

Report of the Executive Team and Chair of the Standing Committee

Action requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to note the report of the Executive Team and Chair.

Background

1. At its 13th meeting (COP13) the Conference of the Contracting Parties, through Resolution XIII.4, paragraph 16, requested the Executive Team to define its terms of reference for approval by the Standing Committee at its 57th meeting (SC57). Through Decision SC57-32 the Standing Committee adopted the terms of reference contained in Annex 8 of the meeting report¹.
2. This report of the Executive Team provides an overview of the work it has carried out since SC57. It also provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Chair of the Standing Committee during this period.

Work undertaken by the Executive Team

3. The Executive Team provided guidance to the Secretariat in the preparations of SC58, including feedback and approval of its agenda for Standing Committee. Importantly, the Executive Team also has provided early guidance regarding possible alternative scenarios for holding SC58 given the COVID-19 situation.
4. The Executive Team also provided guidance after the resignation of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel on the steps to take with the Management Working Group to identify a candidate for this position and to ensure the continuation of the work of the Panel under the interim leadership of the Vice-Chair of the Panel.

Work undertaken by the Chair of the Standing Committee

5. During this period, the Chair provided guidance to the Secretariat with regard to the process to implement Resolution XIII.1 on the declaration of World Wetlands Day by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) by encouraging Parties to co-sponsor and support this effort. The Chair also provided advice on the issues related to the Scientific and Technical Review Panel. As Chair of the Executive Team and Management Working Group, regular contacts were maintained with the Secretary General to advise on the matters of the resignation and appointment of the new Chair of the Scientific and Review Panel and the cancellation of STRP23, scheduled for March.

¹ See <https://www.ramsar.org/document/report-and-decisions-of-the-57th-meeting-of-the-standing-committee>

6. The Chair, together with the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance, advised the Secretary General on IUCN's proposal to change the approach for the management and accounting of non-core projects of the Secretariat especially when using IUCN's legal personality to sign donor contracts. The proposal was not carried forward and the system in place in the context of the current Letter of Agreement between IUCN and the Chair of the Standing Committee remains unchanged.
7. The Chair of the Standing Committee also advised the Secretary General on human resources and administrative matters on her request, and conducted the annual assessment of the Secretary General in accordance with IUCN rules and procedures.