



11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the  
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

*“Wetlands: home and destination”*

Bucharest, Romania, 6-13 July 2012

**Agenda item XV**

**Ramsar COP11 DR19**

**Draft Resolution XI.19**

**Adjustments to the terms of Resolution VII.1 on the composition,  
roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and regional  
categorization of countries under the Convention**

[Secretariat Note: Proposed amendments to Resolution VII.1 paragraphs are shown below as  
**bolded red text.**]

1. RECOGNIZING the value of keeping under periodic review the terms of Resolution VII.1 (1999) so as to ensure that the work of the Standing Committee continues to be delivered in as effective and cost-efficient a manner as possible;
2. AWARE of Decisions SC41-5 and SC42-31, -32, and -33 of the 41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> meetings of the Standing Committee concerning issues of the composition and organization of the Standing Committee and its meetings; and
3. RECALLING that Resolution IX.24 (2005) established a Management Working Group reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties and that Resolution X.4 (2008) also established a transition committee of the Management Working Group; RECOGNIZING that aspects of the work of these groups is also embodied in the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee itself; and AWARE of the intersessional Standing Committee oversight of the Secretariat now conducted on its behalf between meetings of the Standing Committee by its Executive Team (Chair, Vice Chair, and Chair of Subgroup on Finance) with the Secretary General; and EXPRESSING APPRECIATION to the members of the Management Working Group for their work;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

4. ADOPTS the text in Annexes 1-4, based upon amendments that update Resolution VII.1 (1999) on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Ramsar Standing Committee and its appended list of Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties belonging to the six Ramsar regional groups;

5. REAFFIRMS that all other terms and paragraphs of Resolution VII.1 and its annexes, apart from those amendments, continue to be appropriate for guiding the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee;
6. RECOGNIZES the desirability of the members of the Executive Team (Standing Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance) being able to conduct work in a common language, for the effectiveness of conducting their own business within the Team and between the Team and the Secretariat, both during Standing Committee meetings and intersessionally, and in relation to their responsibilities of chairing other Convention bodies such as the CEPA Oversight Panel and STRP Oversight Committee;
7. RETIRES Resolution IX.24 establishing a Management Working Group and INSTRUCTS the Transition Committee established by Resolution X.4, the Standing Committee itself, and the Committee's Executive Team to address any such matters as needed concerning review of the management of Convention processes;
8. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to incorporate the adopted amendments into a final text of the annexed document and to make that finalized text available to the Parties; and
9. CONFIRMS that this updated text and its annexes supersede those adopted as Resolution VII.1, which is retired.

## **Annex 1**

### **The composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention**

1. Considering that it is useful for the effective functioning of the Ramsar Convention that Contracting Parties should have a clear process for the operation of its Standing Committee, in Resolution VII.1 (1999) the Conference of the Contracting Parties adopted guidelines on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and the regional categorization of countries under the Convention. In [Resolution XI.xx (2012)], the Parties amended that text and the list of countries and Contracting Parties assigned to each of the six Ramsar regions in order to bring them up to date.
2. The Ramsar Convention will have the following regional groups:
  1. Africa
  2. Asia
  3. Neotropics
  4. Europe
  5. North America
  6. Oceania
3. Contracting Parties and those countries that are eligible to join the Convention are assigned to the above regional groups, but those Contracting Parties which are near to the boundaries of the allocated region, as given in Annex 2, can at their own request, based on

the existence of similar natural conditions, participate<sup>1</sup> within an alternative region, while remaining a member of their geographical region, upon formal notification of this intent to the COP, ~~provided that the preconditions for this request are not objected to by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel.~~

4. The composition of the Standing Committee will be determined by means of a proportional system, by which each regional group in paragraph 2 above will be represented by voting members in the Standing Committee according to the following criteria:
  - a) one representative for regional groups with 1 to 12 Contracting Parties,
  - b) two representatives for regional groups with 13 to 24 Contracting Parties,
  - c) three representatives for regional groups with 25 to 36 Contracting Parties,
  - d) four representatives for regional groups with 37 to 48 Contracting Parties,
  - e) five representatives for regional groups with 49 to 60 Contracting Parties.
5. The host countries of the most recent and the next meeting of the COP are also voting members of the Standing Committee.
6. The regional representatives will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups established in paragraph 2 above.

*Amended to:*

“The regional representatives will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups established in paragraph 2 above. **Initial consideration of nominations by regional groups will be undertaken at any intersessional regional COP preparatory meetings which may take place, and finalization of nominations will be made by regional groups in their regional meetings at the COP venue immediately prior to the opening of the COP, so that appointments of the new members of the Standing Committee can be made as early as possible in the COP proceedings, thus permitting the members of the new Committee to participate in Conference Committee meetings during COP.**”

7. The terms of office of the regional representatives will commence at the close of the meeting of the COP at which they have been elected and will expire at the close of the next ordinary meeting of the COP, and each Contracting Party may serve on the Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms;
8. Contracting Parties that are voting members of the Standing Committee will convey to the Ramsar Secretariat, through their diplomatic channels, the name of the officer(s) in the designated national Ramsar Administrative Authority who act as their delegates on the Standing Committee, as well as the name of their substitutes, should they be needed;

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1 “Participate” is defined in this context as different from membership within the alternative region. Participation confers to the state the right to be present in meetings, to speak, to exchange information, to submit reports, to cooperate on a scientific and practical level, and to contribute to joint projects. It does not include the right to be a representative of this alternative region nor to participate in the nomination of its representative(s). It does not confer the right to vote within the alternative region.

9. The Contracting Party which hosts the Bureau of the Convention and the Contracting Party which hosts the International Office of Wetlands International shall continue to have the status of Permanent Observers in the Standing Committee.

*Amended to:*

**“The Contracting Party acting as host country of the institutional host of the Ramsar Secretariat will continue to have the status of permanent observer in the Standing Committee. If the host country of the institutional host of the Secretariat stands for, and is elected as, a member of the Standing Committee representing its regional group, it will have voting status for that triennium in lieu of its permanent observer status. The body acting as the depositary for the Convention will have the status of permanent observer in the Standing Committee.”**

10. The Ramsar **Secretariat** will continue to notify all Contracting Parties of the date and agenda of meetings of the Standing Committee at least three months in advance of each meeting, so that they may, as appropriate, make arrangements to be represented at the meeting as observers.
11. Countries that are not Contracting Parties but have expressed an interest in joining the Convention may be also admitted as observers at meetings of the Standing Committee.
12. The Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel will be invited as an observer to Standing Committee meetings, as well as other experts and/or institutions that the Standing Committee may deem appropriate for assisting in its consideration of particular agenda items.
13. International organizations which are official International Organization Partners in the work of the Convention will be invited to participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee.
14. If an extraordinary meeting of the COP is held between two ordinary meetings, the host country will participate as an observer in the work of the Committee on matters related to the organization of the meeting, provided that the country in question is not already present in the Committee as a member or permanent observer.
15. The Contracting Parties in regional groups with one representative in the Standing Committee will use a rotation system for the nomination of the regional representative, and in regional groups with two or more representatives the selection will be made in such a manner as to achieve a balance in relation to biogeographical, geopolitical, and cultural considerations.
16. At its first meeting immediately after the close of the COP the Standing Committee will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the members and chair of the Subgroup on Finance established by Resolution VI.17 of COP6.
17. The Standing Committee shall meet at least once each year, normally at the seat of the Convention **Secretariat**. The costs of participation of Committee members from

developing countries and countries with economies in transition shall be borne by the Convention.

*Amended to:*

“The Standing Committee will meet **at least** once each year, normally at the seat of the Convention **Secretariat, according to the indicative schedule provided as the Annex 4 to this Resolution. A further meeting of the Subgroups on COP and Finance may be envisaged during the year before COP, if required and if sufficient funds are available, in order to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of the COP.** The costs of participation of Committee members eligible for sponsorship will be borne by the Convention.”

18. Within the policies agreed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the functions of the Standing Committee will be to:
- a) carry out, between one ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the next, such interim activity on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary, giving priority to matters on which the Conference has previously recorded its approval;
  - b) make preparations on issues, including *inter alia* draft Resolutions and Recommendations, for consideration at the next meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
  - c) supervise, as a representative of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the implementation of **activities** by the Ramsar **Secretariat**, the execution of the **Secretariat's** budget, and conduct of the **Secretariat's** programmes;
  - d) provide guidance and advice to the Ramsar **Secretariat** on the implementation of the Convention, on the preparation of meetings, and on any other matters relating to the exercise of its functions brought to it by the **Secretariat**;
  - e) act as Conference Committee at meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;
  - f) establish subgroups as necessary to facilitate the carrying out of its functions;
  - g) promote regional and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
  - ~~h) submit proposals to the COP for the election of members of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP); {Explanatory note: STRP members are presently appointed by the STRP Oversight Committee following COP, according to the terms of Resolutions IX.11 (2005) and X.9 (2008).}~~
  - h) approve the work plan of the **Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)** on the basis of the decisions of the COP, receive the reports of the STRP on the progress made with its implementation, and provide guidance for its future development;

- i) adopt for each triennium the Operational Guidelines for the Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use and decide on the allocation of funds;
  - j) review each triennium the criteria for and select the laureates of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award established by Resolution VI.18; and
  - k) report to the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the activities it has carried out between ordinary meetings of the Conference.
19. The tasks of the regional representatives elected to serve in the Standing Committee will be those contained in **Annex 3** of this **document**.
- 20. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, will take into consideration, within available resources, the desirability of having interpretation for its Subgroup meetings when it is requested by its members.**
- 21. The Contracting Parties will endeavor to secure additional voluntary funding to enable simultaneous interpretation at meetings of the Subgroup on Finance and Subgroup on COP.**
22. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, will be governed, *mutatis mutandis*, by the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference.

## Annex 2

### Allocation of Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties to the six Ramsar regional groups [updated]

NOTE: Names of countries in capital and bold letters denote Contracting Parties to the Convention at the time of approval of this Resolution.

#### 1. AFRICA

##### ALGERIA

Angola

##### BENIN

##### BOTSWANA

##### BURKINA FASO

##### BURUNDI

##### CAMEROON

##### CAPE VERDE

##### CENTRAL AFRICAN

##### REPUBLIC

##### CHAD

##### COMOROS

##### CONGO

##### CÔTE D'IVOIRE

##### DEMOCRATIC

##### REPUBLIC OF THE

##### CONGO

##### DJIBOUTI

##### EGYPT

##### EQUATORIAL

##### GUINEA

Eritrea

Ethiopia

##### GABON

##### GAMBIA

##### GHANA

##### GUINEA

##### GUINEA-BISSAU

##### KENYA

##### LESOTHO

##### LIBERIA

##### LIBYA

##### MADAGASCAR

##### MALAWI

##### MALI

##### MAURITANIA

##### MAURITIUS

##### MOROCCO

##### MOZAMBIQUE

##### NAMIBIA

##### NIGER

##### NIGERIA

##### RWANDA

**SAO TOME AND  
PRINCIPE**  
**SENEGAL**  
**SEYCHELLES**  
**SIERRA LEONE**  
Somalia

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
**SUDAN**  
South Sudan  
Swaziland  
**TOGO**  
**TUNISIA**

**UGANDA**  
**UNITED REPUBLIC  
OF TANZANIA**  
**ZAMBIA**  
Zimbabwe

## 2. ASIA

Afghanistan  
**AZERBAIJAN**  
**BAHRAIN**  
**BANGLADESH**  
Bhutan  
Brunei Darussalam  
**CAMBODIA**  
**CHINA**  
Democratic People's  
Republic of Korea  
**INDIA**  
**INDONESIA**  
**IRAN, ISLAMIC  
REPUBLIC OF**  
**IRAQ**  
**ISRAEL**

**JAPAN**  
**JORDAN**  
**KAZAKHSTAN**  
Kuwait  
**KYRGYZSTAN**  
**LAO PEOPLE'S  
DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC**  
**LEBANON**  
**MALAYSIA**  
Maldives  
**MONGOLIA**  
**MYANMAR**  
**NEPAL**  
Oman  
**PAKISTAN**

**PHILIPPINES**  
Qatar  
**REPUBLIC OF KOREA**  
Saudi Arabia  
Singapore  
**SRI LANKA**  
**SYRIAN ARAB  
REPUBLIC**  
**TAJIKISTAN**  
**THAILAND**  
**TURKMENISTAN**  
**UNITED ARAB  
EMIRATES**  
**UZBEKISTAN**  
**VIETNAM**  
**YEMEN**

## 3. NEOTROPICS

**ANTIGUA AND  
BARBUDA**  
**ARGENTINA**  
**BAHAMAS**  
**BARBADOS**  
**BELIZE**  
**BOLIVIA**  
**BRAZIL**  
**CHILE**  
**COLOMBIA**  
**COSTA RICA**  
**CUBA**  
Dominica  
**DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC**  
**ECUADOR**  
**EL SALVADOR**  
Grenada  
**GUATEMALA**  
Guyana  
Haiti

**HONDURAS**  
**JAMAICA**  
**NICARAGUA**  
**PANAMA**  
**PARAGUAY**  
**PERU**  
Saint Kitts and Nevis  
**SAINT LUCIA**  
Saint Vincent and the  
Grenadines  
**SURINAME**  
**TRINIDAD AND  
TOBAGO**  
**URUGUAY**  
**VENEZUELA**

**4. EUROPE**

**ALBANIA**

Andorra

**ARMENIA**

**AUSTRIA**

**BELARUS**

**BELGIUM**

**BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA**

**BULGARIA**

**CROATIA**

**CYPRUS**

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

**DENMARK**

**ESTONIA**

**FINLAND**

**FRANCE**

**GEORGIA**

**GERMANY**

**GREECE**

Holy See

**HUNGARY**

**ICELAND**

**IRELAND**

**ITALY**

**LATVIA**

**LIECHTENSTEIN**

**LITHUANIA**

**LUXEMBOURG**

**MALTA**

**MOLDOVA**

**MONACO**

**MONTENEGRO**

**NETHERLANDS**

**NORWAY**

**POLAND**

**PORTUGAL**

**ROMANIA**

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

San Marino

**SERBIA**

**SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

**SLOVENIA**

**SPAIN**

**SWEDEN**

**SWITZERLAND**

**THE FORMER YUGOSLAV**

**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

**TURKEY**

**UKRAINE**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**5. NORTH AMERICA**

**CANADA**

**MEXICO**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**6. OCEANIA**

**AUSTRALIA**

Cook Islands

**FIJI**

Kiribati

**MARSHALL ISLANDS**

Micronesia (Federated  
States of)

Nauru

**NEW ZEALAND**

Niue

**PALAU**

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

**SAMOA**

Solomon Islands

Timor-Leste

Tonga

Tuvalu

Vanuatu



### Annex 3

#### Tasks of Contracting Parties elected as Regional Representatives in the Standing Committee

The Contracting Parties that have accepted to be elected as Regional Representatives on the Standing Committee will have the following tasks:

1. To designate their delegates to the Standing Committee taking into account their significant responsibilities as Regional Representatives, according to paragraph 10 of this resolution, and to make every effort that their delegates or their substitutes attend all meetings of the Committee.
2. When there is more than one Regional Representative in a regional group, to maintain regular contacts and consultations with the other regional representative(s).
3. To maintain regular contacts and consultations with the Contracting Parties in their regional group, and to use the opportunities of travel within their regions and of attending regional or international meetings to consult about issues related to the Convention and to promote its objectives. To this effect, when there is more than one regional representative, they will agree among themselves which Contracting Parties will be the responsibility of each regional representative.
4. To canvass the opinions of the Contracting Parties in their regional group before meetings of the Standing Committee.
5. To advise the **Secretariat** in setting the agenda of regional meetings.
6. To assume additional responsibilities by serving as members of the subgroups established by the Standing Committee.
7. To provide advice as requested by the Chairperson and/or the chairs of subgroups and/or the **Secretariat** of the Convention.
8. In the regions concerned, to make deliberate efforts to encourage other countries to join the Convention.

## Annex 4

**Indicative schedule for Standing Committee intersessional meetings post-2012, and for the 2013-2015 triennium**

**Note.** This schedule is predicated on future cycles being three calendar years, with the meetings of the Conference of the Parties in May/June of the final year of each cycle.

	<b>General timelines, post-2012</b>	<b>2013-2015 triennium</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> full meeting</b>	9 months after COP	<b>SC46</b> – Feb/March 2013
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> full meeting</b>	18 months after COP	<b>SC47</b> – Feb/March 2014
<b>Subgroup on COP</b> (if required)	1 year before COP	<b>Subgroup on COP12</b> (if required) – May/June 2014
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> full meeting</b>	6 months before COP	<b>SC48</b> – December 2014/January 2015
<b>Pre-COP meeting</b>	immediately prior to COP, at COP venue	<b>SC49</b> – May/June 2015