

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

51<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 23-27 November 2015

SC51-09

## Progress report on the development of the format for National Reports to COP13

### Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the actions and timeframe for the development of the COP13 National Report Form, provide advice on the overall approach to its development, and request the Secretariat to prepare a draft National Report Form for COP13 for consideration at its 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### Background

1. Following previous Standing Committee discussions during the 2013-2015 triennium, the National Report Form (NRF) for the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP12) was developed by the Secretariat, approved by Standing Committee, and issued to all Contracting Parties.
2. COP12 National Reports were received from 146 Contracting Parties, of which 131 were received in sufficient time prior to COP12 to be included in the global and regional analyses and in the overview of the implementation of the Convention's CEPA Programme 2012-2015. All of these papers were submitted to the COP as Information Papers. This level of reporting demonstrates the commitment of Parties to providing up-to-date information on their implementation of the Convention.
3. The Secretariat now holds National Report information from COP8, COP9, COP10, COP11 and COP12 National Reports, in databases which permit an analysis of trends in implementation over time, from the 2002-2005 triennium to 2012-2015.
4. The COP12 NRF information is also importantly a key data source for the STRP in its work assessing the indicators of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention.
5. In addition, under the 5<sup>th</sup> Joint Work Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Ramsar, and Ramsar's lead implementation role for wetlands for the CBD, the COP12 NRF indicators are a key source of information to assess and report to the CBD on the Biological Diversity of Inland Waters.

### Consideration and timings for developing a National Report Form for COP13

6. In Resolution XII.2 *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024*, the Contracting Parties at COP12 requested the Secretariat and the Standing Committee to develop the COP13 National Report format to provide a more user-friendly instrument that reflects the goals and targets of the new Ramsar Strategic Plan, for consideration at the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee (SC51).

7. The COP13 NRF will need to be developed and approved by the Standing Committee considerably in advance so that it can be issued to the Parties with sufficient time for them to complete and submit their reports for analysis prior to COP13.
8. Accordingly, the Secretariat will need to start to develop proposals for the COP13 NRF during 2015/2016 for approval by SC52 so that the COP13 NRF can be issued to Parties well in advance.
9. As in recent triennia, the Secretariat suggests that the format be finalized and issued as soon as possible after SC52. This would allow Parties to have the NRF available as early as possible in the triennium so they can use it to guide their continuing implementation and prepare for its completion in a timely manner. The deadline for submission of completed reports should remain as nine months before COP, for the COP13 National Reports, in September 2017. This timetable will be updated once the dates for SC52 and COP13 are agreed.
10. In the preparation of the COP13 NRF, the Secretariat would like to receive the guidance of the Standing Committee at its present meeting concerning the overall approach of the COP13 NRF. In doing so, the Standing Committee might wish to take into account that:
  - i) the new COP13 NRF should be structured in line with the Goals and Targets of the new 2016-2024 Ramsar Strategic Plan adopted at COP12 as Resolution XII.2;
  - ii) for continuity, and to permit time-series analysis and report of implementation progress, COP13 NRF indicators should as far as possible be consistent with those in previous NRFs and only develop new indicators as appropriate to the new goals and targets of the Strategic Plan;
  - iii) the advice of the STRP and other relevant group of experts in indicators, MEAs, organizations and processes should be sought concerning the adjustments or additional need for indicators;
  - iv) the advice of the CEPA Oversight Panel and CEPA Working Group should likewise be sought concerning indicators for targets 16 and 19 of the Strategic Plan;
  - v) the regional input from Contracting Parties is essential in the preparation of the NRF; and
  - vi) in preparing the proposal for the COP13 NRF, the Secretariat will review the comments provided by Contracting Parties to COP12 NRF.
11. Concerning online reporting, the Standing Committee may already be aware of the development through the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) of an online reporting platform for MEAs. This was utilized for national reporting to the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) MOP in 2012, and has been developed for national reporting to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).
12. The Secretariat will explore the development of such an online system for national reporting by Ramsar Parties to COP13 and present an update of the progress during SC51. The Standing Committee may wish to consider whether it would be appropriate to develop such an online system for national reporting by Ramsar Parties to COP13. If any such system should be considered, two issues need to be taken into consideration. First, it will be important to retain the option of an "offline" format for those Parties without adequate Internet access, and second, any development of an online system would require a source of additional voluntary

funding to be identified. The estimated costs are outlined in Annex 3 of Resolution XII. 1 *Financial and budgetary matters*, which is copied here.

Table 1

Resolution XII. 1 Annex 3: Analysis of 2016-2018 budgeted non-core items, in order of priority

No.	NON-CORE FUNDS 2016 – 2018	3 Year Funding Requirement (CHF)
1	Ramsar Advisory Missions for Parties requiring assistance	600,000
2	STRP 2016-2018 programme of work support	300,000
3	RSIS, IM/IT (Website) Continuing Development	175,000
4	Pre-COP13 regional meetings (delegates support and meeting costs for preparatory meetings)	650,000
5	COP13 (2018) sponsorship to eligible delegates	600,000
6	Arabic language introduction and translation support	250,000
7	Small Grants Funds for protection and wise use of wetlands	1,000,000
8	Regional Initiative Networks and Centres support (priority activities).	150,000
9	Ramsar CEPA Programme (2016-2021), exclusion of World Wetlands Day	300,000
10	On-line system for National Reports, reporting and indicators development	175,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,200,000</b>