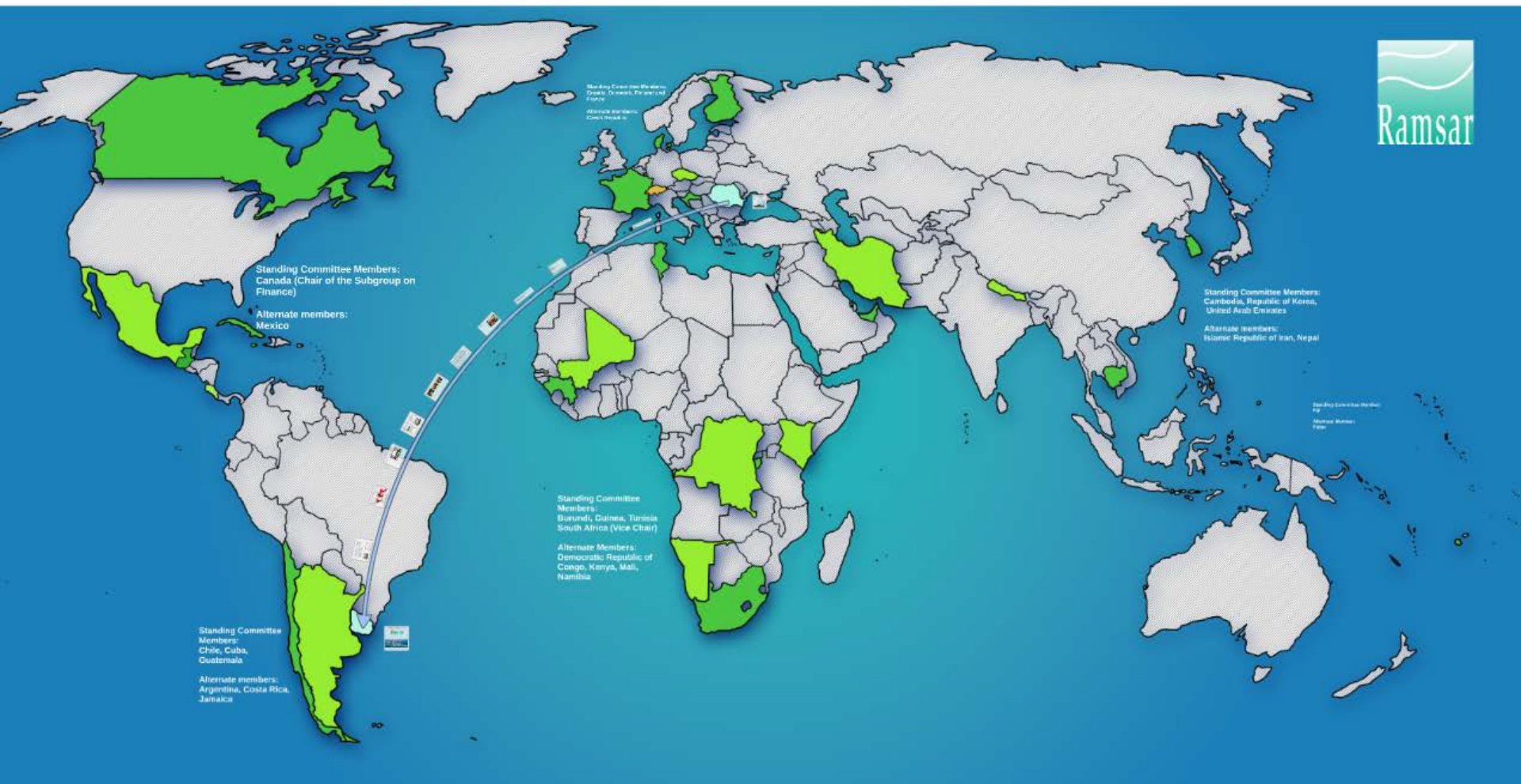


12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

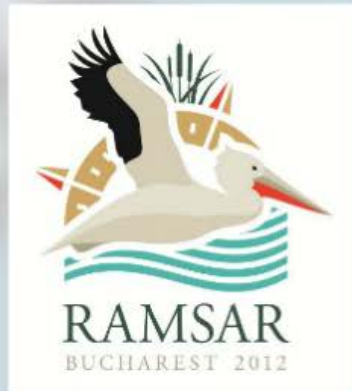


Report of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee 2012 - 2015

Doina Catrinoiu



The 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention



"Wetlands: home and destination"

Bucharest, Romania, 6th-13th July 2012





COP 11 elected the new Standing Committee members for 2012-2015



Standing Committee
Members:
Burundi, Guinea, Tunisia
South Africa (Vice Chair)

Alternate Members:
Democratic Republic of
Congo, Kenya, Mali,
Namibia

Mexico

Standing Committee
Members:
Chile, Cuba,
Guatemala

Alternate members:
Argentina, Costa Rica,
Jamaica

Standing Co
Members:
Burundi, Gu
South Africa

Alternate Me
Democratic
Congo, Keny
Namibia





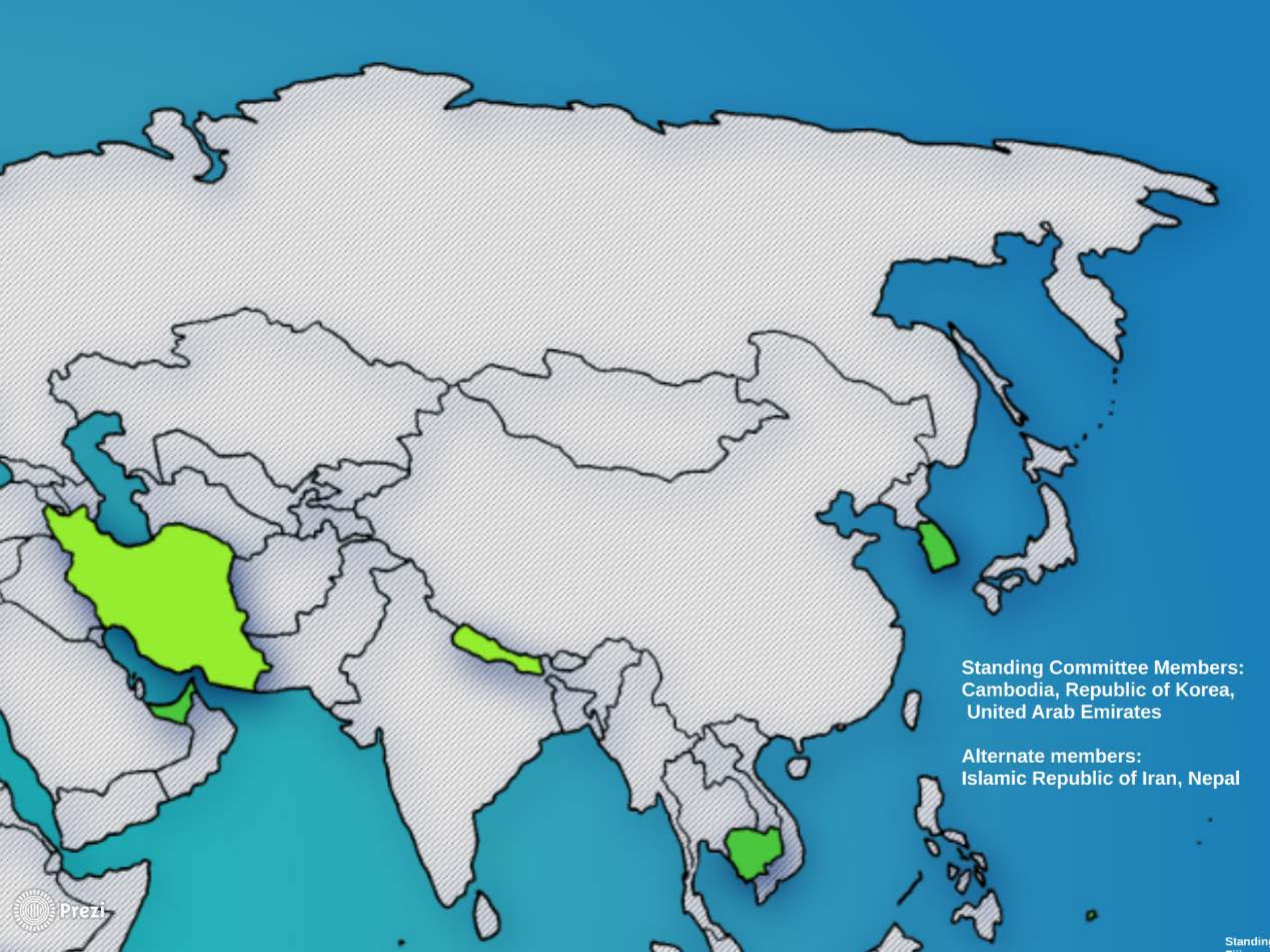
Standing Committee Members:
Canada (Chair of the Subgroup on
Finance)

Alternate members:
Mexico

Standing Committee Members:
Croatia, Denmark, Finland and
France

Alternate members:
Czech Republic





Standing Committee Members:
Cambodia, Republic of Korea,
United Arab Emirates

Alternate members:
Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal

Standing Committee Member:
Fiji

Alternate Member:
Palau



Permanent Observers:

- Switzerland,
- the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel,
- BirdLife International,
- IUCN-International Union for Conservation of Nature,
- International Water Management Institute (IWMI),
- Wetlands International,
- WWF International



Observers:

Countries that are not Contracting Parties but have expressed an interest in joining the Convention, experts and/or institutions.

The Standing Committee met four times during the period under review:

- 45th Meeting: immediately after the close of Ramsar COP11 in Bucharest, Romania, on 10 July 2012;
- 46th Meeting: 08 – 12 April 2013, in Gland, Switzerland;
- 47th Meeting: 24 – 28 March 2014, in Gland, Switzerland;
- 48th Meeting: 28 – 30 January 2015, in Gland, Switzerland.

45th Meeting: Bucharest, Romania, 10 July 2012

"A new Standing Committee - a new era for the Convention"

(Yeon-Chul Yoo (Republic of Korea),
Chair of the outgoing Standing Committee)



45th Meeting: Bucharest, Romania, 10 July 2012

"A new Standing Committee - a new era for the Convention"

(Yeon-Chul Yoo (Republic of Korea),
Chair of the outgoing Standing Committee)



The Standing Committee elected Romania as their Chair and South Africa as Vice Chair

The Standing Committee has been entrusted by the Conference of the Contracting Parties with the supervision of ongoing matters, including:

- implementation of policy by the Ramsar Secretariat,
- execution of the Convention's budget,
- conduct of Secretariat affairs,
- conduct of the Secretary General recruitment process,
- preparation of Ramsar COP13 in 2015,
- any other appropriate matters raised by members and observers

The Standing Committee elected the following members of the Subgroup on Finance:

- for Africa - Burundi,
- for Asia - Republic of Korea,
- for Europe - Denmark,
- for the Neotropics - Chile,
- for North America - Canada,
- for Oceania - Fiji,
- Finland as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup on Finance
- Canada as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance



The Standing Committee Executive Team composition:
the Chair and Vice-Chair of the present SC and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance

The Standing Committee Management Working Group composition:
the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the previous and new Standing Committees,
the Chairs of the Subgroup on Finance of both SCs,
the previous and new Chair of the STRP,
a representative of the ICPS - RUCN,
the Secretary General or officer,
any other interested Parties keeping in mind equitable regional participation, as follows: for Africa - Tunisia; for Asia - the UAE; for Europe - Denmark; for the Neotropics - Cuba; for North America - Canada; and for Oceania - Fiji



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- implementation of policy by the Ramsar Secretariat,
- execution of the Convention's budget,
- conduct of Secretariat affairs,
- conduct of the Secretary General recruitment process
- preparation of Ramsar COP12 in 2015,
- any other appropriate matters raised by members and observers



The Standing Committee elected Romania as their Chair and South Africa as Vice-Chair

The Standing Committee elected the following members of the Subgroup on Finance:

- for Africa - Burundi;
- for Asia - Republic of Korea;
- for Europe - Denmark;
- for the Neotropics - Chile;
- for North America - Canada;
- for Oceania - Fiji,
- Finland as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup on Finance
- Canada as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance



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- the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the previous and new Standing Committees,
- the Chairs of the Subgroup on Finance of both SCs,
- the previous and new Chair of the STRP,
- a representative of the IOPs - IUCN,
- the Secretary General ex officio
- any other interested Parties keeping in mind equitable regional participation, as follows: for Africa - Tunisia; for Asia - the UAE; for Europe - Denmark; for the Neotropics - Cuba; for North America - Canada; and for Oceania - Fiji

Recruitment of the next Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention

Following SC45 Decision, the Executive Team of Standing Committee has taken the lead in the process of recruiting the next Secretary General, assisted by the Secretariat.

The Executive Team, Mr. Anada Tiéga, Secretary General, Ms Anna Goodwin, Finance Officer, Ms Valerie Higgins, Administrative Officer and Ms Mireille Katz, Executive Assistant to the Secretary General joined in a teleconference on 15th of November 2012 in order to approve the new schedule and process for the SG recruitment and to establish the team who will drive the screening, shortlisting and selection process.

On 4th of April 2013 the members of the Selection Panel met in Gland and on 5th and 6th they undertook the interviews for the new Secretary General.

The selected candidate agreed to take the position of Secretary General and started his work for the Convention on August 12th 2013.



46th Meeting: Gland, Switzerland, 08-12 April 2013



The new Standing Committee expressed appreciation to Anada Tenga, for his active contribution to advancing the work of the Ramsar Convention during its six-year tenure.

Achievements:

- a healthy financial position of the Secretariat,
- a higher visibility of the Convention,
- good communication,
- increased number of Contracting Parties.

Needs:

- to increase visibility even more,
- to find opportunities for integrating wetlands into national priorities,
- to create and realize synergies,
- to further educational and communication initiatives.

The new Standing Committee elected five members to serve on the Subgroup on the preparation of COP12, with Uruguay as its Chair and including the COP11 host country, Armenia and one SC member from each region.

The members chosen to serve were:

- for Africa - South Africa;
- for Asia - Cambodia;
- for Europe - France;
- for the Neotropics - Guatemala;
- for North America - Mexico;
- for Oceania - Fiji.

The Committee adopted the Secretary's Work Plan for 2013 as the basis of its programme of work, allowing for flexibility pending its review by the incoming Secretary General.

In order to take forward the preparation of the 4th Strategic Plan, the Standing Committee established a Strategic Plan Working Group, to include Contracting Parties, STWP's CEPA Oversight Panel, International Organization Partners, Regional Initiatives and other Ramsar stakeholders.

The Standing Committee welcomed the work of the Culture Working Group.

The Standing Committee endorsed the revised Operational Guidelines 2013-2015 for the 15 Regional Initiatives.

The Standing Committee noted the report of the Chair of STWP and approving a number of recommendations concerning the Ramsar Information Sheet and the preparation of a report on the state of the world's wetlands, including the STWP 2013-2015 Work Plan for Evaluation.

The Standing Committee urged Contracting Parties and other partners and donors to provide, through voluntary contributions, the resources needed to enable the completion of these tasks.

The Standing Committee approved a number of recommendations on Communications, Education, Participation, and Awareness prepared by the CEPA Oversight Panel, including the Panel's Work Plan for 2013-2015.

Appointment of the next Secretary General – The Standing Committee approved the selected candidate as the next Secretary General.

The Ramsar Convention Standing Committee is pleased to announce that Dr Christopher Briggs has been appointed to, and has accepted, the position of Secretary General. He will be the 10th Secretary General to the Convention and will succeed Mr. Tenga Ananda who has served the Convention for the past six years. Dr Briggs' appointment was approved by the Ramsar Standing Committee during its 46th meeting held in Gland, Switzerland from 8-12 April 2013.

The Ramsar Convention Standing Committee Clerk, Mr. Michael Fazio, would like to wish Dr Briggs every success in this very important and challenging role. The Ramsar Convention welcomes its new Secretary General and looks forward to working closely with him during his tenure.



The new Standing Committee expressed appreciation to Anada Tiega, for his entire contribution to advancing the work of the Ramsar Convention during his six-year tenure.

Achievements :

- a healthy financial position of the Secretariat,
- a higher visibility of the Convention,
- good communication,
- increased number of Contracting Parties.

Needs:

- to increase visibility even more,
- to find opportunities for integrating wetlands into national priorities,
- to create and realize synergies,
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The new Standing Committee elected the members to serve on the Subgroup on the preparation of COP12, with Uruguay as its Chair and including the COP11 host country, Romania and one SC member from each region.

The members chosen to serve were:

- for Africa - South Africa;
- for Asia - Cambodia;
- for Europe - France;
- for the Neotropics - Guatemala;
- for North America - Mexico;
- for Oceania - Fiji.

The Committee adopted the Secretariat's Work Plan for 2013 as the basis of its programme of work, allowing for flexibility pending its review by the incoming Secretary General.

In order to take forward the preparation of the 4th Strategic Plan, the Standing Committee established a Strategic Plan Working Group, to include Contracting Parties, STRP, the CEPA Oversight Panel, International Organization Partners, Regional Initiatives and other Ramsar stakeholders.

The Standing Committee welcomed the work of the Culture Working Group.

The Standing Committee endorsed the revised Operational Guidelines 2013-2015 for the 15 Regional Initiatives.

The Standing Committee noted the report of the Chair of STRP and approving a number of recommendations concerning the Ramsar Information Sheet and the preparation of a report on the state of the world's wetlands, including the STRP 2013-2015 Work Plan for finalization

The Standing Committee urged Contracting Parties and other partners and donors to provide, through voluntary contributions, the resources needed to enable the completion of these tasks

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The Ramsar Convention Standing Committee is pleased to announce that Dr Christopher Briggs has been appointed to, and has accepted, the position of Secretary General. He will be the fifth Secretary General to the Convention and will succeed Mr. Tiéga Anada who has served the Convention for the past six years. Dr Briggs' appointment was approved by the Ramsar Standing Committee during its 46th meeting held in Gland, Switzerland from 8-12 April 2013.

The Ramsar Convention Standing Committee Chair, Mr Mihail Faca, would like to wish Dr Briggs every success in this very important and challenging role. The Ramsar Convention welcomes its new Secretary General and looks forward to working closely with him during this triennium.



47th Meeting: Gland, Switzerland, 24 – 28 March 2014

The new Secretary General presented his vision for the Convention including the four priorities of:

- Communications and advocacy for wise use of wetlands
- Capacity development
- Partnerships
- Measuring the status and value of wetlands

while respecting the financial limitations of Parties and funders.



The Standing Committee welcomed the generosity of Switzerland and Uruguay to reduce the shortfall of the COP12 administrative budget and noted the need to raise a further CHF 1.2 million during 2014 and 2015 for the pre-COP regional meetings and sponsoring of delegates to COP

The Standing Committee agreed financial allocations for Regional Initiatives for 2014

The Standing Committee approved the report of the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) and requested the SPWG to prepare a new Strategic Plan for 2016–2021

Standing Committee noted:

- the STRP Chair's report, and his request for Contracting Parties to consider possible ways of sourcing funding for implementation of the highest priority tasks
- the report and the progress in the preparation of the new CEPA Programme
- progress reports concerning:
 - the Status of Ramsar Sites (including updates from Standing Committee participants)
 - Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) redevelopment
 - The Ramsar – Danone – Evian Partnership



Parties expressed thanks for the ongoing contribution of Danone-Evian to the objectives of the Convention.



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Parties expressed thanks for the ongoing contribution of Danone-Evian to the objectives of the Convention.

48th Meeting: Gland, Switzerland, 26-30 January 2015

The Standing Committee's final meeting before the COP was largely devoted to debate on and possible adoption of the Draft Resolutions and amendments to the Rules of Procedure to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties for its consideration in June.

As recommended by the Management Working Group, the Standing Committee agreed to focus on the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference of Contracting Parties.

The Standing Committee approved forwarding 15 Draft Resolutions, submitted by the Secretariat and by Thailand, Greece, Tunisia and Republic of Korea, Denmark supported by Finland, Mexico and the Philippines, as further amended, for consideration at COP12.

In financial matters, the Committee approved the report of the Subgroup on Finance.

In administrative matters, the Standing Committee approved:

- the Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group
- the Report of the Subgroup on COP12 and the Provisional Agenda for COP12
- the Secretariat's Work Plan for 2015
- the report of the Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel and CEPA Work Programme 2016-2021, taking into consideration the proposed amendments.

In the course of the meeting UAE reported that its offer to host COP13, which had first been made at SC47, now had the approval of the Cabinet, and a letter confirming this had been sent by the Minister of the Environment to the Secretariat. The Secretary General thanked UAE for making this generous and confirmed that full Cabinet approval had been received by hosting COP13 in Dubai and that the Minister of Environment & Water had conveyed a letter of confirmation to the Secretariat.



The SC noted:

- the Report of the Secretary General
- the Report of the STRP Chair
- the Report of the Secretariat with regard to Communication
- the Report of the Secretariat with regard to Partnership

and all comments and proposals for amendments on these items, including the requested clarification on several aspects of the report on Partnerships.

The SC noted the Report from the closed session of the Management Working Group regarding the initiation of a process to review the agreements, policies, guidelines and other mechanisms that regulate and guide the relations between and the division of responsibilities between the Standing Committee, the Management Working Group, the Executive Committee, the Chair of the Standing Committee, the Secretary General and IUCN in relation to making the Secretariat including staff management and the request to be addressed by the Executive Team to IUCN to initiate a 360 degrees evaluation / feedback of the performance of the Secretary General.

During a closed session, the SC selected the Ramsar Award laureates and the announcement was made in plenary by the Chair:

- the Award for Wetland Wise User: Mr. Ziad Hassan, Israel
- the Award for Wetland Innovation: Goussier, Senegal
- the Award for Young Wetland Champions: Fawcett-Hamiltons Bogels, Germany
- the Ramsar Award recipients: Tour du Valat Research Centre, France; Professor William Mitsch, USA; Professor Goo Jun Joo, Republic of Korea.



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- the **Award for Wetland Innovation**: Oceanium, Senegal;
- the **Award for Young Wetland Champions**: Fundación Humedales Bogotá, Colombia;
- the **Merit Award** recipients: Tour du Valat Research Centre, France;
Professor William Mitsch, USA
Professor Gea Jae Joo, Republic of Korea.





Concluding remarks

The period since COP11 has been extraordinarily active and constructive for the Standing Committee and its subgroups.

Together with the Contracting Parties, STRP, the Secretariat, the regional initiatives, the IOPs and the Convention's many other collaborators, we had to operate at a high level of effectiveness in order to support the implementation of the Convention.

The mission of the Convention is now far larger, needs far more partners, more commitments and more awareness.

The Standing Committee must be careful to ensure that these collaborative arrangements are well chosen for their potential added value for the Convention's work and together we will achieve the optimum desired results

The Standing Committee agree the proposed Four Main Goals of the Strategic Plan:

- Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss And Degradation;
- Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network;
- Wisely Using All Wetlands;
- Enhancing Implementation;

To fulfill them there is an urgent need to strengthen capacity for the Convention's implementation by the Contracting Parties at all levels.

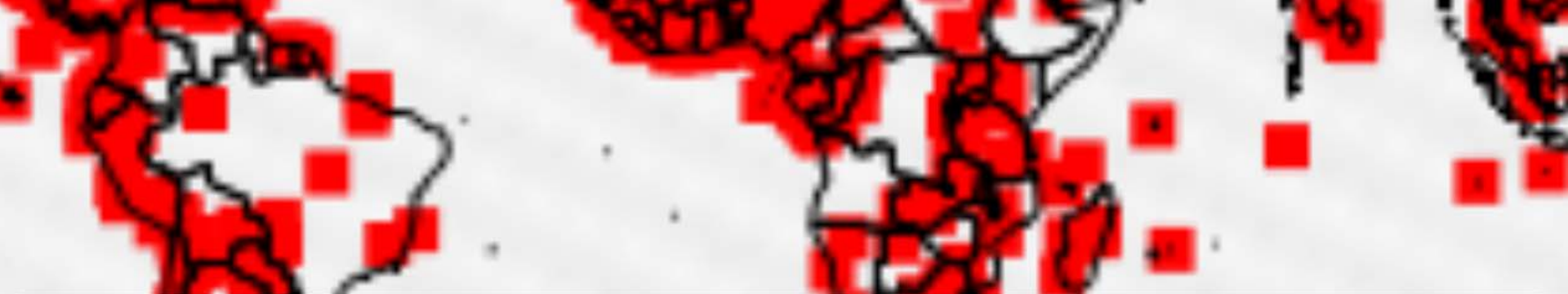


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**I together with Mihail Faca, the past chair of the Standing Committee 2012-2015,
thank**

- **all members of Standing Committee and the many permanent observers and observers who have attended and contributed to its meetings since COP11**
- **the Chair and members of the STRP and members of the CEPA Oversight Panel**
- **the International Organization Partners**
- **all staff of the Ramsar Secretariat**
- **all Contracting Parties and other knowledgeable members of the Ramsar Community**
- **the Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee and the Chair of the Subgroup of Finance**
- **both Secretaries General**



We wish all Contracting Parties and the new Standing Committee plenty of success to accomplish their mission to fight for the future of Wetlands and for the future of all of us.

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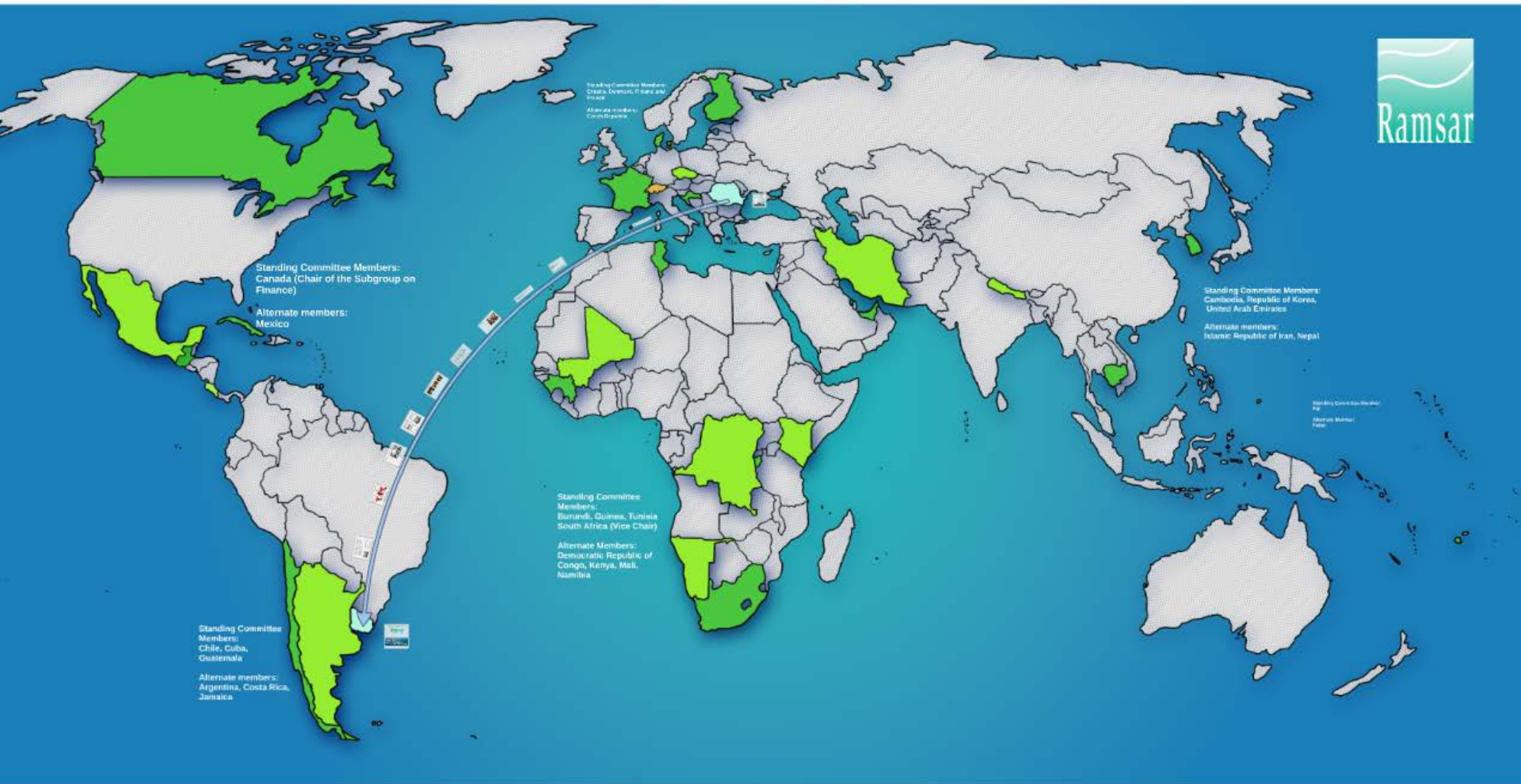


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12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



PUNTA DEL ESTE - URUGUAY
1st-9th June 2015



THANK YOU!