

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

26th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 3-7 December 2001

DOC. SC26-26 - Addendum

Agenda item 14

Report and recommendations from the Subgroup on Finance

Recommendations from the Subgroup on Finance

14.6 Proposed budget for the triennium 2003-2008 for recommendation to COP8 (DOC. SC26-15)

1. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing the next triennium budget. Several countries noted that they did not have authorization to approve an increase in the budget, and expressed reservations regarding the availability of funds in their national budgets. At least one country had specific instructions to oppose an increase, and felt that other Contracting Parties not present would have the same instructions.
2. Given these restraints, but wanting to be responsive to the needs of the Convention, Mexico put forward a suggestion developed at a meeting of the representatives from the Americas. It suggests development of a budget proposal showing an increase each year of 2 percent for inflation and 3 percent growth. The 3 percent increase in funds would be used to meet some of the additional Convention needs as identified by the Bureau. WWF suggested that other unfunded items be left in the budget and that members, with the assistance of the Subgroup Chair, explore other possibilities for funding these needs. These items will be presented as blank line items.
3. On this basis, the Bureau prepared the attached **Tentative Core Budget 2003-2005** based on the forecast income for 2002 of SFR 3,713,935. In this proposal, the additional income is devoted to:
 - a) Budget line 2 a) Ramsar Database

This represent an increase in the existing budget line in order to come nearer to cover the real costs incurred by Wetlands International in maintaining and further developing the Ramsar Sites Database.
 - b) Budget line 3: Support to regional initiatives

This is a new budget line dedicated to support on-going and/or emerging regional initiatives that provide further assistance to Contracting Parties in particular regions or sub-regions.

c) Budget line 8 c): Support to STRP Working Groups

This is a new budget line dedicated to support the work of the STRP Working Groups, either to conduct their meetings or to hire consultants to assist in the development of particular outputs.

d) Budget line 9 a) Cost of the Conference of the Parties

This is a new budget line dedicated to contribute to cover the Bureau costs related to the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties every three years.

4. Based on these discussions and the attached tentative budget prepared by the Bureau, the Subgroup recommends that the Standing Committee adopts this tentative budget 2003-2005 as the basis for further discussions.
5. The Subgroup further recommends that representatives in the Standing Committee seek approval for this modest increase in the Convention's budget. It also recommends to request that the Bureau draft a very short paper making the case for this increase and contrasting the Ramsar budget with those of other MEAs.
6. This issue should be discussed again by the Subgroup on Finance at its proposed meeting in May 2002. The Standing Committee should authorize to adopt at this meeting a firm proposal for circulation as an official COP8 document at least three months in advance of the COP, as required by the Rules of Procedure.