



9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods”

Kampala, Uganda, 8-15 November 2005

Resolution IX.10

Use of the term and status of the “Ramsar Secretariat”

1. RECALLING Article 8 of the Convention which specifies the continuing bureau duties to be performed, as well as Articles 2.1, 6.1 and 10*bis* 3 of the Convention which refer to “the Bureau” as an administrative unit performing those duties which amount to the Convention’s secretariat functions;
2. NOTING the legal opinion of the IUCN Centre for Environmental Law (COP9 DOC. 19) that, in line with modern practice, the term “Bureau” is not satisfactory;
3. RECOGNIZING that, for the Secretariat in its external relations as well, the term “Bureau” is not satisfactory;
4. ALSO RECOGNIZING the need to allow the Secretariat to use a more suitable descriptor in such relations;
5. AFFIRMING that this Resolution does not intend to change the functions of the Bureau as established in the Convention text and in related decisions and Resolutions of the Convention bodies; and
6. NOTING that the Ramsar Convention is recognized as an intergovernmental treaty and that the Contracting Parties remain sovereign with regard to its functioning;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. DECIDES that in its external relations the Ramsar Bureau may use the descriptor “the Ramsar Secretariat” in its official statements and documents when such a descriptor is considered to be more suitable;
8. REAFFIRMS that this use of the descriptor “Secretariat” shall not affect the Bureau’s functions as provided for in the Convention text and in related decisions and Resolutions of the Convention bodies;
9. INSTRUCTS the Secretary General 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; and

10. REQUESTS the Secretary General to report on the outcome of these consultations through the Standing Committee to COP10.