

Opening Statement

by Mr Kim, Chan woo

the Ramsar Convention Standing Committee Chair

Honorable members of Ramsar Standing Committee,
Representatives of observer countries and IOPs

Honorable Secretary General, Mr. Anada Tiega, (Honorable Director General, Madame Julia Marton-Lefevre,)

It has been 6 months already since we got together at the Ramsar COP 10 in Republic of Korea. I would like to take this opportunity to express, again, my heartfelt gratitude to you all for providing unsparing support to the meeting. In addition, I, personally, would like to express sincere appreciation for giving me another opportunity to contribute to the implementation of resolutions of the COP10 and the development of the Convention as a chair of the Standing Committee.

The last Ramsar COP10 provided Korea with great momentum to raise public awareness on environment as well as wetlands and to stand out in the international community as a country pursuing the national vision of the 'Low Carbon Green Growth'. In particular, more citizens are aware of the Ramsar Convention and the value of the environment. Schools also pay more attention on the wetlands and the Convention. The Ramsar Convention Information Tools and the COP results are being utilized by school activities and researches.

I believe that we have been moving forward to achieve the objective of the Convention, which is 'the conservation of all wetlands through local and national implementation with the help of international cooperation.' The Convention also helps policy-makers and wetland actors who strive to establish sustainable societies. To carry on this outcome even further, we should not lose the momentum of the COP10 and the implementation of the results. We need to cooperate.

Contracting parties are the main implementers. The Secretariat supports the networking among the Parties and their efforts to keep up with the COP resolutions and the Convention. And, STRP provides scientific foundation for the stakeholder's decision making and the implementation. Cooperation of IOPs and Observers are essential components we cannot ignore to pursue development of the Convention.

At this Standing Committee meeting, we will review the outcomes of the COP10, and seek for effective measures to implement the outcomes. implementation of the new Ramsar strategic plan and the Changwon Declaration will be sought. Approval of the Ramsar core budget, and work programs of the Secretariat and STRP are also included in the agenda. Regional initiatives that will contribute to the local implementation of the Convention waits for our approval. In addition, report and work plan of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform is also on our table, which will pose significant impact on the operation of the Convention.

A Korean proverb says that you should start with the first button in the right button hole. I think the 40th meeting of Standing Committee would be a place to ensure if we are put the first button in the right button hole in the implementation of the COP10 resolutions. Yesterday during the study tour to the beautiful XXX wetland, I was impressed by the magnificent beauty of nature while felt strong responsibility to conserve and protect the beauty. I believe that we all felt the same way. I hope that you would actively be involved in this meeting toward our common goal, "Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands", based on the shared responsibility we felt.

Thank you.