

Procedure for performance assessment of the Secretary General

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to consider the steps taken to development the procedure for performance assessment of the Secretary General and offer any advice that might seem appropriate.

1. In response to Decision SC41-37 of the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretary General initiated a course of action, requesting all staff members to involve themselves in a process to develop and adopt a strategy to maximize synergies within the Secretariat and to report the outcome to the Standing Committee. The methodology and progress of that process is duly reported in DOC. SC42-02.
2. A key part of that process was the engagement of an external facilitator, Ms Gillian Martin Mehers of Bright Green Learning SARL, who guided the staff through the “StrengthFinder” self-assessment process and presided over a “Staff Advance” in September 2010, with follow-up advice on several occasions.
3. For many years, the staff of the Secretariat has gone through a performance assessment process, involving their line managers and ultimately the Secretary General, which has been based upon IUCN procedures tailored to Ramsar specificities. This process continues as before.
4. For the past few years, the Secretary General has also undergone a separate performance assessment overseen by representatives of the Standing Committee, but it was felt that this could profitably be strengthened and made more useful, with a “360° feedback process”, if it were developed more carefully.
5. Recently it has been learned that IUCN is in the process of developing such a 360° mechanism, but the Secretariat has been informed that it will be some time before that is completed and, in any case, it will be designed to cover all employees of the “M” or Management grade, which might be too inclusive for Ramsar’s present purposes.
6. Accordingly, the Secretariat has taken steps to develop its own 360° performance assessment process for the Secretary General. A proposal has been solicited from an external consultant, and as of late March that proposal has been forwarded to the Executive Team of the Standing Committee for its approval. Following approval, it will be administered within the Secretariat.