

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

48th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 26-30 January 2015

SC48-03

Proposals for amendment to the Rules of Procedure

Action required:

The Standing Committee is invited to review the recommended changes to the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, for the consideration of COP12.

Background

1. The Standing Committee will recall that the Rules of Procedure for the conduct of business of each meeting of the Conference of the Parties are presented for adoption by COP plenary decision early in the COP process.
2. On 12 September 2014 a work session was held at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat with the senior legal advisor to review issues and challenges that the Secretariat and Contracting Parties have observed pertaining to the Ramsar Convention Rules of Procedure (RoPs).
3. The participants identified the need for a review of procedural options, based on a comparative analysis of applicable organizations, in order to generate proposed amendments for adoption.
4. The working paper attached to this paper was prepared, which provides a comparative overview of current Ramsar Rules of Procedure, taking into account a survey of the Rules of Procedure of multiple UN Conventions and organizations, providing recommendations based on the options identified.
5. Based on the findings, this paper presents the proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure for the consideration and approval of Contracting Parties at COP 12.
6. The recommendations for amendment to the COP11 Rules of Procedure are incorporated in the text below for the consideration of COP12. The proposed amendments are indicated in **green text** in cursive brackets

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
CONTRACTING PARTIES TO
THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE
ESPECIALLY AS WATERFOWL HABITAT (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
adopted by the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Bucharest,
Romania, 7 July 2012**

[Showing in brackets in bolded green text the proposed amendments]

Rule 1 Purpose

These rules of procedure shall apply to any meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) convened in accordance with article 6 of the Convention, subject to their adoption by consensus at the start of each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Rule 2 Definitions

For the purposes of these rules:

- a) “Convention” means the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, adopted in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971, as amended by the Protocol signed in Paris, France, on 3 December 1982, and by the Extraordinary Conference of the Contracting Parties held in Regina, Canada, on 28 May 1987;
- b) “Parties” means the Contracting Parties to the Convention;
- c) “Conference of the Parties” means the Conference of the Contracting Parties established in accordance with article 6 of the Convention;
- d) “Meeting” means any ordinary or extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties convened in accordance with article 6 of the Convention;
- e) “President” means the President elected in accordance with rule 21, paragraph 1, of the present rules of procedure;
- f) “Subsidiary body” means all committees or working groups established by the Conference of the Parties, including the Standing Committee;
- g) “Standing Committee” means the body established by a Resolution of the 3rd Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
- h) “Conference Committee” means the Standing Committee, which during a meeting plays such a role;
- i) “Ramsar regional groups” means each of the regional groups in which the Contracting Parties to the Convention have been grouped in order to facilitate the work of the Convention;

- j) "Proposal" means a draft resolution or recommendation submitted by one or more Parties or the Standing Committee or the Conference Committee;
- k) "Secretariat" means the professional and administrative staff of the Secretariat of the Convention established under article 8 of the Convention and any other staff under the authority of the Secretary General who serve a meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- l) {The "COP Bureau" is comprised of the President, an Alternate President, and two Vice-Presidents, one of whom shall act as Rapporteur, as established at the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting.}

{SESSIONS}

Rule 3 {Place of meetings}

1. The meeting of the Conference of the Parties shall take place in the country chosen by the previous Conference of the Parties on the basis of a formal invitation that {shall be issued}to this effect by the Head of State or Government or the Cabinet or the Minister of Foreign Affairs of that country. {A formal invitation shall be provided to the Secretariat, in writing 1 month prior to the conclusion of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and must include a hosting rationale, the proposed location and venue, and available financial resources to support the event}.
2. If more than one Party issues an invitation to host the next meeting, and two or more invitations are maintained after informal consultations, the meeting shall decide on the venue of the next meeting by secret ballot. If no invitation has been received, the meeting shall be held in the country where the Secretariat has its seat, unless other appropriate arrangements are made by the Secretariat and accepted by the Standing Committee.

Rule 4 {Dates of Meetings}

1. Ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall be held every three years.
2. Each ordinary meeting shall determine the year and venue of the next ordinary meeting. The exact dates and duration of each ordinary meeting shall be established by the Standing Committee at its first substantive meeting after each Conference of the Parties, on the basis of consultations between the Secretariat and the host country of the meeting.
3. Extraordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall be convened at such times as may be deemed necessary by the Conference of the Parties, or at the written request of any Party communicated to the other Contracting Parties via the Secretariat, and provided that, within six months of such communication, the request is supported by at least one third of the Parties in a ballot organized by the Secretariat.
4. In the case of an extraordinary meeting, it shall be convened not more than ninety days after the date at which the request is supported by at least one third of the Parties in accordance with paragraph 3 of this rule.

Rule 5 {Notification}

1. The Secretariat shall notify all Parties of the dates, venue, and provisional agenda of an ordinary meeting at least 12 months before the meeting is due to commence. The notification shall include the draft agenda for the meeting and the deadline for submission of proposals by the Parties, which normally shall be 60 calendar days prior to the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which approvals are made for documents for consideration by Contracting Parties at the COP. Only Parties, the Standing Committee and the Conference Committee shall be entitled to submit proposals.
2. {The Secretariat shall notify all Parties of the dates, venue, and provisional agenda of an extraordinary meeting within three months of establishing through a ballot that one-third of the Parties support the hosting of the meeting as required by Rule 4.3. Notification will include any supporting documents relating to the issues proposed for consideration at the extraordinary meeting as required by Rule 13}.

OBSERVERS

Rule 6 {Participation of United Nations and specialized agencies}

1. The Secretariat shall notify the United Nations and its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not Party to the Convention, of meetings of the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented as observers.
2. Such observers may, upon the invitation of the President, participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any meeting unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.

Rule 7 {Participation of other bodies or agencies}

1. Any body or agency, national or international, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, which has informed the Secretariat of its wish to be represented at meetings of the Conference of the Parties may be represented at the meeting by observers, unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.
2. {Bodies or agencies desiring to receive recognition as observers for the purposes of attending meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall submit appropriate documentation including credentials, evidence or approval of the State, and an overview of reasoning three months prior to any meeting}.
3. {Bodies or agencies recognized as observers who desire to be represented at the meeting as observers} shall submit the names of these representatives to the Convention Secretariat at least one month prior to the opening of the meeting.
4. Such observers may, upon the invitation of the President, participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any meeting, {including Standing Committees and subsidiary bodies}, unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.
5. Proposals made by observers may be put to the vote if sponsored by a Party.
6. Seating limitations may require that no more than two observers from any State not a Party, body, or agency be present at a meeting. The Secretariat shall notify those concerned of any such limitations in advance of the meeting.

7. {The Secretariat will maintain a list of bodies or agencies recognized as observers and shall notify those entitled to be observers pursuant to Rules 6 and 7 of the date and venue of any session scheduled by the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented}.

AGENDA

Rule 8 {Preparation of provisional agenda}

The Secretariat shall prepare the provisional agenda of each ordinary meeting for consideration and approval by the Standing Committee at its annual meeting in the year following the meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Rule 9 {Items on provisional agenda}

The provisional agenda of each ordinary meeting shall include, as appropriate:

- a) {The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization};
- b) All items arising from the articles of the Convention;
- c) All items the inclusion of which has been decided at a previous meeting or which emanate from decisions taken at a previous meeting;
- d) All items referred to in rule 15 of the present rules of procedure;
- e) Any item proposed by a Party and received by the Secretariat before the provisional agenda is approved by the Standing Committee;
- f) All technical/scientific issues related to wetlands conservation and wise use that could advance the implementation of the Convention.

Rule 10 {Distribution of documents}

The documents for each ordinary meeting, as per Rule 54, and including an annotated provisional agenda based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee, shall be distributed in the official languages by the Secretariat to the Parties at least three months before the opening of the meeting.

Rule 11 {Inclusion on provisional agenda}

The Secretariat shall, in agreement with the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, include any item which has been proposed by a Party and has been received by the Secretariat after the provisional agenda has been produced, but before the opening of the meeting, in a supplementary provisional agenda.

Rule 12 {Examining the provisional agenda}

1. The Conference of the Parties shall examine the provisional agenda together with any supplementary provisional agenda. When adopting the agenda, it may add, delete, defer, or amend items. Only items which are considered by the Conference of the Parties to be urgent and important may be added to the agenda.

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2. {Debate regarding actions to add, delete, defer, or amend items to the agenda shall be limited to three speakers in favour of and three against the action. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under the rule.}

Rule 13 {Scope of provisional agenda for extraordinary meetings}

The provisional agenda for an extraordinary meeting shall consist only of those items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the extraordinary meeting. The provisional agenda and any necessary supporting documents shall be distributed to the Parties at the same time as the invitation to the extraordinary meeting.

Rule 14 {Explanatory Memorandum}

The Secretariat shall report to the Conference of the Parties on the administrative and financial implications of all substantive agenda items submitted to the meeting before these items are considered by the meeting. Unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise, no such item shall be considered until at least forty-eight hours after the Conference of the Parties has received the Secretariat's report on the administrative and financial implications.

Rule 15 {Automatic inclusion of unaddressed issues in the agenda of the next ordinary meeting}

Any item of the agenda of an ordinary meeting, consideration of which has not been completed at the meeting, shall be included automatically in the agenda of the next ordinary meeting, unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties.

REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rule 16 {Composition of delegation}

Each Party participating in a meeting shall be represented by a delegation consisting of a head of delegation and such other accredited representatives, alternate representatives, and advisers as it may require.

Rule 17 {Alternates and advisers}

A representative may be designated as an alternate head of delegation. An alternate representative or an adviser may act as a representative upon designation by the head of delegation.

Rule 18 {Submission of credentials}

1. The original of the statement of credentials of the Head of Delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives, and advisers (specifying the individual named as the Head of Delegation) shall be submitted to the Secretary General of the Convention or to his/her designated representative, **deleted at the venue of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, not later than {15 days prior to} the opening of the meeting. {Submission of the statement of credentials may be done digitally, conditional upon compliance with the terms set out in rule 18.3.}**Any later change in the composition of the delegation shall also be submitted to Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General.

2. After the opening of the COP, any further changes, in particular of the Head of Delegation, shall be submitted to the Secretary General or to the Regional Representative on the Credentials Committee. Any changes to the Head of the Delegation during the COP may be made by the current Head of Delegation, alternate Head of Delegation, or the Embassy of the Party in question, provided that the newly designated Head of Delegation is properly identified as a delegate in the original credentials duly authorized by the appropriate official. If a person not identified in the initial letter of credentials is proposed as a new Head of Delegation, that change would need to be done through issuance of new credentials in accordance with rule 18.3.
3. The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or his/her equivalent. If other authorities in a Contracting Party are entitled to issue credentials for international meetings, this should be notified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with an original letter to the Secretary General at the time of submitting their credentials. {Submission of credentials may be done in either written or digital form, with digital submission requiring authentication by a valid digital signature.}
4. The credentials must bear the name and position of the person who signs the credentials as well as the full signature of the appropriate authority or else be sealed and initialled by that authority. The seal and/or letterhead should clearly indicate that the credentials have been issued by the appropriate authority. {When submitted digitally, the aforementioned criteria apply to the electronic copy of the credentials, and shall be accompanied by the electronic signature of the appropriate authority listed in the document.}
5. A representative may not exercise the right to vote unless his/her name is clearly and unambiguously listed in the credentials.
6. If credentials are submitted in a language other than one of the official languages of the Convention, they shall be accompanied by a translation into {either English, French or Spanish}, and the translation shall be produced and sealed or otherwise duly authorized by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or its diplomatic representation, or the office of the Head of Delegation or the office of one of the delegates whose name is listed in the Credentials.

Rule 19 {Credentials Committee}

1. A Credentials Committee composed of {6 members} with one Party from each of the Ramsar regions, elected at the first session of each ordinary meeting on the basis of a proposal from the Standing Committee or Conference Committee, shall examine the credentials and submit its report to the Conference of the Parties for approval.
2. {The President of the Credentials Committee shall be elected by the Committee. The holder of this post shall have equivalent powers and duties in relation to meetings of the Committee as the President of the Conference. A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. Decisions in the Committee shall be taken by majority vote. No member shall have more than one vote. Meetings of the Committee shall be held in private unless otherwise determined by the Conference.}

Rule 20 {Provisional Participation}

DELETED Pending a decision of the Conference of the Parties upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the meeting

1. {The Credentials Committee shall examine all credentials deposited with the Convention Secretariat and report promptly to the Conference, which shall decide any and all questions arising.}
2. {Any delegation or representative which has been subject to an objection shall be seated and entitled to participate provisionally in the meeting until the Credentials Committee has reported and the Conference has given its decision.}

OFFICERS

Rule 21 {President}

1. At the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting, a President, an Alternate President, and two Vice-Presidents, {one of whom shall act as Rapporteur, are to} be elected from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting, on the basis of a proposal put forward by the Conference Committee. {They will serve as the COP Bureau .} In preparing its proposal on this matter, the Conference Committee shall consider the candidates put forward by the host country of the meeting for the posts of President and Alternate President of the meeting. {The offices of President and Rapporteur shall normally be subject to rotation among the six regional groups.}
2. {The officers of the COP bureau as referred to in Rule 21.1 shall assume their functions at the beginning of the session and will remain in office until their successors are duly elected. The President shall preside until a new President is elected at the commencement of the next ordinary meeting, with the President and the Vice-Presidents serving as the bureau of any extraordinary meeting held during their term of office and providing guidance to the Secretariat with regard to preparations for, and conduct of, meetings of the Conference of the Parties. No officer may be re-elected for more than two consecutive terms}.
3. The President and the Alternate President shall participate in the meeting in that capacity and shall not at the same time exercise the rights of a representative of a Party. The Party concerned shall designate another representative who shall be entitled to represent the Party in the meeting and to exercise the right to vote.

~~Deleted~~ "The President, the Alternate President, and the Vice Presidents shall be entitled to join the Conference Committee as full members for the duration of the meeting".

Rule 22 {Role of President}

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon the President elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of the meeting, preside at the sessions of the meeting, ensure the observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions. The President shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, shall have complete control of the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat.
2. The President may propose to the Conference of the Parties the closure of the list of speakers, limitations on the time to be allowed to speakers and the number of times each Party or observer may speak on a question, the adjournment or the closure of the debate, and the suspension or the adjournment of a session.

3. The President, in the exercise of the functions of that office, remains under the authority of the Conference of the Parties.

Rule 23 {Role of Alternate President}

If the President is absent from a session of any part thereof, the Alternate President shall act as President. Should both the President and Alternate President be absent, they shall designate a Vice-President to act as President. The Alternate President or a Vice-President acting as President shall have the same powers and duties as the President.

Rule 24 {Replacement of an officer (unable to complete term)}

If {an officer of the bureau as referred to in Rule 21.1resigns or is} otherwise unable to complete the assigned term of office or to perform the functions of the office, a representative of the same Party shall be named by the Party concerned to replace the said officer for the remainder of that officer's mandate.

Rule 25 {Temporary President}

At the first session of each ordinary meeting, the President of the previous ordinary meeting, or in the absence of the President, a representative of the same Party, shall preside until the Conference of the Parties has elected a President for the meeting.

**THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, OTHER COMMITTEES
AND WORKING GROUPS**

{THE STANDING COMMITTEE, THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODIES}

Rule 26 {Establishment of subsidiary bodies}

The contents of this original rule have been reorganized as follows

1. **In addition to the Standing Committee of the Convention,¹ the Scientific and Technical Review Panel,² and the Conference Committee,** the Conference of the Parties may establish other committees and working groups if it deems it necessary for the implementation of the Convention.³ Where appropriate, meetings of these bodies shall be held in conjunction with meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
2. **The Conference Committee shall be comprised of the voting members of the Standing Committee of the Convention in addition to the elected President, Alternate President, and Vice Presidents of the current meeting.**
 - (a) The Conference Committee shall meet at least once daily over the duration of the meeting to review progress, including the draft of the report of the previous day prepared by the Secretariat, and to provide advice to the President in order to ensure the smooth development of the rest of the proceedings.
 - (b) Other Contracting Parties and permanent observers to the Standing Committee may attend meetings of the Conference Committee unless any member of the Standing Committee objects. Other observers may be invited to attend meetings of the Conference Committee, or other closed meetings if required to assist proceedings.**
 - (c) The Conference Committee shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Standing Committee during the period previous to the current meeting.
3. **The Conference of the Parties may decide that any subsidiary body may meet in the period between ordinary meetings.**
4.
 - (a) Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties, the chairperson for each {standing and subsidiary} body shall be elected by the Conference of the Parties {with due regard to equitable geographical representation}.
 - (b) The Conference of the Parties shall determine the matters to be considered by each such body and may authorize the President, upon the request of the chairperson of a body, to make adjustments to the allocation of work.
5. Subject to paragraph 4 of this rule, each body shall elect its own officers. No officer may be re-elected for a third consecutive term.
6. Unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties, these rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of such bodies, except that:

¹Established by COP Resolution 3.3 (1987).

²Established by COP Resolution 5.5 (1993).

³ Note substantive equivalents incorporated in CBD Rule 26.1, UNFCCC Rule 27.2, UNCCD Rule 28.1, CITES Rule 5.3.

- a) {If specific Rules of Procedure have been established for a standing committee or subsidiary body, those rules shall apply to the conduct of that body.} At times of conflict the Rules of the COP prevail.
- b) A majority of the Parties designated by the Conference of the Parties to take part in any such body shall constitute a quorum, but in the event of the body being open-ended, one quarter of the Parties shall constitute a quorum;
- c) The chairperson of any such body may exercise the right to vote;
- d) {The Secretariat shall endeavour to provide interpretation in sessions of both the standing committee and subsidiary bodies, including the Conference Committee, in a phased manner with due regard to the financial impact}.

SECRETARIAT

Rule 27 {Duties of the Secretariat}

1. The Secretary General of the Convention shall be the Secretary General of the Conference of the Parties. The Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference of the Parties and of subsidiary bodies.
2. The Secretary General shall {arrange for the provision of}staff{and services}required by the Conference of the Parties {and its}subsidiary bodies,{within available resources, shall manage and direct such staff and services, provide appropriate support and advice to the presiding and other officers of the Convention.}
3. {The Secretary General shall make an annual report to the Conference on progress made to further the goals on the Convention.}

Rule 28 {Functions of the Secretariat}

The Secretariat shall, in accordance with these rules:

- a) Arrange for interpretation at the meeting;
- b) Prepare, receive, translate, reproduce and distribute the documents of the meeting;
- c) Publish and circulate the official documents of the meeting;
- d) Make and arrange for keeping of sound recordings of the meeting;
- e) Arrange for the custody and preservation of the documents of the meeting;
- f) Draft the report of the meeting for consideration by the Conference Committee first and for final approval by the meeting; and
- g) Generally perform all other work that the {Conference of the Parties} may require.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 29 {Meetings}

1. Sessions of the Conference of the Parties shall be held in public, unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise.
2. Sessions of subsidiary bodies shall be held in public unless the subsidiary body concerned decides otherwise.
3. Delegations shall be seated in accordance with the alphabetical order of the English language names of the Parties.

Rule 30 {Quorum}

The President may declare a session of the meeting open and permit the debate to proceed if at least one third of the Parties to the Convention are present, and may have decisions taken when representatives of at least two thirds of the Parties are present.

Rule 31 {Procedures for speaking}

1. No one may speak at a session of the Conference of the Parties without having previously obtained the permission of the President. Subject to rules 32, 33, 34 and 36, the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The Secretariat shall maintain a list of speakers. The President may call a speaker to order if the speaker's remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
2. The Conference of the Parties may, on a proposal from the President or from any Party, limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times each Party or observer may speak on a question. Before a decision is taken, two representatives may speak in favour of and two against a proposal to set such limits. When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call the speaker to order without delay.
3. A speaker shall not be interrupted except on a point of order. He may, however, with the permission of the President, give way during his/her speech to allow any other representative or observer to request elucidation on a particular point in that speech.
4. During the course of a debate, the President may announce the list of speakers, and with the consent of the meeting, declare the list closed. The President may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after the list has been closed makes this desirable.

Rule 32 {Precedence}

The chairperson or rapporteur of a subsidiary body may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by that subsidiary body.

Rule 33 {Point of order}

During the discussion of any matter, a Party may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be decided immediately by the President in accordance with these rules. A Party may appeal the ruling

of the President. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the Parties present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 34 {Decisions on competence}

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Conference of the Parties to discuss any matter or adopt a proposal or an amendment to a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.

Rule 35 {Proposals and amendments to proposals}

1. A new proposal that was not submitted to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the opening of the Standing Committee meeting at which approvals are made of documents for consideration by the COP, as required by Rule 5, and amendments to proposals, shall be introduced in writing by the Parties and handed to the Secretariat in at least one of the official languages, for submission to the Conference Committee.
2. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any session unless copies of it, translated into the official languages of the Conference of the Parties, have been circulated to delegations not later than the day preceding the session. Nevertheless, the President may {in cases of urgency, permit the discussion and consideration of proposals}, amendments to proposals or of procedural motions even though these {documents may not have} been circulated or have been circulated only the same day or have not been translated into all the official languages of the Conference of the Parties.
3. A new proposal shall deal only with matters that could not have been foreseen in advance of the meeting or arise out of the discussions at the meeting. The Conference Committee shall decide if the new proposal meets this requirement, so as to introduce it formally for consideration by the meeting. If a new proposal is rejected by the Conference Committee, the sponsor(s) shall be entitled to request the President to submit the question of its admissibility to a vote, as per Rule 34. The sponsor(s) shall be given the opportunity to make one intervention to present the arguments in favour of the introduction of the new proposal, and the President shall explain the reasons for its rejection by the Conference Committee.

Rule 36 {Order of procedural motions}

1. Subject to rule 33, the following motions shall have precedence, in the order indicated below, over all other proposals or motions:
 - a) To suspend a session;
 - b) To adjourn a session;
 - c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion; and
 - d) For the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.
2. Permission to speak on a motion falling within (a) to (d) above shall be granted only to the proposer and, in addition, to one speaker in favour of and two against the motion, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

Rule 37 {Withdrawal of proposals or motions}

A proposal or motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has begun, provided that the motion has not been amended. A proposal or motion withdrawn may be reintroduced by any other Party.

Rule 38 {Reconsideration of proposals}

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same meeting, unless the Conference of the Parties, by a two thirds majority of the Parties present and voting, decides in favor of reconsideration. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to the mover and one other supporter, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

VOTING

Rule 39 {Single Vote}

Each Party shall have one vote.

Rule 40 {Consensus Voting}

1. The Parties shall make every effort to reach agreement on all matters of substance by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement reached, the decision shall, as a last resort, be taken by a majority vote of the Parties present and voting, unless otherwise provided by the Convention{or these Rules}, such as in the case of:
 - a) the adoption of the budget for the next financial period, which shall require a two-third majority of Parties present and voting (article 6.5.); and
 - b) the adoption of the scale of contributions to the budget, which shall require unanimity (article 6.6.).
2. {Decisions of the Conference of the Parties on matters of procedure shall be taken by a majority vote of the Parties present and voting.}
3. {If the question arises whether a matter is one of procedural or substantive nature, the President shall rule on the question. An appeal against this ruling shall be put to the vote immediately and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the Parties present and voting.}
4. If on matters other than elections a vote is equally divided, a second vote shall be taken. If this vote is also equally divided, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.
5. For the purposes of these rules, the phrase "Parties present and voting" means Parties present at the session at which voting takes place and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Parties abstaining from voting shall be considered as not voting.

Rule 41 {Order of voting on proposals}

If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Conference of the Parties, unless it decides otherwise, shall vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. The

Conference of the Parties may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

Rule 42 {Division of proposals and amendments}

Recommendation: Rules 42 and 43 are addressing the same substantive point – divisions of proposals and amendments. As such current Rule 43 should be incorporated as Rule 42.2.

1. Any representative may request that any parts of a proposal or of an amendment to a proposal be voted on separately. The President shall allow the request unless a Party objects. If objection is made to the request for division, the President shall permit two representatives to speak, one in favor of and the other against the motion, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.
2. If the motion referred to in rule 42 is adopted, those parts of a proposal or of an amendment to a proposal which are approved shall then be put to the vote as a whole. If all the operative parts of a proposal or amendment have been rejected, the proposal or amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Rule 43 {Amendment to a proposal}

A motion is considered to be an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises parts of that proposal. An amendment shall be voted on before the proposal to which it relates is put to the vote, and if the amendment is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

Rule 44 {Order of voting on amendments to a proposal}

1. If two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Conference of the Parties shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal, then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all amendments have been put to the vote. The President shall determine the order of voting on the amendments under this rule.
2. {Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon.}

Rule 45 {Voting Procedures}

1. Voting, except for elections and the decision on the venue of the next ordinary meeting, shall normally be {conducted through an electronic system or} by show of hands.
 - a) {In the case of votes taken through an electronic system, other than votes taken by secret ballot, the individual votes of all Parties may be displayed on a screen for all participants to see immediately after a vote has taken place, and included in the summary record of the session.}
 - b) A roll-call vote shall be taken if one is requested by any Party; it shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the Parties participating in the meeting, beginning with the Party whose name is drawn by lot by the President.

- c) If at any time a Party requests a secret ballot, this shall be the method of voting on the issue in question, provided that this request is accepted by a simple majority of the Parties present and voting. The President shall be responsible for the counting of the votes, assisted by tellers appointed by the Conference, and shall announce the result.
2. The vote of each Party participating in a roll-call vote shall be expressed by “Yes”, or “No”, or “Abstain” and shall be recorded in the relevant documents of the meeting.
{When the meeting votes by mechanical means, a non-recorded vote shall replace a vote by show of hands and a recorded vote shall replace a roll-call vote.}
3. All elections and the decision on the venue of the next ordinary meeting shall be decided by the Conference of the Parties with recourse to secret ballot only where necessary .

Rule 46 {Voting Conduct}

After the President has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The President may permit the Parties to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, but may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations. The President shall not permit proposers of proposals or of amendments to proposals to explain their vote on their own proposals or amendments, except if they have been amended.

ELECTIONS

Rule 47 {Absence of majority}

1. If, when one person or one delegation is to be elected, no candidate obtains in the first ballot a majority of votes cast by the Parties present and voting, consecutive ballots shall be taken until one of the candidates obtains the largest amount of votes cast by the Parties present and voting.
2. In the case of a tie in the first ballot among three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, a second ballot shall be held. If a tie results among more than two candidates, the number shall be reduced to two by lot and the balloting, restricted to them, shall continue in accordance with the procedure set forth in paragraph 1 of this rule.

Rule 48 {Election to two or more elective places}

1. When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates, not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot the largest number of votes and a majority of the votes cast by the Parties present and voting shall be deemed elected.
2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons or delegations to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled, provided that, after the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for any eligible person or delegation.
3. If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third of the unrestricted

ballots, to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be unrestricted, and so on until all the places have been filled.

{LANGUAGES, DOCUMENTS AND SOUND RECORDINGS}

Rule 49 {Official languages}

The official and working languages of the Conference of the Parties shall be English, French, and Spanish.

Rule 50 {Interpretation}

1. Statements made in an official language shall be interpreted into the other official languages.
2. A representative of a Party may speak in a language other than an official language, if the Party provides for interpretation into one such official language.

Rule 51 {Languages of official documents}

1. Official documents of the meetings shall be drawn up in one of the official languages and translated into the other official languages.
2. Financial limitations may make it necessary to limit the number of documents provided to each Party and observer. The Secretariat shall encourage Parties and observers to download the documents from the Secretariat's Web site on the Internet.
3. Any documents, including proposals, submitted to the Secretariat in any language other than {an official} language shall be accompanied by a translation into one of the {official} languages.
4. When in doubt, the Secretariat shall request the agreement of the Conference Committee for issuing a document as an official document of the meeting.
5. Parties and observers wishing to distribute documents which have not been admitted as official documents of the meeting shall make their own arrangements for distribution, after having sought the advice of the Secretariat on how to proceed.

Rule 52 {Sound Recording of the Meetings}

Sound records of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and whenever possible of its subsidiary bodies, shall be kept by the Secretariat.

ENTERING INTO FORCE AND AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule {53}

These rules of procedure shall apply immediately after their adoption.

OVERRIDING AUTHORITY OF THE CONVENTION

Rule {54}

In the event of any conflict between any provision of these rules and any provision of the Convention, the Convention shall prevail.

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

Rule 1 {Scope}

{These rules shall apply to the Standing Committee of the Convention,⁴ the Conference Committee, and any subsidiary bodies including working groups.}

Rule 2 {Functions}

Within the policies agreed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties and in accordance with COP Resolution XI.19, the functions of the Standing Committee will be to:

- a) carry out, between one ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the next, such interim activity on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary, giving priority to matters on which the Conference has previously recorded its approval;
- b) make preparations on issues, including inter alia draft Resolutions, for consideration at the next meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
- c) supervise, as a representative of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the implementation of activities by the Ramsar Secretariat, the execution of the Secretariat's budget, and conduct of the Secretariat's programmes;
- d) provide guidance and advice to the Ramsar Secretariat on the implementation of the Convention, on the preparation of meetings, and on any other matters relating to the exercise of its functions brought to it by the Secretariat;
- e) act as Conference Committee at meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;
- f) establish subgroups as necessary to facilitate the carrying out of its functions;
- g) promote regional and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
- h) approve the work plan of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) on the basis of the decisions of the COP, receive the reports of the STRP on the progress made with its implementation, and provide guidance for its future development;
- i) adopt for each triennium the Operational Guidelines for the Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use and decide on the allocation of funds;
- j) review each triennium the criteria for and select the laureates of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award established by Resolution VI.18; and
- k) report to the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the activities it has carried out between ordinary meetings of the Conference.⁵

⁴ Hereafter referred to as 'the Committee.'

⁵ Ramsar, Resolution XI.19, COP 11 (2012), at Annex 1, para 19, available at: <http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/cop11/res/cop11-res19-e.pdf>. [Res XI.19]

- l) approve the annual workplan and budget expenditures and accounts of the Secretariat
- j) appointment of Secretaries General

REPRESENTATION AND ATTENDANCE

Rule 3 {Representative and Alternate}

{Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee by a Representative and an Alternate Representative. Each member shall also designate a person with whom communications regarding the work of the Committee should be conducted between meetings of the Committee and an alternate.}

Rule 4 {Voting Rights}

{The Representative shall exercise the voting right of a member or alternate member. In his/her absence, the Alternate Representative shall act in his/her place. Only members or alternate members of the committee have the right to vote.}

OBSERVERS

Rule 5 {Participation of United Nations and specialized agencies}

1. Contracting Parties not members of the Committee, upon request, shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee by observers who shall have the right to participate but not to vote.⁶
2. {Members of the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not a Party to the Convention may, upon the invitation of the President, be represented at meetings by observers who shall have the right to participate in meetings of the Committee but not to vote.}

Rule 6 {Participation of other bodies or agencies}

1. The Director General of IUCN or his or her representative and the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel shall be invited as observers to meetings of the Standing Committee, as well as other experts and/or institutions that the Standing Committee may deem appropriate for assisting in its consideration of particular agenda items.⁷
2. International organizations which are official International Organization Partners in the work of the Convention will be invited to participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee.⁸
3. {The Chair of the Standing Committee may invite any person to attend a meeting of the Committee as an observer and may invite bodies or agencies to be represented at a meeting of the Committee by observers. Such observers shall have the right to participate only during the

⁶ Ramsar, Resolution 3.3 COP 3 (1987), Article 2(c), available at: http://archive.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-cops-cop7-resolution-3-3/main/ramsar/1-31-58-83%5E23396_4000_0. [Ramsar Res. 3.3]

⁷ *Supra*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 13.

⁸ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 14.

discussion of specific agenda items determined by the Committee, but not to vote. However, the right of any such observer to participate shall be withdrawn if so agreed by the Committee.}

4. {a) Bodies or agencies recognized as observers who desire to be represented at the meeting as observers, in accordance with Rule 5.1, shall submit the names of these representatives to the Secretariat at least one month prior to the opening of the meeting.}
- {b) Any such request from a body shall be accompanied by:
 - i) appropriate documentation including credentials, evidence or approval of the State, and an overview of reasoning for attendance;
 - ii) the name(s) of the observer(s) who have been authorized to represent it at the meeting; and}
- {c) The Secretariat shall forward each request received and relevant information to the Chair and the other members of the Executive Committee for approval, intersessionally to the meeting of the Standing Committee.}

CREDENTIALS

Rule 7 {Representatives}

{Each Party, prior to participating in the meeting as a full voting member, shall deliver the appropriately granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority and the name(s) of the representatives to enabling them to represent the member at the meeting 15 days prior to the opening of the meeting}

Rule 8 {Observers}

{Any observer representing a State or an intergovernmental organization in a meeting, prior to participation as an observer, shall have been granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority enabling him or her to represent the State or organization, and shall deliver the appropriately granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority and the name(s) of the representatives to enabling them to represent the member at the meeting.}

Rule 9 {Language of Credentials}

{The credentials required under Rules 6 and 7 shall be presented to the Secretariat of the Convention, in an official language, or be accompanied with a translation into one of the official languages if they are not in one of those languages.}

Rule 10 {Review of Credentials}

{The Secretariat shall review the credentials submitted and report to the Committee at the earliest opportunity, providing a list of the credentials received in accordance with Rules 6 and 7, and drawing attention to any potential problems identified during the review.}

Rule 11 {Decision on Credentials}

1. {On the basis of the report of the Secretariat, the Committee shall decide whether to accept the credentials presented and whether any of them requires further review by members of the Committee.}

2. {If requiring further review, a Credentials Committee of not more than three Representatives of members, or their Alternates, shall examine the credentials requiring further review and provide a report to the meeting.
 - (a) Credentials in the form of a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Minister responsible or the Director of the Management Authority or a *note verbale* from a permanent mission may be accepted. Verifiable copies of credentials may also be accepted.
 - (b) Credentials shall however not be accepted if they have been signed by the person whom they accredit.
 - (c) Credentials may be valid for more than one meeting if this is specified in the text thereof.}
3. {Any delegation or representative which has been subject to an objection shall be seated and entitled to participate provisionally in the meeting until the Credentials Committee has reported and a decision has been given.}

Rule 12 {Participation pending approval on credentials}

{Pending a decision on their credentials, representatives of members and observers referred to in Rule 7 may participate provisionally in the meeting. The right to participate in the meeting shall not extend to persons whose credentials the Standing Committee has decided are unacceptable.}

COMPOSITION AND OFFICERS

Rule 13 {Composition}

1. The Committee shall consist of Contracting Parties representing the six regional groups, who shall be nominated by the Conference of the Contracting Parties. Members of the committee shall be selected according to the following regional groups:
 1. Africa,
 2. Asia,
 3. Neotropics,
 4. Europe,
 5. North America, and
 6. Oceania.⁹
2. The composition of the Standing Committee will be determined by means of a proportional system, by which each regional group as established in COP Resolution XI.19, Annex 2,¹⁰ will be represented by voting members in the Standing Committee according to the following criteria:
 - a) one representative for regional groups with 1 to 12 Contracting Parties,
 - b) two representatives for regional groups with 13 to 24 Contracting Parties,
 - c) three representatives for regional groups with 25 to 36 Contracting Parties,

⁹*Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 2.

¹⁰*Ibid*, Res XI.19, Annex 2.

- d) four representatives for regional groups with 37 to 48 Contracting Parties,
- e) five representatives for regional groups with 49 to 60 Contracting Parties.¹¹

Rule 14 {Election of Representatives}

1. {The regional Representatives of the Parties and their Alternate representatives will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups.}
 - (a) Initial consideration of nominations by regional groups can be undertaken at any intersessional regional COP preparatory meetings.
 - (b) finalization of nominations will be made by regional groups in their regional meetings at the COP venue immediately prior to the opening of the COP, to permit the members of the new Committee to participate in Conference Committee meetings during COP.¹²
 - (c) The Contracting Parties in regional groups with one representative in the Standing Committee will use a rotation system for the nomination of the regional representative, and in regional groups with two or more representatives the selection will be made in such a manner as to achieve a balance in relation to biogeographical, geopolitical, and cultural considerations.¹³
2. Each region can decide to appoint an Alternate Member or Members pro rata with their appointed Members with full power to represent the region, if the representative Member is unable to participate in a meeting of the Standing Committee.¹⁴

Rule 15 {Term of Office}

The terms of office of the regional representatives will commence at the close of the meeting of the COP at which they have been elected and will expire at the close of the next ordinary meeting of the COP, and each regional representative may serve on the Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Rule 16 {Host Countries}

1. The Contracting Parties which host countries of the most recent and the next meeting of the COP are also voting members of the Standing Committee.¹⁵
2. The Contracting Party acting as host country of the institutional host of the Ramsar Secretariat will continue to have the status of permanent observer in the Standing Committee. If the host country of the institutional host of the Secretariat stands for, and is elected as, a member of the Standing Committee representing its regional group, it will have voting status for that triennium in lieu of its permanent observer status.¹⁶

Rule 17 {Extraordinary Meetings}

¹¹ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 4.

¹² *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 7.

¹³ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 16.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 5

¹⁵ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, para 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, Article 15.

If an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties is held between two ordinary meetings, the host Party of that meeting shall participate as an observer in the work of the Committee on matters related to the organization of the meeting, provided that the country in question is not already present in the Committee as a member or permanent observer.¹⁷

Rule 18 {Review of Membership of the Committee}

The membership of the Committee shall be reviewed at each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the meeting. Members may serve on the Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms.¹⁸

Rule 19 {Committee}

1. {The Chair of the Committee shall be nominated and elected by the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with Rule 26.4(a) of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure.}
2. At its first meeting immediately after the close of the COP the Standing Committee will elect its {Chair} and Vice-Chair, as well as the members and {Chair} of the Subgroup on Finance established by Resolution VI.17 of COP6.¹⁹

Rule 20 {Chair and Vice-Chair}

1. The {Chair} shall preside at meetings of the Committee, and act as a liaison with {other relevant bodies} between meetings of the Committee. In addition to exercising such powers as are conferred elsewhere by these Rules, the Chairperson shall:
 - a. declare and preside over the opening and closing of each committee meeting,
 - b. approve the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat,
 - c. direct discussions and debate during the meetings,
 - d. ensure observance of these Rules,
 - e. rule on points of order
 - f. accord the right to speak to members and place limits on speaking time,
 - g. put questions and announce decisions,
 - h. has the right to vote on matters of the Committee, in accordance with Rule 26.6(c) of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure, and
 - i. subject to these Rules, shall have complete control over the proceedings at any meetings.²⁰
2. {The Chairperson shall represent the Committee and the Parties as required within the limits of the Committee's mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be entrusted to him/her by the Committee.}
3. {The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in the functions of the role, and shall act on his/her behalf at meetings in the absence of the Chair.}

Rule 21

¹⁷ *Supra*, Res XI.19, at Annex 1, Article 15.).

¹⁸ *Supra*, Ramsar Res 3.3, Article 2(e).

¹⁹ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at para 17.

²⁰ Rule 22.1 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

Executive Team of the Standing Committee

1. The Executive Team of the Standing Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair of the Standing Committee and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance to support and advise the Secretary General on matters arising between the meetings of the Standing Committee.
2. The Executive Team will be able to make decisions on all urgent intersessional issues and be accessible to any forms of communication especially through electronic means.

Rule 22 {Rapporteur of the Meeting}

{The Ramsar Secretariat shall service and act as secretary for meetings of the Committee. However, in the event of a closed session, the meeting shall provide for its own rapporteur, if needed.}

MEETINGS

Rule 23 {Annual Meeting}

1. The Committee should at a minimum meet on an annual basis, normally at the Seat of the Convention Secretariat, according to the indicative schedule provided by the Conference of the Parties.²¹
2. {Sessions of the Standing Committee shall be held in public unless decided otherwise.}
3. {At the request of the Chair, or of any member, the Committee shall decide by a vote whether the discussion of any particular subject shall be held in closed session. Any such vote shall be decided by a simple majority. [Parties represented at the meeting by observers shall be entitled to be represented at closed sessions].}
4. Delegations shall be seated in accordance with the alphabetical order of the English language names of the Parties.
5. A further meeting of the Subgroups on COP and Finance may be envisaged during the year before COP, if required and if sufficient funds are available, in order to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of the COP.
6. The costs of participation of Committee members eligible for sponsorship will be borne by the Convention.²²
7. Extraordinary meetings of the Standing Committee shall be convened at such times as may be deemed necessary by the Standing Committee, or at the written request of any Party communicated to the Standing Committee via the Secretariat, and provided that, within six months of such communication, the request is supported by at least one third of the Parties in a ballot organized by the Secretariat.
8. In the case of an extraordinary meeting, it shall be convened not more than ninety days after the date at which the request is supported by at least one third of the Parties in accordance with paragraph 7 of this rule.

²¹ *Ibid*, Res XI.19, at para 18.

²² *Ibid*.

Rule 24 {Notice of the Meeting}

{Notice of the date and agenda of {the meetings} shall normally be given by the Secretariat of the Convention at least 90 days, and in case of emergency meetings at least 14 days, in advance of the meeting.}

Rule 25 {Submission of Documents}

1. Only Parties, the Standing Committee and the Conference Committee are entitled to submit proposals for consideration by the Standing Committee.²³
2. Documents to be considered at a meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the meeting where they are to be discussed
3. Documents to be considered should not be longer than 10 pages and will be translated to the other two official languages by the Secretariat.²⁴ Translation of any documents over 10 pages to the other official languages will be at the expense of the proposer.

Rule 26 {Access to Meeting Documents}

1. {At least 30 days before each meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall:
 - a) [place on its website,] in the official languages of the Convention, all documents submitted by any Party, or submitted by an observer or prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the Chair or the Standing Committee, and
 - b) provide and distribute printed copies of documents for the meeting to all members and alternate members of the Committee who request them.}

{When the Secretariat believes that a Party may be directly affected by any discussion of a document to be considered by the Committee, it shall alert the Party concerned and inform it where the document may be viewed on the Ramsar website.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 27 {Quorum}

{A quorum for a meeting shall consist of a majority of Representatives or Alternate Representatives being present and voting, and representing at least five of the regions. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.}

Rule 28 {Procedures for speaking}

1. No one may speak at a session of the {Standing Committee} without having previously obtained the permission of the Chair.
 - {(a) The right to speak shall extend to all participants whose credentials are under consideration or have been accepted, and to observers who have been admitted to the meeting in accordance with these rules, as well as to the Secretariat.}

²³ Rule 5 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for the COP.

²⁴ Rule 35 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for the COP.

- {(b) Subject to these rules, the Chair shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak giving precedence to members of the Standing Committee, and the Secretariat shall maintain a list of speakers for the Chair.}
- (c) The {Chair} may call a speaker to order if the speaker's remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
2. The {Standing Committee} may, on a proposal from the {Chair} or from any Party, limit the time allowed to each speaker, and the number of times each member or observer may speak on a question.
- (a) Before a decision is taken, two representatives may speak in favour of and two against a proposal to set such limits.
- (b) When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the {Chair} shall call the speaker to order without delay.
3. A speaker shall not be interrupted except on a point of order. The speaker may however, with the permission of the Chair, give way during his/her speech to allow any other representative or observer to request elucidation on a particular point in that speech.
4. During the course of a debate, the {Chair} may announce the list of speakers, and with the consent of the meeting, declare the list closed. The {Chair} may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after the list has been closed makes this desirable.²⁵

Rule 29 {Precedence}

1. The {Chair} may accord precedence to the representative or technical expert of a subsidiary body, technical body, or expert organization for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by that body.²⁶
2. {Amongst observers, precedence shall be given to representatives of Parties, non-Party States, intergovernmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations, in this order.}
3. {The Chair may depart from this general rule and call on speakers in any order which based on appropriate judgment will ensure the timely progress of the debate.}

Rule 30 {Point of order}

1. During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be decided immediately by the {Chair} in accordance with these rules. A Party may appeal the ruling of the Chair.
2. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the Parties present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.²⁷

²⁵ Rule 31 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

²⁶ Rule 32 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

²⁷ Rule 33 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

Rule 31 {Decisions on competence}

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Standing Committee to discuss any matter or adopt a proposal or an amendment to a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.²⁸

Rule 32 {Proposals and amendments to proposals}

3. A new proposal that was not submitted to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the opening of the Standing Committee meeting shall be introduced in writing by the Parties and handed to the Secretariat in at least one of the official languages, for submission to the Standing Committee.²⁹
4. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any session {of the Standing Committee} unless copies of it, translated into the official languages of the {Committee,} have been circulated to delegations not later than the day preceding the session. Nevertheless, the {Chair} may {in cases of urgency,} permit the discussion and consideration of proposals, amendments to proposals or of procedural motions even though:
 - (a) these {documents may not have} been circulated or
 - (b) have been circulated only the same day or
 - (c) have not been translated into all the official languages of the Standing Committee.³⁰
5. A new proposal shall deal only with matters that could not have been foreseen in advance of the meeting or arise out of the discussions at the meeting.
 - (a) The {Chair} shall decide if the new proposal meets this requirement, so as to introduce it formally for consideration by the meeting.
 - (b) If a new proposal is rejected by the Chair, the sponsor(s) shall be entitled to request the {Chair} to submit the question of its admissibility to a vote.
 - (i) The sponsor(s) shall be given the opportunity to make one intervention to present the arguments in favor of the introduction of the new proposal,
 - (ii) The {Chair} shall explain the reasons for its rejection {and it should immediately be put to a majority vote.³¹}

Rule 33 {Order of procedural motions}

1. Subject to {Rule 29,} the following motions shall have precedence, in the order indicated below, over all other proposals or motions:
 - a) To suspend a session;
 - b) To adjourn a session;
 - c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion; and
 - d) For the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.

²⁸ Rule 34 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

²⁹ Rule 35.1 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

³⁰ Rule 35.3 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

³¹ Rule 35.2 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

2. Permission to speak on a motion falling within (a) to (d) above shall be granted only to the proposer and, in addition, to one speaker in favour of and two against the motion, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.³²

Rule 34 {Withdrawal of proposals or motions}

A proposal or motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has begun, provided that the motion has not been amended. A proposal or motion withdrawn may be reintroduced by any other Representative.³³

Rule 35 {Reconsideration of proposals}

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same meeting, unless the Standing Committee, by a two thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, decides in favor of reconsideration. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to the proposer and one other supporter, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.³⁴

Rule 36 {Consensus voting}

1. All efforts shall be taken by the Committee to ensure all decisions are reached by way of consensus.
2. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement reached, the {Chair} may call for a vote. In the case of a vote, the decision of the Committee shall be taken by a {simple majority} of the members voting. In the case of a tie, the motion shall be taken again by a {simple majority} of the members voting and if tied again, the motion shall be considered as rejected.

Rule 37 {Languages}

1. The official and working languages of the meetings of the Committee shall be English, French and Spanish {and no working document may be discussed at a meeting unless it has been made available in accordance with Rules 24 and 25 in these languages.}
2. Documents arising out of the discussion over a working document may be discussed provided that copies translated into the official languages of the Convention have been circulated to the Parties no later than {one month} prior to the session at which they are to be discussed.

Rule 38 {Executive Report of the Decisions of the Committee}

1. {A concise executive report of the decisions of the Committee shall be prepared by the Secretariat for endorsement by the Committee before the closure of the meeting.}
2. {The executive report of the last day of the meeting shall be sent by email to the members for endorsement after the meeting, and incorporated into the final report.}

Rule 39 {Interpretation}

³² Rule 36 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

³³ Rule 37 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

³⁴ Rule 38 of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure for COP.

1. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, shall take into consideration, within available resources, the need for providing interpretation for its Subgroup meetings when it is requested by its members.³⁵
2. The Contracting Parties and the Secretariat will endeavor to secure additional voluntary funding to enable simultaneous interpretation at meetings of the Subgroup on Finance and Subgroup on COP.³⁶

Rule 40

Electronic approval of documents

1. For matters that require urgent decision by the Standing Committee, the Secretary General shall send a proposal to the Standing Committee members for a decision by electronic means. The Standing Committee members shall comment within 15 days of the communication of the proposal. Any comments received by the Secretariat within this time limit shall also be so communicated to the members.
2. If no objection from a member to a proposal is received by the Secretariat within 15 days of the date when the results of the consultation on the proposal were communicated to the members, the proposal shall be considered as adopted, and notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.
3. If any member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be put to a vote. The proposal shall be considered as decided by a [two-thirds/simple majority]. If no majority is achieved, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Rule 41 {Application of the Rules}

In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure currently in effect for meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 42 {Adoption of the Rules}

These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Conference of the Parties, and shall remain valid for each of its meetings unless amended by decision of the Conference of the Parties.

³⁵*Supra*, Res XI.19, at para 21.

³⁶*Ibid*, Res XI.19, at para 22.

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL

INTRODUCTION

Rule 1 {Scope}

These rules shall apply to the {Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) as established by the Conference of the Parties.³⁷}

Rule 2 {Purpose}

The purpose of the STRP is to provide scientific and technical guidance to the Ramsar Contracting Parties, the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, the Ramsar Secretariat and to others wetland users working on wetlands issues, in order to foster the implementation of the Convention.³⁸

OPERATION OF THE PANEL

Rule 3 {Collaborative Relationships}

1. The STRP will develop collaborative relationships with the International Organization Partners, thematic experts and regional organizations relevant to its priority work areas, and where feasible, directly with wetland managers and users of wetlands.³⁹
2. The STRP and the communications team of the Secretariat will also work with Administrative Authorities and CEPA Focal Points, with International Organization Partners (IOPs) and other bodies, to build up a network of wetland practitioners and users, and the Secretariat will maintain regular contact with them.⁴⁰

Rule 4 {Voting Rights}

The Representative shall exercise the voting right of a member or alternate member. In his/her absence, the Alternate Representative shall act in his/her place. Only members or alternate members of the {Panel} have the right to vote.

Rule 5 {Observers}

1. {Bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings and processes of the STRP shall be established by COP resolution each triennium.}
2. Representatives of other organizations {recognized by the Conference of the Parties, may request} to participate as observers in meetings or intersessional processes of the STRP on a temporary basis with the prior approval of the STRP Chair.⁴¹

³⁷Ramsar, Resolution 5.5 COP 5 (1993), available at:

http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/res/key_res_5.5e.pdf [Res 5.5]

³⁸Ramsar, "Proposed new framework for delivery of scientific and technical advice and guidance on the Convention," (Draft for Consultation) Doc SC48-18 (2015), at annex 1, para 1. [SC48-18]

³⁹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 33.

⁴⁰*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 34.

⁴¹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 9.

3. Bodies and organizations wishing to be invited to participate as observers must gain the prior approval of the STRP Chair. {In granting such approvals, the STRP Chair will take into consideration the scientific, technical or implementation expertise of the body or organization, and its relevance to the goals of the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan and STRP thematic areas.}

Rule 6 {Composition of the Panel}

1. The Scientific and Technical Review Panel will be made up of 18 members with appropriate scientific and technical knowledge, plus observers representing the International Organization Partners and other organizations recognized by the COP. They will include:
 - i) six scientific members;
 - ii) 12 technical expert members, including six regional expert representatives and six other experts on issues identified for action during the triennium;
 - iii) one observer representative of each of the Convention's International Organization Partners;
 - iv) a small number of observer experts from scientific and technical organizations and networks recognized by the COP which may be invited to support the work of the Panel as appropriate; and
 - v) The chairs of scientific and technical subsidiary bodies and relevant secretariat staff of other environmental agreements will continue to be invited to participate as observers.⁴²
2. Organizations will be asked to nominate a representative who is able to access the organization's national, regional and international networks of wetland experts and who is committed to serve for the entire triennium to ensure continuity of participation.⁴³
3. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel shall be nominated and elected from among the members.⁴⁴

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rule 7 {General Responsibilities of the Panel}

1. The main collective responsibilities of the Panel members are to:
 - i) establish the scope, deliverables and approach to delivery for each assigned task, including through scoping workshops as appropriate, and in so doing ensure input from the network of STRP National Focal Points, Ramsar Regional Initiatives, and any other relevant organizations;

⁴²*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 7.

⁴³*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 8.

⁴⁴*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 10.

- ii) ensure appropriate peer review of draft materials, and consult with peers and the Communications team of the Secretariat on how best to ensure their effective communication and implementation;
 - iii) review all scientific and technical materials drafted by Convention bodies, consulting with STRP Focal Points as required, before they are shared with Parties and the Conference of the Parties, in line with the terms of Resolution VIII.45; and
 - iv) encourage their own national and international networks of wetland experts to contribute more widely to the work of the Panel and disseminate its final products.
 - v) Assist the Ramsar Secretariat on Ramsar Advisory Missions, when requested and subject to the availability of resources;⁴⁵
2. {To avoid any conflict of interest, STRP members involved in defining the workplan for the next triennium shall recuse themselves from discussing any substantive scientific or technical work for which they may be later compensated by the Ramsar Secretariat, for that section of the work plan. Equally, members preparing substantive work shall not be involved in reviewing any substantive scientific or technical work in which they have been involved. All members shall sign a Conflict of Interest Declaration when they accept the nomination to the panel, and before the start of each subsequent STRP meeting.}⁴⁶

Rule 8 {Responsibilities of the Chair}

1. The STRP Chair must have a broad knowledge of wetland issues and be familiar with the work of the Panel and the Convention.⁴⁷In addition to exercising such powers as are conferred elsewhere by these Rules, the Chairperson shall:
 - (a) declare and preside over the opening and closing of each committee meeting,
 - (b) approve the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat,
 - (c) direct discussions and debate during the meetings,
 - (d) ensure observance of these Rules,
 - (e) rule on points of order
 - (f) accord the right to speak to members and place limits on speaking time,
 - (g) put questions and announce decisions,
 - (h) have the right to vote on matters of the Panel, in accordance with Rule 26.6(c)of the Ramsar Rules of Procedure, and
 - (i) subject to these Rules, shall have complete control over the proceedings at any meetings.}

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 11(i-v).

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 11(vi).

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 12.

2. The Chair is responsible for:
 - (i) preparation and approval of the agendas for STRP meetings with the assistance of the Secretariat and Vice-Chair, and other relevant meeting papers;
 - (ii) {acting as chair of plenary sessions of STRP meetings and overseeing the conduct of all aspects of those meetings;}
 - (iii) {management of the implementation of the STRP work plan and ensuring timely delivery of the STRP's products;}
 - (iv) {leading the STRP's work and coordinating the Panel's advice to the next COP concerning new and emerging priorities the Parties may wish to consider for the Panel's work in the next triennium;}
 - (v) {appointing leads and co-leads of any thematic working groups established by the Panel, and acting as an advisor to them on the membership of groups;}
 - (vi) {establishing an agreed upon} division of responsibilities, with the STRP Vice-Chair, regarding oversight of the thematic working groups or specific task groups established by the Panel;
 - (vii) coordinating inputs from the Panel, its thematic working groups and the Secretariat on new and emerging priorities, identifying priority tasks and drafting the STRP work plan for the coming triennium, for approval by the COP;
 - (viii) {reporting to each meeting of the COP and the Standing Committee on the progress of the STRP work plan and the priority tasks included in it, and STRP-related matters, and provide feedback and guidance to the STRP;}
 - (ix) {providing recommendations} to the Standing Committee Management Working Group for its consideration the names of three members eligible for reappointment for a subsequent triennium based on their contributions to the STRP's work and the relevance of their expertise to the COP-assigned priority tasks; and
 - (x) {maintaining} records of the hours devoted to contributing to the work of the Panel, to facilitate reporting of inputs.⁴⁸

3. The Chair shall, resources permitting, represent the STRP:
 - (i) at meetings of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other processes and initiatives relevant to the STRP's work, such as:
 - (a) meetings of the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (CSAB) and
 - (b) the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES);
 - (ii) {through maintenance of relationships with partner organizations and} participation in scientific forums and conferences which support the Convention's external scientific and technical work at the request of the Secretary General;⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 12 (i-viii).

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 12(ix-xii).

Rule 9 {Responsibilities of the Vice-Chair}

1. The STRP Vice-Chair must have a broad knowledge of wetland issues and be familiar with the work of the Panel and the Convention.
2. The Vice-Chair is responsible for:
 - (i) {assisting} the Secretariat and STRP Chair prepare agendas and other papers for STRP meetings;
 - (ii) {substituting} for the STRP Chair in chairing plenary sessions of STRP meetings and overseeing the conduct of all aspects of STRP meetings;
 - (iii) advising, along with the STRP Chair and the Secretariat, the leads and co-leads of working groups on the membership of groups; and
 - iv) agreeing upon the division of responsibilities, with the STRP Chair, regarding oversight of the thematic working groups or specific task groups established by the Panel.⁵⁰
3. The Vice-Chair shall, resources permitting:
 - (i) substitute for the Chair in representing the STRP at meetings of other MEAs and relevant processes and initiatives;
 - (ii) represent the Convention's scientific and technical work externally, through maintaining relationships with partner organizations and, resources permitting, by participating at scientific forums and conferences; and
 - (iii) when requested, substitute for the STRP Chair in any functions; and maintain records of the hours devoted to contributing to the work of the Panel, to facilitate reporting of inputs by the STRP Chair.⁵¹

Rule 10 {Responsibilities of Scientific and Technical Panel Members}

1. The scientific members will ensure the scientific quality of finished products and provide independent advice to the Secretary General and STRP Chair on emerging scientific issues; and support and champion the STRP and its work.⁵²
2. The technical members will prepare technical guidance to inform policy-makers and practitioners, and seek input and feedback on these from stakeholders and partners in all the Ramsar regions, and assist with the dissemination, promotion and implementation of guidance in relevant networks, countries and regions.⁵³

Rule 11 {Responsibilities of International Organization Partners (IOP)}

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 13(i-iv)

⁵¹ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 13(v-vii)

⁵² *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 14.

⁵³ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 15.

1. IOP nominees should be wetland experts and have a role within their IOPs for maintaining and accessing the wetland conservation and wise use expertise of their organization’s regional and global networks.
2. STRP’s IOP representatives are expected, in addition to the responsibilities listed above, to:
 - i) seek the views of experts within their organizations (including relevant specialist groups and networks) of the work plan of the STRP;
 - ii) participate in working groups and task forces established by the Panel;
 - iii) ensure that the scientific and technical capacity of their organization’s networks of wetland experts is available to the Panel, and establish mechanisms to identify and engage experts from their networks in the work of the STRP;
 - iv) leverage the outreach capacity of their organization to promote and disseminate the outputs of the STRP.⁵⁴

Rule 12 {Responsibilities of Observer Organizations}

1. {Observer Organizations should strive to establish mechanisms to support the work of the Convention and the STRP.}
2. Representatives of Observer Organizations are expected to:
 - i) ensure that the scientific and technical capacity of their organizations’ national, regional and international networks of wetland experts (where applicable) are available to the Panel, and establish mechanisms to identify and engage experts from their networks in the work of the STRP;
 - ii) identify to the Panel and its working groups any work relevant to STRP tasks already in existence or underway through their processes and initiatives;
 - iii) advise on emerging and priority development issues and trends.
 - iv) participate in any relevant working group and task forces established by the Panel;
 - v) Support and promote the STRP’s work;
 - vi) Create opportunities for partnerships, collaborations and financing.
 - vii) Leverage the outreach capacity of their organization to share information about and help disseminate STRP products after they are finalized.⁵⁵

Rule 13 {Responsibilities of STRP National Focal Points}

1. The STRP National Focal Points of each Contracting Party act as a liaison between their national wetland practitioners and the STRP. They are appointed to the role for their scientific and

⁵⁴*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 16.

⁵⁵*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 17.

technical expertise in wetland conservation, management and wise use. They will represent their organization or government in undertaking their liaison role in the work of the STRP.

2. STRP Focal Points are expected to:

- i) provide input and support to the implementation of the work plan of the STRP;
- ii) maintain regular contact with other Ramsar National Focal Points in their country (Ramsar Focal Point and CEPA Focal Points);
- iii) mobilize local capacity and, to the extent possible, consult with and seek input from other experts and bodies and wetlands centres in their country, including focal points of other MEAs;
- iv) provide advice to, and participate in, meetings of the National Wetland/Ramsar Committee or similar bodies (e.g., National Biodiversity Committees) where they exist, and provide advice in the preparation of National Reports to Conferences of Contracting Parties. They should also assist in disseminating information on the work of the STRP, interpreted as appropriate to the national context, to relevant individuals and bodies in their countries;
- v) provide technical support to national wetland activities such as the preparation of wetland inventory,
- vi) help disseminate STRP products and information on its work, adapted as appropriate to the national context.

SELECTION OF PANEL MEMBERS

Rule 14 {Procedures for Selection}

1. Immediately after the COP, the Secretariat will make a call for nominations of the STRP members for the coming triennium, which shall include information on the specific profiles required for the technical and scientific members.⁵⁶
2. {The members and observer representatives for each triennium will be appointed by the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee as soon as possible after the COP, from the candidates nominated according to Rule 15.}
3. Nominations for regional technical expert members will be accepted automatically.⁵⁷

Rule 15 {Appointments to STRP}

1. STRP members will be appointed in their personal capacity for their scientific and technical expertise, and will not represent any organization or government in their interaction with the STRP except for the IOP members.
2. Selections will be made to secure the scientific and technical expertise required for the STRP's work during the triennium, and ensure regional and gender balance.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 19.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 20.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 21.

Rule 16 {Nomination Process}

1. Administrative Authorities of Contracting Parties, IOPs and observer organizations will make nominations for the six scientific members.
2. The Administrative Authorities will nominate candidates for the six regional technical expert representatives with one for each Ramsar region, while Administrative Authorities, IOPs and observer organizations may make nominations for the other six technical members.⁵⁹
3. Each International Organization Partner will nominate its representative member.⁶⁰
4. Any observer organization may nominate a representative as observer to the Panel.⁶¹

Rule 17 {Information on Nominees}

1. Organizations nominating members or observers must provide a letter of recommendation summarizing the expertise of the candidate and the relevance of their work to the Panel's workplan.⁶²
2. All nominees will provide a curriculum vitae and a declaration that they are willing to be considered for appointment to the Panel, that they have the required support of their organizations on a voluntary basis to deliver the work expected of Panel members and the time and availability for meetings. They will note whether they will need any financial support to participate in meetings and will provide a brief summary of how their skills and expertise might contribute to the Panel's work.⁶³

Rule 18 {Selection for the Panel}

1. The Secretariat will assess the nominations and make recommendations for appointments for consideration by the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee.
2. The Management Working Group of the Standing Committee shall reach its decisions through electronic communication and teleconferences as soon as possible after each COP, to enable the Panel to start work as early as possible.⁶⁴
3. {Selection is generally done via consensus. Where consensus is impractical, a majority vote shall be used to determine members of the STRP.}
4. If a vacancy for a member of the Panel arises between COPs, the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee will review other nominations and appoint a replacement member as soon as practicable.⁶⁵

⁵⁹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 22.

⁶⁰*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 23.

⁶¹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 24.

⁶²*Supra*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 25.

⁶³*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 26.

⁶⁴*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 27.

⁶⁵*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 28.

Rule 19 {Criteria of Panel Candidates}

Candidates for appointment as members of the STRP must have the following:

- (i) capacity and experience in local, national and international networking with wetland conservation and wise use experts, including when appropriate STRP National Focal Points;
- (ii) recognized experience and expertise in one or more aspects of wetland conservation and wise use, particularly those relevant to the identified priorities for the forthcoming work of the Panel;
- (iii) full access to electronic mail and the online systems which the Panel will use;
- (iv) proficient comprehension of English, and fluent written and spoken English, French or Spanish; and
- (v) commitment to undertake the work of the Panel and its working groups, and the support, where relevant, of their organization, enabling them to deliver the work expected of Panel members on a voluntary basis.⁶⁶

Rule 20 {Term of Panel}

1. With the exception of the IOPs observers, membership to the panel will not in principle be for more than one triennium, to allow rotation in the panel composition.
2. The maximum tenure of any member including the Chair and Vice-chair will be two triennia (six years).⁶⁷
3. For each triennium, three members of the outgoing STRP will be retained to ensure continuity.
 - (a) On each occasion, the STRP Chair and Vice-chair and the Secretariat will propose STRP members for reappointment, for endorsement by the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee.⁶⁸
 - (b) Members being proposed for reappointment must have demonstrated the ability to contribute effectively to the work of the Panel and must confirm their willingness to be reappointed.⁶⁹

Rule 21 {Establishment of Working Groups}

The appointed STRP members will, where appropriate and with the assistance of the Secretariat, establish working groups at the start of each triennium and lead or co-lead them as appointed by the STRP Chair.⁷⁰

MEETINGS AND DOCUMENTS

Rule 22 {Meetings}

⁶⁶*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 29.

⁶⁷*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 30.

⁶⁸*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 31.

⁶⁹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 32.

⁷⁰*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 36.

1. The Panel should at a minimum meet on an annual basis, normally at the Seat of the Convention Secretariat, to:
 - (a) to review progress on identified tasks,
 - (b) to consider urgent emerging issues and,
 - (c) in the year leading up to the COP, to discuss the areas of work to recommend to the Conference of Parties for its consideration for the next triennium.⁷¹
2. {Meetings of the Panel shall be called at the request of the Chair or by a simple majority of the members.}
3. {Sessions of the STRP shall be held in public unless decided otherwise.}
4. At the request of the Chair, or of any member, the Panel shall decide by a vote whether the discussion of any particular subject shall be held in closed session. Any such vote shall be decided by a simple majority. {All bodies or organizations represented at the meeting by observers shall be entitled to be represented at closed sessions.}
5. Representatives shall be seated in accordance with the alphabetical order of the English language names of the Organization.

Rule 23 {Notice of the Meeting}

Notice of meetings shall normally be given by the Secretariat of the Convention at least 60 days, and in case of emergency meetings at least 14 days, in advance of the meeting.

Rule 24 {Submission of Documents}

Documents to be considered at a meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the meeting where they are to be discussed, and should not be longer than 12 pages. Costs for translation of any documents longer than 12 pages into the other official languages will be the responsibility of the proposer.

Rule 25 {Access to Meeting Documents}

At least 30 days before each meeting of the Panel, the Secretariat shall:

- a) {place on its website,} all documents in the three Convention languages, subject to the availability of resources of the Secretariat, submitted by any Party, submitted by panel members or by an observer at the request of the Chair; and
- b) provide and distribute printed copies of documents at the meeting to members of the Panel who request them 15 days in advance of a meeting of the Panel.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 26 {Quorum}

⁷¹*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 35.

1. {A quorum for a meeting shall consist of a majority of Representatives being present and voting, and with at least two-thirds of both the scientific and technical experts participating. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.}

Rule 27 {Procedures for Speaking}

1. No one may speak at a session of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel without having previously obtained the permission of the Chair.
 - (a) The right to speak shall extend to all participants, and to observers who have been admitted to the meeting in accordance with these rules, as well as to the Secretariat.
 - (b) Subject to these rules, the Chair shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak, and the Secretariat shall maintain a list of speakers for the Chair.
 - (c) The Chair may call a speaker to order if the speaker's remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
2. The Panel may, on a proposal from the Chair or from any member, limit the time allowed to each speaker, and the number of times each member or observer may speak on a question.
 - (a) Before a decision is taken, two representatives may speak in favour of and two against a proposal to set such limits.
 - (b) When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the Chair shall call the speaker to order without delay.
3. A speaker shall not be interrupted except on a point of order. The speaker may however, with the permission of the Chair, give way during the allotted time to allow any other representative or observer to request elucidation on a particular point in that speech.
4. During the course of a debate, the Chair may announce the list of speakers, and with the consent of the meeting, declare the list closed. The Chair may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after the list has been closed makes this desirable.
5. {At the discretion of the Chair, a speakers list can be established for an open scientific and technical exchange, in accordance with the agreed agenda.}

Rule 28 {Precedence}

1. {The Chair may accord precedence to a scientific or technical expert, a representative of a technical body, an IOP, or an observer for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by that body.}
2. {Amongst members, precedence shall be given to scientific and technical experts, representatives of international organization partners, and observers, in this order.}
3. The Chair may depart from this general rule and call on speakers in any order which based on appropriate judgment will ensure the timely progress of the debate.

Rule 29 {Point of Order}

1. During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be decided immediately by the Chair in accordance with these rules. A Party may appeal the ruling of the Chair.
2. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the Parties present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 30 {Decisions on Competence}

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Panel to discuss any matter or adopt a proposal or an amendment to a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before the matter is discussed or a vote is taken on the proposal or amendment in question.

Rule 31 {Procedures for Submission of Items for the Agenda}

1. {New items shall be put forward for deliberation by the Panel in writing in one of the official languages to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the opening of the Panel meeting for submission to the Panel for consideration.}
2. {Submitted proposals received by the Secretariat shall be added to the agenda for approval by the Chair.}
3. {Additional items may be submitted for inclusion on the agenda through request of a member of the Panel, or any observer, and approved at the discretion of the Chair.}⁷²

Rule 32 {Order of Procedural Motions}

1. Subject to{Rule 28 ,} the following motions shall have precedence, in the order indicated below, over all other proposals or motions:
 - a) To suspend a session;
 - b) To adjourn a session;
 - c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion; and
 - d) For the closure of the debate on the question under discussion.
2. Permission to speak on a motion falling within (a) to (d) above shall be granted only to the proposer and, in addition, to one speaker in favour of and two against the motion, after which it shall be put immediately to the vote.

Rule 33 {Consensus Voting}

1. All efforts shall be taken by the Committee to ensure all decisions are reached by way of consensus.

⁷² Note: This approach of incorporating items into an amendable agenda is similar to the approach taken by the FAO which requires consensus for amendments, additions and deletions. See FAO, Rules of Procedure of the Global Soil Partnership (June 2013), at Rule IV, available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/GSP/docs/Plenary_Assembly/rules_procedure/Rules_of_Procedure_GSP.pdf.

2. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement reached, the Chair may call for a vote. In the case of a vote, the decision of the Committee shall be taken by a {two-thirds majority} of the members voting.
3. {A scientific or technical minority opinion may be recorded, if relevant or useful, at the request of the Chair or by a motion supported by one third of the members of the Panel participating.}

Rule 34 {Languages}

1. Meetings of the STRP will operate in the {official languages of the Convention} and meeting documents will be made available in the {official languages,} subject to the availability of resources.⁷³

THREE-YEAR CYCLE OF WORK

Rule 35 {The Process of the STRP Cycle of Work}

1. Priorities are reviewed and proposed for the coming triennium.
 - (a) The STRP will report to the final full meeting of the Standing Committee before each COP on the status of issues addressed in the triennium, including all tasks agreed by Contracting Parties in previous COPs.
 - (b) The STRP will propose how it will complete any remaining tasks, or propose alternate solutions if necessary.
 - (c) The STRP, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Standing Committee, will recommend scientific and technical priorities for the coming triennium, identify anticipated associated funding needs, and indicate potentially relevant partner organizations, for the consideration of the Conference of Parties.
 - (d) The list of priorities [must] reflect the content of the Ramsar Strategic Plan for the coming triennium, resolutions of the last COP, and other priority issues which have been identified by regional or global wetland networks.⁷⁴
2. Approval of priorities for STRP programming is approved by COP.
 - (a) a draft resolution will be presented to the COP which reports on the products delivered during the last triennium, and proposes the list of potential themes for the coming triennium, along with a revised list of potential observer organizations.⁷⁵
 - (b) The COP will approve a maximum of five thematic work areas for each triennium, and approve an appropriate allocation of core funds, with the selection to be made based on their relationship and alignment to the Strategic Plan and tasks already assigned by the previous COP.⁷⁶
3. The STRP shall be convened as soon as possible following the COP

⁷³*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 37.

⁷⁴*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 39-42.

⁷⁵*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 43.

⁷⁶*Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 44.

- (a) The Management Working Group of the Standing Committee will select the STRP members intersessionally, as soon as possible after receiving the nominations from the Secretariat. {The Management Working Group may consult internally and give approval under the virtual electronic consultation option}.
 - (b) The Management Working Group will first select the Chair and Vice-chair, who will participate in the selection of the other members.⁷⁷
4. A comprehensive work plan is to be developed for the STRP.
 - (a) The first task of the new STRP will be to develop the work plan, in consultation with the Secretariat (Secretary General /Deputy Secretary General, Senior Regional Advisors and the Head of Communications).
 - (b) This work plan shall be based on the thematic work areas selected by the Contracting Parties.⁷⁸
 5. Approval by the Standing Committee of the work plan is to be done at the first full meeting of the Standing Committee following COP, at which the STRP Chair shall present and outline the thematic alignment for the next triennium.⁷⁹
 6. Established scientific and technical products shall be prepared and communicated to the target groups, as established for the triennium by COP resolution, for dissemination, with the assistance of the Secretariat’s communication team.⁸⁰

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDANCE

Rule 36 {Establishment of Audience}

1. The target audience categories, and types of guidance expected for each triennium shall be established by COP resolution.⁸¹
2. Technical guidance, which responds to specific methodological needs of policy-makers and practitioners, will be the main focus for STRP products. Scientific guidance will primarily serve to underpin the technical guidance.⁸²
3. Technical guidance will be the main focus for STRP products. Scientific guidance will primarily serve to underpin the technical guidance.⁸³

Rule 37 {Approval of the Programme of Work}

1. The programme of work and priorities of the STRP will be established at each meeting of the COP.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 45.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 46.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 47.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 48.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 49.

⁸² *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 50.

⁸³ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 52.

2. The Conference of the Contracting Parties will approve the STRP work plan for the coming triennium and the budget to implement it.
3. The work plan will be built around the priority tasks determined and approved by the Conference of the Parties, in line with the current Strategic Plan and COP Resolutions.⁸⁴

Rule 38 {Oversight of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel}

1. Between the COPs, the Standing Committee will continue to direct and oversee the implementation of the programme, review priority tasks and amend them as necessary, and approve the allocation of funds.
2. The Chair of the STRP will report to each Standing Committee meeting on the Panel's progress and recommend for the consideration of the Standing Committee any adjustments as necessary.⁸⁵
3. Functionally, the Standing Committee's Management Working Group will oversee the work of the STRP, and is responsible for:
 - i) appointment of the members of the STRP and appointment of the Chair and Vice-chair from among them;
 - ii) oversight on the implementation of the STRP's programme, and delivery of progress reports to each Standing Committee with recommendations for action as required;
 - iii) providing guidance and support to the Panel as required;
 - iv) delivery of recommendations on the allocation of funds for STRP tasks to the Standing Committee Sub-group on Finance; and
 - v) liaising with the Secretariat to oversee STRP expenditures.⁸⁶

Rule 39 {Support of the Secretariat}

1. The Secretariat will provide support for the STRP, with relevant staff including:
 - (a) the Deputy Secretary General,
 - (b) Senior Regional Advisors,
 - (c) the Head of Communications and;
 - (d) the Scientific and Technical Support Officer.⁸⁷
2. {The Head of Communications will serve as the CEPA expert defined in Resolution IX.11}.
3. {The Secretariat's responsibilities include:
 - i) facilitating the work of the STRP, including by organizing and administering its meetings and maintaining the web-based STRP Support Service;
 - ii) fostering opportunities for collaboration with other conventions, intergovernmental institutions, and national and international NGOs, and facilitating such collaboration as required;
 - iii) facilitating linkages between potential collaborators within countries, regions and globally;

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 3.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 4.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 5.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 6.

- iv) identifying the needs of potential audiences and thematic priorities in different countries or regions to suggest to the Parties for their consideration;
 - v) creating a comprehensive database of contacts including Administrative Authorities, STRP CEPA and general National Focal Points, National Ramsar Committees, managers of Ramsar Sites, wetland organizations, past STRP members and other relevant contacts and other relevant organizations and conventions making known the decisions, Resolutions and Recommendations of the COP and the Standing Committee;
 - vi) keeping the Contracting Parties, the Ramsar community, and the public informed of developments related to the Convention, including the availability of finalized STRP products;
 - vii) ensure all materials from the STRP are developed for target audiences as clear, readable materials;
 - viii) support modification of technical and scientific products for communication to targeted audiences;
 - ix) publishing and disseminating the guidance and products of the STRP, ensuring that policymakers and other identified audiences have timely and accessible guidance they need on identified priority issues; and
 - x) monitoring the application of the guidance.⁸⁸
4. The Secretariat's communications team will ensure all materials are clear and accessible, and relevant to targeted audiences. It will monitor and evaluate the reach and impact of the products, and report its findings to the STRP.⁸⁹

Rule 40 {Executive report of the Decisions of the Panel}

A concise executive report of the decisions and recommendations of the Panel shall be prepared by the Secretariat for endorsement by the Committee before the closure of the meeting. However the executive report of the last day of each meeting shall be sent by email to the members for endorsement after the meeting.

Rule 41 {Interpretation}

1. The Scientific and Technical Review Panel, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, shall take into consideration, within available resources, the desirability of having interpretation for its meetings in the official languages of the Convention.
2. The Contracting Parties and the Secretariat will endeavor to secure additional voluntary funding to enable simultaneous interpretation at meetings of the Panel.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 6(i-x).

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, SC48-18 at annex 1, para 56

FINAL PROVISIONS

Rule 42 {Application of the Rules}

In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure currently in effect for meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 43 {Adoption of the Rules}

These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Conference of the Parties, and shall remain valid for each of its meetings unless amended by decision of the Conference of the Parties.