

Information concerning the process and timelines for the recruitment of the next Secretary General

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to consider the process, timelines and issues concerning the recruitment of the next Secretary General and to provide guidance for consideration by the new Standing Committee (for 2013-2015) when it first meets (on the evening of Tuesday, 10 July 2012).

Note: The three-person “Executive Team” referred to in this document comprises the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Standing Committee and the Chair of its Subgroup on Finance.

Background

1. The recruitment of the next Secretary General will be an important task for the new Standing Committee during the 2013-2015 triennium. The Secretariat has prepared this paper to provide the Standing Committee with information on how the recruitment of the Secretary General has been organized in the past, suggest some timeline options for the recruitment process, and offer some clarifications about financial aspects of that process.
2. It is important that the Standing Committee considers and agrees the recruitment process to be followed, since under both timeline scenarios that process will need to be started prior to the first full meeting of the Standing Committee (proposed for April 2013).
3. Please also refer to information document DOC. SC41-2 on these matters (www.ramsar.org/pdf/sc/41/sc41_doc02.pdf) which was provided to the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee in April 2010. That document reviewed the process for recruitment of the incumbent Secretary General and made recommendations for updating or improvement with the advice of IUCN’s Human Resources staff. The current Terms of Reference for the SG’s position are annexed to DOC. SC41-2.
4. Please note that the information provided here concerns the process to be followed with the Secretariat continuing to be hosted by IUCN. Should a decision be made for the Secretariat to move under UNEP administration, this process – depending on the timeline of such a move in relation to the timing of the SG’s recruitment – might need to be revisited.

Guidance information and updated timeline options for the recruitment of the next Secretary General

5. The contract of the present Ramsar Secretary General, Mr Anada Tiéga, ends on 22 July 2013, at the end of his second term of office. However, Mr Tiéga reaches the statutory retirement age for men in Switzerland of 65 years on 31 January 2014.

6. In the light of this, two draft scenarios and timelines for the recruitment of Mr Tiéga's successor are outlined below, Scenario A for the recruitment to be targeted for the end of Mr Tiéga's present contract and Scenario B, for the time of Mr Tiéga's statutory retirement date. The overall recruitment process will take about one year.
7. In its consideration of the two scenarios, the Standing Committee will wish to take into consideration that the new Secretary General should be granted sufficient time to settle into the position before assuming the responsibility for leading the organization of the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP12), which will presumably take place in the first half of 2015.

Scenario A (SG's contract ends July 2013; new SG takes up post in September 2013)

Mid-August 2012	Process begins. Allow 2 months for the Standing Committee and the Secretariat to list and consider the selection criteria, write the vacancy announcement, terms of reference, etc., and organize the procedure.
3 rd – 4 th week October 2012	Allow 2 weeks for dissemination of vacancy announcement (Web, e-mail lists, possible advertisements).
November-December 2012	Allow 2 months for application period – suggested deadline for online applications of 31 December 2012.
Christmas/New Year break in Switzerland	
January-February 2013	Allow at least 6 weeks for the shortlisting process. Consider who should carry out this task – IUCN Human Resources Management Group or a consultant?
March 2013	Calls for interview of short-listed candidates, organization of interview process, collection of references.
2 nd week of April 2013	Interviews: SC46 is proposed to be scheduled for 8-12 April. Interviews could be held immediately after SC46.
3 rd /4 th week of April 2013	Allow 2 weeks for thorough reference checks of selected candidate(s) from recent employers, etc. Consider who will perform these reference checks.
1 st week of May 2013	Standing Committee makes selection of the new SG.
May – August 2013	3-4 month period to allow successful candidate to make the transition from his/her current assignment to Ramsar Secretariat, recognizing that 3 months is normally required to acquire a work visa if the new SG is not an EU citizen.
22 July 2013	Mr Tiéga's contract ends.
September 2013	New SG begins – the timing of this scenario does not allow for a handover, unless Mr Tiéga agrees to return to the Secretariat to do this.

Scenario B (SG retires in January 2014; new SG takes up post in January 2014)

Mid-January 2013	Process begins. Allow 2 months for Standing Committee and the Secretariat to list and consider the selection criteria, write the vacancy announcement, terms of reference, etc., and organize the procedure.
3 rd – 4 th week March 2013	Allow 2 weeks for dissemination of vacancy announcement (Web, e-mail lists, possible advertisements).
April / May 2013	Allow 2 months for application period – suggested deadline for online applications of 31 May 2013.
June / July 2013	allow at least 6 weeks for shortlisting process. Consider who should carry out this task – IUCN Human Resources Management Group or a consultant?
4 th wk Jul– 3 rd wk Aug. 2013	Calls for interview of short-listed candidates, organization of interview process, collection of references.
4th week August 2013	Interviews
1 st /2 nd week of Sept 2013	Allow 2 weeks for thorough reference checks of selected candidate(s) from recent employers, etc. Consider who will perform these reference checks.
Mid-Sept 13 – mid-Jan 14	3-4 month period to allow successful candidate to make the transition from his/her current assignment to Ramsar Secretariat, recognizing that 3 months is normally required to acquire a work visa if the new SG is not an EU citizen
15-31 January 2014	Handover period
31 January 2014	Mr Tiéga retires.

Notes on financial and related issues concerning the recruitment of the next Secretary General

8. The Standing Committee will wish to take the following issues into account in considering the recruitment and terms of appointment of the next Secretary General:
 - i) It is recommended that the IUCN online recruitment system be used, as it is for all other Ramsar Secretariat staff recruitments. This has already proved to reach a far wider audience than just using the Ramsar networks, and there is no extra cost to Ramsar.
 - ii) For this high-level position the Standing Committee and Executive Team may wish to consider hiring a recruitment professional or headhunter, in addition to advertising through the IUCN system, in order to seek a talented leader outside the normal “environment” channels. IUCN Human Resources advises that a headhunting company would charge 25-30% of the SG’s first year’s gross annual salary + benefits, and so the charge would be in the order of CHF 60-72,000 (or more if education allowances, etc., are included in the benefits – see v. below).

- iii) It is difficult to estimate the precise overall cost of the hiring process since this is highly dependent on the geographical location and number of both the shortlisted candidates to be interviewed and the interview panel. The budget will need to include travel and lodging expenses for the Standing Committee representatives on the interview panel and for the interviewees.
- iv) The normal repatriation costs of the current SG and travel and removal/installation costs of the new incumbent will have to be covered.
- v) A rough estimate of CHF 80,000 should be included in the projection for the new SG's salary to cover possible education allowances. That estimate is based on the education allowance for two children of a current senior staff member. The education allowance is part of the package extended to any senior staff member categorized as "expatriate" – in other words, the Convention seeks the best person for the job, and this involves moving her or him and family to Switzerland and then paying international school fees for dependents. [Note: the current Secretary General's children are beyond the age for schooling costs, so the Secretariat does not pay this item currently, but it should be budgeted for.]
- vi) Given that Standing Committee 46 is being proposed for the 2nd week of April 2013, it appears that Scenario A could allow for interviews to coincide with the Standing Committee Meeting; normally they would take place immediately after the close of that meeting before SC representatives have departed. This would be beneficial as SC members who are familiar with the work of the Secretariat would be able to attend the interviews without too much extra expenditure for travel and accommodation.