

## **Decisions of the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**

### **Agenda item 7.2: Preparation of draft Resolutions for COP9**

**Decision SC31-1: The Standing Committee decided that the Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45 should continue its work into the next triennium, with a new Chair to be determined, and it expressed its gratitude to the Subgroup for its work so far.**

### **Agenda item 8.1: DR1 on additional scientific guidance**

**Decision SC31-2: The Standing Committee approved the amended text of DR1 for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration.**

### **Agenda item 8.2: DR1 Annex A on a conceptual framework for wise use**

**Decision SC31-3: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to incorporate the agreed amendments to DR1 Annex A and its explanatory paper and have the document translated and circulated as soon as possible, and to bring it forward for COP9's consideration.**

### **Agenda item 8.9: DR1 Annex D on the revised *Strategic Framework for the List***

**Decision SC31-4: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to incorporate the proposed amendments to DR1 Annex D, add the requested further explanations, and have the document translated and circulated as soon as possible, and to bring it forward for COP9's consideration.**

### **Agenda item 8.3: DR1 Annex B, Integrated Framework for inventory, assessment, and monitoring**

**Decision SC31-5: The Standing Committee encouraged the STRP to complete DR1 Annex B within two weeks and instructed the Secretariat to circulate the document to SC31 participants for comment and approval for bringing it forward for the consideration of COP9.**

### **Agenda item 8.4: DR1 Annex B i), Guidelines on rapid assessment**

**Decision SC31-6: The Standing Committee approved DR1 Annex B i) for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration.**

### **Agenda item 8.5: DR1 Annex C, Integrated Framework for water-related guidance**

**Turkey** expressed a number of objections to the documents' inclusion of mention of the Report of the World Commission on Dams and stated Turkey's view that issues of

transboundary water management and allocation are outside the Convention's mandate. The full text of Turkey's intervention is annexed verbatim to this report.

**Decision SC31-7: The Standing Committee approved DR1 Annexes C, C i) and new C ii) (formerly C iii) for transmittal to the COP for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 8.10: DR1 Annex E, Ecological effectiveness indicators**

**Decision SC31-8: The Standing Committee endorsed the approach being taken on DR1 Annex E and requested the Secretariat to bring the STRP's final version forward for the consideration of COP9.**

**Agenda item 8.11: DR2, Future scientific and technical priorities for STRP and the Convention**

**Decision SC31-9: The Standing Committee requested the Secretariat to consult with the STRP and prepare a short list of recommendations for the STRP's future priority tasks for the COP's consideration. All participants are encouraged to inform the Secretariat within the next two weeks of tasks they feel should be included.**

**Agenda item 8.12: DR4 on sustainable use of fish resources**

**Decision SC31-10: The Standing Committee approved DR4 on fish resources, with the inclusion of the amendments, for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 9.1: DR5 on synergies with other conventions and harmonization of reporting**

**Decision SC31-11: The Standing Committee agreed to transmit DR5, subject to the amendments made, to COP9 for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 9.2: DR6 on transboundary Ramsar sites**

**Decision SC31-12: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to circulate by e-mail an improved version of the DR on transboundary Ramsar sites, as amended, and following a suitable period for comment, to bring the DR forward for the consideration of the COP.**

**Agenda item 9.3: DR7 on Ramsar sites that no longer meet the Criteria**

**Decision SC31-13: The Standing Committee approved DR7 as amended for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration. A draft of the revised version will be circulated as soon as possible.**

**Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards for 2005**

**Decision SC31-14: The Standing Committee unanimously agreed to confer the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards for 2005 upon the following laureates: in the science category, Prof. Shuming Cai of the Chinese Academy of Science; in the**

management category, Dr. SH. A. Nezami Baloochi of the Department of Environment in the Province of Gilan, Islamic Republic of Iran; and in the education category, a shared award between the Wetlands Centre Australia in Shortland, NSW, Australia and Ms Reiko Nakamura of the Ramsar Centre Japan.

**Agenda item 9.8: DR 12, Revised *modus operandi* of the STRP**

**Decision SC31-15:** The Standing Committee established an ad hoc Subgroup on the STRP to agree a revised proposal for the STRP *modus operandi*, which will be circulated to all SC31 participants for comment and brought forward for the consideration of Ramsar COP9. The Subgroup will be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the SC, the Chairs of the Subgroups on COP9, Finance, and Resolution VIII.45, the Chair of the STRP, and the Deputy Secretary General.

**Agenda item 9.5: DR9, Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention**

**Decision SC31-16:** The Standing Committee requested the Secretariat to revise the Strategic Framework further in light of the amendments proposed and circulate a new draft to all participants as soon as possible for comment, before sending it for translation and bringing it forward to consideration by COP9.

**Agenda item 9.6: DR10 on the role of the Convention in disaster prevention, mitigation and adaptation**

**Decision SC31-17:** The Standing Committee approved DR10 on natural disasters, with the inclusion of the amendments, for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration.

**Agenda item 9.7: DR11 on use of the term “Ramsar Secretariat”**

**Decision SC31-18:** The Standing Committee approved DR11 on Bureau terminology for presentation to the COP for its consideration and called upon the Secretariat to propose a brief DR to the COP concerning the precedence of Resolutions.

**Agenda item 9.9: DR15 on Ramsar and poverty reduction**

**Decision SC31-19:** The Standing Committee approved DR15 on poverty reduction, as amended, for presentation to the COP for its consideration, with the inclusion of consensus text on trade concerns to be agreed by Switzerland, Australia, and the USA.

**Agenda item 9.10a: The Convention’s CEPA Programme**

**Decision SC31-20:** The Standing Committee directed that a brief draft Resolution should be presented for the COP’s consideration which establishes a Standing Committee CEPA oversight panel and its terms of reference.

**Decision SC31-21:** The Standing Committee requested the CEPA Programme Officer to prepare an information paper for COP9 on the implementation of the Convention’s CEPA Programme in the first half of its 2003-2008 period.

**Agenda item 9.11: DR16 on the status of Ramsar sites**

**Decision SC31-22: The Standing Committee approved the framework DR on the status of Ramsar sites for the consideration of COP9, to be filled out with the results of the Secretariat's analysis of the National Reports and discussions emerging during the COP.**

**Agenda item 11: DRs submitted by Parties: DOC. SC31-38 on DR17, ongoing processes dealing with water**

**Decision SC31-23: The Standing Committee instructed that a revision of the DR with the proposed amendments will be circulated to the participants for final comment before translation and transmittal to the COP for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 9.4: DR8, Regional initiatives**

The Subgroup on Finance recommended for the COP's approval financial support to the following regional initiatives for 2006: MedWet 26,000 SFR, WacoWet 60,000, High Andean 20,000, Ramsar Centre Iran 20,000 subject to presentation of detailed budget information, and CREHO 80,000, which in total is an overcommitment of 20,000 for the first year of the triennium. The Subgroup recommended full endorsement for WacoWet, ChadWet, NigerWet, WSSD type 2 Partnership, the High Andean Strategy, CREHO, and the Oceania/SPREP initiative, and it recommended that the COP endorse for further development the proposals from RAMCEA, the Himalayan Initiative, the Carpathian Initiative, and the Nordic-Baltic proposal. It was noted that the SC should be empowered by the COP to make allocations for 2007 and 2008.

**Decision SC31-24: The Standing Committee instructed that DR8 on regional initiatives be finalized in light of the Subgroup on Finance's recommendations for funding and endorsement, and circulated to the SC participants for comment before transmittal to the COP for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 10.1: DR13, Financial and budgetary matters**

The Subgroup on Finance recommended for COP9 consideration a budget for 2006-2008 based upon a 4% annual increase, which is basically a 1.5% cost of living increase across the board and additional budget lines for regional initiatives and CEPA Programme activities. In the recommended budget, the new line for regional initiatives has been split between 3a) for ecosystem initiatives and 3b) for capacity building initiatives and the new line 7 covers activities under the CEPA Programme.

**Decision SC31-25: The Standing Committee accepted the Subgroup on Finance's recommendations to approve the Audited Financial Statements for 2004 and to request the Secretariat to report to COP9 on the impacts of IUCN-linked budget provisions for dissolution of the organization and on options for addressing the non-payment of Parties' contributions, and it approved the budget recommended by the Subgroup to be taken forward and proposed for the COP's consideration.**

It was reported that through an administrative oversight the Secretariat undercharged the Parties in their contributions for 2005 in a total amount of 90,000 francs.

**Decision SC31-26: The Standing Committee accepted the Secretary General's recommendation that the Secretariat will manage with the loss caused by the 90,000 franc error and provide information on how that was done.**

**Agenda item 10.2: DR14, Ramsar Endowment Fund**

**Decision SC31-27: The Standing Committee approved DR14, rescinding the establishment of an Endowment Fund, as amended, for transmittal to COP9 for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 12: Rules of Procedure**

**Decision SC31-28: The Standing Committee approved the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure found in DOC. SC31-29 and recommended that the Parties adopt those amendments under Agenda item 4 of the COP.**

**Agenda item 14: Any other business: Request by IWMI for IOP status**

**Decision SC31-29: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to prepare a draft Resolution, entirely within brackets, concerning the admission of IWMI to the International Organization Partners, with an explanatory note on the SC31 discussion.**

**Agenda item 14: Any other business: Presentation by the Republic of Korea concerning COP10**

The Chair observed that evidently all the participants supported and welcomed the proposal and looked forward to receiving a formal proposal and favorable decision by the COP.

**Agenda item 11: DRs submitted by Parties**

**Decision SC31-30: The Standing Committee invited Japan and the Secretariat to finalize the language of a draft Resolution concerning the Asian Wetland Symposium and the Ramsar Centre Japan for transmittal to the COP for its consideration.**

**Agenda item 13: Date of the next Standing Committee meeting**

The next SC meeting will take place at 10 a.m. on 7 November 2005 at the COP9 venue.

**Agenda item 15: Adoption of the meeting report**

**Decision SC31-31: The Standing Committee adopted the first two days' reports, subject to the amendments notified to the rapporteur. The third day's report will be approved by the SC Chair and circulated to all participants.**

**Annex: Intervention of the Turkish delegation under Agenda item 8.5**

Thank you Madame Chair,

At the outset, I would like to thank the STRP and the Ramsar Bureau for their efforts for the preparation of the documents, which are valuable inputs to achieve our common goals, on protection and conservation of wetlands.

Madame Chair,

The Government of Turkey has been attributing great importance to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention since its accession. We are aware of the vital role of the wetlands to sustain our life, and in this context, we support the international cooperation in environmental matters.

Regarding this issue, the Turkish Delegation would like to draw your kind attention to the document DOC.SC31-10 para 61, bullet 3, concerning the Resolution VIII.2 “Report of the World Commission on Dams”.

Turkey is of the opinion that the report of the WCD should not be a basic reference document for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. The Report of the WCD has no worldwide acceptance. The recommendations of the Report are not globally acceptable and they have been subject to criticism of many countries. The Report has put forward 8 conclusive points which were based on the analysis of 125 water storage facilities. However, these water storage facilities constitute only 0.28% of the total completed ones in the world.

Destructions by uncontrolled power give damage not only to people but also the wildlife. If it is not properly controlled, such destructions create social and economic disasters. On the other hand, access to safe drinking water could not be achieved without storing water and there is an urgent need for building more water infrastructures to store water during the rainy seasons in order to avoid water shortages. It is obvious that developing countries have no choice but to store water. During the construction of the necessary infrastructures, environmental changes may occur, but if the necessary precautions are taken, changes will not lead to “destruction”. Briefly, our perspective should be based on an understanding of “balancing the need for the development of water resources with the conservation of the environment.”

Madame Chair,

I would like to also draw your attention to the same document, para 61,62, Resolution VIII.1 “Allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands” which is related to transboundary water management.

Madame Chair,

There is a great heterogeneity in the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political situations of river basins throughout the world. Different countries and regions have different needs and priorities and face different challenges. Accordingly, there cannot be a “one size fits all” solution. Moreover, we are of the opinion that transboundary water resources management is out of the mandate of the Ramsar Convention.

For the reasons which I stated earlier, on behalf of my Delegation, I wish to put on record my country's reservations on the Resolution VIII.1 "Allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands" and Resolution VIII.2 "Report of the World Commission on Dams" during the COP-8 of the Ramsar Convention.

Therefore, Madame Chair, I kindly request the Ramsar Bureau to duly reflect this statement in all of the relevant documents of the 31th Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention which refer to the Resolutions stated above.

I thank you, Madame Chair.