



**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 7

Draft Resolution X.7

**Optimizing the Ramsar Small Grants Fund during the period
2009-2012**

Submitted by the Standing Committee

1. RECALLING Resolution VI.6 (1996) which renamed the Wetland Conservation Fund, originally established through Resolution IV.3 (1990), as the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use (SGF), reviewed its operation, and made recommendations on its level of funding;
2. NOTING WITH PLEASURE that since its inception in 1991 the SGF has provided funding for 203 small projects in 53 developing countries and countries in economic transition for a total amount of 7.6 million Swiss francs;
3. EXPRESSING SINCERE APPRECIATION to those Contracting Parties and organizations that have made voluntary contributions to the SGF over all these years;
4. NOTING WITH CONCERN that the level of voluntary contributions has only been sufficient to fund 17 projects during the triennium 2006-2008, while another 77 valuable proposals submitted by eligible Contracting Parties could not be funded because of a serious lack of funds;
5. RECOGNIZING the desire of the Standing Committee to broaden the current spectrum of potential donors through the submission of non-funded valuable projects to a different group of donors subsequent to each annual SGF evaluation cycle;
6. COMMENDING the Ramsar Secretariat for its initiatives to improve the project assessment process, administration and monitoring of projects supported by the SGF, as well as for its fundraising efforts for the Fund; and
7. RECALLING Resolution IX.13 (2005) which requested the Standing Committee to bring to COP10 new proposals for establishing a more vigorous mechanism to support the SGF, including the possible development of regional support funds;

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THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

8. REAFFIRMS its conviction that the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use (SGF) should continue to be an extremely valuable mechanism for facilitating the implementation of the Convention in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
9. REITERATES its conviction that the level of resources available to the Ramsar SGF should be increased to 1 million Swiss francs annually and INVITES Contracting Parties to make voluntary donations to the SGF and to seek the assistance of other organizations to meet this target in time for each annual funding cycle;
10. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to package those project proposals that were evaluated and approved for SGF funding but could not be funded because of a lack of money in the unrestricted SGF fund into an attractive, low-cost Small Projects Portfolio (SPP), once the annual SGF allocations have been made by Standing Committee from within the available unrestricted SGF funds, and, according to the priorities of the Contracting Parties as authorized through the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, to make that Portfolio as widely available as possible to potential new donors who are additional to those traditionally supporting the SGF;
11. ENCOURAGES all potential donors who are not able to make an unrestricted voluntary contribution to the Small Grants Fund to contribute to the funding of specific projects described in the Ramsar Small Projects Portfolio, with a view to funding a maximum total number of valuable projects each year;
12. ESTABLISHES the Ramsar Signature Initiatives as a mechanism for facilitating regional funding support for the SGF;
13. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Secretariat, with the Subgroup on Finance, to prepare advice for Contracting Parties on the development and preparation of Signature Initiatives in relation to the operations of the Convention's Small Grants Fund;
14. ENCOURAGES the regional groups of the Convention, as identified in Resolution VI.1 (1996), including through their regional intersessional meetings, to identify Signature Initiatives as region-wide projects to address regionally-identified priorities;
15. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and donor organizations to help identify sources of funding for such proposals;
16. FURTHER ENCOURAGES potential donors to contact the Ramsar Secretariat whenever funding opportunities may arise in order to make voluntary donations to the Small Grants Fund, or if such unrestricted funding is not possible for them, to fund specific projects initially submitted to the SGF that form part of the Small Project Portfolio; and
17. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Secretariat to report to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the functioning and success of the combined project funding strategy of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund, Project Portfolio and Signature Initiatives, in order to guarantee that Parties will have an opportunity to review the operation of these mechanisms.