

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
52nd Meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 13-17 June 2016

Decisions of the 52nd Meeting of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the revised draft agenda

Decision SC52-01: The Standing Committee approved the revised agenda, with the inclusion of discussion of progress made by Working Groups in the item on *Report of the Management Working Group*, and changes in running order of this item and those on *Update on partnerships and synergies* and *Update on the process of selection of the new Secretary General*, as set out in Doc. SC52-01 Rev.2.

Agenda item 3: Admission of observers

Decision SC52-02: The Standing Committee admitted the observers listed by the Acting Secretary General as contained in SC52 Inf.Doc. 09 Rev.1.

Agenda item 10: Update on the status of the Ramsar List

Decision SC52-03: The Standing Committee took note of the report presented by the Secretariat and instructed the Secretariat, according to its capacities, to strengthen its interaction with Contracting Parties regarding the longest-running Article 3.2 files, particularly those for which no information had been forthcoming for a long period.

Agenda item 13: Report of the Chair of the STRP (SC52-10 *Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and amended draft STRP 2016-2018 Work Plan*)

Decision SC52-04: The Standing Committee approved the STRP 2016-2018 Work Plan in Doc. SC52-10, with the exception of task 2.5 *Management of mosquito disease vectors in wetland*, requested informal consultations between the involved countries, and amended to take into account the comments made at the meeting.

Agenda item 18: Update on the process of selection of the new Secretary General

Decision SC52-05: The Standing Committee unanimously selected Martha Rojas-Urrego as new Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention.

Agenda item 15: Update on the preparation of the National Report format for COP13 (SC52-13 *Draft format for National Reports to COP13*)

Decision SC52-06: The Standing Committee approved the National Report format for COP13 incorporating the comments made by Parties.

Decision SC52-07: The Standing Committee agreed that a National Reporting format could be made available to all Parties through an on-line system, together with an off-line option, and requested the Secretariat to present an evaluation for the next COP regarding the use of the on-line system.

Agenda item 16: Implementation of the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention according to Resolution XII.10 (SC52-14 Rev.1 *Progress report on the implementation of the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention*)

Decision SC52-08: The Standing Committee approved the composition and membership of the Independent Advisory Committee for Wetland City Accreditation as presented by the Secretariat (www.ramsar.org/document/sc52-presentation-progress-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-wetland-city-accreditation), and invited the North America and Latin America and the Caribbean regions to appoint members.

Decision SC52-09: The Standing Committee approved the continuation of the work according to the timetable for implementation of the Wetland City Accreditation, and requested continued actions to streamline processes and minimize the impact on Secretariat time and resources.

Agenda Item 23 c. Progress on MOUs (SC52-16 Rev.2 *Update on formal agreements and joint work plans of the Ramsar Convention and partners*)

Decision SC52-10: The Standing Committee approved the MOUs in Annexes 2, 3 and 5 of Doc. SC52-16 Rev.2, amended to take into account the comments made by the Contracting Parties.

Decision SC52-11: The Standing Committee decided that the Management Working Group be asked to review all new MOUs and other such agreements between the Ramsar Secretariat and other bodies, at its meeting immediately before the Standing Committee meeting at which the agreements were to be submitted for approval.

Agenda item 11: Secretariat Work Plans
a. Work Plan for the 2016-2018 triennium (SC52-07 *Secretariat Work Plan for the 2016-2018 triennium*)
and
b. Work Plan for 2016 (SC52-08 *Secretariat Work Plan for 2016*)

Decision SC52-12: The Standing Committee approved the revised Secretariat Work Plan for 2016 in Doc. SC52-08 Rev.1, taking into account the comments made and on the understanding that Parties might provide further advice on how to streamline activities.

Decision SC52-13: The Standing Committee decided to consider the Secretariat Work Plan for the 2016-2018 triennium at SC53.

Agenda item 19 b. Revised CEPA Action Plan for the Ramsar Secretariat 2016-2018

Decision SC52-14: The Standing Committee approved the revised CEPA Action Plan for the Ramsar Secretariat for 2016-2018.

Agenda item 19 c. Report on World Wetlands Day 2016 (verbal presentation)

and

d. World Wetlands Day Themes for 2017 and 2018 (SC52-17 *World Wetlands Day themes*)

Decision SC52-15: The Standing Committee decided that the theme for World Wetlands Day 2017 would be “Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction” and that the theme for World Wetlands Day 2018 would be linked to urban wetlands, the exact wording to be decided when the theme for COP13 had been finalized.

Agenda item 14. Ramsar Regional Initiatives

b. Assessment of existing Ramsar Regional Initiatives (SC52-Inf.Doc.04 *Ramsar Regional Initiatives: An assessment of their achievements by 2015*)

and

c. Report of the Chair of the Working Group on the Ramsar Regional Initiatives (SC52-11 Rev.1 *Update on Ramsar Regional Initiatives*)

Decision SC52-16: The Standing Committee adopted the revised Operational Guidelines, submitted to the 52nd Standing Committee by the Working Group for the Ramsar Regional Initiatives, as “Operational Guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives to support the implementation of the Convention”.

Decision SC52-17: The Standing Committee approved the Ramsar Regional Initiatives list as functional within the framework of the Convention for the period 2016-2018, as follows: 1) Ramsar Centre for Eastern Africa (RAMCEA), 2) Ramsar Regional Centre – Central and West Asia (RRC-CWA), 3) Ramsar Regional Centre – East Asia (RRC-EA), 4) Ramsar Regional Centre for Training and Research in the Western Hemisphere (*Centro Regional Ramsar para la Capacitación e Investigación sobre Humedales en el Hemisferio Occidental*, CREHO), 5) West African Coastal Zone Wetlands Network (WACOWet), 6) Niger River Basin Network (NigerWet), 7) Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of High Andean Wetlands (*Iniciativa Regional de Conservación y Uso Sostenible de los Humedales Altoandinos*), 8) Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of the Plata River Basin (*Iniciativa para la Conservación y Uso Sustentable de los Humedales Fluviales de la Cuenca del Plata*), 9) Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative (CariWet), 10) Regional Initiative for the Integral Management and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs (*Iniciativa Regional para la Conservación y Uso Racional de Manglares y Corales*), 11) East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, 12) Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), 13) Carpathian Wetlands Initiative, 14) Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet), 15) Regional Initiative on Black and Azov Seas Coastal Wetlands (BlackSeaWet).

Decision SC52-18: The Standing Committee asked the Contracting Parties members of Ramsar Regional Initiatives, through the Working Group, to assess the applicability of Operational Guidelines as approved, at the latest four months before the 53rd Standing Committee.

Decision SC52-19: The Standing Committee requested the Working Group, in conjunction with the Secretariat, to present at the 53rd Standing Committee a summary report of the issues raised by the Ramsar Regional Initiatives and any proposals related to them.

14 e. Consideration of new Regional Initiatives (SC52-12 *Proposals for new Ramsar Regional Initiatives*)

Decision SC52-20: The Standing Committee endorsed the four new Ramsar Regional Initiatives named in Doc. SC52-12 and approved an allocation from the Ramsar core budget of CHF 30,000 for

each (corrected from CHF 25,000 each as proposed in Document SC52-12) as follows: 1) Regional Initiative for the Amazon River Basin, 2) Regional Initiative for Central Asia, 3) Indo-Burma Regional Initiative and 4) Regional Initiative for the Senegal River Basin.

Agenda item 4. Approval of terms of reference for a future language strategy for the Convention (SC52.03 Rev. 1 *Development of a strategy outlining the potential phased integration of Arabic or other UN languages into the work of the Ramsar Convention*)

Decision SC52-21: The Standing Committee requested the Ramsar Secretariat to develop a strategy, without consultant support, outlining the potential phased integration of Arabic or other UN languages into the work of the Convention contained in the annex to Doc. SC52.03 Rev. 1.

Agenda item 5. Report of the Sub-Group on COP13

Decision SC52-22: The Standing Committee gave preliminary approval for the COP13 Provisional Agenda in Doc. SC52.21 and instructed that it should be submitted for detailed consideration at the 53rd Meeting of the Standing Committee.

Agenda item 21. Report of the Working Group on Resource Mobilization

Decision SC52-23: The Standing Committee 1) adopted the Resource Mobilization Work Plan Framework that had been developed, 2) took note of the Working Group's offer to advise the new Secretary General on the grade level, job description and possible revision of the title for the position currently known as the Partnerships Officer, 3) also took note of the Working Group's offer to advise the person hired to mobilize resources as they develop their first full Resource Mobilization Work Plan to guide their work, and 4) decided to adopt the first full Resource Mobilization Work Plan at a future Standing Committee, SC53 if possible.

Agenda item 24. Other matters: Date and venue of the 53rd Meeting of the Standing Committee

Decision SC52-24: The Standing Committee agreed that SC53 would be held in the week of 29 May to 2 June 2017 at IUCN headquarters in Gland, Switzerland.

Decision SC52-25: The Standing Committee asked the Secretariat to work with any interested Parties to prepare a paper for SC53 discussing the possibility of holding future meetings of the Committee in Geneva and requested the issue to be included in the next agenda of SC53.

Agenda item 20. Report of the Sub-Group on Finance (SC52-18 Rev.1 *Ramsar financial matters 2014/2015* and SC52-19 *Contracting Parties with outstanding annual contributions*)

Decision SC52-26: The Standing Committee agreed to direct the remaining balance of the 2014 surplus of CHF 6,000 to the Reserve Fund.

Decision SC52-27: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat:

- For countries with arrears greater than three years (from end 2015), to:
 - work with the Ramsar national focal point to identify the appropriate government official/minister (individual) who can resolve outstanding annual contributions,
 - notify the individual, in writing, of status of outstanding contributions, with copy to Finance Minister (or equivalent), and
 - request acknowledgement and/or payment of their outstanding contributions.

- **Following the recommendation of African countries to Standing Committee, to:**
 - **make an assessment of the voluntary contributions of this region**
 - **make a report at SC53, and to develop a Draft Resolution changing the word voluntary to “additional” taking account of the considerations of this region.**

Decision SC52-28: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretary General to propose a 2018 austerity budget to address the increasing amount of outstanding contributions, for consideration at SC53.

Decision SC52-29: The Standing Committee decided that there is no need to change 2016 core and non-core budgets, and that any surplus at the end of 2016 should be used to replenish the Reserve Fund.

Decision SC52-30: The Standing Committee confirmed the 2017 budget as approved at COP12.

Decision SC52-31: The Standing Committee agreed to make an amendment to the table entitled “Approved Secretariat staff (core) for 2016-2018” at Resolution XII.1, Annex 4, to add one core staff member, Regional Officer – Oceania, a core funded position which had not been included in the staff list due to employment conditions.

Agenda item 24. Other matters: Adoption of the report of the 52 nd Meeting

Decision SC52-32: The Standing Committee adopted the report of the meeting for Wednesday 15 June and Thursday 16 June 2016 with minor amendments submitted by Parties, and asked the SC Chair to approve the report of the meeting for Friday 17 June.