

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

50th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Punta del Este, Uruguay, 9 June 2015

Report of the 50th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC50)

SC Members present: Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Estonia, Honduras, Iraq, Kenya, Nepal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Senegal, Seychelles, Suriname, Tunisia, United States of America, Uruguay.

Alternate Members present: Bahrain, Botswana, Canada, Cuba, France, Japan, Samoa, Ukraine.

Permanent observers present: Switzerland.

Observer Parties present: Argentina, Denmark, Fiji, Guatemala, Norway, South Africa, United Arab Emirates.

Other observers: Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), IUCN.

Agenda item 2: Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee

1. Uruguay was elected Chair of the Standing Committee and Australia was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation.

Decision SC50-1: The members of the newly-elected Standing Committee chose Uruguay as their Chair and Australia as Vice-Chair.

Agenda item 3: Election of the Subgroup on Finance

2. The following Contracting Parties were elected to the Subgroup on Finance by acclamation: Australia, Estonia, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Suriname, the United States of America and Canada, as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup.

Decision SC50-2: The Standing Committee elected the following members of the Subgroup on Finance: for Africa, Senegal; for Asia, Republic of Korea; for Europe, Estonia; for Latin America and the Caribbean, Suriname; for North America, the United States of America; for Oceania, Australia. Canada to serve as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup.

3. The Subgroup members discussed the election of their Chair and Senegal was supported for that position.

Decision SC50-3: The Standing Committee elected Senegal as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance.

Agenda item 4: Review of the Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework and Plan and 4.a.: Establishment of a task force on the Global Partnership for Wetland Restoration

4. **The Secretariat** introduced Agenda item 4 on resource mobilization, and went on to give further information on a proposed global task force for wetland restoration explaining that, following a

side event, possible draft terms of reference for such a task force had been drawn up by IUCN.

5. **The President** noted that the language for this agenda item might have to be changed to match that of the Resolution on resource mobilization (DR7) that had been agreed at COP12.
6. **Colombia, Denmark, Switzerland, Tunisia and the United States of America** all expressed serious doubts about the Secretariat playing a major role in the establishment of a global partnership for wetland restoration as they believed this would place undue burden on its limited resources. They did not believe there was a mandate from the COP to create such a partnership and were concerned that the Standing Committee was discussing potential terms of reference that had resulted from a side event.
7. **Colombia, Kenya and the United States of America** agreed to lead an open-ended resource mobilization working group to review resource mobilization and the partnership framework and plan and report back to SC51. Any Standing Committee member could join this group which would work virtually, meeting once a year at the Standing Committee meetings.

Decision SC50-4: The Standing Committee agreed to lead an open ended working group to review resource mobilization and the partnership framework and plan and report back to SC51.

Agenda item 5: Date and venue of the next meeting

8. **Romania** reminded the Committee that COP12 had agreed that SC51 should take place within six months of the close of COP12, that is, before mid-December 2015.
9. After some discussion it was agreed that SC51 should take place in Switzerland on 23-27 November 2015.

Decision SC50-5: The Standing Committee established the dates and venue of its next meeting as 23-27 November 2015 in Gland, Switzerland.

Agenda item 6: Any other business

Management Working Group

10. **The Secretary General** noted that according to Resolutions IX.24 and X.4, the Management Working Group is composed of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the previous and new Standing Committees, the Chairs of the Subgroup on Finance of previous and new Standing Committees, the previous and new Chair of the STRP, and any other interested Parties as observers.

Decision SC50-6: The Standing Committee nominated the following to serve as the Management Working Group: Romania as outgoing SC Chair for the 2012-2015 triennium, South Africa as outgoing SC Vice-Chair for the 2012-2015 triennium, Uruguay as current SC Chair, Australia as current SC Vice-Chair, Senegal as current Chair of the Subgroup on Finance and Canada as outgoing Chair of the Subgroup on Finance. The STRP Chair for the 2012-2015 triennium was also called to serve while designation of the Chair of the STRP for the triennium 2015-2018 is pending. The Standing Committee welcomed statements by Fiji, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America that they would observe the Management Working Group as interested Contracting Parties.

Allocation of 2014 surplus funds

11. On a proposal from **Switzerland** it was agreed that in the first instance the budget surplus would be used for funding SC51. Any amount remaining after this would be placed under the control of the Subgroup on Finance. Any use for it proposed by the Secretariat would need the approval of the Subgroup.

Decision SC50-7: The Standing Committee agreed that the budget surplus of 2014 be used to fund SC51.

Organization of COP13

12. It was agreed that establishment of an organizing committee for COP13 should be included on the agenda of SC51.

Establishment of working groups resulting from COP12 Resolutions

13. The **United States** reminded the Committee that under the adopted COP12 Resolutions, the Standing Committee had been instructed to establish two working groups at its next meeting, one to oversee implementation of CEPA and the other to improve existing management instruments between IUCN, the Standing Committee and the Secretary General.
14. The **SC Chair** asked for volunteers for both groups.
15. The following Contracting Parties volunteered to join the group to oversee implementation of CEPA: **Democratic Republic of Congo, Honduras, Kenya, Romania, Seychelles, and the United States of America.**
16. The following Contracting Parties volunteered to join the group to improve existing management instruments between IUCN, the Standing Committee and the Secretary General: **Kenya, Romania, Senegal, Switzerland, the United States of America, and Uruguay.**
17. **The Chair** noted there was enough interest to establish both working groups and that other interested Parties could join either or both groups later.

Decision SC50-8: The Standing Committee agreed the establishment of a working group to oversee the implementation of CEPA and a working group to improve existing management instruments between IUCN, the Standing Committee and the Secretary General.