

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
4th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
Montreux, Switzerland
27 June – 4 July 1990

Annex to DOC. C.4.14: Resolution on the Standing Committee

CONSIDERING the usefulness of a small permanent committee for matters relating to the organization of meetings and for the continuous implementation of the Convention,

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. DECIDES to establish a Standing Committee of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, which, within the policy agreed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties, shall
 - (a) carry out, between ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, such interim activity on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary, such activity being limited to matters on which the Conference has previously recorded its approval;
 - (b) make 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 policy by the Bureau, the execution of the Bureau's budget, the conduct of the Bureau's programmes and Bureau personnel matters;
 - (d) provide guidance and advice to the Bureau 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 Bureau;
 - (e) promote regional cooperation for the conservation of wetlands;
 - (f) Act as the Conference Steering Committee at meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties with the general duty of forwarding the business of the meeting;
 - (g) report to the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the activities it has carried out between ordinary meetings of the Conference; and
 - (h) perform any other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Conference of the Contracting Parties, and
2. DETERMINES the following principles for the composition of and procedures to be followed by the Standing Committee:
 - (a) the Committee shall consist of not more than nine Contracting Parties, who shall be nominated by the Conference of the Contracting Parties. For at least seven of these members, nomination shall be based upon the principle of proper geographical distribution with due regard for a proper representation of developing countries.* Alternate representatives shall be nominated by the Conference of the Contracting

Parties for each of these seven regions. The remaining two members shall be comprised of the host country of the present meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the host country for the next meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. The Contracting Parties which are host countries for IUCN and IWRB shall be invited to participate as observers in the work of the Committee;

- (b) if an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties is held between two ordinary meetings, the host Party of that meeting shall participate as an observer in the work of the Committee on matters related to the organization of the meeting;
- (c) Contracting Parties which are not members of the Standing Committee may upon their request participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee. The Director General of IUCN or his representative and the Director of IWRB or his representative shall be invited to participate in an advisory capacity in meetings of the Standing Committee. In addition, the Committee may invite observers to attend meetings or attend particular meetings or attend meetings for particular agenda items;
- (d) the Committee should at a minimum meet on an annual basis, normally at the seat of the Convention Bureau;
- (e) the membership of the Committee shall be reviewed at each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the meeting. In electing members to the Standing Committee, due regard shall be paid to ensuring some continuity of membership on the Committee through the appointment of alternate regional representatives. Members may serve on the Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms, however to provide for needed continuity, the Conference of the Contracting Parties may elect a member to no more than a third consecutive term;
- (f) the Standing Committee working through the Regional Representatives may establish regional Ramsar groups of Contracting Parties for the purpose of promoting regional cooperation among Parties, non-Party states and non-governmental organizations;
- (g) the Committee shall, by consensus, establish its own rules of procedure; and
- (h) the Secretary for the Committee shall be provided by the Convention Bureau.

* “Geographical distribution” reflects the following seven regions listed at the Third Meeting, and slightly revised at the Fourth Meeting, of the Conference of the Contracting Parties as Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Neotropics, Northern America, Oceania and Western Europe. This distribution is to be reviewed by the Standing Committee with a view to presenting a proposal for changes to the Fifth meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. The Standing Committee shall give special consideration in its future discussions, of the consensus of this Conference that the establishment of separate Eastern and Western European regions had been politically, and not geographically motivated.