conference Centre Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland

Chairperson: H.E. Mr. GUAN Zhi'ou, Administrator of the National Forestry and
Grassland Administration of China

Time	Content
16:00-16:10	Opening remarks
16:10-17:45	Statements by: 1. Secretary General of the Convention 2. Ministers and other high-level officials of the Contracting Parties 3. Diplomatic representatives of Member States 4. Representatives of UN Agencies and International Organizations
17:45-17:55	1. Introduction to the drafting process of the <i>Wuhan Declaration</i> 2. Adoption of the <i>Wuhan Declaration</i>
17:55-18:00	Closure of the meeting