

**Agenda item 8.5**

**Contracting Parties that are consistently in arrears in their payments to the Convention**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the present status of arrears in Parties' contributions and advise as to the way forward.

1. In Resolution X.12 (2008), the Conference of the Contracting Parties "URGES Contracting Parties in arrears in their payments of assessed contributions to make a renewed effort to settle them as expeditiously as possible to enhance the financial sustainability of the Convention through contributions by all Contracting Parties, and AGREES that the Standing Committee at its 40th meeting should further consider options for dealing with Parties that are consistently in arrears with payments to the Convention."
2. At the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (SC34, 2006), the Secretariat presented a number of opportunities to improve the support given by the Secretariat to members, including: producing timely and easily readable statements of contributions, including all unpaid portions, for Contracting Parties in arrears; requesting Parties that are in arrears with their contributions to settle them by the established deadlines; and requesting Parties experiencing difficulties in meeting their financial contributions to propose a plan to provide for the payment of contributions in arrears within a limited period. In assisting Contracting Parties to develop such a plan, the Chair of the Standing Committee, the Standing Committee regional representatives, and the Secretary General should make contacts, through diplomatic channels, with those Parties having arrears to plan settlement of their outstanding contributions.
3. These steps have all been taken and the collection of contributions has improved significantly. In 2008, the additional impetus of the COP meant that at 31 December 2008 gross membership receivables in arrears were less than each year since 2002 (except 2006).
4. During 2008 we have received previously overdue contributions from the following countries: Gambia, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Niger, Phillipines, and Vietnam. However, a number of Contracting Parties remain in arrears. A schedule of these is attached.
5. Options have been suggested to reduce the flow and priority of services provided by the Secretariat to Parties with arrears. For example, the Standing Committee could advise the Secretariat to manage requests from Contracting Parties with arrears in the following ways:
  - by not processing further Small Grants Fund (SGF) proposals;
  - by providing Secretariat advice and missions (including Ramsar Advisory Missions) only in emergency situations;

- by providing delegate support to attend regional and COP meetings only if all other Parties have been assisted according to existing rules, and in any event only if the Contracting Party is not more than three years in arrears.
6. Finally, there exists the option that Contracting Parties more than three years in arrears could be made ineligible to vote in Convention meetings, ineligible for election to the Standing Committee, and ineligible to make nominations for membership of the STRP.
  7. However, all of these possibilities seek to provide essentially punitive measures and would inevitably restrict the Secretariat in assisting all Parties to fully implement their Convention commitments.
  8. The Secretariat continues to apply a mixture of awareness-raising and counseling as its principal mechanisms and hopes that these will be sufficient to help the situation continue to improve.

### Ramsar Contracting Parties with outstanding contributions, by region

Region		Amount due	Last year paid	Region		Amount due	Last year paid
		CHF				CHF	
Africa	Nigeria	14,593	-	Asia	UAE	12,639	-
Africa	Mauritania	10,577	-	Asia	Iraq	1,000	-
Africa	Chad	10,367	-	Asia	Yemen	1,000	-
Africa	Guinea Bissau	10,367	-	Asia	Mongolia	8,000	2000
Africa	Guinea	10,215	-	Asia	Uzbekistan	4,930	2004
Africa	DRC	9,846	-	Asia	Iran	17,138	2006
Africa	Comoros	9,694	-	Asia	Syria	1,110	2007
Africa	Sierra Leone	8,000	-	Asia	Myanmar	1,049	2007
Africa	Djibouti	6,000	-	Asia	Lebanon	4,347	2008
Africa	Burundi	6,000	-	Asia	Philippines	2,524	2008
Africa	Liberia	5,000	-	Asia	Bahrain	1,341	2008
Africa	Sudan	3,000	-	Asia	Jordan	1,000	2008
Africa	Sao Tome	2,000	-				
Africa	CAR	1,000	-			56,078	
Africa	Cameroun	97	-				
Africa	Mali	10,454	1990	Europe	Montenegro	3,100	-
Africa	Burkina Faso	7,887	2001	Europe	Serbia	2,000	2006
Africa	Rep of Congo	6,774	2002	Europe	Portugal	13,650	2008
Africa	Togo	6,000	2002				
Africa	Libya	18,365	2004			18,750	
Africa	Cote d'Ivoire	3,723	2005				
Africa	Senegal	3,031	2005	Neotropics	Paraguay	10,648	-
Africa	Equatorial Guinea	2,000	2006	Neotropics	Saint Lucia	6,000	-
Africa	Gambia	1,257	2007	Neotropics	Antigua and Barbuda	3,000	-
Africa	Malawi	1,000	2007	Neotropics	Nicaragua	8,810	2000

Africa	Mauritius	1,000	2007	Neotropics Honduras	8,688	2000
Africa	Tunisia	3,901	2008	Neotropics Peru	13,265	2005
Africa	Cape Verde	3,000	2008	Neotropics Belize	2,000	2006
Africa	Niger	1,192	2008	Neotropics Cuba	2,269	2007
Africa	Gabon	353	2008	Neotropics Costa Rica	2,135	2007
			2008	Neotropics Guatamala	1,451	2007
		<u>176,693</u>	2008	Neotropics Venezuela	7,307	2008
				Neotropics Ecuador	927	2008
Oceania	Palau	6,000		Neotropics Trinidad and Tobago	92	2008
Oceania	Papua New Guinea	9,205		Neotropics Uruguay	15	2008
Oceania	Marshall Islands	3,000	-			
Oceania	Samoa	400	1998		<u>66,607</u>	
			2005			
		<u>18,605</u>	2008	Americas Canada	134,038	2007
					<u>134,038</u>	
GRAND TOTAL		<u>470,771</u>				

Key	
-	No payment since acceding to Convention