

Agenda item 15.5

**Follow-up on Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27 on the status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this report requested for this meeting, to consider the issues listed below, to advise on activities to be undertaken by regional members of the Standing Committee and those Contracting Parties directly concerned, and to instruct the Secretariat on specific measures to be taken.

1. In the opening operational paragraph 20 of Resolution IX.15, the Contracting Parties reaffirmed their commitment “to fully implement the terms of Article 3.2 [of the Convention] on reporting change and to maintain or restore the ecological character of their Ramsar sites, including utilizing all appropriate mechanisms to address and resolve as soon as practicable the matters for which a site may have been the subject of a report pursuant to Article 3.2; and, once those matters have been resolved, to submit a further report, so that both positive influences at sites and changes in ecological character may be fully reflected in reporting under Article 3.2 and in the reporting to meetings of the COP in order to establish a clear picture of the status and trends of the Ramsar site network at three-year intervals.”
2. At COP9, the Conference of the Parties made specific recommendations to a number of Contracting Parties in paragraph 27 of Resolution IX.15, pursuant to Article 8.2 (e) of the Convention, with respect to alterations to the List or changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites and other wetlands included in the Report of the Secretary General to the Conference of the Parties (COP9 DOC.6) or otherwise brought to the attention of COP9.
3. After COP9, the Standing Committee reiterated the above commitment by the Parties and took Decision SC34-1, requesting “the Secretary General to follow up on Resolution IX.15, para 27, with requests that the Parties concerned report on their actions in response to those recommendations, and that he report on their responses to SC35.”
4. Having taken note of his report to SC35 (DOC. SC35-14), the Standing Committee took Decision SC35-28, instructing “the Secretariat to note the information supplied in the interventions [as summarized in paragraphs 161-171 of the Report of the 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee] and to follow up on them as requested to, and to report back to SC36 on the results. The Committee agreed that the reporting on the status of Ramsar sites should be an agenda item for every Standing Committee meeting.”

**Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites** (*Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27 i-xi*)

5. The Secretariat contacted the governments listed below during 2006 and 2007 and made formal requests, as spelt out in Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27, i-xi. The current situation concerning these eleven cases can be summarized as follows:
- i) **Australia** informed the Secretariat that the Senate called for a review of the management of Ramsar sites in November 2006. This should be seen as a first step to resolving and restoring damage to the ecological character of part of the Gwydir Wetlands: Gingham and Lower Gwydir (Big Leather) Watercourses, the Macquarie Marshes, The Coorong, Lake Alexandrina & Lake Albert, and other Ramsar sites. The Secretariat awaits an update on progress with this review.
  - ii) **Germany** indicated to the Secretariat that it is preparing an updated Ramsar Information Sheet and map for the Mühlenberger Loch Ramsar site, showing the reduced boundaries of the site, and a consolidated report on the compensation measures taken under Article 4.2 and their effectiveness in line with Resolution VIII.20.
  - iii) **Georgia** advised the Secretariat in April 2006 that it will submit an updated Ramsar Information Sheet and map for the Wetlands of Central Kolkheti Ramsar site, showing reduced boundaries of the site, and a consolidated report on the compensation measures taken under Article 4.2 and their effectiveness in line with Resolution VIII.20, after having implemented the compensation measures proposed in an expert report requested by the Ministry of Environment. Since then, no new information was provided.
  - iv) **Ukraine** has not provided any information to the Secretariat regarding the development of the deep water Bystroe navigation channel in the Danube Delta and the specific points listed in Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27:
    - “a) suspend further works pending a full environmental impact assessment being conducted and its findings acted upon;
    - b) make available full documentation including the findings of the environmental impact assessment for Phase II of the project to all stakeholders, including the government of Romania as a potentially affected state;
    - c) ensure that compensatory provision is made for any damage to the ecological character of designated Ramsar sites and other wetlands caused by the works which have already been carried out;
    - d) establish, in cooperation with relevant international organizations and the government of Romania, a programme of international monitoring of the ecological character of the Ramsar sites and Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, in line with the Convention’s guidance on wetland monitoring (Annex to Resolution VI.1; Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 8); and
    - e) in line with Article 5 of the Convention, apply international norms in the provision of information, consultation and involvement in decision-making processes of all stakeholders concerning Phase II of the process.”

- v) Despite several reminders to the Ramsar Authority in **Peru** to advise the Secretariat of steps taken to maintain the ecological character of the Paracas Ramsar site in relation to the construction of the port facility in Lobería beach within the buffer zone of the Ramsar site, the Secretariat has not received a response to date.
- vi) The Secretariat reiterated in October 2007 its request to **Colombia** to submit up-to-date information about the measures taken for the conservation of the Sistema Delta Estuarino del Río Magdalena, Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta Ramsar site during the development of a multi-purpose port facility in Palermo. So far, the Secretariat has not yet received a response.
- vii) **Kenya** reported that they successfully held national consultations on the threats to Kenya's Ramsar sites and are preparing a workshop report. The consultations focused on two sites: Lakes Naivasha and Baringo. Local stakeholders are looking forward to a Ramsar Advisory Mission visit after December 2007. Kenya has started the process of listing the Tana Delta as a Ramsar site.
- viii) **Chile** included the Carlos Anwandter Sanctuary Ramsar site in the Montreux Record on 6 October 2006. Further information about its status is included in the report of the Secretary General to this meeting (DOC. SC36-2). Some measures were taken by CONAF, the national forest management authority.
- ix) Reminders were sent by the Secretariat to the Ramsar Authority in the **Dominican Republic** to provide information on the current situation concerning the enactment of legislation weakening the status of protected areas, including Ramsar sites.
- x) The **Republic of Korea** has not yet advised the Secretariat of the current situation concerning the sea-wall construction and reclamation of the Saemangeum coastal wetlands and the impact of the construction works undertaken to date on the internationally important migratory waterbird populations dependent upon these wetlands.
- xi) **Greece** has not yet advised the Secretariat on steps being taken to restore the ecological character of the seven Greek Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record with a view to removing these sites from the Record, and the steps taken to maintain the ecological character of the three sites removed from the Montreux Record in 1999.

**Administrative Authority responses concerning third-party reports of negative changes at Ramsar sites** (*Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27 xii*)

6. The last subparagraph of Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27 (xii) requested “that the governments listed in Annex 3b of COP9 DOC.6, and which have not already done so, make a report to the Ramsar Secretariat without delay under Article 3.2 concerning reports of change or likely change to the ecological character of those Ramsar sites listed in this Annex”. A number of such reports have been received by the Secretariat since COP9, but for a number of cases a response from the Administrative Authority is still outstanding.
7. The table below shows Ramsar sites for which, since COP8, first reports of human-induced negative changes having occurred, occurring or likely to occur (Article 3.2) were

received by the Secretariat from third parties before COP9. The list is based on the table in Annex 3b of COP9 DOC.6 and is an update of the list submitted to Standing Committee 35 in DOC.35-14. It does, however, no longer contain sites where the danger of negative change no longer exists, i.e. those sites marked with “OK” in the Status column of the table submitted to Standing Committee 35. On the other hand, in the table below, some new sites have been added, where the Secretariat received reports about new dangers since the 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of Standing Committee.

8. Information provided by the national Ramsar Authorities to the Secretariat since COP9, under Article 3.2, is summarized in the right-hand column. Where reports were sent, they were asked to indicate either that it was possible to find a solution avoiding negative changes or that negative changes were unavoidable, in which case the country therefore evoked “urgent national interest” under Article 2.5 and is preparing compensation measures in compliance with the requirements of Article 4.2.
9. If the Status column shows “Change”, this indicates that the Administrative Authority has reported ongoing work to find lasting solutions or a remaining need to define or implement mitigation or compensation measures. If it shows “Status unknown”, this indicates that the Administrative Authority has not yet provided a conclusive report to the Secretariat.

Country	Sites	Status	Negative Changes
Australia	Moreton Bay	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Austria	Untere Lobau	Change	compensation need for planned road constructions remains
Belgium	Marais d’Harchies	Change	potential impacts of the reopening of a canal are monitored
Bulgaria	Belene Islands Complex	Change	wetland restoration project is under way
Chile	Santuario Carlos Anwandter	Change	was put on Montreux Record since 6 October 2006
Croatia	Delta Neretve Kopacki Rit	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Hungary	Lake Balaton	Change	potential of water quality deterioration
India	East Calcutta Wetlands Keoladeo National Park Sasthamkotta Lake	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Iceland	Myvatn-Laca region Thjörðsarver	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Ireland	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Italy	Stagno di Cagliari Stagno di Molentargius	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Kenya	Lake Naivasha	Status unknown	no reaction from AA
Kyrgyz Republic	Isyk-Kul State Reserve with the Lake Isyk-Kul	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Malaysia	Pulau Kukup Sungai Pulai Tanjung Piai	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Moldova	Lower Prut Lakes	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Netherlands	Bargerveen	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Norway	Froan Nature Reserve & Landscape Protection Area	Status unknown	no final report by AA

	Ilene & Pesterödkilen Kurefjorden	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Poland	Biebrza National Park	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Portugal	Ria Formosa	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Romania	Small Island of Braila	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Russian Federation	Kurgalsky Peninsula	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Serbia and Montenegro	Skadarsko Jezero	Change	Ramsar Advisory Mission in October 2006, no final report by AA
Spain	Albufera de Valencia Delta del Ebro Mar Menor Pantano de El Hondo S'Albufera de Mallorca Txingudi	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	RAM in December 2006 no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
Sweden	Umeälv delta	Status unknown	no final report by AA
Turkey	Gediz Delta Göksu Deltası	Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA
Ukraine	Kartal Lake; Kugurlui Lake; Kyliske Mouth	Change	potential impacts by the Bystroe navigation channel (cf. above)
United Kingdom	Chesil Beach & The Fleet Dengie (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) Lewis Peatlands The Swale	Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown Status unknown	no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA no final report by AA
USA	Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve	Status unknown	no final report by AA
<b>New sites with third-party reports received since Standing Committee 35</b>			
Honduras	Parque Nacional Jeanette Kawas	Status unknown	no report by AA
Russian Federation	Moroshechnaya River	Status unknown	no report by AA
Serbia	Stari Begej/Carska Bara	Status unknown	no report by AA
Slovenia	Skocjan Caves	Change	potential impacts from a reservoir project
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Prespa Lake	Status unknown	no reply by AA