

## **Report of the Working Group on the Review of the Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention**

1. The Secretariat outlined the tasks agreed for the Working Group listed at Annex 1, paragraph 9, of Resolution XIII.5 on *Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention*, which are intended to culminate in the submission of a proposal for a draft resolution to the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC59) in early 2021.
2. Uganda was unanimously elected as Chair of the Working Group.
3. The Secretariat provided an update on progress to date, particularly with reference to the appointment of a consultant called for in Annex.1, paragraph 11, of Resolution XIII.5. Ten proposals had been received, and the Secretariat had drawn up a shortlist of four based on the criteria included in the terms of reference provided by the Working Group.
4. During discussions the need for transparency and speed in completing the appointment of the consultant was underlined. It was recommended that the consultancy result in a well-developed submission to SC58. Attention was drawn to the low rate of response from Contracting Parties to the questionnaire evaluating the implementation of the current Strategic Plan.
5. Interventions were made by Australia, Dominican Republic, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America.
6. The Working Group recommended that the Standing Committee instruct the Secretariat to share the shortlisting assessment with the members of the Group, and include the Chair of the Working Group in panel interviews of the shortlisted candidates for the consultancy.
7. The Working Group recommended that the Standing Committee instruct the Secretariat to proceed expeditiously with the appointment of the consultant and inception of the project work plan, in order that it might be well advanced before the end of 2019, to enable the submission of an advanced draft report to SC58 in 2020.
8. The Working Group recommended that the Standing Committee instruct the Secretariat to organize an inception meeting with the selected consultant on their appointment, to define detailed timelines and outputs, in light of existing processes such as the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) in October 2020 and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
9. The Working Group recommended that the Standing Committee instruct the Secretariat to seek further responses from Contracting Parties to the survey on implementation of the current Strategic Plan, and invite regional representatives of the Standing Committee to encourage Parties in their respective regions to respond.

10. The Working Group recommended that the Standing Committee instruct the Secretariat to finalize the work plan of the Working Group to reflect the discussions of its meeting of 24 June 2019.