

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

**29th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 26-28 February 2003**

Decisions of the 29th Meeting of the Standing Committee

(The full report of the meeting is available in English at
http://ramsar.org/key_sc29_report.htm)

Agenda item 5: The Bureau's Work Plan 2003

Decision SC29-1: The Standing Committee approved the Bureau's Work Plan for 2003, subject to the amendments concerning sustainable trade, synergies with MEAs, and time allocations. (Document available at http://ramsar.org/key_sc29_report_annex1.htm.)

Agenda item 7: Designation of the new Secretary General

Decision SC29-2: The Standing Committee determined to offer the position of Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands to Dr. Peter Bridgewater.

Agenda item 6.3: Election of STRP members, Chair, and Vice-Chair

Decision SC29-3: The Standing Committee agreed to invite the following experts to become members of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) until the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties:

Africa: Mr Manikchand Putto (Mauritius), Dr Heather MacKay (South Africa), and Prof Steven Njuguna (Kenya)

Asia: Dr Cui Lijuan (China), Prof Ho Sinn-Chye (Malaysia), and Mr Najam Khurshid (Pakistan)

Europe: Prof Eckhart Kuijken (Belgium), Mrs Tatiana Minaeva (Russian Federation), Dr Maria-José Viñals (Spain), and Mr David Stroud (United Kingdom)

Neotropics: Dr Jorge Jiménez Ramon (Costa Rica) and Prof Teresita Borges (Cuba), with Prof Francisco Daniel Rilla Manta (Uruguay) to be added with the accession of the next Party from that region

North America: Dr Francisco Contreras Espinosa (Mexico)

Oceania: Dr Max Finlayson (Australia)

The SC selected Dr Max Finlayson to serve as STRP Chairperson, and Dr Heather MacKay to serve as Vice-Chair.

Agenda item 12: Establishment of a Ramsar Centre for the Western Hemisphere

Decision SC29-4: The Standing Committee endorsed Revision 2 of the proposed agreement between Panama and the Ramsar Bureau on the establishment of a

Regional Ramsar Centre for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere, to be based in Panama.

Agenda item 8: Format for National Reports

Decision SC29-5: The Standing Committee adopted a National Planning Tool and National Report Format based on the model presented in DOC. SC29-7 and with the benefit of the suggestions made during the discussions.

Agenda item 8 *bis*: Implementation of Resolution VIII.45

Decision SC29-6: The Standing Committee established a Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45 to work intersessionally by correspondence, and by meetings if needed and feasible, and to be composed of: Morocco (Africa), Iran and Japan (Asia), Austria and Romania (Europe), Argentina (Neotropics), the USA (North America) as Chair, with a representative from Oceania to be named after consultations in the region, and BirdLife International representing the International Organization Partners.

Agenda item 9: Preparations for Ramsar COP9

Decision SC29-7: The Standing Committee decided that COP9 should be held in the last quarter of 2005 and agreed to await further discussions with Uganda before setting specific dates.

Decision SC29-8: The Standing Committee named the following Parties to serve on the Subgroup on COP9: Uganda (as Chair) and another to be named, for Africa; Japan for Asia; Spain for Europe; Nicaragua for the Neotropics; the USA for North America; one to be named for Oceania after consultations in the region; representatives of the International Organization Partners; and the Secretary General *ex officio*.

Agenda item 10: Financial matters

Decision SC29-9: The SC noted the provisional report on income and expenditure for fiscal year 2002 and requested the Bureau to circulate to the Subgroup on Finance the draft audited accounts for this fiscal year as soon as they become available.

Agenda item 10.2: Ramsar Bureau budget 2003

Decision SC29-10: The Standing Committee determined that Bureau budgets for 2004 and 2005 should be brought before it for approval, with information on any changes that may have occurred in relation to the forecasted income, including information on overheads on projects and any additional revenue from new Contracting Parties.

Agenda item 10.3: *Modus operandi* for the Ramsar Endowment Fund

Decision SC29-11: The Standing Committee approved a timetable for further work on the *modus operandi* for the Ramsar Endowment Fund whereby the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance will receive suggestions on the proposal prepared by the Bureau (document SC29-11) until 31 March 2003, circulate to the Subgroup a compilation by 10 April, and oversee the Subgroup's attempt to arrive at a consensus final draft for transmittal to the Standing Committee Chair by 31 May 2003, after which the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance will seek guidance from the Chair of the Standing Committee on how to proceed further on the issue. Participants include the Subgroup members (Argentina, Canada, Ghana, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Romania) plus Armenia, Austria, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, U.S.A., and WWF.

Agenda item 10.5: Operational Guidelines for the SGF for 2003-2005

Decision SC29-12: The Standing Committee endorsed the revised Operational Guidelines for the Ramsar Small Grants Fund to be used for the period 2003-2005. (Available at http://ramsar.org/key_sgf_guide_2003_e.pdf)

Ghana's statement concerning a desk officer for Ramsar and NEPAD

Decision SC29-13: The Standing Committee noted the statement made by Ghana on the desirability of a desk officer to act as a liaison between Ramsar and NEPAD and instructed the Bureau to follow the matter up.

Agenda item 6.1: Priorities for the STRP Work Plan 2003-2005

Decision SC29-14: The Standing Committee approved the revised "Advice from the Standing Committee concerning the priorities for the STRP Work Plan 2003-2005", with the agreed new wording for para. 11 (available at http://ramsar.org/key_sc29_report_annex2.htm).

Agenda item 6.2: Establishment of the STRP Support Service

Decision SC29-15: The Standing Committee adopted the proposal for establishment of the STRP Support Service and terms of reference, as shown in DOC. SC29-5 add.1 rev.2 and as amended during the meeting, and instructed the Bureau to conclude contractual arrangements in line with those terms. (Document available at http://ramsar.org/key_sc29_report_annex3.htm.) The Committee also confirmed the dates of the first STRP meeting as 8-11 April 2003.

Agenda item 11: Review of other COP8 Resolutions

Decision SC29-16: The Standing Committee requested the Bureau, in collaboration with interested Parties and IOPs, to prepare a report on the request in Resolution VIII.22 para. 8, on Ramsar sites which cease to meet or never met the Ramsar Criteria, for consideration by the next SC meeting.

Agenda item 13: Dates of the 30th meeting of the Standing Committee

Decision SC29-17: The Standing Committee established the dates of its next meeting as 13-16 January 2004, in Gland, Switzerland.

Agenda item 14: Report of the meeting

Decision SC29-18: The Standing Committee adopted the first two days of the meeting's report, with minor amendments, and instructed the Bureau to circulate the draft last day's report to Standing Committee members and observers for comments within a fixed deadline.