

**Establishment of a working group to progress Resolution XI.1
(Convention languages, visibility and ministerial COP segment,
enhancing synergies with MEAs and UNEP)**

Action requested. The Management Working Group and Standing Committee are invited to consider ways and means of implementing the terms of Resolution XI.1, paragraphs 17 and 18, taking into account the suggestions from the Ramsar Secretariat.

Background

1. Resolution XI.1 on *Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat*, adopted by COP11, requests the Standing Committee and all Contracting Parties to take action as reflected in paragraphs 17 and 18 below:

17. INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee through an appropriate Working Group representative of Parties to develop strategies that explore:
- a) accommodation of UN languages into the Convention;
 - b) elevation of Ramsar visibility and stature, including *inter alia* enhancing high-level political engagement in the work of the Convention at national, regional and global level; the working group will among other possibilities look into establishing a ministerial segment at the COP including the topics to be addressed at this level;
 - c) enhancement of synergies with MEAs and other international entities including through Regional Initiatives;
 - d) increased involvement in UNEP's initiatives and programs regarding biodiversity-related MEAs to enhance cooperation and synergies between Ramsar and UNEP;

and INVITES all Parties to participate in this group and its discussions including through electronic means where feasible; and

18. REQUESTS the Working Group to provide each Standing Committee meeting with a progress report including any implications such as financial ones and recommendations, and ALSO REQUESTS the Standing Committee to submit a report, including its recommendations, to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Suggestions by the Secretariat

2. In order to take these matters forward, the Ramsar Secretariat suggests that the issue should first be considered by the Management Working Group immediately prior to the 46th meeting of the Standing Committee.
3. The Management Working Group should develop a Terms of Reference for this “Resolution XI.1 Working Group” for consideration by the Standing Committee.
4. The Management Working Group and Standing Committee are invited advise on what assistance will be required from the Secretariat to facilitate the establishment of the Working Group. If significant support work will be expected from the Secretariat, the Standing Committee will wish to advise on how this could be delivered under the current capacity limitations of the Secretariat.
5. Key elements to consider in defining the Terms of Reference of the Working Group could include the following questions.
 - The composition of the Working Group: should the Working Group include only representatives of Contracting Parties or should it also include other stakeholders such as Ramsar International Organization Partners (IOPs) and members of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) who are willing to contribute?
 - Who should lead the Working Group?
 - What actions would be expected from the members of the Working Group to respond the requests on paragraphs 17 and 18 of Resolution XI.1?
 - Since sub-items a) to d) in Resolution XI.1 paragraph 17 are very different in their nature, should a separate process under the Working Group be established to progress each sub-item?
 - How should the overall Working Group process be coordinated?
 - How would the members of the Working Group communicate intersessionally?
 - What costs can be expected to be incurred in the work of the Working Group? Since there is no provision in the core budget to support the work of such a Working Group, how would any anticipated costs be funded?