

## Draft resolution on conservation and management of small and micro wetlands

*Submitted by China*

### Action requested:

- The Standing Committee is invited to review the attached draft resolution for consideration at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

### Draft Resolution XIII.xx

#### Conservation and management of small and micro wetlands

1. RECALLING the commitments made by Contracting Parties in Article 3.1 of the Convention on Wetlands to achieving the wise use, as far as possible, of all wetlands in their territory and to maintaining the ecological character of wetlands included in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance;
2. AWARE that wetland inventory has ignored wetlands smaller than eight hectares in area, and that there are major gaps in our understanding of small and micro wetlands and their spatial distribution around the world; ALSO AWARE that spatial distribution of wetlands presents a heterogeneous network of a few large wetlands and great number of small and micro wetlands;
3. ALSO AWARE that small and micro wetlands are extremely vulnerable to environmental changes, in particular, climate changes, as well as to human development needs for land;
4. RECOGNIZING that small and micro wetlands within a wetland complex provide critical habitat for migratory water birds, and often are breeding grounds of waterbirds, and major feeding sites for wintering water birds; FURTHER RECOGNIZING that small and micro wetlands also provide many other multiple ecosystem services, provide excellent human residential environment of natural beauty, provide food, such as vegetables and fish, mitigate floods and purify water, regulate micro climates, as well as providing defence, or isolation;
5. ALSO RECOGNIZING that human settlements, villages and towns are often associated with small and micro wetlands and that together they form important landscape heritage, due to the wetland's multiple ecosystem services, in particular, transportation, water supply, and wetland culture, e.g., the classical water pond within the landscape of rice paddies;

6. CONCERNED that small and micro wetlands are increasingly facing development pressures; wetland reclamation have been started from small and micro wetlands, for the expansion of agriculture, urban development, etc, etc.; and even MORE CONCERNED that major cities have generally reclaimed small and micro wetlands;
7. NOTING the efforts made by the European Pond Conservation Network and its Pro-Pond Project 2007-2010; the Small Wetlands Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; as well as China's "The strategy of Rural Revitalization" which set excellent examples for small and micro wetland conservation and management;
8. RECALLING that the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (as adopted through Resolution VII.11 (1999) and amended through Resolution XI.8 *Streamlining procedures for describing Ramsar Sites at the time of designation and subsequent updates* (2012) indicates that smaller wetlands should not be overlooked for designation as Wetlands of International Importance, and that such wetlands may be especially important in maintaining habitat or ecological community-level biological diversity;
9. FURTHER RECALLING Recommendation 5.3 (1993), which called for the establishment of strict protection measures for Ramsar Sites and wetland reserves of small size or particular sensitivity;
10. NOTING that conservation and management of the ecological character of small and micro wetlands can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG 5, SDG 11, SDG 15 and SDG 16;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

11. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to address urgently the significant human-induced pressures that threaten small and micro wetlands, through promulgation of regulation, and national policy, and other effective measure to prevent the continuous loss of small and micro wetlands;
12. ALSO CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to designate key small and micro wetlands for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance, to ensure the conservation of their biodiversity, and the maintenance of their ecological, cultural and social values;
13. URGES Contracting Parties to produce a complete, science-based inventory of small and micro wetlands, based on appropriate methodologies, and to integrate their information into national and regional land use plans;
14. REQUESTS that all Contracting Parties conduct an innovative communication, education, and public awareness programme on the ecosystem services of small and micro wetlands, so as to enhance awareness of both decision makers and the general public;
15. INVITES the Contracting Parties, with the support, as appropriate, of the Ramsar Secretariat, to:
  - i) further promote the importance of small and micro wetlands to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, as well

as other relevant international institutions, through existing mechanisms, or, through effective communication, by dissemination of best practices and case studies;

- ii) strengthen the wise use of small and micro wetlands under the premise of conservation and restoration, as the basis of sustainable development; and

16. INVITES all Contracting Parties to report on the status of small and micro wetlands in their territory.