

Agenda item 15.6

Review of COP decisions (Resolution IX.17)

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to advise on what further work should be undertaken, capacity permitting, for SC37 and COP10 consideration.

1. The Standing Committee will recall that at its 35th meeting it received a report on work undertaken for the Secretariat by Dave Pritchard (RSPB/BirdLife International) pursuant to Resolution IX.17. This report and analysis examined all COP decisions from 1980 to 2005 and identified where there could be opportunities for retirement or consolidation of decisions, as well as certain decisions where there could be issues of inconsistency or contradiction.
2. At SC35, the Standing Committee:
 - expressed its profound gratitude to RSPB and BirdLife International for having released time for Dave Pritchard to undertake his review of the Ramsar Convention's decisions from 1980 to 2005 with a view to rationalization and consolidation (Decision SC35-25); and
 - urged that further work should be encouraged on the review of past decisions, but that legal advice should be sought only if and when major problems should arise, and that it would be worth while to present the Convention's decisions in thematic groupings, with a list of decisions currently in effect. The Committee felt that consolidations and retirements of past decisions should be undertaken only when necessary, but that all new Resolutions should include retirements of superseded earlier decisions when appropriate. The SC encouraged Dave Pritchard to look at what retiring specific blocks of decision might look like, and asked the Secretariat to assess ways and means of analyzing the implementation of past decisions in order to identify any redundancies. And the SC requested a report for SC36 that could be communicated to COP10 (Decision SC35-26).
3. Unfortunately, owing to a change in the work circumstances of Dave Pritchard since SC35, which has led to a significant reduction in his capacity and time available to work with the Convention and Secretariat, it has not yet been possible to further progress this work requested under Decision SC35-26.
4. The advice of the Standing Committee is sought concerning if and how this matter might be progressed prior to its 37th meeting, and what information and advice might be transmitted to COP10 on this matter.