

## Wetland City Accreditation Report of the Secretariat

### Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of progress with the scheme for Wetland City Accreditation.

### Background

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat as an update of the implementation of the Wetland City Accreditation scheme.
2. Resolution XII.10 on *Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention* underlines the importance of wetlands in urban and peri-urban environments (as defined in Resolution X.27 on *Wetlands and urbanization*) and approved the establishment of a voluntary Wetland City Accreditation scheme to recognize municipal authorities that demonstrate strong and positive relationships with wetlands (as outlined in the Annex of Resolution XII.10).
3. Through Decision SC53-14, the Standing Committee: (i) confirmed the composition of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC) until COP13 as set out in Resolution XII.10, with the exception that the Chair would be Tunisia and the Co-Chair would be the Republic of Korea, while UN-Habitat would serve as a member of the Committee; (ii) welcomed the offer of the Ramsar Regional Center – East Asia (RRC-EA) to participate in the IAC; (iii) agreed that the participation of the Secretary General or her designee in the IAC should be largely symbolic; (iv) confirmed that the administrative role of the Secretariat should be minimal, limited to receiving applications and forwarding them to the IAC, without any impact on core budget funding; (v) noted the specific proposed amendments to document SC53-16 tabled by South Africa; and (vi) agreed an extension of the deadline for the submission of WCA applications until 31 October 2017.

### Progress with the implementation of the Wetland City Accreditation

4. Following the adoption of Standing Committee Decision SC53-14, the Secretariat launched the call for applications for Wetland City Accreditation on 14 June 2017.
5. Following the fixed deadline for receipt of applications of 31 October 2017, the Secretariat verified the formal endorsement of applications by the Ramsar Administrative Authority of the Contracting Party, and forwarded the applications to the IAC on 8 November 2017.
6. The IAC produced a formal methodology and timeframe for assessing the applications on 10 October 2017, as a guidance on how the members would review the applications and how the

Committee would decide, for each nomination, whether all criteria established by Resolution XII.10 had been fulfilled, and whether or not each nominated city would be recommended for accreditation.

7. The next steps are as described at Resolution XII.10 paragraphs 15.c to 15.e:

*“15.c. The Independent Advisory Committee shall review the applications and decide whether to accredit proposed cities, and report its decision at least 60 days in advance of the final full meeting of the Standing Committee prior to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties;*

*15.d. The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Independent Advisory Committee listing those cities approved for accreditation and transmit it to the Conference of the Parties;*

*15.e. The Secretary General shall provide the Contracting Party with an accreditation certificate, containing the Ramsar Convention logo, for the Wetland City, which is valid for six years;”*

8. In accordance with paragraph 15.c of Resolution XII.10, the Independent Advisory Committee has provided a report of its deliberations, which will be submitted to members of the Standing Committee, to consider in a closed session at its 54th meeting.