

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
33rd Meeting of the Standing Committee
Kampala, Uganda, 15 November 2005

Report of the 33rd meeting of the Standing Committee

SC members present: Austria, Bahamas, Benin, China, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Gabon, Georgia, Iran, Kenya, Malawi, Slovenia, Thailand, United States, and Uganda and Republic of Korea as hosts of the past and next COPs.

Apologies from SC members: Ecuador, Samoa.

SC permanent observers present: Switzerland; BirdLife International.

Observer Parties present: Argentina, Australia, Ghana, Japan, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom.

Agenda item 1: Opening remarks

1. The **Secretary General** welcomed the newly elected regional members of the Standing Committee. These are

Africa: Benin, Gabon, Kenya, and Malawi

Asia: China, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Thailand

Europe: Austria, Czech Republic, Georgia, and Slovenia

Neotropics: Bahamas, Ecuador, and El Salvador

North America: United States

Oceania: Samoa

Agenda item 2: Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee

2. **The USA** nominated Uganda (Paul Mafabi) as Chair of the Standing Committee. Uganda was approved by acclamation.
3. **Paul Mafabi of Uganda** accepted Uganda's election and said that COP9 has shown that Africa is ready to offer leadership for the Convention, and on behalf of the Government of Uganda he said that he would do his best to guide the Standing Committee during the next triennium.
4. **Slovenia** nominated Bahamas (John Bowleg) as Vice Chair of the Standing Committee. Bahamas was approved by acclamation.

Decision SC33-1: The Standing Committee elected Uganda as Standing Committee Chair and Bahamas as Vice Chair for the 2006-2008 triennium.

Agenda item 3: Election of the Subgroup on Finance

Decision SC33-2: The Standing Committee elected the following Parties to the Subgroup on Finance for 2006-2008: Benin (Africa), China (Asia), Czech Republic (Europe), Ecuador (Neotropics), USA (North America), and Samoa (Oceania). The USA was elected as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance.

Agenda item 4: Date and venue of the next meeting

Decision SC33-3: The Standing Committee determined that its next meeting will take place at the Secretariat's offices in Gland, Switzerland, 10-13 April 2006.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

5. **The USA** proposed an informal meeting in February 2006 to facilitate a smooth transition from the outgoing to the incoming Standing Committee and consider issues that cannot be left until the next regular SC meeting in April, namely, the Secretariat's work plan and the Secretary General's contract. He proposed that the outgoing and incoming Chairs of the Standing Committee and the Subgroup on Finance should participate in that informal meeting.

Decision SC33-4: The Standing Committee welcomed the proposal that the outgoing and incoming Chairs of the Standing Committee and its Subgroup on Finance should meet in February to facilitate a smooth transition to the next triennium's work.

Agenda item 6: Closing remarks

6. **Gordana Beltram (Slovenia)**, outgoing Chair of the Standing Committee, wished her successor good success and welcomed all of the new SC members. She thanked everyone who had been so helpful to her in accomplishing the SC's agenda over the past three years and foresaw continuing collaborative efforts in the next three.
7. **Argentina**, as an outgoing member of the SC, thanked all colleagues and the Secretariat, particularly the Senior Regional Advisor for the Americas.
8. **The Secretary General** thanked the interpreters for carrying on through a difficult schedule. He thanked the outgoing SC and welcomed the new one, and he foresaw that it would be as good as the last one, perhaps better.