



10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Healthy wetlands, healthy people”

Changwon, Republic of Korea,
28 October-4 November 2008

Agenda item XV

Ramsar COP10 DR 5

Draft Resolution X.5

**Facilitating the work of the Ramsar Secretariat at international
level**

Submitted by the Standing Committee

1. RECALLING that the Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty deposited with the United Nations, but that the Secretariat of the Convention has no legal recognition *per se*, as it is administered by IUCN (Article 8.1 of the treaty text);
2. AWARE that the absence of such a recognition, providing an international organization legitimization for Ramsar Secretariat staff, is substantially impeding or slowing down important working procedures of Secretariat staff;
3. NOTING that the Conference of the Contracting Parties wishes to improve this situation and instructed the Secretary General in Resolution IX.10 (2005) “to engage in a consultative process with appropriate bodies such as IUCN and UNESCO, as well as the government of the host country and other interested organizations and governments, regarding the options, as well as legal and practical implications, for the transformation of the status of the Ramsar Secretariat towards an International Organization or other status whilst still recognizing and maintaining its links with IUCN and the host country”;
4. RECOGNIZING that the process of responding to the instructions of Resolution IX.10 is ongoing and is intended to address the formal international status of the Ramsar Secretariat and provide solutions to the current operational difficulties and obstacles encountered by Secretariat staff in their daily work; and
5. WISHING to facilitate the work of the Ramsar Secretariat at international level without further delay, independently of and without preempting the conclusions and outcomes of the above process;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. REAFFIRMS that the Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty, and that activities mandated by the Conference of Parties for the implementation of the Convention should accordingly be recognized as intergovernmental activities;
7. URGES Contracting Parties to intervene where appropriate in intergovernmental processes and organizations of which they are members in order to ensure that the Ramsar Convention and its Secretariat have appropriate recognition and status in those processes and organizations to reflect the intergovernmental status of the Convention;
8. CALLS on each Contracting Party to facilitate the work of the Secretariat through regularly informing all relevant ministries and other governmental services about the formal nature of the Convention on Wetlands as a global, intergovernmental treaty, the work that the Parties have entrusted to the treaty Secretariat, and the obligations of implementation of the treaty and its Resolutions in each Contracting Party as well as through international cooperation as addressed in Article 5 of the treaty and further specified through Resolution VII.19;
9. SUGGESTS that Parties could invite Ramsar Secretariat staff to participate in relevant meetings and on-site visits to be held in their territories in order to further the approaches promoted by the Convention and to support the implementation of its obligations;
10. ASKS Contracting Parties to facilitate these visits of Ramsar Secretariat staff or representatives on their territory by drawing the attention of their relevant administrative services and consulates to the character of the Convention and by assisting in the delivery of travel documents, particularly visas, needed for Ramsar Secretariat staff or representatives to enter their territory, in order that their visits can be planned and undertaken in a timely manner;
11. CALLS upon Contracting Parties and non-Party States hosting international meetings that address issues of relevance or potential interest to the Convention on Wetlands to inform the Ramsar Secretariat about such meetings and to invite a representative of the Secretariat to participate actively in such meetings in order to facilitate further cooperation and synergies among international organizations and processes, as addressed through Resolutions IX.3 and IX.5; and
12. URGES Contracting Parties hosting such meetings to facilitate the registration of Ramsar Secretariat staff to attend them and, in doing so, to formally recognize that Ramsar staff are representing the Secretariat of the intergovernmental Convention on Wetlands.