

## **Report of the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (SC45)**

**SC members present:** Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Guatemala, Guinea, Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates

**Permanent Observers present:** Netherlands, Switzerland

**Outgoing SC members present as observers:** Jamaica, Lebanon, Mauritius, Mexico

**Other Parties present as observers:** Argentina, Colombia, United States of America, Uruguay

1. **Mr Yeon-Chul Yoo (Republic of Korea), Chair of the outgoing Standing Committee**, welcomed the participants and observed that the handover to a new Standing Committee marks a new era for the Convention. He commemorated the occasion by reprising some of the best jokes he had told for previous meetings. Mr Yoo explained that he would chair the meeting until the new Chair had been chosen.

### **Agenda item 1: Opening remarks**

2. **Mr Anada Tiéga, the Secretary General (SG)**, thanked all of the outgoing SC members for their support and leadership during what was financially a difficult year. We were forecasting a significant deficit for the end of 2011, but the SC made the right decisions at that time and we have ended the year with a CHF 166,000 surplus which will strengthen the Reserve Fund. He said that the outgoing SC is handing over the Convention in a stronger position and he looked forward to a further strengthening in the triennium ahead. He promised to report regularly, not only at the SC meetings but at any other time as well, as needed.

### **Agenda item 2: Election of the SC Chair and Vice-Chair**

3. **Mr Yoo** explained the composition of the SC and invited the members of the new Committee to nominate their officers.

**Decision SC45-1: The members of the newly-elected Standing Committee chose Romania as their Chair and South Africa as Vice-Chair.**

### **Agenda item 3: Election of the Subgroup on Finance**

4. **The SG** explained the composition and role of the Standing Committee's Subgroup on Finance and invited nominations for the regional representatives from the members of the new SC.
5. At the suggestion of several members and the SG, the European region was invited to nominate a second Party as a member since Finland, the most recent Chair of the Subgroup, remains as a member in that capacity.

**Decision SC45-2: The Standing Committee elected the following members of the Subgroup on Finance: for Africa, Burundi; for Asia, Republic of Korea; for Europe, Denmark; for the Neotropics, Chile; for North America, Canada; for Oceania, Fiji, and Finland as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup.**

6. **Mr Yoo** invited the members of the Subgroup to choose their Chair. Chile nominated Canada as Chair and all other members signified their support for that choice.

**Decision SC45-3: The Standing Committee elected Canada as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance.**

7. **State Secretary Mr Mihail Făcă, Romania**, took the Chair and thanked Mr Yoo for his able leadership of the Standing Committee during the past triennium and expressed his view that his election as the new Chair is a great honor for his country. He congratulated the new Subgroup on Finance and noted that its Chair's job will not be an easy one, given the state of the global economy at this time. He said that the COP's adoption of Resolution XI.2 on financial and budgetary matters was not a glory or great success, as there would have been more to debate if there had been more money to work with, but he was optimistic that together the SC could make Ramsar as good as possible.

#### **Agenda item 4: Process and timelines for the recruitment of the next Secretary General**

8. **The new SC Chair** outlined the timelines recommended by the former SC at its 44<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 4 July, and opened the floor for comments.
9. **South Africa** wished to thank the Secretary General for his wonderful work over the past six years. She expressed great appreciation for the way in which he guided the Secretariat through the financial difficulties without giving up, and she understood well that those constraints were caused by the global financial situation and the consequent decline in voluntary contributions. She indicated that the incoming Africa group of the SC feels that Mr Tiéga has made them proud and that it is a pity that he must work with inadequate resources.
10. **The SC Chair** welcomed the appreciative remarks about the SG but noted that the SG will still be leading the Secretariat surely for another year.
11. **Denmark** inquired about who will do what in the various steps along the recruitment timeline. **The SG** explained that the Secretariat will work with IUCN in line with IUCN's employment rules and Swiss law and then make a proposal to the Executive Team, which can then submit a recommendation to the Standing Committee about the way forward and give instruction to the Secretariat about how to implement the process.
12. **The SC Chair** indicated that we will receive more details about the process by e-mail from the Secretariat.
13. **The USA** reported that during the last SG recruitment process there was a bottleneck in the checking of candidates' references, which is not at all an easy job, and he recommended that one of the Parties be appointed to carry out that task thoroughly.

**Decision SC45-4: The Standing Committee confirmed the procedures and timeline for the recruitment of the next Secretary General as recommended by the SC decision SC44-10.**

**Date and venue of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties**

14. **The SG** explained that it is the Conference of the Parties that must decide on the date and venue of the next meeting of the COP but that it is expected that the Standing Committee will bring forward a recommendation if possible.
15. **Uruguay** recalled that his country submitted an invitation in 2009 to host COP12 in 2015, and that invitation has now been ratified by three ministries and will be honored.
16. **The SG** reported that an original invitation has been received from Uruguay that fulfills the prescribed terms for such an offer, and that no other offers have been received so far.

**Decision SC45-5: The Standing Committee welcomed the proposal from Uruguay and agreed to recommend that it be accepted by the Conference of the Parties.**

**Agenda item 5: Date and venue of the next Standing Committee meeting**

17. **The SG** noted that the first full business meeting would normally be held in the northern spring and that the only dates available in the Geneva area, among other major events like the automobile show, are 8-12 April 2013. It will be held in the Secretariat's facilities at IUCN headquarters in Gland, Switzerland.

**Decision SC45-6: The Standing Committee established the date and venue of its next meeting as 8-12 April 2013 in Gland, Switzerland, barring unforeseen circumstances.**

**Agenda item 6: Any other business**

**Management Working Group**

18. **The USA** inquired about the appropriate mechanism for appointing a new Management Working Group.
19. **The SG** recalled that as established in Resolutions IX. 24 and X.4 the MWG is composed of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the previous and new Standing Committees, the Chairs of the Subgroup on Finance of both SCs, the previous and new Chair of the STRP, any other interested Parties keeping in mind equitable regional participation, a representative of the IOPs, and the Secretary General *ex officio*.
20. **The USA** urged that it made sense to establish that group at the present SC meeting so that it would be ready to convene at the next one.
21. **The Chair of the SC** noted that Draft Resolution 19 as drafted would retire the MWG and turn its responsibilities over to the Executive Team (the Chair and Vice-Chair of the present SC and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance). **The USA** indicated that it seemed

likely that that part of DR19 would be deleted from the adopted Resolution because some responsibilities have been charged to the MWG in DR16 already adopted by the COP.

22. **The Chair of the SC** opened the floor for nominations of SC members to serve as a core group of regional Parties on the Management Working Group. **The SG** clarified that though this core group must be drawn from SC members, any other interested Contracting Parties may also participate as well.

**Decision SC45-7: The Standing Committee nominated as a core group of representatives to serve on the Management Working Group: for Africa, Tunisia; for Asia, the UAE; for Europe, Denmark; for the Neotropics, Cuba; for North America, Canada; and for Oceania, Fiji.**

#### **Transition Committee of the MWG**

23. **The USA** inquired about the status of the Transition Committee.
24. **The SG** reported that the recent Standing Committee meeting determined in Decision SC44-8 to urge the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Subgroup on Finance Chair of the present and the outgoing Standing Committees to work together as a Transition Committee “with reference to the recruitment of the next Secretary General and other matters”.

#### **Adoption of the report of the meeting**

25. **The Standing Committee** requested the Chair of the SC to review and adopt the report of the meeting on its behalf.

#### **Closed session**

26. **Finland** requested the SC Chair to put the meeting into a brief closed session of Contracting Parties only.
27. **The Chair of the SC** asked the Contracting Parties to remain and adjourned the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee for all other participants.