

**CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
40th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 11-15 May, 2009**

DOC. SC40-14, add. 1

Agenda item 12

Review of COP10 and preparations for COP11

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to review the proposed MOU to be agreed between the Secretariat and the host country of the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, to comment upon it, and to approve it as the basis for moving forward with the COP preparations.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Romania and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

**Concerning the Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
to be held in 2012**

Note: On several occasions since 2005, Romania has expressed its interest in hosting the 11th COP of the Ramsar Convention. This offer was formalized in a letter by the Prime Minister of Romania, dated 17 October 2008, that was presented to the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties by the delegation of Romania, and the Contracting Parties at COP10 unanimously accepted this generous invitation on Tuesday 4 November 2008.

Terms used in this Memorandum of Understanding:

“The Convention” or “the Ramsar Convention”: The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, also known as the Convention on Wetlands, signed in the Iranian city of Ramsar on 2 February 1971 and amended by the Paris Protocol on 3 December 1982 and the Regina Amendments of 28 May 1987

“The host country”: The government of Romania

“The Ramsar Secretariat”: The secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, located in Gland, Switzerland

“COP”: Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention

“Participants”: Delegates from Contracting Parties and Observers

Introduction

1. This Memorandum of Understanding seeks to establish the responsibilities of the government of the Romania and the Ramsar Secretariat regarding the preparation and holding of the Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP11) in Romania.
2. In this Memorandum of Understanding the Ministry of Environment of Romania is the interlocutor and representative of the government of Romania, and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention represents the Convention's Standing Committee. The Memorandum is signed by the Secretary General of the Convention, representing the Conference of the Parties and the Secretariat.

The Event

3. COP11 will be a meeting by invitation (not an open congress to anyone interested). It will be held as a regular or "ordinary" meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention in accordance with Article 6 of the treaty. The Conference of the Parties meets, in principle, every three years.
4. COP11 will be governed by the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Contracting Parties adopted at COP10 (Republic of Korea, 2008), subject to amendment and confirmation at the beginning of COP11.
5. The Standing Committee of the Convention shall supervise substantive preparations for COP11 and take decisions with regard to the agenda and programme of the meeting. In order to assist it in this task, the Standing Committee has established a Subgroup on COP11 chaired by Romania, which, as host of COP11, is a voting member of the Standing Committee from the closing of COP10 in 2008 until the closing of COP12 in 2015.

Delegations

6. At the time of the signing of this memorandum, the Convention has 159 Contracting Parties. It is expected that by the time COP11 is held, this number will have increased.

Observers

7. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, only duly accredited delegations of the Contracting Parties have the right to vote during a COP. However, a considerable number of observers are invited on the basis of the following articles of the Rules of Procedure:

Rule 6.1. The Ramsar Secretariat shall notify all specialized agencies and the secretariat of the United Nations, as well as any State not Party to the Convention, of meetings of the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented as observers.

Rule 7.1. Any body or agency, national or international, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, which has informed the Ramsar Secretariat of its wish to be represented

at meetings of the Conference of the Parties may be represented at the meeting by observers, unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.

As is established practice, the Ramsar Secretariat may require the head of each organization wishing to be represented to provide a letter confirming the nature and work of the organization and the names and positions of their representatives.

Number of Participants

8. The number of delegates per country varies between one and ten for a total of about 450 delegates of the Parties. It is estimated that approximately 500 observers from abroad and at least as many observers from the host country will participate, making a total to be expected of about 1,500 participants.

Date

9. Ramsar COP11 will take place sometime during the months of April and May 2012, precise dates to be agreed at a later date.

Duration of the Meeting

10. The Ramsar COP normally lasts eight days and additionally is preceded by a one-day Standing Committee meeting and one day of regional meetings.
11. The secretariat of the Conference must have access to the Conference Centre at least three full days prior to the start of the 1st meeting of Standing Committee, at which time the secretariat facilities (offices, meeting rooms, computer network, communications system and general office amenities – see ‘Responsibilities of the host country’) should be in operation, and one full day after the closing, for packing purposes. In other words, the Conference Centre should be booked for a minimum of 14 days of secretariat / conference use.

The Secretariat must have unrestricted access to the Conference facilities 24 hours a day.

Venue

12. The Ramsar Conference of the Contracting Parties should take place in a proper, purpose-built conference centre with professional conference facilities, preferably within reasonable proximity to an international airport and sufficient accommodation.

Programme

13. The programme of COP11 is subject to approval by the Standing Committee of the Convention, but in general terms it may be as follows:

PreCOP Day 1: Secretariat and host country preparations

PreCOP Day 2: Secretariat and host country preparations

PreCOP Day 3: Preparations, training of registration and other teams, start of registration

PreCOP Day 4: Standing Committee meeting

Pre-COP Day 5: Regional meetings

COP Day 1

- Continuation of registration
 - Morning – free for regional meetings
 - Afternoon – Opening Ceremony with the presence of the Head of the State and members of the Cabinet, including presentation of the Ramsar Awards
 - Evening - Welcome reception offered by the government of Romania
- Note: the opening ceremony will be developed jointly by Romania and the Ramsar Secretariat.

COP Day 2

- Plenary session
- Evening – host country reception/dinner

COP Day 3

- Plenary session and regional meetings

COP Day 4

- Plenary sessions

COP Day 5

- Plenary sessions
- Evening – meetings to deal with electoral matters

COP Day 6

- Field excursions for participants
- Preparation by the Secretariat of final revisions of draft Resolutions

COP Day 7

- Plenary session
 - Plenary session for adoption of Resolutions
- host country – Farewell reception

COP Day 8

- Morning - Plenary session for adoption of Resolutions
- Afternoon - Closing of the COP and brief meeting of the new Standing Committee

Post COP Day

- Full day for Secretariat packing up

Responsibilities of the host country

Facilities and Services required at the Conference Centre

14. The host country should make the following facilities, services and staff available to COP11 at no cost to the Ramsar Secretariat:

Meeting Rooms and Offices

14.1 A plenary meeting room

- a) A plenary room that can accommodate about 1,500 persons, with table seating for at least the delegates from Contracting Parties, Observer States, Intergovernmental Organizations, the STRP representatives, International Organization Partners, and the Business Sector.
- b) A lectern and a podium with a table and seating for seven conference officers. Behind the seating for the officers, chairs should be provided for government advisors and Ramsar Secretariat support staff.
- c) A table for the Ramsar Secretariat of twelve persons situated near the front of the plenary hall along the side wall.
- d) Equipment for audiovisual presentations, including PowerPoint, computer projector, and video/film projection.
- e) Interpretation booths, state-of-the-art interpretation equipment and earphones (1,500) for simultaneous interpretation in the three languages of the Convention must be available, and any other languages for interpretation as required by the host country. These facilities should include a small private lounge area close by for the interpreters during their rest periods outside the booths, with coffee, tea, water and possibly light snacks (see 15.2.b).
- f) Equipment and material for recording debate in plenary session.
- g) Equipment for projecting on screens an image of the current plenary speaker on the rostrum.
- h) Microphones should be available, one microphone per two participants seated at tables, and a number of wireless microphones for participants seated without tables.
- i) Each table should be provided with a power outlet (one power outlet per two people).

The plenary room should be equipped and available to use at all times throughout the COP.

14.2 Rooms for the regional meetings

- a) Five regional meeting rooms, four with a capacity of 200 persons and one with a capacity of 30-50, and all rooms to be equipped with audiovisual equipment (including microphones) and table seating.
- b) The five rooms shall all have microphones and equipment for simultaneous interpretation as shown below:
 - Europe: English, French and Spanish
 - Africa: English and French
 - Americas: English and Spanish
 - Asia: English only
 - Oceania: English only

Rooms for the regional meetings should be equipped and available for use at all times throughout the COP. It is understood that some subregional groupings may also wish meeting facilities which the host government shall make every effort to accommodate.

14.3 Other meeting and working rooms

- a) A meeting room for the Ramsar Standing Committee (at that time operating as the Conference Committee) with a capacity for 50 persons, a system of simultaneous interpretation to three languages, and microphones (one between two people).
- b) A meeting room for the Credentials Committee, to accommodate 15 people.
- c) Three additional rooms should be available for other Conference Committees (capacity classroom style: 1 x 80 persons, 2 x 40 persons).
- d) Two rooms should be available for "contact groups" which will form and meet during the conference to discuss contentious issues (capacity classroom style: 1 x 120 persons and 1 x 40 persons).
- e) A meeting and working room for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with power outlets for computers (50 persons).
- f) The host country should be ready to provide meeting rooms for other groups such as the EU coordination group, to accommodate 10 people.
- g) A number of additional rooms, at least 6 with audiovisual equipment for holding "side events" outside the times of formal COP plenary sessions (see 18.1).
- h) Media centre (see 16.3).
- i) Document reproduction centre (see 14.9).

14.4 Offices for the secretariat and COP Officers:

Note. Depending on the staffing and budget, and the development of the Secretariat during this triennium, the list below may change nearer to the date of the COP.

- a) An office for the President of the Conference
- b) Offices for the National Organizing Committee/host country Delegation, as required
- c) An office for the host country's local coordinator, if needed
- d) An office for the Chair of the Standing Committee, with meeting space
- e) An office, with reception ante room and meeting space, for the Secretary General and Executive Assistant to the Secretary General, with shelving for storage of document files
- f) An office for the Deputy Secretary-General, with meeting space
- g) An office for the Head of Documentation Service and an assistant, with space (tables, desks) for laying out documents
- h) Two offices, preferably with natural light, for the French and Spanish translators, with space for seven computer workstations in total, and tables and document trays for laying out documents
- i) Four offices for the two-person Regional Teams of the Secretariat, with meeting space in each
- j) An office for the Conference Rapporteur
- k) An office for the STRP Support Officer and for the Danone Project Officer
- l) An office for the CEPA Programme Officer and Secretariat Press Liaison person
- m) An working office for the Secretariat's Finance Officer
- n) An office for the Regional Affairs Officer and IT assistant
- o) An office for the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)
- p) A meeting/rest area for the Secretariat staff
- q) An office with working space and facilities for six staff of the Earth Negotiations Bulletin
- r) Five offices for the International Organization Partners (IOPs) of the Convention

- s) An office (with public access and a safe) for the Finance Officer for the payment of per-diems

Offices should be equipped and available three full days before the start of the first meeting (Standing Committee meeting or regional meeting). Offices mentioned in points d) to p) above, the Secretariat offices, should be separate from the other offices such that the entry of participants to this work area can be controlled. Every effort should be made to ensure that the staff offices are located and designed to minimize the transfer of noise between offices.

Office Equipment

14.5 It is expected that the following office equipment will be provided by the host country:

- a) Network with at least 40 computers (final numbers to be confirmed at a later date) and 15 printers which need to be fast and efficient when the final documentation is being produced, with Internet connection. These computers will be allocated according to the Secretariat plan in the offices, registration and documentation area. This does not include computers required for the Press room.
- b) Three photocopy machines for Secretariat office use.
- c) Ink cartridges and paper for printers and photocopy machines.
- d) Three landline phones for making national and international calls.
- e) If natural light is not available in the offices, desk lamps should be made available for 24 work stations.

Office equipment should be available, installed and functioning three full days before the first meeting (Standing Committee or regional meeting), and technical support should be available from this time.

Registration and Production of Badges

14.6 A Registration area

- a) Registration should be situated close to the Document Distribution area and the badges production.
- b) The Registration area should have a network of nine computers, at least one of which should be a desktop, for registration of the 1,500 participants in eight registration lines. These should all be available for pre-COP days 1-3 and COP days 1 and 2. Thereafter the number of computers can be progressively decreased.
- c) In addition, the Registration Officer should be provided with a nearby desk and chair with the aforementioned desktop computer.

14.7 Registration

- a) Pre-COP registration of the delegates and observers will be organized by the Ramsar Secretariat possibly through collaboration with a conference organizing company (see 26.8).
- b) Accreditation and registration of Press should be organized by the host country.

- c) Registration of local support staff and suppliers, and any exhibitors and side event organizers not registered as COP participants, should be done by the host country (see 18.1 and 18.2).

On-site registration will remain open during the entire conference but will reduce to three computers after the bulk of participants have registered.

14.8 Production of Badges

- a) The host country is financially responsible for providing participant identification badges through a badge production process and a professional supplier agreed upon between the host country and the Secretariat,
- b) Participants' badges serve two purposes – security and identity. Each badge should clearly show the name of the participant and must include a passport-style photograph.
- c) The Secretariat should liaise with the host country on badge design.
- d) The Secretariat shall oversee the pre-COP and on-site production of badges since it is closely linked to the registration process.
- e) Badges should be produced for all participants and local staff.
- f) Provision to produce up to 2,000 badges (or more if needed) should be made.
- g) Production of badges should continue throughout the conference, as necessary.

Documentation

14.9 Reproduction of official documents

- a) Document reproduction centre with two large photocopier machines (industrial capacity) and large tables for compilation of documents.
- b) The host country shall provide free of charge to the Secretariat the photocopier machines, photocopying paper, ink cartridges, service and operating staff.
- c) Reproduction services should be available from pre-COP Day 1. Extended working hours should be expected on a number of key days (see 17.2.g.)

14.10 Distribution area for documents and general information desk

- a) A counter and shelves for distribution of official documents.
- b) One workstation near the counter with one computer, one printer/photocopier.
- c) 220 pigeon holes (one for each Contracting Party and official partners, as well as for the conference secretariat and interpreters).
- d) Three large tables near the documentation centre for self-service distribution of official documents in English, French and Spanish.
- e) Tables for distribution of documentation provided by the participants (books, pamphlets, magazines) should be made available near the plenary hall.

14.11 Participant's Manual

- a) The host country, in consultation with the Ramsar Secretariat, shall prepare and publish in the three official working languages of the Convention a participant's manual with practical information about the conference programme and services available during COP11.
- b) The manual should be available on the Web at least three weeks before the start of the meeting in PDF format in the three official working languages of the Convention.
- c) The manual should be ready for hard copy distribution on the first day of registration.

Facilities and Services for Participants

It is expected that the host country will provide the following facilities and services for the participants:

14.12 IT/Internet

- a) Internet center with at least 20 computers (access to e-mail, Internet, MS-Office software) and 3 printers.
- b) Wireless Internet coverage with unrestricted access should be available throughout the conference center for all participants.

The Internet computers and wireless Internet coverage should be available free of charge.

14.13 Service centre (for provision of commercial services to the participants)

- a) Telephones and fax machines
- b) Photocopy services
- c) A post office
- d) A travel agency
- e) A souvenir shop

14.14 Other facilities and services

- a) Banking facilities / ATM
- b) A rest area for participants (bar or lounge)
- c) On-site emergency medical care
- d) Facilities for making announcements and leaving messages at key points of the Conference Centre
- e) Adequate signs and indications in the three official working languages of the Convention in order to help participants find meeting rooms and other services
- f) Provision of an information screen displaying the times and locations of planned and ongoing meetings
- g) A cloakroom
- h) The host country may take any steps to produce promotional items (posters, neckties, cups, caps, pins, etc.) for sale or free distribution.
- i) The host country should consider the possibility of providing participants with a complimentary folder, bag or other articles usually provided at this type of event.

Facilities and Services for the Secretariat

14.15 It is expected that the host country will provide the following facilities and services for the Secretariat:

- a) 35 mobile phones or other communication systems for Secretariat staff, which will work across the site and Secretariat accommodations.
- b) Provision of a safe for the safekeeping of per diems and other cash payments.
- c) Provision of an executive-class car for the Secretary General, available at any time with the driver, from the day of arrival until the day of departure.

Facilities and services for the Secretariat should be available free of charge.

Catering for Participants

15.1 It is expected that the catering services for participants will meet the following requirements:

- a) Continuous coffee, tea, water, and refreshment (possibly biscuits or light snacks) service for the participants during meeting hours. During the meeting, there are no coffee breaks; participants take refreshments as they please. Coffee, tea, water and possibly some biscuits are provided free of charge to participants by the host country, while light snacks are generally proposed against payment.
- b) Cafeteria and restaurant service should allow a large number of persons to have lunch in a short period of time.
- c) Catering service for side events and receptions are at the organizer's expense (on request).

A choice of local / international meals for the participants should be available at their own expense.

Catering for the Secretariat

15.2 It is expected that the catering services for the Secretariat will meet the following requirements:

- a) 24 hours coffee/tea/light snacks for the Ramsar Secretariat and translators
- b) Coffee, tea, water and possibly light snacks for the interpreters, during their working hours.

Publicity and Media

16.1 In consultation with the Standing Committee and Secretariat, a logo and a theme shall be adopted for COP11, which shall be used by the host country and the Secretariat on all stationery and documents related to COP11. The logo design should be finally approved by Standing Committee at least 18 months before the COP.

16.2 Media coverage

- a) The host country should make the necessary arrangements for organizing the press coverage of the event, since the Ramsar Secretariat does not have its own press service.
- b) It is anticipated that the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) will cover the proceedings of COP11 by publishing *in situ* the Earth Negotiations Bulletin in the Convention's three languages. The host country shall assist IISD in obtaining the necessary logistics, as requested by IISD, for the production of the Bulletin.

16.3 Media centre requirements

- a) A press room with computers, printers and facilities for e-mail and Internet access
- b) A room appropriate for holding press conferences
- c) An office for the press officer, with appropriate links

Media centre facilities should be available throughout the COP.

16.4 Live broadcast facilities requirements

- a) From the plenary to the press room
- b) From the plenary to the foyer and the lounge area

Live broadcast facilities should be available throughout the duration of the COP.

Local Staff

- 17.1 Substantive preparation of the Conference is the responsibility of the Ramsar Secretariat under the responsibility of the Secretary General of the Convention.

The host country will make the following local staff available to the secretariat of the Conference, preferably trilingual (three official working languages of the Convention):

- a) A local coordinator in charge of, *inter alia*, liaison with the Secretariat, the Conference Centre, local authorities, service providers, designated teams, staff, etc.
- b) Transport logistics coordinator to manage the delegates' transportation from/to the airport(s), from/to the hotel(s), and on the cultural events/excursions.
- c) Staff of the Conference Centre
- d) Assistants for the plenary room and other meeting rooms
- e) Multilingual staff for reception and information
- f) Reception staff at the main airport(s)
- g) Staff to assist at the registration and documentation desks - ten local employees, who speak the official working languages of the Convention
- h) Service staff for the offices and meeting rooms' layout arrangements
- i) A technician for the equipment of the offices and meeting rooms
- j) Operating and service staff for the Document Reproduction Centre.

- 17.2 It is expected that the following local staff will be available for assistance:

- a) The local coordinator should be available on site and reachable at all times.

- b) A transport logistics coordinator should be available and reachable at all times, starting from one day prior to the first participants' arrival.
- c) Staff of the Conference Centre, staff for reception and information, assistants for the plenary room and other meeting rooms should be available according to the conference schedule. Extended working hours should be expected on request.
- d) Staff for the Registration and Documentation Distribution desk should be available according to the registration schedule and on the Registration Officer's request.
- e) Service staff for the offices and meeting rooms' layout arrangements should be available at all times on request.
- f) A technician for the equipment of the offices and meeting rooms is required to be available at all times on request.
- g) Operating staff for the Document Reproduction Centre is required to be available from pre-COP Day 1. Extended working hours should be expected on a number of key days. Service staff for the photocopy machines of the Document Reproduction Centre are required to be available at all times on request.

17.3 For the final months of preparations before the COP, the host country may wish to consider seconding a staff member to the Ramsar Secretariat in Switzerland to facilitate communications between the host country's organizing committee and Secretariat staff.

Side Events and Exhibitions

18.1. It is expected that not less than 6 rooms with audiovisual equipment will be available for holding "side events" outside the times of formal COP plenary sessions, i.e., normally during the noon break and in the evening. At least three of these should have facilities for interpretation in two languages at an affordable price for side event organizers requesting this service.

Following established practice, the Secretariat receives and assesses all requests for side events. It approves those that are relevant to the themes and issues of the COP in consultation, as appropriate, with the host country.

The host country should designate a team responsible for handling the side events, including making layout arrangements, arranging for interpretation on request, taking orders for catering on request, and checking the smooth running of these activities. The team should liaise with the local coordinator.

Information on the facilities being offered for side events and any costs involved in additional equipment, catering, etc., should be ready for distribution to participants 6 months before the start of the Conference. The host country is expected to provide, free of charge, 'basic' equipment for side event rooms (tables, chairs, projector or beamer, screen, and at least two microphones).

18.2 It is expected that there will be provided a large area for exhibiting information material, including posters, publications, videos, etc., equipped with panels, tables, adequate lighting, electrical outlets, etc.

The host country should designate a team responsible for handling the exhibitions, including requests for exhibition space, information on shipping exhibition materials to the

venue and their temporary storage before the Conference, making layout and all other necessary arrangements, and checking the smooth running of these activities. The team should liaise with the local coordinator.

Information on the facilities being offered for exhibition and any costs involved should be ready for distribution to participants 6 months before the start of the Conference.

Social Events

19. The host country should consider the possibility of organizing the following events and activities, several of which, for example the excursions, can be offered at a cost.
 - a) A welcome reception offered by the host country
 - b) An official Conference dinner offered by the President of COP11 for Heads of Delegations
 - c) A cultural event
 - d) A farewell reception
 - e) Excursions during the early morning, preferably with the possibility of bird watching
 - f) A programme for accompanying persons, including cultural excursions and tourism.
 - g) A programme of all-day excursions for participants on the documents-preparation day during the COP when there are no COP plenary sessions.
 - h) Pre- and post-conference excursions to points of interest related to the topics of COP11, especially to Ramsar sites. Details on these excursions should be announced several months in advance, in order to give participants the opportunity to make necessary arrangements.

The host country should designate a team responsible for organizing the social events, including making layout and all necessary arrangements for cultural events and receptions, arranging and coordinating excursions and tourism, checking the smooth running of these activities. The team should liaise with the local coordinator.

Assistance to the Participants

- 20.1 It is expected that participants will be welcomed and facilitated upon their arrival at the airport:
 - a) The host country should organize a reception service at the appropriate airports beginning at a date agreed upon with the Ramsar Secretariat and shall facilitate the transfer of participants to and from the hotels at no cost to the participants.
 - b) If the local airport(s) is not the main port of entry for participants arriving on international air flights, a reception service should also be provided at the main international airport acting as the port of entry.
- 20.2 It is expected that the following arrangements will be made with regard to transportation:
 - a) If the hotels are not within walking distance of the Conference Centre, the host country shall make arrangements to provide transportation from the main hotels to the Conference Centre and vice versa with convenient schedules and at no cost to the participants. Remote location of hotels should be avoided.

- b) If the bus service is required, a pick-up schedule should be published on the Web 4 weeks before the meeting to assist non-sponsored delegates, and particularly NGOs, in choosing their hotel. The pick-up schedule should be displayed in the foyer of each main hotel used by participants.

20.3 It is expected that the following arrangements will be made with regard to hotel accommodations:

- a) The host country, in collaboration with the Secretariat or a conference support agency appointed by the Secretariat, shall take steps to block a sufficient number of hotel rooms of acceptable quality and at prices convenient to the participants in COP11, including five, four, three and two-star hotels.
- b) Likewise, the host country and the Secretariat shall agree on an efficient and centralized service for reserving hotel rooms in order to facilitate the stay of participants.

The host country should designate a team responsible for assistance to the participants, including reception service at the airport, transport logistics coordinator, and hotel coordinator. The team should liaise with the local coordinator.

Security Arrangements

21 It is expected that the following security arrangements will be in place:

- a) Security service is required at the Conference venue
- b) Secure storage should be available for all the documents and materials sent by the Ramsar Secretariat and exhibition and side events organizers.
- c) A security guard should be available on request at the office for the payment of per-diems
- d) Security service is required at the entrance of the Secretariat offices area.

The local coordinator, representing the host country, should be in charge of the security arrangements.

Visas

22. The host country shall take all necessary steps to grant visa as speedily as possible for all invited delegates and observers. For the participants inevitably unable to obtain visas prior to their arrival, the host country should conduct consultation with relevant authorities to ensure their entry into Romania. The Secretariat will provide a liaison point for the host country to advise on visa needs. As the COP is a full intergovernmental process, it is essential that the issuing of visas for participants should be done in an easy and effective way. The host country's organizing team should ensure the collaboration of the relevant other sectors of the government in this process at a very early date.

Customs

23. It is expected to have the following facilitation with regard to transportation of materials:

- a) The host country should negotiate a timely entry into the country through customs for all documentation and equipment considered necessary by the Ramsar Secretariat for holding the meeting, as well as its return to Switzerland after the Conference in a timely manner. The host country will arrange with the Customs authorities exemptions from taxation for all materials and documents the Ramsar Secretariat will send to the venue. The local coordinator, representing the host country, should collaborate with the Ramsar Secretariat on these matters.
- b) The host country should designate a government agency to act as recipient of exhibition and other materials sent by Ramsar Secretariat and participants before the COP. That agency shall also be responsible for liaising with customs at the airport to facilitate entry of these materials, and have a secure storage space for such materials, keeping an accurate inventory of all of them and delivering them to the exhibition area. The agency should liaise with the local coordinator and the team responsible for handling the exhibitions.

Bank Account

24. The host country shall assist the Ramsar Secretariat with the opening and operation of a foreign currency bank account where the Secretariat shall deposit the required resources to pay its expenses related to COP11, including the daily subsistence allowance (per diems) to be received by the participants whose expenses are covered by the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall be entitled to repatriate to Switzerland any remaining balance after paying all its obligations in Romania.

Insurance Coverage against damage, accidents and third-party liability

25. The host country will take all steps necessary to ensure that the Conference Centre has insurance coverage against damage, accidents, and third-party liability.

Responsibilities of the Ramsar Secretariat

26. The following aspects are the responsibility of the Ramsar Secretariat:

Secretariat services

- 26.1 Provision of the required secretariat support for the smooth functioning of the Subgroup on COP11 established by the Standing Committee of the Convention and chaired by the host country, including preparation of an initial draft of all documents to be considered by that Subgroup.
- 26.2 All steps needed to prepare the working documents for COP11 for the approval of the Standing Committee within established deadlines.
- 26.3 Translation of all official documents in the official working languages of the Convention and their distribution within established deadlines.
- 26.4 Dispatch of invitations for COP11 to the Contracting Parties and observers.

- 26.5 Organization of the secretariat of the Conference, including contracting and management of simultaneous interpretation and translation services in the three official working languages of the Convention during COP11 (excluding side events).
- 26.6 Provision of all the conference secretariat services during COP11, under the authority of the Secretary General of the Convention.
- 26.7 Preparation, publication and distribution of the COP11 official Conference Report and the adopted version of the Resolutions and Recommendations, in the three official working languages of the Convention, within three months of the close of the Conference.

COP Registration

- 26.8 Contracting and management of badge production supplier and process, possibly in collaboration with a conference organizing company, if Ramsar and the host country agree upon the need for these.
- 26.9 Organization of pre-COP registration of participants, which will be done at the Ramsar Secretariat headquarters in Gland, Switzerland. The registration database interface with the database needed for badge production will be discussed between the Secretariat and the host country.

Ramsar Secretariat Costs related to the preparation of COP11

27. The attached annex “Ramsar COP11 Administrative Budget” lists the contributions to be made in cash and in kind by the government of the host country to meet the requirements of the Ramsar Secretariat, before and during the COP11.

The annexed budget may be changed by the amendment of the annex to this MOU only with agreement from the Standing Committee, represented by its Subgroup on COP11.

Liaison Officials

28. For all aspects regarding the organization of COP11, the Ramsar Secretary General is the official liaison with the host country, except when he designates other officials of the Ramsar Secretariat for specific aspects. In the host country, the person responsible for relations with the Ramsar Secretariat for everything related to the organization and holding of COP11 shall be the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

For the Ministry of Environment and
Sustainable Development

For the Ramsar Convention

Minister for Environment and Sustainable
Development

Secretary General