

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee  
Gland, Switzerland, 13-16 January 2004

DOC. SC30-8

Agenda item 9.1

## Issues concerning the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

***Action requested:* The Standing Committee is invited to note the Memorandum of Understanding between Uganda and the Secretariat regarding the hosting of Ramsar COP9 and to consider the remaining issues noted below.**

1. The Government of Uganda has now signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ramsar Secretariat regarding the hosting of COP9, and this document is attached for reference.
2. Key items of Discussion remaining include the theme, dates, logo and exact form of the Conference.
3. **Preferred dates proposed by the Government of Uganda, subject to final ratification, are:** 7-15 November 2005

4. **Proposed theme:**

***WETLANDS - alleviating poverty, sustaining life***

5. **Logo:**

Should we continue the theme of a different logo for each CoP? There are advantages and disadvantages. It may be better to look at making a stronger logo for the Convention as a whole and not devote resources to marketing the CoP as a separate event, rather as a continuum in the process of governing the Convention.

6. **Length, type of sessions, need for side meetings, etc.:**

In part this will respond to the issues proposed by the group dealing with the follow-up on Resolution VIII.45, which may not be available until very close to the Standing Committee meeting. We will try to update participants as information from the Group becomes available.

The Subgroup on CoP9 will meet before the Standing Committee meeting proper, and a report of that meeting will be made to SC for full discussion.

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**Memorandum of Understanding  
between  
the Government of Uganda  
and  
the Ramsar Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands**

**Concerning the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties  
to be held in 2005**

**A Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Uganda represented by the Ministry for the Land, Water and Environment and the Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands concerning the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to that Convention to be held in Uganda in 2005**

*Terms used in this Memorandum of Understanding*

*"The Convention" or "the Ramsar Convention": The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, also known as the Wetlands Convention, signed in the Iranian city of Ramsar on 2 February 1971 and amended by the Paris Protocol on 3 December 1982 and the Regina Amendments of 28 May 1987*

*"The Ministry": The Ministry of Water, Land and the Environment of Uganda*

*"The Ramsar Bureau": The secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, located in Gland, Switzerland*

*"COP": Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention*

## **Introduction**

1. This Memorandum of Understanding seeks to establish the responsibilities of the Government of Uganda and the Ramsar Bureau regarding the preparation and holding in Uganda of the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP9).
2. In a letter dated 20 November 2002 addressed to the Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention, Mr. Tom R. Butime, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, transmitted an offer to the Parties to the Convention to host Ramsar COP9. The 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties unanimously accepted this generous invitation on 26 November 2002.

## **The event**

3. COP9 will be a meeting by invitation (not an open congress to anyone interested). It will be held as a regular meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention in accordance with Article 6 of the treaty. The Conference of the Parties meets every three years.

4. COP9 will be governed by the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Contracting Parties adopted at COP7 (Costa Rica, 1999), subject to confirmation at the beginning of each COP. The Standing Committee may submit proposals to introduce changes in the current Rules of Procedures, in line with Resolution VIII.45 of COP8.
5. The Standing Committee of the Convention shall supervise substantive preparations for COP9 and take decisions with regard to the agenda and programme of the meeting. In order to assist it in this task, the Standing Committee has established a Working Group on COP9 chaired by Uganda, which, as host of COP9, is a member of the Standing Committee with a right to vote, from the closing of COP8 in 2002 until the closing of COP 10 in 2008.

### **Delegations**

6. At the time of the signing of this memorandum, the Convention has 136 Contracting Parties. It is expected that by the time COP9 is held, this number will have increased to at least 145 Contracting Parties.
7. Until now, Meetings of the Ramsar COP do not normally have a "ministerial segment", although several delegations are occasionally headed by ministers or vice ministers and several ministers or high-level officials may attend the COP to make a formal statement.

### **Observers**

8. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, only duly accredited delegations of the Contracting Parties have the right to vote during a COP. However, a considerable number of observers are invited on the basis of the following articles of the Rules of Procedure:

Rule 6.1. The Bureau shall notify the United Nations and its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not Party to the Convention, of meetings of the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented as observers.

Rule 7.1. Any body or agency, national or international, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, which has informed the Bureau of its wish to be represented at meetings of the Conference of the Parties may be represented at the meeting by observers, unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.

### **Number of participants**

9. The number of delegates per country varies between one and ten for a total of 350 to 450 delegates of the Parties. It is estimated that approximately 500 observers from abroad and 200 to 300 observers from the host country will participate, making a total of about 1200 participants.

### **Date**

10. Ramsar COP9 must take place during 2005. The Ministry, in consultation with the Ramsar Bureau, shall make a proposal to the Standing Committee concerning the exact date of the event, preferably towards the end of that year.

### **Duration of the meeting**

11. The Ramsar COP normally lasts nine days, if possible beginning on a Monday. The Ramsar Standing Committee at its 30th meeting on 12-16 January 2004 shall determine the duration for COP9. The secretariat of the conference must have access to the Conference Centre three days before the opening, when secretariat facilities (computers network, communications system and general office amenities) shall be in operation, and one day after the closing, for packing purposes. In other words, the Conference Centre should be booked for a minimum of 13 days of secretariat / conference use, if the COP itself would extend for nine days, plus the number of days required to set up the facilities in order to have them ready when the secretariat have to have access to the Conference Centre.

### **Venue**

12. Ramsar COP9 shall be held in the International Conference Centre in Kampala or any other venue as may be agreed upon by the Ramsar and the Ministry.

### **Programme**

13. The programme of COP9 is subject to approval by the Standing Committee of the Convention, but in general terms it may be as follows:

#### Sunday before the opening

- Meeting of the Standing Committee and several working groups
- Beginning of registration of participants and distribution of last-minute documentation

#### Monday

- Continuation of registration
- Morning - Opening ceremony with the presence of the Head of State and members of the Cabinet and Plenary session
- Afternoon - Plenary session
- Evening - Welcome reception offered by the Government of Uganda

#### Tuesday

- Plenary session

#### Wednesday

- Plenary session and regional meetings
- Evening - Official dinner (optional)

#### Thursday

- Technical sessions that begin in plenary and continue in four regional working groups (Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe)

Friday

- Technical sessions (idem)

Saturday

- Morning - Technical sessions (idem)
- Afternoon - Plenary session

Sunday

- Field excursions for participants
- Preparation by the secretariat of final draft resolutions

Second Monday

- Plenary session for adoption of resolutions

Second Tuesday

- Morning - Plenary session for adoption of resolutions
- Afternoon - Closing of the COP and brief meeting of the new Standing Committee

### **Facilities, services and staff required at the Conference Centre**

14. The Ministry shall make the following facilities, services and staff available to COP9 at no cost to the Ramsar Bureau.

14.1 A plenary meeting room

- a. A plenary room with comfortable seating for all participants (about 1200 persons) at tables equipped with a microphone for at least every three to four participants
- b. A raised table for the bureau of eight persons, a rostrum for speakers and an additional table for support staff
- c. Equipment for audiovisual presentations, including PowerPoint, computer beamer, and video, film, slide and overhead projectors
- d. Equipment and earphones (1200) for simultaneous interpretation in three languages (English, French and Spanish) and, if possible, to other languages in the event some Contracting Parties are willing to pay the costs related to the use of other languages (such as German, Arabic, Chinese or Russian). These facilities should include a small lounge area for the interpreters during their rest periods outside the booths, with coffee and refreshment service.
- e. Equipment and material for recording debate in plenary session on cassettes (this does not in apply to the technical sessions).
- f. Equipment for projecting on screens the image of whoever is speaking in the plenary

14.2 Three rooms for regional meetings, all with audiovisual equipment and classroom-style tables with a capacity for 200 persons each. Two of them shall have equipment for simultaneous interpretation: one to English and French for the Europe region and one English and Spanish for the Americas region. The third room will be used by the Asia-

Pacific region, which works only in English. The Africa region use the plenary room with interpretation to English and French.

#### 14.3 Other meeting rooms

- a. A meeting room for the Ramsar Standing Committee ([at] that time operating as the Conference Committee) with a capacity for 50 persons, preferably with a rectangular or square table with a system of simultaneous interpretation to three languages
- b. A minimum of three additional rooms with audiovisual equipment for holding "parallel events" in the mornings, during the noon break and in the evening
- c. A meeting and working room for non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

#### 14.4 Exhibit areas. A large area for exhibit of information material, including posters, publications, videos, etc., equipped with panels, tables, adequate lighting, electrical outlets, etc.

Note: The host country shall designate a government agency to act as recipient of exhibition and other materials sent by delegates before the COP. The agency shall also be responsible for liaising with customs at the airport to facilitate entry of these materials, and have a safe place/room to store such materials, keeping an accurate inventory of all of them.

#### 14.5 Offices for the secretariat and COP Officers. About 20 offices or shared workstations equipped with telephones and computers, preferably in a network, including the following independent offices.

- a. An office for the President of the Conference
- b. Offices for the National Organizing Committee/Ugandan Delegation, as required
- c. Two offices, for the Secretary-General and his assistant, with a small reception area (the Assistant could also be in the ante-room to the Secretary General's office, with enough space for the reception area)
- d. An office for the Deputy Secretary-General
- e. (to be confirmed) Two offices, preferably with natural light for the French and Spanish translators, with space for six workstations each
- f. An office for the head of the documentation service and an assistant
- g. An office for the Ramsar travel agency, and for payment of travel allowance to the delegates whose attendance at the meeting is sponsored by Ramsar
- h. Offices for the four regional coordinators of the Ramsar Bureau and the MedWet Coordinator
- i. Two offices for the four Assistants to the Regional Coordinators
- j. An office of the Conference Rapporteur
- k. An office with six workstations for the staff of the "Earth Negotiations Bulletin"
- l. Four offices for the four International Organization Partners of the Convention

#### 14.6 A registration area. A large room where a counter can be installed, approximately 20 metres long, with a network of six computers for registration of the 1200 participants in a short period of time on Sunday before the opening and on Monday morning of the opening. Beginning on the second full day of the Conference, the registration service

(which will remain open during the entire conference) will relocate to the documentation desk, and the network of computers will be dismantled with only two computers remaining in operation for late registration purposes.

- 14.7 Reproduction of official documents for the COP. One or two large rooms with two large photocopy machines (industrial capacity) for making approximately one million photocopies, and large tables for compilation of documents. The host country shall provide free of charge all the photocopying paper.
- 14.8 Distribution area for documents and general information desk
- a. A room with a counter for distribution to the public and some 50 meters of shelves for holding official documents
  - b. About 50 metres of tables near the documentation centre for self-service distribution of official documents and distribution of other documentation provided by the participants (books, pamphlets, magazines)
  - c. 200 pigeon holes (one for each Contracting Party and official partners, and for the conference secretariat and interpreters)
- 14.9 Media centre
- a. A press room with computers, printers and facilities for e-mail and the Internet access
  - b. A room appropriate for holding press conferences
  - c. An office for the press officers, with appropriate links
- Note: The Host Government shall be responsible for press accreditation and make the necessary arrangements for organizing the press coverage of the event, since the Ramsar Bureau does not have its own press service.
- 14.10 A delegates' lounge with at least 20 computers and printers, and access to e-mail and the Internet
- 14.11 Service centre (for provision of commercial services to the participants)
- a. Telephones and fax machines
  - b. Banking facilities
  - c. Typing and photocopy services
  - d. A post office
  - e. A travel agency
  - f. A souvenir shop
- 14.12 Other facilities and services
- a. A rest area for delegates (bar or lounge)
  - b. Continuous coffee, tea and refreshment service for the delegates during meeting hours. During the meeting, there are no coffee breaks; participants take refreshments as they please.



- c. 24 hours coffee/tea/drinks and food for the secretariat.
- d. Cafeteria and restaurant service that allows a large number of persons to have lunch in a short period of time
- e. Catering service for side events and receptions
- f. On site emergency medical care
- g. Facilities for making announcements and leaving messages at key points of the Conference Centre
- h. Adequate signs and indications in the three official working languages of the Convention in order to help delegates find meeting rooms and other services
- i. A cloakroom
- j. 20 mobile telephones, with local coverage only, for use by the Conference secretariat since the time of arrival in Uganda until the day after the closure of the Conference

14.13 Additional sets of COP9 documents. Preparation of 200 sets of COP9 documents in English, 50 sets in French and 80 sets in Spanish (originals provided by the Ramsar Bureau) to be ready on the first day registration.

14.14 The Secretariat shall have free access to the Conference facilities 24 hours a day.

#### **Local staff**

15. Substantive preparation of the Conference is the responsibility of the secretariat provided by the Ramsar Bureau under the responsibility of the Secretary General of the Convention. The Ministry will make the following local staff available to the secretariat of the Conference; preferably trilingual or at least bilingual (English, French and Spanish).
  - a. A local coordinator in charge, inter alia, of liaison with the Conference Centre, local authorities and service providers, etc.
  - b. Staff of the Conference Centre, including technicians for all the audiovisual, interpretation, electronic equipment and reproduction services. Quick 24-hour access shall be provided to technicians for the computers and photocopiers during the 12 days of use of the Conference Centre.
  - c. Six local employees at the registration/documentation desk, who, if possible, speak the official working languages of the Convention
  - d. Multilingual staff for reception and information
  - e. Assistants for the plenary room and other meeting rooms
  - f. Reception staff at the airport

#### **Participant's manual**

16. The Ministry, in consultation with the Ramsar Bureau, shall prepare and publish in the three official working languages of the Convention a participant's manual with practical information about the conference programme and services available during COP9. The manual shall be ready for distribution at the time of registration.

**Social events**

17. The Ministry shall consider the possibility of organizing the following events and activities, several of which, for example the excursions, can be offered at a cost.
  - a. A welcome reception offered by the host country
  - b. An official conference dinner offered by the President of COP9 for Heads of Delegation
  - c. A cultural event
  - d. A farewell reception (the evening of the second Monday or after the closing ceremony on the afternoon of the second Tuesday)
  - e. Excursions during the morning and outdoor excursions, preferably with the possibility of bird watching
  - f. A programme for accompanying persons, including cultural excursions and tourism. (Normally, delegates joined by their accompanying persons on excursions related to the conference, as well as to dinners and receptions.)
  - g. Pre and post-conference excursions to points of interest related to the topics of COP9, especially to Ramsar sites

**Assistance with regard to accommodations, transportation and reception of participants**

18. Hotels. The Ministry and the Ramsar Bureau shall take steps to block a sufficient number of hotel rooms at prices convenient to the participants in COP9, including five, four, three and two-star hotels. Likewise, the Ministry and the Ramsar Bureau shall agree on an efficient and centralized service for reserving hotel rooms in order to facilitate the stay of participants.
19. Transportation. If the hotels are not within walking distance of the Conference Centre, the Ministry shall make arrangements to provide transportation from the main hotels to the Conference Centre and vice versa with convenient schedules and, if possible, at no cost to the participants.
20. Reception at the airport. The Ministry shall organize a reception service at the airport beginning at a date agreed upon with the Ramsar Bureau and shall facilitate the transfer of participants to their hotels.

**Visas and transportation of material**

21. The Ministry shall take all necessary steps to ensure access to Uganda for all invited delegates and observers, taking into account information provided by the Ramsar Bureau. For this, it will probably be necessary to establish a particular system for providing visas to participants from countries where there are no Ugandan consular services.
22. The Ministry shall negotiate a timely entry into Uganda through Customs for all documentation and equipment considered necessary by the Ramsar Bureau for holding the meeting and its subsequent return to Switzerland after the Conference in a timely manner.

### **Publicity**

23. In consultation with the Ramsar Bureau, a logo and a theme shall be adopted for COP9, which shall be used by the Ministry and the Ramsar Bureau on all stationery and documents related to COP9.
24. The Ministry may take any steps to produce a series of promotion items (posters, neckties, cups, caps, pins, etc.) for sale or free distribution.
25. The Ministry shall consider the possibility of providing participants with a folder, bag or other articles usually provided at this type of event.

### **Global Biodiversity Forum**

26. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) is planning to organize, as has been done at the COPs of almost all the environmental conventions, a meeting of the Global Biodiversity Forum. This will take place on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (until midday) before the opening of COP9. The Ministry shall facilitate, as much as possible, the support required for the organization of this pre-COP event aimed at debating several of the most important topics on the agenda of COP9.

### **Earth Negotiations Bulletin**

27. It is expected that the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) will be interested to cover the proceedings of COP9 by publishing in situ the Earth Negotiations Bulletin. The Ministry shall assist IISD in obtaining the necessary logistics (e.g. printing facilities) for the production of the Bulletin.

### **Bank Account**

28. The Ministry shall assist the Ramsar Bureau with the opening and operation of a foreign currency bank account where the Bureau shall deposit the required resources to pay its expenses related to COP9, including the daily subsistence allowance to be received by the delegates whose expenses are covered by the Bureau. The Bureau shall be entitled to repatriate to Switzerland any remaining balance after paying all its obligations in Uganda.

### **Responsibilities of the Ramsar Bureau**

29. The following aspects are the responsibility of the Ramsar Bureau.
  - 29.1 Provision of the required secretariat support for the smooth functioning of the subgroup on COP9 established by the Standing Committee of the Convention and chaired by Uganda, including preparation of an initial draft of all documents to be considered by that Subgroup.
  - 29.2 All steps needed to prepare all working documents for COP9 for submission for approval of the subgroup and Standing Committee within established deadlines.

- 29.3 Translation of all official documents to the official working languages of the Convention and their distribution within established deadlines.
- 29.4 Dispatch of invitations for COP9 to the Contracting Parties and observers.
- 29.5 Organization of pre-registration of participants, which will be done at the Ramsar Bureau headquarters in Gland, Switzerland. This will include production of badges for all pre-registered participants and on site production of badges for new registrations.
- 29.6 Organization of the secretariat of the Conference, including contracting simultaneous interpretation and translation services to the three official working languages of the Convention during COP9.
- 29.7 Obtaining the funds required to provide assistance for participation of delegates from developing countries and countries in transition that require it, and making all arrangements necessary for their travel and stay.
- 29.8 Providing the all the [sic] conference secretariat services during COP9, under the authority of the Secretary General of the Convention.
- 29.9 Preparation, publication and distribution of the COP9 official conference report and the final version of the resolutions and recommendations, in the three official working languages of the Convention.

### **Ramsar Bureau costs related to the preparation of COP9**

30. The Ramsar Bureau is expected to have the following costs for preparation and running of the COP9 (in Swiss francs, CHF). Note: this budget is tentative and subject to the approval of the Standing Committee.

1. Translation of documents before the meeting, the official conference report and final version of decisions	200,000
2. Reproduction and distribution of pre-COP9 documentation and transportation of material from Geneva to Kampala	100,000
3. Consultants and experts	45,000
4. Temporary support staff in the Ramsar Bureau	25,000
5. Interpretation services in English, French and Spanish contracted by the Bureau (a coordinator and 12 interpreters)	95,000
6. Forty return airfares (economy class) for the Ramsar Bureau staff, interpreters and translators (CHF 1500 per person)	60,000
7. Travel expenses for 40 persons for 12 days (CHF 145 per day)	69,600
8. Preparation and publication in the three official working languages of the official conference report and decisions (about 800 A4 pages in each language)	150,000
9. Miscellaneous expenses	30,000
<b>Total CHF</b>	<b>774,600</b>

31. The Ramsar core budget for the 2003-2005 triennium contains budget line 9 "COP related costs incurred by the Bureau" with a total allocation of CFF 274,058. The Ministry and the Ramsar Bureau, with the support of the Ramsar Standing Committee, shall find the means to cover the Bureau's full remaining costs (CHF 500,542).

**Insurance coverage against damage, accidents and third-party liability**

32. The Ministry will take all steps necessary to ensure that the Conference Centre has insurance coverage against damage, accidents and third-party liability.

**Liaison officials**

33. For all aspects regarding the organization of COP9, the Ramsar Secretary General is the official liaison with the Ministry, except when he designates other officials of the Ramsar Bureau for specific aspects. In the Ministry, the person responsible for relations with the Ramsar Bureau for everything related to the organization and holding of COP9 shall be Mr. Paul Mafabi Assistant Commissioner for Wetlands.

Kampala, Thursday October 23, 2003

For the Ministry of Water, Land and Environment  Col. Kahinda Otafiire Minister for Water Lands and Environment	For the Ramsar Bureau  Dr Peter Bridgewater Secretary General
Endorsed by  Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uganda 28 October 2003	