

# 41<sup>th</sup> Ramsar Standing Committee meeting Summary of documents

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41<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee Kobuleti,  
Georgia, 26 April – 1 May 2010

# Responsibility of the Standing Committee

- The Ramsar Standing Committee is the intersessional executive body which represents the COP between its triennial meetings. The Contracting Parties that are members of the SC are elected by each meeting of the COP to serve for the three years until the next one.
- a) 1 to 12 Contracting Parties - one representative,  
b) 13 to 24 Contracting Parties - two representatives,  
c) 25 to 36 Contracting Parties - three representatives,  
d) 37 to 48 Contracting Parties - four representatives,  
e) 49 to 60 Contracting Parties - five representatives.
- Roles and responsibilities are outlined in Resolution VII.1



# Representation of Standing Committee members

- **China (Mr. Yen Chenggao)** maintains regular contacts and consults with Japan, Republic of Korea, and Mongolia.
- **Lebanon (Mr. Nabil Assaf)** maintains regular contacts and consults with Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan.
- **Thailand (Ms. Nirawan Pipitsombat)** maintains regular contacts and consults with Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.
- **Marshall Islands (Mr. Michael Honeth)** maintains regular contacts and consults with Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa.
- **The Republic of Korea** is a member of the Standing Committee because this country hosted COP10 (cf. Resolution VII.1).

# Representation of Standing Committee members

Contracting Party	Standing Committee (voting) member	Management Working Group <sup>1</sup>	Sub-group on Finance <sup>2</sup>
<b>China</b>	Yes		Yes
<b>Lebanon</b>	Yes		
<b>Thailand</b>	Yes		
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>R.O. Korea</b>	Yes	Yes	
<b>Japan</b>		Yes	

<sup>1</sup>Management Working Group is responsible for examining and reviewing the management structures and systems in place within the Convention.

<sup>2</sup>Subgroup on Finance is responsible for analyzing all financial matters and to prepare recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.

## SC41-02: Review of the process for recruitment of the Secretary-General

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to review the procedures used in the past concerning recruitment of the Secretary General and instruct the Secretariat on any further steps required.

### Past procedure

- Dr. Peter Bridgewater – contract expires on 31 July 2007;
- Departure announced on 30 November 2006 via Diplomatic Note and CPs were requested to identify suitable replacements;
- Deadline for application was 12 January 2007 (3 months);
- SC Chair and Vice-Chair, and Chair of Sub-group on Finance met on 9 February 2007 to review applications and agree on a ‘long’ shortlist of candidates;
- The Management Working Group met on 13 February 2007 prior to SC35, and prepared a recommended shortlist of candidates;
- SC35 at its meeting from 14-16 February 2007, will act as a ‘first selection panel’ to agree on a shortlist of candidates for interview;
- SC35 will appoint a ‘second selection panel’ to conduct the interview (22-23 March 2007);
- Name and profile of selected candidate circulated to SC members, with a deadline for approval by 30 March 2007

## SC41-02: Review of the process for recruitment of the Secretary-General

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to review the procedures used in the past concerning recruitment of the Secretary General and instruct the Secretariat on any further steps required.

### Suggestions for improvement

- Consider the use of a professional recruitment specialist to assist in the search of a new Secretary-General. Will likely lead to more applicants. Specialist would also prepare 'long-list' of possible candidates.
- Define quality of the new Secretary-General (para. 14)

### Current Secretary-General

- Current Secretary-General's contract will end on 22 July 2010
- Secretary-General should be informed of Standing Committee's decision about his contract by 22 May 2010.

## SC41-03: Review of 2009 core and project income and expenditure

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the contents of this report and advise as appropriate.

SC members are invited to note:

- In 2009, there was a surplus of CHF 187,000.
- CHF 112,000 was unspent as it was ring-fenced for the Partnership Coordinator post (CHF 87,000) and for Regional Initiatives (CHF 25,000). It is proposed that this be transferred to restricted projects for use on these activities in 2010;
- There will thus be a net surplus of CHF 75,000 for 2009.

## SC41-04: Current status of the Reserve Fund

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the contents of this report and consider the suggestion about the use of the Reserve Fund excess.

### Reserve Fund

- Made up of funds from each year's core budget used to meet unforeseen expenditure
- Limited to a maximum of 1/12th of the core budget of the current fiscal year

	CHF'000
Balance at 31 December 2008 per final accounts	363
Surplus for 2009	75
Transfer requested by Secretary General (see below)	(25)
Balance at 31 December 2009 per draft accounts	413

- The Secretary-General proposes to use CHF 25,000 in 2010 to allow the SG, Deputy SC and Partnership Coordinator to travel to additional meetings and processes.

## SC41-05: Status of the Secretariat services agreement with IUCN

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to note this report.

1. The new Letter of Agreement on the provision of Services was signed by Ramsar and IUCN on 15 May 2009 and is attached to the report.
2. The Secretary General reports that the new agreement is operating very satisfactorily. He will continue to work with IUCN to make further efficiency improvements.
3. We are hopeful that the charges for 2010 will soon be finalized and agreed at a level in line with our 2010 budget. The 2010 charges are being modified to take into account the recent office moves within the existing building and the allocation of charges for shared services and space across both the existing building and IUCN's new building.
4. The March 2010 move of Ramsar has given us an improved overall space for Ramsar, though our total floorspace occupied remains 307 m<sup>2</sup>.

## SC41-06: CPs that are consistently in arrears with their payments

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

- Note the arrears situation by Contracting Party relating to 2009 and before, and;
- To note the fact that a number of Contracting Parties have significant overdue amounts, many having never paid;
- Note some opinion that the Secretariat should reduce the flow and priority of services provided by the Secretariat to Parties with arrears;
- However, this line of action is not recommended and as agreed during SC40, the Secretariat will continue to work with the countries in arrears to help the situation to improve, and;
- Request all Standing Committee members, especially those on the Subgroup on Finance, to strongly encourage those Contracting Parties to begin to address their arrears.

## SC41-07: Review of process and mechanisms for Secretariat staff salary awards

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the content of this document, a response to Decision SC40-13, and advise the Secretary General as appropriate.

- The 2010, 2011 and 2012 budget for the Secretariat has a 4% annual increase for salaries.
- Zero cost of living increases for 2010. The S-G plans to use the 4% (CHF 110,279) budgeted increases in staff lines as follows:

	CHF'000
Net cost of 50% documentation officer	32
Additional admin resource	10
Basic ("2%") performance increments	35
Medical costs (CHF 20 per month)	4
Other	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

## SC41-08: Ramsar Secretariat core budget 2010

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to note this report on the budget for the current year and advise the Secretary General as appropriate.

- Full funding for the Partnership Officer post (salary and related costs) is available from the restricted allocation from 2009 and 2010 budget allocation and should be appointed shortly.
- Continued discussions with Canton Vaud to resolve the issue of permits and salaries for Assistant Advisors. It is expected that from 2011 the salary will need to be increased significantly with an estimated financial impact of CHF 118,000 per annum.
- Allocation of CHF 279,190 towards regional initiatives
- Use of CHF 25,000 from the 2009 Reserve Fund to cover travel costs of SG, DSG and Partnership Officer.
- IUCN charges to Ramsar (13%); expected costs remain broadly in line with the COP10 approved budget.
- 2011 contribution invoices will to be sent in Autumn 2010.

## SC41-09: Ramsar Secretariat non-Core requirements and activities 2010

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to note this report and advise the Secretary General as appropriate.

SC members are invited to:

- Take note of the continued decline of voluntary contributions from CPs
- Consider how CPs might help meet the needs for RAMs, STRP, World Wetlands Day/Week activities, SGF, CEPA, COP11 (including regional preparatory meetings).
- SC members are invited to consider how they might help, taking into account the very significant demands in 2011 and 2012.
- 2011 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention and it marks the beginning of the regional preparatory meetings for COP11. We will need a host for the 2011 Regional Meeting for Asia and another for Oceania.

## SC41-10: Towards a new budget framework for COP11

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to note this report and to consider requesting the Subgroup on Finance to work with the Secretariat to develop an indicative non-Core budget, with full cost allocation, for 2011 as a basis for considering presenting a non-Core budget to COP11.

- From 2007, the Secretariat has been trying to make reporting of the relative cost of their work more transparent.
- However, the way in which the Secretariat budget and report on the actual cost of their activities currently misses out the cost of non-Core operations.
- In recent years, the COP has approved annual budgets for the Core budget but has not formally endorsed a budget for non-Core activities.
- The Secretariat would like the SC to consider asking for the preparation of an indicative annual non-Core budget for 2011 covering non-Core activities requested by the COP such as our grants programmes, the successful delivery of a COP, the work of STRP, CEPA workshops, the preparation and celebration of World Wetland Day, RAMs and other capacity building activities, which might be further developed and utilised for 2012 and ultimately at COP11.

## SC41-11: Progress report on engagement with GEF

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the progress on engagement with the GEF and advise on how to take this process forward.

- At the next (4<sup>th</sup>) Assembly of GEF (24-28 May 2010) in Uruguay, the Secretariat would like to request GEF Councils member countries to assist the Convention in being formally linked to the 'International Waters', one of GEF's six focal areas. This would allow the International Waters focal area to become a financial mechanism for the Convention and the GEF would receive guidance from the Ramsar COP on policy, strategy, programme priorities, and eligibility criteria related to the use of resources for purposes of the Convention.
- GEF Council members include Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Pakistan and Vietnam

## SC41-12: Ramsar Small Grant Fund

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the progress on engagement with the GEF and advise on how to take this process forward.

- In 2009, the Standing Committee approved 29 projects for funding.
- The Secretariat wrote to CPs to solicit voluntary financial support but none was coming. As of 9 February, 2010, only CHF 24,749 was available in the budget for projects.
- The Secretariat then compiled a portfolio of the 29 projects on the web, as well as being posted to CPs and possible donors.
- Funding was promised by Japan, Sweden and Danone, totalling CHF 158,103.
- Projects are:
  - Japan: Vietnam
  - Sweden: Vietnam and Uzbekistan
- For the 2010 cycle, the deadline for the advisory service is the 30th of April 2010 cycle, and the 30th of June for the final submission. Only the best proposals, following the format and guidelines, will be taken into consideration for possible funding.

## SC41-13: Regional Initiatives 2009 – 2012 in the framework of the Ramsar Convention

**Action requested:** Standing Committee is invited to take note of the update on progress with work of the 17 Regional Initiatives it endorsed during SC40. In the Asia/Oceania regions, operational Initiatives are the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, Ramsar Regional Centres for East Asia, and the RRC-Central and West Asia. There are also two inactive Initiatives on hold (Pacific Islands, Himalayan)

Standing Committee is invited to adopt an improved “Combined format for annual reporting and forward planning” by the Regional Initiatives, as attached in Annex I. This will address both annual reporting (on past activities and expenditures) as well as forward planning (activities and finance needs) for the coming year.

Standing Committee is invited to welcome the model contract in Annex II, used by the Secretariat to disburse annual Ramsar core budget allocations to Regional Initiatives, and specifying the reporting requirements.

Standing Committee is invited to allocate Ramsar core budget funds to Regional Initiatives for 2010 as outlined in the table in paragraph 23, and to approve the accrual of any unallocated funds for allocation under the same budget line for the year 2011 during its 42<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

## SC41-15: Report on preparations for COP11

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to take note of progress with preparations for COP11 since SC40. An updated report, based on the results of the agenda of the meeting of the Subgroup on COP11 on 27 April 2010, with concrete requests to Standing Committee, will be provided under agenda item 7 in the plenary session.

Romania proposes that the meeting of the Subgroup on COP11 deal with the following issues, the results of which will be reported to the plenary session of SC41:

- update on the signature of the MoU (will be provided in DOC. SC41-14)
- introductory report by Romania to the Subgroup on progress with the establishment of the interministerial organization committee, including Ramsar IOPs and NGOs willing to contribute to the success of COP11
- proposed dates for COP11
- proposed theme for COP11 and World Wetland Day 2012
- proposed structure for COP11, in terms of duration, plenary vs. technical and regional sessions
- proposed ceremony for the Ramsar Award/Evian Special Prize (DOC. SC41-16)
- update on proposed regional Ramsar meetings in preparation of COP11.

## SC41-16: Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to review the attached document and

- a) to consider and approve the Criteria and Procedures for the COP11 Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award;
- b) to note the provisional calendar for the COP11 Ramsar Award process.

- Categories: Management, Science and Education:
- Timeline:
  - Call for nominations by Jan 2011. Deadline for nomination of 30 Apr 2011
  - Analysis of candidature by Secretariat. Submit to COP11 Subgroup of Standing Committee before SC43 at end of 2011.
  - At SC43, COP11 Subgroup recommends laureates to SC43 who will make final decision.

## SC41-17: Report of the Secretary-General

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to receive the Secretary General's report and advise as appropriate.

- The Secretariat is making efforts to participate in the deliberations of the Commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD).
- The Secretariat would like to request ECOSOC members to assist the Convention have consultative status with ECOSOC so as to be able to participate, present written contributions, and make statements to the Council and its subsidiary bodies.
- Asian ECOSOC members are China and the R.O. Korea

## SC41-18: Roles and Responsibilities of Standing Committee

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to consider the assessments and recommendations on a) Resolution VII.1 and the COP Rules of Procedure as they apply to the Standing Committee; and b) issues concerning Permanent Observers and other observers to the Standing Committee. In particular the Standing Committee may wish to:

- Consider requesting that the Secretariat prepare a briefing paper for SC which provides an explanation of the application of each of the COP Rule of Procedure to the Standing Committee as derived from Res. VII. 1. and COP Rules of Procedure interpreted *mutatis mutandis* for consideration at SC42;
- Recommending to COP11 that the host government of the Ramsar Secretariat be added to the full voting membership of the Standing Committee;
- Consider the extent to which the conferral of Wetlands International host country permanent observer status to the Standing Committee remains appropriate, in relation to the status of other organizations such as other International Organization Partners and the host countries of their headquarter offices.
- As a result, request the Secretariat to draft a COP11 Resolution concerning these matters to update Resolution VII.1, for consideration at SC42.

## SC41-19: Progress report on the appointment of a Partnership Coordinator

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the progress on appointment of a Partnership Coordinator

- TORs have been finalized according to the steps decided during SC40 and this “M” position has been advertised (deadline 30<sup>th</sup> of May).
- Two main fields in the TORs:
  - Fundraising: To build up voluntary financial contributions, and develop less reliance on Secretariat core budget, through both public and private sector sources.
  - Development of partnerships: To maintain and develop existing partnerships with key Ramsar Partners, and develop new ones, in line with priorities, including strategic alliances.

## SC41-20: COP10 outputs requiring action or review by SC

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the range of actions requested of it by COP10, and to advise on how to address those actions not covered elsewhere in the SC41 agenda.

- Almost all of these actions have been addressed by SC40 or are being addressed under different agenda items of SC41. These are noted in the annexed table.
- However, there are two main areas requiring attention at SC41 or brought forward to SC42, concerning implementation of the Strategic Plan 2009-2015.
  - Assess progress and any difficulties in implementing the [Strategic] Plan at each [SC] meeting; and
  - Conduct a mid-term review of progress and to propose adjustments, if necessary, [to the Strategic Plan] to be submitted to COP10.
- However, it may be unhelpful to CPs to carry out the review at the same time as they are completing the COP11 National Reports.
- Instead, SC41 may wish to consider including a section in the COP11 National Report Format (Agenda Item 15) to allow CPs to propose changes to the Strategic Plan from their experience of implementation, so that these may then be compiled and reported to COP11.

## SC41-22: Promotion and utilization of the “Changwon Declaration” (Resolution X.3, Decision SC40-22)

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the report on the dissemination and uptake of the Changwon Declaration (Resolution X.3) and suggested next steps..

- Implementing the Changwon Declaration: Need to develop mechanisms to reach out to as wide a range of relevant stakeholders as possible outside of the usual Ramsar community, in order to ensure the wise use of wetlands and the implementation of the actions outlined in the Declaration.
- Raising awareness of the Changwon Declaration: Need to promote greater awareness of the Changwon Declaration.
- Sharing of experiences and case studies: Need for the sharing of case studies of activities or programmes that have been carried out which were in the spirit of implementing the Declaration.

## SC41-21: Review of the Ramsar Convention's relationship with its International Organization Partners

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the review of the Ramsar Convention's relationships with its International Organization Partners and advise on how to strengthen these partnerships.

- BirdLife International;
- IUCN
- International Water Management Institute
- Wetlands International
- WWF

## SC41-23: Ramsar Secretariat work plan 2010 Report on activities since January 2010

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to consider the Secretariat work plan for 2010, note the activities undertaken since January, and offer additional advice as appropriate.

## SC41-24: Draft National Report Format for COP11

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to review and approve the draft COP11 National Report Format for finalization by the Secretariat and to agree the timelines for its issuing to, and completion by, the Contracting Parties.

Review and approve the the draft COP11 National Report Format for finalization by the Secretariat and to agree the timelines for its issuing to, and completion by, the Contracting Parties

- New format has 88 specific indicator questions, c.f. 66 in the format for COP10. Changes include:
  - Two new questions (E and F) have been added to Section 2 of the draft COP11 NRF to allow mid-term review of the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan (pg. 11)
  - Small number of 'Changwon Declaration' indicators have been added (pg. 15, Strategy 1.5)
  - Following comments from some CP about the usefulness of having a section for reporting on issues concerning individual Ramsar sites, an option Section 4 Annex has been added (pg. 33-35)
- Practical timeline (para. 12)
  - NRF to be adopted by SC41.
  - Distributed to Parties 12-months prior to COP11, i.e. in January 2011
  - CPs to complete and submit 6-months prior to COP11, i.e. September 2011

## SC41-25: Update on the status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this report requested for this meeting, to consider the issues listed below, to advise on activities to be undertaken by regional members of the Standing Committee and those Contracting Parties directly concerned, and to instruct the Secretariat on specific measures to be taken.

- Res X.13 (para. 18), the Contracting Parties reaffirmed their commitment “to implement fully the terms of Article 3.2 [of the Convention] on reporting change and to maintain or restore the ecological character of their Ramsar sites, including employing all appropriate mechanisms to address and resolve as soon as possible the matters for which a site may have been the subject of an Article 3.2 report; and, once those matters have been resolved, to submit a further report, so that both positive influences at sites and changes in ecological character may be fully reflected in reporting to meetings of the Conference of the Parties in order to establish a clear picture of the status and trends of the Ramsar site network”.

## SC41-26: Report of the STRP Chair and STRP Work Plan for 2010-2011

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, endorse the updated STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan, and consider possible ways and means of funding those STRP priority tasks for which sufficient resources are not yet available.

A number of significant issues were discussed at the STRP mid-term workshop (22-26 February 2010, Gland), including the following which should be brought to the attention of SC41. These include:

- re-development of the guidance for the selection and designation of Ramsar sites, and needs for data and information at the point of designation, including options for revising the format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS);
- nomination of STRP members as authors for the upcoming 5th Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
- redevelopment of the STRP Support Service website; and
- support for STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) to participate in STRP and regional meetings, and for STRP member participation in regional preparatory meetings in order to assist Parties in understanding and discussing technical Draft Resolutions.

## SC41-27: Progress and advice on IPBES

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the progress on IPBES and to advise on how the position of the Convention can be conveyed in ongoing deliberations related to IPBES and particularly at the 3<sup>rd</sup> intergovernmental and stakeholder meeting on IPBES, scheduled for 7-11 June 2010.

- The Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was convened by UNEP to consider establishing an efficient science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being, that can translate emerging scientific knowledge into specific policy action at the appropriate levels.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> IPBES meeting is planned for 7-11 June 2010 and in order to make the most of this opportunity, SC41 is invited to consider the following:
- CPs encouraged to include their Ramsar AA and NFP in their in-country preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> IPBES meeting, and to include Ramsar AAs in their delegations if possible.
- The Secretariat and the STRP will review the documents for the 3<sup>rd</sup> IPBES and prepare a short briefing paper on the various options associated with the key decisions, including the advantages and disadvantages, from the point of view of the Ramsar Convention, for discussion at SC41.

## SC41-28: Report of CEPA programme Officer

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the information provided in the report.

### Advisory Board for Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention

A key product of the Advisory Board is the 'Capacity Building Framework', targeted specifically but not exclusively at the Ramsar Administrative Authorities. However, due to the ill-health of the consultant responsible for this work, the Framework has not yet been finalized and the Advisory Board decided at its meeting in March 2009 that it would not meet again until the final draft of the Framework is available.

### CEPA Oversight Panel

- The composition of the Panel and its work plan for 2009-2012 was agreed at SC40. Since then the Panel has begun some of its work by e-mail.
- The Panel will meet at the end of SC41, on the afternoon of the 1st May and the morning of the 2nd of May. From then on, they will most likely continue working only by e-mail in delivering its work plan.

## SC41-29: WWD themes for 2011 and 2012

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the information on WWD 2011 and requested to take a decision on (a) the linking of the theme for WWD 2012 with the COP11 theme and (b) the COP11 theme itself.

- In 2008, the theme for WWD was linked to the theme for COP10, ‘Healthy Wetlands – Healthy People’
- The theme for WWD 2011 has been suggested by SC40 to be ‘Wetlands and Forests’ to coincide with the UN decision for 2011 to be the International Year of Forests
- Suggestion for WWD 2012 is ‘Wetlands and Tourism’ or ‘Wetlands and Ecotourism’. Need to decide:
  - Do we want to link the theme of WWD 2012 with that of COP11;
  - Are there any other suggestions for the theme of COP11?

## SC41-30: Plans for the Convention's 40th anniversary (2011)

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the preparations underway for the celebration of the Convention's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

- February 2<sup>nd</sup> is the date when the Ramsar Convention was agreed in the city of Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. 2011 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention.
- In the Secretariat, a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coordination Group has been set up to oversee activity celebration plans and products.
- On January 28<sup>th</sup> 2010, a Diplomatic Note on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was sent to the Parties including key messages, information on Secretariat activities and suggested activities for the Ramsar Administrative Authorities.
- Contracting Parties were requested through the Diplomatic Note to forward on any concrete suggestions regarding regional and national actions by April 2010.
- The Secretariat Group also welcomes any suggestions from Standing Committee members.

## SC41-31: Update on business partnership activities

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the developments in our partnership activities.

**Danone-Evian** with three different programmes and a MoU to be renewed in 2011

- Danone Fund for Water: has supported a range of activities, especially the annual World Wetland Day material and the new website and communication activities.
- ‘Ecole de protection de l’eau’ Fund: Project-based programme that has funded projects in Argentina, Nepal and Thailand, as well as a Project Officer.
- Danone Fund for Nature: signed with Danone and IUCN, supports programmes to store carbon through wetland restoration, thus making Danone carbon-neutral by 2011.

**Biosphere Connection partnership.** Links the Star Alliance network with Ramsar, IUCN and UNESCO-MAB. Annual €25,000 allocation of air tickets for use by non-Secretariat staff.

## SC41-32: Report of the STRP Oversight Committee

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the report of the STRP Oversight Committee.

- The Committee has approved the STRP budget for 2010

	CHF
STRP mid-term workshops (February 2010):	60,000
STRP Support Officer (salary & related costs):	120,000
STRP Chair's travel:	8,000
Contribution to priority task implementation:	17,985

TOTAL: CHF 205,985

- Appreciation to Finland, Norway, Tanzania and the U.K. for voluntary contributions to STRP's work in 2009 and 2010, but still shortfall in the amount needed for full delivery of its Workplan.
- Next (16<sup>th</sup>) STRP meeting will be from Monday 14 to Friday 18 February 2011 in the Secretariat offices.

## SC41-33: Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform

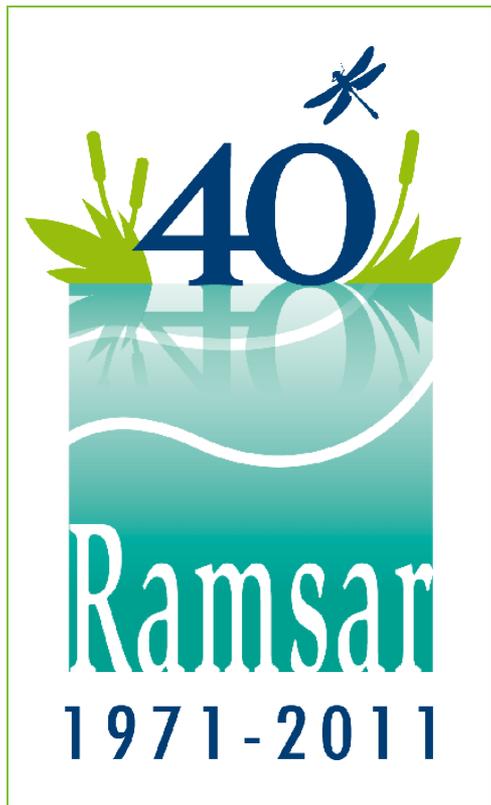
### Mandate:

- Evaluate the success of steps already taken to improve the effectiveness of the Convention
- Recommend additional ways to improve current operation of the Secretariat
- Determine whether the Secretariat would be better provided by UNEP

This report covers the Working Group's deliberations from its five meetings between January 2009 and March 2010. The recommendations for SC41 are:

- The Working Group could not reach consensus on whether the Ramsar Secretariat should be provided by UNEP or continue to be hosted by IUCN.
- A large majority of States concluded that there is strong evidence that a Ramsar Secretariat provided by UNEP would more effectively implement the Ramsar Convention and recommend that the Secretariat be hosted by UNEP.
- Several States concluded that there is not enough evidence to suggest that if hosted by UNEP, the Secretariat would more effectively implement the Convention and recommend that, at this time, the Secretariat continue to be hosted by IUCN.
- Some States at the above Working Group did not express a view.

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