

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE
ESPECIALLY AS WATERFOWL HABITAT

Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland : 26-28 October 1993

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Members:

Africa: Kenya (A. Koyo - Vice-Chair)
Alternate: Senegal (S.I. Sylla)
Asia: India (B.P. Singh)
Alternate: Jordan (Y. Al-Zubi)
Eastern Europe: Hungary: (L. Lakos - Chair)
Alternate: Russian Federation (S.B. Tveritinov,
A. Goudyma)
Neotropics: Uruguay: (G.C. Dutra, R. Cal Johnston)
Alternate: Panama (R.E. Arango)
North America: Canada: (J. McCuaig)
Alternate: Mexico (S. Sierra Bernal)
Oceania: New Zealand: (J. Owen)
Alternate: Papua New Guinea (J. Genolagani)
Western Europe: Spain (C. Morillo)
Alternate: Germany (K. Mömkes)

Host of Next Conference: Australia (B. Phillips)

Host of Previous Conference: Japan (K. Kikuchi, M. Nagatsu)

Permanent Observers: Switzerland (A. Antonietti)
UK (G.C. Donald, M. Ford)
IUCN (M. Holdgate, J.-Y. Pirot)
IWRB (M. Moser)

Contracting Party Observers: Austria (R. Turk)
Brazil (A. Ricarte)
France (M. Bigan, F. Lerat)
South Africa (H.S. van Rooy)

Invited NGO Observers: BirdLife International (J. O'Sullivan)
WWF (B. Gujja)

Secretariat: Secretary General (D. Navid)
Assistant Secretary General (M. Smart)
Director of Conservation (H. Lethier)

Administrator (J. Tucker)
Communications Officer (M. Katz)
Technical Officer (M. Herzig)
Technical Officer (S. Kobayashi)
Administrative Assistant (K. Hills-Peppler)
Communications Assistant (D. Peck)
Executive Assistant (E. Luthi - Rapporteur)
Programme Assistant (A. Pavlic)
Secretary (F. Conus)
Secretary (A. de Giorgio)
Secretary (M. Wittig)
Office Clerk (M. Riera)
IWRB/Liaison Officer (T.Jones - Rapporteur)

1. Opening and Welcoming Remarks:

After everyone had introduced themselves, the meeting was opened officially by Ms. Louise Lakos (Hungary), Chairperson of the Standing Committee. She made reference to the brief Standing Committee meeting which had been held immediately at the close of the Kushiro Conference and reiterated her thanks for the confidence the Committee had placed in her country by electing Hungary as Chair for the 1994-1996 triennium. She expressed special thanks to Japan for the Kushiro Conference which was a vast contribution towards a global acceptance of the Convention as a major international instrument for conservation of wetlands. The future for the Convention was bright, yet manifold were the tasks that lay ahead.

Dr Martin Holdgate, Director General of IUCN, in turn welcomed the participants to the meeting which was the first gathering of the Standing Committee in the new IUCN headquarters building. He, too, had been impressed by the display of conservation interest in Japan and, on behalf of IUCN, shared the pleasure in the positive outcome of the Kushiro event. He considered communication efforts and work in partnership between the Ramsar Bureau and IUCN's worldwide membership and Secretariat of premier importance. Also the forthcoming IUCN General Assembly (Argentina, January 1994) was expected to result in several conservation initiatives to be taken up in constructive cooperation during the years ahead.

Dr Michael Moser, Director of IWRB, greeted the meeting on behalf of his organization and also in the name of IWRB's associated organizations, the Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) and Wetlands for the Americas (WA). Referring to wetland conservation meetings he had attended recently, Dr Moser reported that, despite all efforts, worldwide wetlands were still being lost and/or degraded. He noted the need for continued concentrated action under the Convention.

2. Adoption of Agenda:

The agenda was agreed by consensus.

3. Admission of Observers:

The Chairperson noted that in addition to the permanent NGO observers from IUCN and IWRB, BirdLife International and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) had been invited to attend the present meeting. Their attendance was approved by consensus.

4. Matters Arising from the Twelfth and Thirteenth Meetings of the Standing Committee not otherwise covered by this Agenda:

It was agreed that all 'Matters Arising' were covered by the agenda. However, referring to page 10 (point 4, line 13) of the Standing Committee documentation, the Secretary General noted the need for clarification. No agreement had been signed between IUCN and Ramsar. Rather a delegation of authority by the IUCN Director General to the Secretary General had been witnessed and approved by the Chairman of the Standing Committee. The wording of the sentence in question would be rephrased in the report proceedings to read "...; a delegation of authority to this effect had been signed by IUCN's Director General and was witnessed and approved by the Chairman of the Standing Committee."

5. General Overview of the Results of the Kushiro Conference:

The representative from Japan conveyed to the meeting the greetings of Mayor Wanibuchi and his assurance that the people of Kushiro would persevere in their enthusiasm and efforts for wetland conservation. This was followed by a summary report prepared by the Japanese Government. It contained a special note of appreciation for both the former and the new Chairperson of the Standing Committee and its members, cooperating organizations, the Secretary General and all staff of the Ramsar Bureau for their generous input towards the success of the Kushiro Conference which had been prepared jointly by the Central Government of Japan, Hokkaido Prefectural Government and the City of Kushiro. All these efforts had contributed to, and greatly enhanced public awareness of wetland values. Japan wished to continue contributing to wetland conservation at a global level.

The Secretary General noted the release of a special issue of the Ramsar Newsletter (No. 16) in four languages covering the results of the Kushiro Conference. Also, there had been an exchange of letters with the host country Japan on follow-up work as well as a visit by Bureau staff in September. The first volume of the Conference Proceedings had just been published in English, French, and Spanish and was to be distributed to Conference participants shortly.

The Assistant Secretary General reported on the conservation achievements of the last Conference. Among elements to make the Convention more effective he mentioned: the Kushiro Statement; new site listings; resolution on initial designation of listed sites; additional guidance on wise use and guidelines relating to management plans; the establishment of a Scientific and Technical Review Panel; increasing importance of the Wetland Conservation Fund; regional matters; specific questions relating to wetlands as fish habitats on the one hand, and ecological character and changes therein on the other.

In response to a request from the representative of Australia, who was seeking guidance on

how to organize the next Conference of the Contracting Parties (e.g. workshop themes and structure, issues to be deliberated), the Chairperson proposed the establishment of a sub-committee. This was agreed and the committee, composed of the Vice-Chair Kenya as head of the group, Australia, Japan, Switzerland, and Canada (with Brazil as an observer) was requested to review experience with the Secretariat, and to report back to the present meeting under Agenda item 17.

6. Presentation of Report on Activities since the Kushiro Conference by the Convention Bureau:

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretary General reported on the key Bureau activities which had been undertaken during the last four months. He noted that the number of Contracting Parties now stood at 80, with Armenia, Honduras and Lithuania having become Contracting Parties since Kushiro. The List of Wetlands of International Importance stood at 632 sites (an increase of 24 since the start of the Kushiro Conference), and it was understood that further designations would be announced in the near future. Six Contracting Parties (Armenia, Iceland, Jordan, Lithuania, New Zealand and Poland) had recently accepted the Regina Amendments, bringing the total number of Contracting Parties to have done so to 30. Of the 21 acceptances required to bring the Amendments into force, 20 had now been received. It was hoped that a further acceptance (needed from Chile, Denmark, France, Gabon, India, Iran, Morocco, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, or USA) would be received in the very near future.

In terms of follow-up to Kushiro, the Secretary General drew attention to work carried out in order to finalize and distribute the Conference decisions (i.e. Recommendations and Resolutions). In particular, he was pleased to report publication of the first volume of Proceedings, which had been distributed to the Standing Committee. The Secretary General then summarized work that had been done towards furthering the many important conservation matters arising from Kushiro. These included the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and the Montreux Record. Much other work had been completed in terms of finalizing the Kushiro Conference accounts; communications (e.g. production of a special issue of the Ramsar Newsletter and proposal for a possible 25th Anniversary campaign); undertaking a follow-up visit to Japan; and preparing a review of the Kushiro Conference in order to identify any lessons to be learned for 1996.

Turning to specific conservation activities, the Secretary General noted that the Wise Use case-studies book, resulting from the three-year project funded by the Netherlands, had just been published, and that documentation concerning the Wise Use Action Plan had also been prepared. Wise Use projects had been initiated in Costa Rica and in Peru, with financial support from the USA. In terms of Listed sites, considerable work had been put into discussions with IWRB concerning the future of the Ramsar Database, while other activities had concerned the Montreux Record, Monitoring Procedure (notably consultations with South Africa and Uruguay) and participation in the scientific committee established for the Austrian Ramsar site of Neusiedlersee. Work in the field of international cooperation had included publication of the Proceedings of the seminar on Caribbean Wetlands held in French Guyana in April; receipt and analysis of Wetland Conservation Fund project proposals; and extensive liaison with partner organizations and partner secretariats, notably that of the

Convention on Biological Diversity.

Other activities undertaken since Kushiro had been in the areas of communications, office administration and financial management, personnel, and preparations for the present meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Chairperson thanked the Secretary General for his report and offered her congratulations to the Bureau staff for having undertaken so many activities in a short period of time. She wished, in particular, to extend a warm welcome to the three new Contracting Parties which had joined the Convention since Kushiro. She also reminded the committee of the importance of securing one more acceptance of the Regina Amendments from among the Contracting Parties whose acceptance could bring the Amendments into force.

At the request of the Chairperson, the Assistant Secretary General expanded upon some of the points made by the Secretary General concerning conservation issues. He noted that while the Convention had not yet been successful in securing direct support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Bureau had been asked by GEF to assist with preparation of wetland conservation project concepts. Discussions with GEF were ongoing.

The Technical Officer responsible for coordinating the Bureau's work in the Neotropical Region presented additional information concerning the Wise Use projects being carried out in Peru and Costa Rica. The Bureau was working closely with IUCN, in the case of Caño Negro Ramsar site in Costa Rica, and with Wetlands for the Americas (WA) in the case of Paracas Ramsar site in Peru.

The Chairperson thanked the Assistant Secretary General and Neotropical Technical Officer for their presentations and invited the observers from IUCN, IWRB, BirdLife International and WWF to make brief presentations on the recent activities of their respective organizations.

The observer from IUCN drew attention to the report distributed at Kushiro covering IUCN support for the Convention. He reported that active support and cooperation was ongoing and cited a number of specific instances. These included advocating participation in the Convention by non-Contracting Party states (e.g. Thailand); promoting designation of additional wetlands to the Ramsar List (e.g. in Mauritania) and wide consultation within IUCN to determine ways in which the organization's support for the Convention could be broadened and strengthened. The results of this consultation would be drawn into a single document for discussion with the Ramsar Bureau early in the coming year.

The observer from IWRB referred participants to the document circulated in Kushiro which covered IWRB's technical support to Ramsar. In terms of ongoing developments, he highlighted the role of the alliance currently evolving between three key wetland conservation NGOs, namely IWRB, Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) and Wetlands for the Americas (WA). Within the alliance, IWRB itself would be focusing its activities more on Africa and Europe, but would also provide coordination between the three partners. It was expected that further consolidation of the alliance would bring many opportunities for enhanced technical support to the Convention. Finally, the observer from IWRB expressed his thanks to the

IWRB/Ramsar Liaison Officer (responsible for maintaining the Ramsar Database) who would shortly be leaving IWRB in order to join the staff of the Ramsar Bureau.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the IWRB/Ramsar Liaison Officer made a brief presentation reviewing progress with the Database since Montreux and highlighting some of the priorities for the new triennium. In this respect, he noted that special emphasis would be given to database outputs in 1994-1996. An electronic link would be established between Slimbridge and Gland and a major review of Listed sites would be published prior to the 1996 Conference.

The observer from BirdLife International thanked the Committee for having invited his organization to participate in the present meeting. He presented a brief overview of the recent establishment and structure of BirdLife, noting the important role of national lead organizations, known as 'partners'. BirdLife had participated actively at Kushiro, particularly in the field of conservation of listed sites, but also on matters varying from national committees to wise use, and would continue its strong support for the Convention in future.

The observer from WWF also expressed his organization's appreciation of having been invited to attend the Standing Committee meeting. He continued by summarizing WWF's interest in ensuring effective integration of local people into the process of decision making in wetlands. WWF was ready to support the Convention in its efforts to promote 'grass roots' implementation of the many important areas of conservation and wise use covered by Ramsar publications.

7. Review of Convention Finances:

Introducing this Agenda item, at the request of the Chairperson, the Secretary General drew the attention of participants to the document entitled 'Review of Convention Finances: Update as of 30 September 1993'. This superseded pages 35 to 83 of the main set of meeting documentation. The Secretary General then introduced each of the seven Agenda sub-items in turn.

a) 1993 Core Income

The Secretary General noted that the current situation was relatively healthy and that since preparation of the updated documentation, two additional national contributions had been received, from Bulgaria and Romania, respectively. Nevertheless, it was of some concern that a number of significant Contracting Party contributions had not yet been received. This could cause cash flow problems in the future, although it could be anticipated that a number of important payments would be received in due course. He also drew attention to the fact that while the situation had improved in 1993, it was still the case that several developing countries had never made contributions to the Convention budget.

The representative from the Russian Federation recalled that his country had announced payment of its 1992 contribution at Kushiro and that the funds had been received by the Bureau shortly thereafter. Owing to the current difficult economic situation, there was uncertainty over payment of the 1993 contribution, although it was hoped that payment might

be effected early in 1994. It was also noted that while the United Nations had agreed that the Russian Federation should be assessed at a lower percentage than that applied to the former USSR, the Russian Federation had paid the full share of the former USSR to Ramsar for 1991 and 1992, and hoped to do so soon for 1993.

In reply to a question from the observer from the United Kingdom, the Secretary General indicated that, as the Regina Amendments were not yet in force, contributions were of a voluntary nature. In any event the Convention could not coerce any Contracting Party into making a financial contribution. However, the Bureau was anxious to work closely with Contracting Parties which had so far been unable to make payments, in the hope that ways could be found to facilitate full participation in the Convention.

At the suggestion of the representative from India, it was agreed that a letter from the Secretary General and Chairperson of the Standing Committee should be addressed to ministers from Contracting Parties which had not yet paid.

b) 1993 Core Expenditure

The Secretary General reported that 1993 core expenditure was expected to be in line with the figure contained in the Convention budget. A number of apparently overspent budget lines in the document before the meeting would, in fact show an on-target outturn at the end of the year, owing to the reallocation of certain expenditure from the core budget to project budgets, in particular, the Kushiro Conference.

Following requests from the observer from the United Kingdom and the representative from Kenya, it was agreed that certain adjustments of presentation would be made in the future, notably through indication of actual expenditure as a percentage of the budgeted figure, and indication of the expected out-turn. Should any significant overspend be projected, an explanation should be provided on how this could be met.

c) 1993 Project Income

The Secretary General noted that additional project income (from the Commission of the European Communities, France and Japan) would be received in the near future, so that all project balances would show a positive out-turn. The total project income for the year had been dominated by donations to the Wetland Conservation Fund and by receipt of a large restricted grant from the USA.

It was pointed out that the list of donor countries for project 7041, Preparation of Caribbean Wetlands Seminar, was incomplete. Whilst France had been a major sponsor of the meeting, important contributions had also been made by the Netherlands, UK, USA, and the EEC.

The observer from France requested that presentation of project income be amended in future years to give a clearer indication of the level of support received from Contracting Parties which, like France, contributed to many separate activities. She also indicated that France would soon be contributing another FF167,000 to the Caribbean project. In response to this request and comments made by other participants, the Secretary General said that in the past

the Standing Committee had agreed that the documentation on this sub-item should be kept to a minimum, since the Bureau's principal reporting obligation was to the donor Contracting Party. However, there would be no difficulty in making adjustments in presentation for the committee's next meeting.

d) 1993 Project Expenditure

The Secretary General reported that the Kushiro Conference had been by far the largest item of project expenditure. As noted under the previous sub-item, all projects were expected to show credit balances at the end of the year.

e) 1994 Income Projections

Sounding a note of caution, the Secretary General pointed out that the augmented 1994-1996 budget might make it difficult for some Contracting Parties to pay their contributions as promptly as in the past. This meant that the Convention should exercise even greater care than usual in making expenditure at the beginning of 1994.

As in previous years, the Bureau had prepared a sample invoice for the Standing Committee to review. The committee gave its approval for the dispatch of 1994 invoices through the usual diplomatic channels. The Bureau reassured the Standing Committee that copies of invoices were always sent directly to the Administrative Authority in each Contracting Party.

f) 1994 Priorities for Expenditure

The Standing Committee reviewed and approved the documentation concerning this sub-item. The Secretary General reported that IUCN had informed the Bureau that charges for Administrative Services in 1994 would be slightly below the budgeted figure. Referring to expenditure priority four (Support for Regional Representatives) the Secretary General requested the Standing Committee's guidance in allocating expenditure under this new heading.

It was agreed that the money available for support to regional representatives should in 1994 be used for the African, Asian and Neotropical regions. An equal share of SFR 10,000 per region should be made and the relevant regional representatives would be invited to make detailed proposals for expenditure of the funds to the Bureau.

g) Auditors' Consolidated Report for 1991-93

Following consultations with the Convention's firm of auditors, Price Waterhouse, the Secretary General presented a schematic outline, which the Bureau proposed to use for compiling a three-year report at the end of the triennium. The report would be completed and distributed in the first half of 1994 when all of the relevant information was available. The Standing Committee authorized the Bureau to proceed as suggested.

8. Review of Administrative Matters:

This item was covered by a closed session of the Standing Committee.

9. Follow-up on Kushiro Conference Decisions:

The Secretary General reported that the specific recommendations had been sent to the countries concerned via diplomatic channels, and further follow-up action would be taken by the Bureau regarding Conference decisions pertaining to individual countries. Volume I of the Conference Proceedings which included the Conference decisions had just been published and would shortly be sent to all Contracting Parties both via diplomatic channels and to the competent Administrative Authority. In addition, the directions to the Convention Bureau contained in the resolutions and recommendations had been included within the Bureau's 1994 Work Plan.

The observer from the United Kingdom felt that although it was more important to look forward rather than back, a few of the Kushiro decisions were repetitions of what had previously been agreed, and others were less substantive than originally envisaged, and perhaps premature, as the issues that they sought to address required further elaboration. He urged that this be borne in mind when developing the technical materials for the next Conference.

The representative from India commented on specific follow-up requirements for his own country as regards the Conference decisions on the Monitoring Procedure, Wise Use, bilateral and multilateral assistance, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and the guidelines on fish habitats.

Also referring to Recommendation REC. C.5.9 'Establishment of Ramsar guidelines on wetlands of international importance as fish habitat', the representative from Panama stressed the importance that such guidelines should comprise the whole resource concept, i.e. not only conservation-related considerations but also the related value of fisheries and other economic concerns.

The Secretary General reported that this question had been discussed with experts in IUCN. The Chairperson, supported by the Assistant Secretary General agreed that consideration of this issue would range among the duties of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel.

10. Approval of Bureau Work Plan for 1994:

The Secretary General reported that the 1994 work projections were the result of a consolidated planning effort carried out by the Ramsar Bureau with its partner organizations. The Standing Committee should review the substance and advise on the necessity of any shifts in priority.

The Assistant Secretary General referred to pages 235-238 of the Standing Committee documentation which summarized the proposed Bureau activities for the coming year. He underlined that in addition to input from IUCN's Wetlands Programme the work plan had received increased input from several other IUCN sectors, such as the Marine Programme, the Species Survival Programme, Protected Areas Programme, and the different Regional

Programmes. Substantial contributions had also been provided by BirdLife International, IWRB, and WWF.

The Assistant Secretary General pointed out that the items were applications of the obligations deriving from the Convention and were listed under the two categories of 'essential' and 'desirable' activities in the Convention Programme. The essential activities included: a review of the application of the Monitoring Procedure; the need to devote more time to national wetland conservation policies; an attempt to calculate the size of the remaining world wetland resource; the effect of major development projects on wetlands worldwide; the need to remain in close contact with other conventions, especially the Biodiversity Secretariat; special efforts to gain new Contracting Parties (especially Kushiro Observer States). The desirable activities ranged from training, shared wetlands and species, and development assistance, to the Wetland Conservation Fund and a review of its first three years of existence.

The representative from India suggested that Contracting Parties that had finalized their national wetland policies should make these available to others.

The representative from Canada queried the mention of 'if funds are available' regarding certain activities in the 'essential' category. The Secretary General explained that this referred to the use of consultants for expanded work since the Convention's budget did not have a consultancy budget line. He confirmed that Bureau staff would work in these areas, but in some cases it would also be helpful to secure external financial support.

The representative from New Zealand pointed out an apparent imbalance in regional emphasis which seemed to feature Europe and the Neotropics more predominantly than others. The Secretary General assured the meeting that there was certainly no policy intention to that effect although the Work Plan would necessarily reflect ongoing actions. He assured the Committee that should there be an imbalance, this would be remedied.

The representative from Japan referred to item 2.II (a) 'Sensitizing development agencies' concerning a reference to USA-Japan cooperation to support conservation efforts in developing countries. He requested that the reference should be rephrased as the matter was still under discussion.

Referring to item 2 III (a) 'Liaison with other Convention secretariats', the representative from Brazil questioned the relevance of the Convention on Climate Change to the Ramsar treaty. In his opinion close linkage with the Convention on Biological Diversity, for example, was much more important.

The Chairperson concluded that the changes suggested by the participants would be incorporated in the final version of the Bureau Work Plan for 1994. The linkage of this item with that of 'Business Plans' discussed under item 8 was also noted.

11. Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP):

The Chairperson recalled Kushiro Resolution RES. C.5.5 and the ensuing Bureau Notification

to all Contracting Parties which had led to the formulation of the present list of nominations.

The Chairperson expressed the hope that informal consultations had taken place with a view to designating one panel member per region. The receipt of certain nominations after the deadline of 1 September 1993 might be used as a selection criterion, although the deadline had been set by the Bureau simply to facilitate the processing of information. The decisions should take into account the need for different types of expertise on the panel. According to the Rules of Procedure, the actual decision could be exercised either by consensus, or by show of hand, or by ballot.

Following these introductory remarks, the Chairperson addressed the floor region by region: The representatives from Africa had come to a consensus and nominated Ms. Yaa Ntiamoah-Baidu as panel member for the African Region. Following some additional consultation, Mr Mohammad Rashid Shatanawi (Jordan) was nominated as representative for the Asian Region, and Mr. Mihaly Végh (Hungary) for Eastern Europe. The Asian representative furthermore recommended that Messrs Ghosh (India) and Komoda (Japan), who had been nominated by their governments, be invited as observers to the Panel. The representatives from the Neotropical Region nominated Mr Roberto Schlatter from Chile by consensus. The representatives from North America nominated Mr Thomas E. Dahl from the United States. The representatives from Oceania nominated Mr Max Finlayson from Australia to the Panel by consensus, while the representatives from Western Europe nominated Mr François A.C. Letourneux from France. It was noted that Messrs Dahl and Végh would ensure continuity of the work formerly carried out by the Wise Use Working Group. At the request of the Chairperson, the election of this slate of Panel members was formally approved by the Committee.

As far as the working arrangements for the Panel were concerned, the Committee agreed with the Secretary General that the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee be applicable *mutatis mutandis*; the Panel members choose their officers (Chair only) following a suggestion by the Bureau; and work should be carried out through correspondence, direct consultations between the Bureau and the Chairperson, as well as through at least one meeting per year, the first one to be held at the time of the IUCN General Assembly in Argentina in January 1994.

The Secretary General announced that the Bureau would be contacting the individuals elected to inform them of the decision taken by the Standing Committee. This would be followed by a Notification to all Contracting Parties inviting them to send an observer to a planned first meeting of the Panel in January 1994. To decide upon the exact timing of that meeting, some consultations with IUCN were yet to be made; it was likely, however, that it would be during the early part of the IUCN General Assembly in Buenos Aires.

The representative from New Zealand voiced concern about the financial ramifications for the work of the Panel. The Secretary General noted that there was a limited amount available in the Convention budget (SFr15,000) each year for the Panel.

The representative from Brazil pointed out that observers from Contracting Parties might wish to participate in Panel meetings. The Bureau noted that this was indeed true; however,

travel assistance could not be provided.

The representative from Panama was anxious about guidance for the Panel in their choice of tasks to be undertaken. The Chairperson referred him to the relevant guidelines contained in Resolution RES. C.5.5. The Secretary General clarified further that the Panel was structurally not an independent body but under the governance of the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee considered a draft agenda for the first meeting of the Panel which the Bureau had distributed to all meeting participants.

Following some discussion, and at the request of the Chairperson, the meeting approved the following remit for the work of the Panel in 1994 by consensus: (1) Review of the 'Criteria for identifying wetlands of international importance', as regards habitat for fish populations; (2) Review of the 'Montreux Record' with a view to identifying priorities for application of the 'Monitoring Procedure'; (3) Consideration of a definition of ecological character and of guidelines on monitoring change in ecological character.

12. Conservation of Listed Sites:

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the IWRB/Ramsar Liaison Officer reported on the current status of the List of Wetlands of International Importance. The total number of Listed sites now stood at 632, with designations since Kushiro having been made by Brazil, Panama, United Kingdom and the new Contracting Parties of Armenia, Honduras and Lithuania. Many additional planned designations had been announced at Kushiro and it was expected that the List would continue to grow rapidly in the coming months. For example, the Russian Federation had recently announced its intention of designating more than 30 new sites as soon as possible.

The Assistant Secretary General reported that Australia had just confirmed designation of two sites in Queensland - the first Ramsar wetlands in that state. Canada had indicated its intention of listing a further site, while informal consultations had been held with France concerning possible additions to the List.

The Secretary General informed the meeting that a fax had just been received from the Czech Republic confirming designation of a further five wetlands.

In reply to a concern raised by the representative from New Zealand, the Secretary General assured the meeting that the Bureau was not advocating development of a formal evaluation procedure for admission of new sites to the List. The 'informal consultations' referred to in Kushiro Resolution 5.3 were aimed at assisting those Contracting Parties which actively sought advice from the Bureau. Under the Convention, it was clearly the sovereign right of a Contracting Party to designate sites, so that introduction of any admissions procedure would require a formal amendment to the Convention.

The representative from Uruguay requested that a footnote be added to the List to indicate that the boundaries of the Bañados del Este Ramsar site in Uruguay were currently being reviewed within the framework of the Monitoring Procedure. The area of the site should therefore be considered as provisional. The Bureau indicated that this amendment would be

made.

The observer from IWRB reported that his organization had established a technical group to examine the subject of ecological character of wetlands. A workshop currently being held in Austria would focus on changes in ecological character of specific Central European wetland types.

The Chairperson reminded all Contracting Parties of their responsibility to submit Ramsar Wetland Information Sheets for their Listed sites. A number of Contracting Parties had not yet provided this information which formed the foundation of the Convention's database.

The Assistant Secretary General presented information concerning the Montreux Record, reminding participants that the Record had been adopted as a means of highlighting those sites where priority conservation action was required. In particular, the Montreux Record served to guide application of the Monitoring Procedure. Following the Kushiro Conference, the Bureau had circulated a diplomatic note to all Contracting Parties, in which a number of suggestions for possible additions to the Montreux Record had been made. These were based upon information included in the National reports or data sheets prepared by the Contracting Parties. Contracting Parties had been asked to comment on these suggestions prior to the present meeting, so that the Standing Committee could lend its authority to an updated version of the Record.

A number of Contracting Parties had responded to indicate that the sites suggested by the Bureau should not be added to the Montreux Record, while others had instructed the Bureau to include those and other sites. Certain Contracting Parties had also expressed the view that it was not the role of the Standing Committee to approve the Montreux Record, since inclusion of any site was a matter for purely bilateral consultations between the Bureau and the Contracting Party concerned.

The observer from the United Kingdom, speaking as convenor of the Standing Committee sub-group that devised the Montreux Record procedure, considered that the Standing Committee could not have a role in authorizing or approving the Montreux Record, since it had been emphasized in Kushiro that the Record should be continually updated in order to reflect the changing conservation status of listed sites. The Standing Committee met only once per year in most years and would therefore be unable to accommodate the necessary degree of flexibility. He was also concerned that written authorization should be received from the relevant Contracting Party before any site was added to the Record. It was not acceptable to assume that no response was an indication of the Contracting Party's agreement. These views were supported by other participants, including the representative from Australia, Austria, France and Germany.

During the extensive subsequent discussion, many participants emphasized the primary role of bilateral consultations. The multi-lateral exercise carried out by the Bureau through circulation of a diplomatic notification was not considered by some participants to be fully satisfactory for consultation. The Secretary General reported that the UK authorities had written to say that Rostherne Mere and Redgrave & South Lopham Fens should not be included in the Montreux Record. The representative from Australia reported that it would be

premature to include The Coorong and Western District Lakes, while the observer from Austria instructed that Neusidlersee should not be included. The observers from France and Germany indicated that the sites of Etang de Biguglia (France), Donauauen & Donaumoos (Germany) and Berga-Kelbra (Germany) were not appropriate for inclusion.

Responding to the comments made, the Secretary General proposed that the Bureau would be happy to proceed with updating the Montreux Record on the basis of formal bilateral consultations with the Contracting Parties concerned. A site would only be added to the Record following receipt of written agreement from the Contracting Party. The new Scientific and Technical Review Panel would clearly have a role in reviewing operation of the Montreux Record and the Standing Committee would continue to have general oversight of this, and all other, Convention activities. The Standing Committee indicated its approval of the Secretary General's proposals and instructed the Bureau to work accordingly.

At the request of the Chairperson, the Assistant Secretary General presented a brief report on operation of the Monitoring Procedure in 1993. The Monitoring Procedure had been implemented at Unterer Niederrhein in Germany and at Bañados del Este in Uruguay. Arrangements were in hand for application at the Dee Estuary (UK), while there had been a proposal for application at Nariva Swamp in Trinidad & Tobago. Follow-up to earlier Monitoring Procedures had included those covering St. Lucia (South Africa) and Donau-March-Auen (Austria). Future operation of the Monitoring Procedure would depend in part on which sites were to be included in the Montreux Record.

13. Wise Use of Wetlands:

Following the Chairperson's invitation to the Bureau to report on the work accomplished, the Director of Conservation referred to the items that had been distributed to each meeting participant: the video, the wise use book, and the draft action plan in two volumes. All products were closely linked and were the result of a three-year project financed by the Government of the Netherlands. The book contained case studies that had been carried out in cooperation with partner organizations. Its publication had been delayed in order to be able to include not only the Montreux Wise Use Guidelines (1990) but also the further Guidance as approved in Kushiro (1993). The Draft Action Plan contained project concepts that could be of interest to funding organizations; more technical information on these concepts was available from the Bureau. Upon a request by the observer from the United Kingdom, the meeting was informed that the final product was to be delivered at the end of the year. Therefore, comments on the Draft Action Plan were most welcome but should reach the Bureau by the end of November 1993. The video had been produced by NHK Hokkaido Vision in Japan and should be considered a complement to information contained in the book.

Upon the question by the Chairperson as to how the Action Plan would be distributed, and a query by the observer from the United Kingdom as to who would be responsible for submitting the project concepts to funding sources, the Secretary General responded that under the terms of the cooperating agreement with the Netherlands, the product was primarily for their own use. It was intended to discuss with them the possibility of submitting the document to other funding sources. If interest were generated on a particular project, the Bureau would then revert to its partner organizations to carry such a project forward.

The representative from Australia, supported by New Zealand, expressed concern that the priorities approached in the Draft Action Plan appeared to have been chosen with little consultation with the relevant Government authorities in the countries concerned. The Secretary General underlined that this activity had been carried out by the Wise Use Working Group in which the former Chairman of the Standing Committee had been deeply involved. The proposals for action had been developed by partner organizations in consultation with concerned governments. Indeed the collection of information did not pretend to be exhaustive but was an illustration of examples of how to implement the wise use guidelines. The Bureau was pleased to receive input from the Standing Committee on this matter; however the imminent requirement to report to the donor government had to be borne in mind.

14. Wetland Conservation Fund

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretary General reviewed establishment of the Wetland Conservation Fund (WCF) and the development of the Operational Guidelines which governed use of the fund. He recalled that a number of amendments to the Operational Guidelines had been approved by the Standing Committee just prior to the Kushiro Conference. These included bringing forward the annual deadline for project submissions to 1 June, and establishment of a technical evaluation procedure to be carried out by the Bureau's closest partners, IUCN and IWRB. The new deadline could not apply for 1993, but an interim technical evaluation had been implemented, thanks to the rapid and efficient work carried out by IUCN and IWRB.

At the request of the Chairperson, the Standing Committee agreed that the Bureau should work with the observer from the United Kingdom to review the text of the new Operational Guidelines for the fund, and make minor changes of an editorial nature.

The Secretary General reported that the Bureau calculated that some SFR478,000 was available in the WCF, although the position was complicated by several factors. This figure included one outstanding payment of SFR10,000 already pledged to the fund. There was also money remaining from previous years' allocations, where it had not been possible to conclude a contract with the recipient country.

In response to questions raised by the representatives from Australia, Canada, Japan and UK, the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General made a number of observations which were endorsed by the meeting: It was agreed that money from past years should be put back into the fund for reallocation if it had not been claimed by the end of the triennium. It was also acknowledged that it was essential that recipient countries submit reports on the use of funds received. Many outstanding reports had been received in 1993, but the Bureau was anxious to find ways of improving this aspect. As noted previously, the Bureau intended to prepare a major review of the first three years of the WCF in 1994. Finally, the Standing Committee accepted the request for a 10% administration fee to be added to each allocation from the fund, since operation of the WCF was not covered by the Bureau's core budget.

It was further noted that additional advance information about each project could be supplied to the Standing Committee in future, but this would have substantial implications for the

Bureau's workload. The technical evaluation procedure could be strengthened, perhaps by increasing the number of score categories and/or separating evaluation of the project itself from the presentation of the project.

The UK observer expressed concern that some of the proposals which the Assistant Secretary General was recommending for funding had been technically evaluated as inadequate. He asked whether, for such projects, a conditional acceptance could be issued stating that funds would only be released on receipt of a satisfactorily amended project proposal. The Secretary General confirmed that it was open to the Committee to adopt such an approach.

A discussion was held concerning definition of the term 'developing country' in relation to qualifying for support from the Wetland Conservation Fund. It was recalled that in 1990 the Standing Committee had agreed to use the UN definition for this term. In addition, reference was made to the decision of the Kushiro Conference that countries whose economies were in transition should not be eligible, but that they should receive funding through other bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. After extensive discussion it became clear that marked differences of view about eligibility could not be readily reconciled without more thorough preparation and consultation. A number of participants expressed the view that deciding upon a definition of developing country was a task for the Conference of the Contracting Parties, and that the Standing Committee might wish to bring forward a recommendation. It was also recalled that the method of calculating contributions to the Convention budget was under review and that the outcome of this might reduce the apparent paradox of major contributors to the budget nevertheless being eligible to benefit from the WCF.

Concern was also raised about the difficulty of deciding upon proposals containing voluminous details and which had been submitted so late that there was insufficient time to appraise them. It was noted that this problem must be sorted out in future years.

It was decided that the 1993 allocations should be made in line with the procedure followed in 1991 and 1992, but that the fundamental issues raised had to be addressed both before and during the 1994 meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Assistant Secretary General introduced each of the project proposals on a region-by-region basis. He referred the Standing Committee to the results of the technical evaluation carried out by IUCN and IWRB and to the additional comments provided by Bureau staff. On the basis of this information, the Standing Committee decided to make allocations as follows:

Africa: Burkina Faso - Management of the Mare d'Oursi (Sfr34,000); Morocco - Merja Zerga Management Plan (Sfr40,000); Tunisia - National Wetland Inventory (Sfr20,000); Asia: Cambodia - Preparatory Assistance for Accession (Sfr25,000); China - Training Assistance (Sfr40,000); Nepal - Technical Assistance for Koshi Tappu (Sfr40,000); Neotropics: Argentina - Management Plan for Laguna de los Pozuelos (Sfr31,500); Brazil - Technical assistance for Maranhao mangrove site (Sfr40,000); Chile - Preparatory assistance new Andean Ramsar sites (Sfr25,000); Costa Rica - Technical Assistance for Tamarindo (Sfr40,000); Honduras - Protection Cuero and Salado site (Sfr37,500); Peru - Emergency Assistance Lagunas de Mejia (Sfr18,000); North America: Mexico - Preparatory Assistance

new Ramsar sites (Sfr25,000). Total amount Sfr416,000.

It was decided that there was sufficient flexibility in cash flow to make these allocations in full and to make a 10% administration charge for each project.

In relation to the African region, it was decided that a Kenyan proposal for regional consultations should be recommended for forwarding to other potential sources of funding. The observers from Switzerland and the UK indicated that their Governments would be interested to see such a proposal.

The observer from France indicated that her Government would be willing to work with Suriname to investigate means of assisting with that country's project which it had not been possible to fund through the WCF. This initiative was warmly welcomed by the representative from Panama, on behalf of the Neotropical Region.

In relation to evaluation of projects in future years, the representative from India expressed the view that priority should be given to training projects, wetland database work and projects involving participatory management.

The representative from Papua New Guinea indicated that his country had received support from the WCF in 1992 and would probably be submitting proposals to the fund in 1994 and 1995. He expressed thanks for the support already given by the Convention which also had enabled Papua New Guinea to participate fully at Kushiro and in the present meeting.

15. Review of Convention Projects outside the Wetland Conservation Fund:

The Secretary General briefly reviewed the projects listed on page 425 of the Standing Committee documentation. He reported that the previous Standing Committee had required that support from government sources should be in line with Ramsar Programme priorities, with direct reporting to the donors concerned. It had also adopted Guidelines for the receipt of NGO funds where caution might need to be exercised. Therefore discussion with the Chairman of the former Standing Committee and the concerned regional representative had always taken place before proceeding with projects covered by NGO or private funds. At the request of the Chairperson, these Guidelines were provided to all participants for reference.

The Chairperson also asked that in the future a brief paragraph on each project be provided for the information of the Standing Committee. It was realized, however, that the main responsibility of the Bureau in the case of externally-funded projects lay with the donor.

The representative from India requested further details on Bureau projects particularly relevant to public awareness efforts for developing countries. The Secretary General reported that the limited funds available were being used to provide information items, such as a video and library materials for developing countries, and that it was very much the desire of the Bureau to have at its disposal more sophisticated resources for the important task of public awareness.

The observer from the United Kingdom said, in relation to countries whose economy were in

transition, that his government was assisting activities in wetland conservation by means of the Know How Fund, rather than channelling funds through Ramsar. (This was only one of the purposes for which the Fund was used.) Over Sfr60,000 had been contributed so far, and to his knowledge this programme was likely to continue.

The representative from France briefly referred to the projects to which the French Government had contributed or was financing on its own. She thanked the Bureau for the speedy publication of the Caribbean seminar report and further announced that her Government intended to finance Caribbean management plans in 1994. The Secretary General expressed his sincere thanks to the French Government for their continued support and was gratified to learn about their intention of further involvement. As regards the Caribbean seminar, his thanks also went to the United Kingdom and to the Commission of the European Communities for their contributions. It had been an interesting exercise for Ramsar which until now was not well represented in the Caribbean Region.

The representative from Uruguay, on behalf of the other participants, expressed his deep appreciation to the Governments of France, Netherlands, United Kingdom and USA as well as to the EEC for their generous support towards the conservation of wetlands in the Neotropics, and he formulated the hope that such support could continue in order to consolidate the work undertaken so far.

16. Communications Activities:

In response to the invitation by the Chairperson, the Communications Officer of the Ramsar Bureau reported that in 1993 the Newsletter had been funded through contributions from external sources. Thanks to the budget adopted at Kushiro, from 1994 the basic production costs of the Newsletter in English, French and Spanish could be covered, but additional costs as well as the continued production of a German version would require continued external support. Reference was made to publication of Volume I of the Kushiro Conference Proceedings, as well as the Wise Use Report. Volumes II and III of the Kushiro Proceedings were under preparation for publication in 1994. In addition to contributing to other publications, the Bureau intended to produce a report on 1993 allocations from the Wetland Conservation Fund, a report of 1993-94 activities, a published version of Kushiro document C.5.16 'Overview of National Reports', and a published updated version of Kushiro document INF. C.5.19 'Legal Development of the Ramsar Convention'. Also mentioned were various communications activities since the Kushiro Conference which include the organization of an exhibition of children's paintings; cards reproducing children's paintings to be used as Christmas cards by the Bureau and for sale; an agreement with a Japanese jewellery firm under which a certain amount of money will be paid to the Wetland Conservation Fund for each item sold; a collection of photos produced by a professional photographer; the video on Wise Use of Wetlands available in English, French and Spanish; an exhibition made on the basis of the brochure; and various contributions by Bureau staff to various periodicals and publications.

On the subject of the 25th anniversary celebrations, and based on follow-up to Recommendation REC. C.5.10, the Communications Officer reported on proposals for 1996. A meeting of partner organizations had been held the previous evening and the group had felt

that it was premature to consider a global Wetland Campaign in 1996. It was agreed that Ramsar's 25th Anniversary should be considered a separate event which should be focused upon at the time of the next Conference. Partner organizations could assist the Bureau in the development of certain activities. It had been thought that the Contracting Parties should take the opportunity to promote the Convention and wetland values and functions, and that the Bureau should be in a position to assist them in this process as necessary with the provision of material. The Group wished to invite the Standing Committee to consider the possibility of allocating part of the Wetland Conservation Fund resources to 25th anniversary activities in coming years. It had also been recognized that a proposal to involve 25 Ramsar cities in the Anniversary would have very complex implications, and it was therefore thought preferable that Contracting Parties utilize Ramsar sites as the mechanism to bring about the desired increased public awareness.

The Chairperson welcomed these proposals but pointed out the need for international consistency and a clear identification of any campaigns with the Ramsar Convention.

The observer from Brazil, supported by his colleague from France, congratulated the Bureau on its presentation. He was, however, not in favour of using WCF sources of funds to finance the 25th anniversary celebrations; he suggested direct voluntary contributions should be used to this end. The observer from France added that Contracting Parties needed to make a particular effort in the future for an appropriate communication flow between government level and relevant national components.

The observer from Austria requested and received confirmation from the Secretary General of the need of some SFR 15,000 per year to maintain production of the Newsletter in German.

The representative from India stressed the need to propagate the Ramsar Convention message worldwide: through environmental awareness programmes in developing country Contracting Parties, and through an approach to children with a view to developing their understanding of wetland values.

The representative from Panama suggested that a habitat approach be used in choosing a theme for the celebrations, i.e. to replace the word 'water' in the Bureau proposal by 'wetlands'.

The representative from Japan stressed the importance of involving local governments since many organizational difficulties could be encountered in the preparation of such an event.

The Chairperson recapitulated the suggestions made and confirmed that, irrespective of any global campaign on the value of wetlands, it was thus foreseen to have some action to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention in association with the 1996 Conference. The Bureau would endeavour to prepare some rather broad materials which each country could adapt to its needs. At the same time all Contracting Parties were urged to take advantage of this event to launch nationally-targetted campaigns. Information on progress would be submitted to the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

17. Organization of Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties:

The representative from Australia reported on the results of the sub-group established during consideration of Agenda item 5 to look at 'lessons learned' from the Kushiro Conference, as there were significant implications for organization of the 1996 conference. It was emphasized that the lessons learned should not be interpreted as criticism of the magnificent effort put into organization of the Kushiro Conference. The key recommendations of the sub-group included: (a) the need to ensure smooth operation of the Credentials Committee (b) the need to increase time for plenary debate, perhaps by holding the opening ceremony during the late afternoon preceding the first full business day and by holding one or more evening sessions; (c) the need to make regional reports more analytical; (d) modifying the workshops to make them more focused on specific issues and to provide more time for discussion; and (e) the need to make the one-day technical symposium more directly relevant to the overall goals of the Conference. Further details of these recommendations are attached as Annex 1.

The representative from Australia then reported upon arrangements for the Sixth Meeting. He suggested that, following consultations with the Bureau, the meeting would probably be held in late February or early March of 1996. A venue had not yet been selected, but a number of states and cities had expressed interest and a decision would be reached early in 1994. The meeting would be planned to cater for one thousand delegates and this would limit the number of potential venues, since only a few cities had facilities suitable for such large conferences. A preliminary programme outline was then presented, in which it was suggested that the one-day technical symposium might focus on mangrove ecosystems and preparation of a conservation action plan. The Government of Australia's Northern Territory had expressed interest in hosting a pre-conference technical meeting on 'wise use of tropical wetlands'. This idea was currently under discussion and more information would be given at a later stage.

The Chairperson thanked the representative of Australia for his presentation and looked forward to receiving further details in the near future.

18. Next Meeting of the Standing Committee:

The Chairperson expressed her pleasure at having the opportunity to invite the Standing Committee to meet in Budapest, Hungary in 1994. The Ministry of Environment and Regional Policy would host the meeting, probably in the second week of October, although the details of time and venue would have to be arranged.

The Standing Committee participants accepted the invitation extended by Hungary with warm appreciation.

19. Any Other Business:

The observer from the UK reported that the British Government had announced designation of a further site for the List of Wetlands of International Importance. Malham Tarn, in northern England, was a freshwater lake designated because of its importance for plants, invertebrates and breeding birds.

The Secretary General noted that the next Standing Committee meeting would need to consider the request made at Kushiro that the Convention's scale of assessment for financial contributions be reviewed. The Standing Committee would be required to make a recommendation for a way forward to the Sixth Meeting of the Conference in Australia.

20. Closing Remarks:

The Chairperson reviewed the work undertaken during the present meeting and concluded that a number of important decisions had been taken and that the committee could be content with its work. However, several complex, ongoing issues would require further attention at the next meeting. Finally, wishing all participants well and looking forward to welcoming them to Hungary in 1994, the Chairperson closed the meeting.

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE ESPECIALLY AS WATERFOWL HABITAT

Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland : 26-28 October 1993

ANNEX 1 to the MINUTES

LESSONS LEARNED - KUSHIRO 1993

Participants: Kenya - Chair
Australia
Canada
Japan
Russian Federation
IWRB
Bureau

Switzerland unable to attend.

1. The group agreed to focus on areas where improvements could be made - acknowledging that overall the Japanese host to the Bureau had done an excellent job in hosting and organizing the Conference.

Issues raised and solutions proposed

2. Credentials Committee

There is a need to ensure that at least one member is familiar with Parliamentary systems of Government to avoid difficulties with recognizing credentials.

Solution

This should not be a problem in Australia - a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be available to assist the Credentials Committee.

3. More time needed in Plenary Sessions (without extending the length - in days - of the Conference)

In Kushiro too little time was available to review the work programme for 1994-96 and Resolutions/Recommendations.

Solutions

Start the Conference on the afternoon of the Tuesday and have the official welcome, dignitaries' speeches, and the keynote address on this afternoon (16.00-17.30 hours). This means Wednesday (the normal first day) can be fully dedicated to business matters, etc.

In addition consideration could be given to a night session (perhaps the Thursday night) and we should also be prepared to finish later on the final day.

4. Regional reports need to be more analytical

Rather than reports based on the National Reports, regional presentations should describe the challenges perceived by the countries in each region where the Convention is working or failing.

Solutions

i) Members of the Standing Committee need to be conscious of this shift in emphasis and to liaise within their regions in advance of the Conference to get some feeling for these issues.

ii) The programme could be structured to allow regional consultations before presentations; this would ensure all countries have a say in the process.

iii) Perhaps the structure of National Reports could be altered to encourage critical analysis by each country of the Convention's strengths/weaknesses. (N.B. This point was not discussed by the group.)

5. Workshops

The problems encountered in Kushiro were largely due to the number of participants. The major problems were:

- i) Insufficient forms - trying to cover too many issues in the time allowed.
- ii) Too many presentations - some of which exceeded their time allocation and were not clearly relevant to the draft Resolutions/Recommendations.
- iii) As a result of the above, there was too little time to debate the text of the draft Resolutions/Recommendations.

Solutions

i) The Standing Committee with the assistance of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) should nominate eight key issues for the workshops' consideration in Australia; some examples could be:

- National Wetland Policies;
- Wetland Conservation Fund;
- Monitoring Procedure;
- Montreux Record;
- Ecological changes;
- Education/awareness;
- Values of wetlands;
- Fish habitat values;
- Management issues for particular wetland types;
- Interactions with the Biodiversity Convention/GEF.

ii) The workshop arrangements would remain similar, that is with two concurrent sessions over two days, but there would be different themes for each morning and afternoon session (i.e. eight themes in all).

iii) Presentations would be limited to one or two for each workshop and the authors would be obliged to develop these to compliment or put in context the draft Resolutions/Recommendations. The Standing Committee and STRP should be closely involved.

iv) Persons selected to chair workshops should be well known for their experience, knowledge of the subject area, and ability to impose discipline on the proceedings.

6. One-day technical symposium more directly relevant to overall Conference goals

In the past these days have been informative, but have provided little in the way of direction and advice to the Conference.

Solutions

As for shorter workshops (see above) - more focus, less presentation, more debate, and draft Resolutions, etc., prepared in advance.

Bill Phillips

Lessons/maw - 19.7.94

First Thoughts

Re: Programme

1. The expanded space for regional implementation doesn't leave much room for discussion of broad convention issues, e.g.:

- Make-up of regions (Initial regional discussions, then Conference decisions)
- Definition of change in ecological character (workshop?)
- Fish criteria (workshop?)
- Guidelines on EIA execution (workshop?)
- Guidelines on avoiding oil spills (workshop?)
- Guidelines on Article 5 (workshop?)
- Review of developing countries eligible for WCF (budget?)
- Review of Conference mechanisms (WCF, Montreux Record, Monitoring Procedure)
- Review of relations with other Conventions (e.g. Biodiversity) & funding bodies (GEF)
- "Think" pieces (amount of remaining wetlands; threats to major wetlands)

They could be fitted in as indicated above, but would detract from world view.

2. Still just four workshops. Where are the notes on our workshop discussion in Gland after the excursion in October 1993?

Annex I to Standing Committee minutes - who?

3. Quite a number of the issues are mentioned in the latest version (10.5.94) of my workplan, which you might like to take to Hungary as an aide mémoire.

Michael Smart
Lessons/maw - 13.7.94