

## Report and decisions of the 56th meeting of the Standing Committee

Monday 29 October 2018

17:30 – 18.15 Plenary Session of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 1: Opening statements

1. Opening remarks were made by **Uruguay** as the outgoing Chair of the Standing Committee.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda

2. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda in document SC56 Doc.2.
3. **Senegal** and the **Secretariat** drew attention to additional subjects that could be considered under "Any other business".

**Decision SC56-01: The Standing Committee adopted the agenda in document SC56 Doc. 2, noting that working groups established or re-established under COP13 Resolutions would be discussed under Agenda item 6 *Any other business*.**

Agenda item 3: Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair

**Decision SC56-02: The United Arab Emirates was elected as Chair of the Standing Committee and Sweden was elected as Vice-Chair.**

4. The **United Arab Emirates** replaced Uruguay as the Chair.

Agenda item 4: Election of the Subgroup on Finance

5. Interventions were made by **Australia, Japan, Mexico, Senegal, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Uruguay** and the **Secretariat**.

**Decision SC56-03: The Standing Committee elected the following to the Subgroup on Finance, noting that the Subgroup was open to participation of other interested Parties: Sierra Leone, representing the Africa region; Japan, representing the Asia region; Estonia, representing the Europe region; Costa Rica, representing the Latin America and the Caribbean region; Mexico, representing the North America region; Australia, representing the Oceania region; Senegal, as the outgoing Chair of the Subgroup on Finance; and the United States of America.**

**Decision SC56-04: The Standing Committee elected Mexico as Chair of the Subgroup on Finance by acclamation.**

Agenda item 5: Date and venue of the next meeting

6. Interventions were made by **Australia, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay** and the **Secretariat**.

**Decision SC56-05: The Standing Committee agreed to hold its 57th meeting (SC57) in Gland, Switzerland, from 24 to 28 June 2019.**

Agenda item 6: Any other business

7. The Secretariat noted that the Resolution adopted at COP13 on *Governance of the Convention* establishes the Effectiveness Working Group, to comprise one member from each Ramsar region as well as any other interested Contracting Parties, keeping in mind the desirability of equitable participation and keeping the group to a manageable size.
8. Interventions were made by **Australia, Bhutan, Chad, China, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Japan, Lesotho, Kenya, Mexico, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States of America** and the **Secretariat**.
9. The Chair received nominations for membership of the Effectiveness Working Group.

**Decision SC56-06: The Standing Committee agreed that:**

- **the membership of the Effectiveness Working Group comprised the following Contracting Parties: Australia, Austria, Bhutan, Cameroon, China, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, the Netherlands, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and Zambia, noting that some Parties might withdraw in order to respect the aim of regional balance; and**
- **the Group would appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair, define its terms of reference and report at SC57.**

10. It was noted that the Resolution adopted at COP13 on *Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021* re-establishes the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group and requests the Standing Committee at its 56th meeting to facilitate the functioning of the Working Group and allocate core budget surplus.
11. Interventions were made by **Australia, Japan, Senegal, the United Kingdom** and the **Secretariat**.

**Decision SC56-07: The Standing Committee agreed to defer further consideration of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group, and of the allocation of funds, until its 57th meeting.**

12. The Resolution adopted on *Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention* requests the Standing Committee to establish, at its 56th meeting, a Strategic Plan Working Group to include representation from all regions.
13. The Chair received nominations for membership of the Strategic Plan Working Group. Interventions were made by **Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Costa Rica, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland, Uganda** and the **Secretariat**.

**Decision SC56-08: The Standing Committee agreed that:**

- **the membership of the Strategic Plan Working Group comprised the following Contracting Parties: Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Benin, the Dominican Republic, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda and the United States of America; and**
- **the Asia region would provide names to the Secretariat at a later date.**

Agenda item 7: Closing remarks

14. The **Chair** thanked Mr Jorge Rucks, as the outgoing Chair, for all his hard work and support and stated that he looked forward to working with the Standing Committee and the Secretariat over the next triennium.