

**CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**  
**38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee**  
**Changwon, Republic of Korea, 27 October 2008**

Agenda item 2

**DOC. SC38-2**

**Monday, 27 October 2008**  
**10:00-18:00 h**

## **Draft Annotated Agenda**

**Venue:** CECO Conference Centre, Changwon, Republic of Korea (COP10 venue) – Grand Conference Room

**Important Note:** Participants are advised to arrive at the venue with sufficient time for registration before the meeting. Badges will be a requirement for gaining access to the building. Please also note that a passport or other appropriate identification document with photograph will be required for registration.

The Registration Desk will be open from 08:30 to 18:00 h on Monday 27 October.

**10:00 - 13:00**

- 1. Welcoming remarks** by the Chair and the host country
- 2. Report on the arrangements for COP10** by the Secretary General and the host country
- 3. General review of the Ramsar COP10 Provisional Agenda** (DOC. SC38-3)

Following the issuing of COP10 DOC. 1 Rev. 1, the Secretariat has identified the need to make a number of mostly minor adjustments and corrections to certain times of COP events, the addition of a meeting of the Conference Committee on the morning of the first full day of COP, and some changes to the titles of some special presentations owing to availability of speakers. Revision 2 of the Provisional COP10 Agenda, which includes these amendments, is provided as DOC. SC38-3.

Under Rule of Procedure 25, “At the first session of each ordinary meeting [of the COP], the President of the previous ordinary meeting, or in the absence of the President, a representative of the same Party, shall preside until the Conference of the Parties has elected a President for the meeting.”

Thus in the opening plenary session on the morning of 29 October, Uganda will chair the session for Agenda items III, IV and V until the COP10 President is elected.

- 4. COP10 Rules of Procedure**

Following the agreement at the 37<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (SC37) to propose certain changes to the COP Rules of Procedure, a small number of further issues have

come up that necessitate some further amendments to those recommended in COP10 DOC. 2. These are provided in DOC. SC38-4, as a Rev 1 to COP10 DOC. 2.

The further proposed changes are as follows:

- a) Concerning the amendment recommended by SC37 to Rule 5 on the deadline for the submission of proposals by Contracting Parties for consideration by COP to be changed from 40 days to 60 days, it is necessary to make an amendment to Rule 35 (1) which also refers to this deadline.
- b) **Appointment of the COP President.** By tradition, for each meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, it is the privilege of the host country, if it so wishes, to propose to the Conference Committee and COP the name of the person to be appointed as COP President. This is currently covered under Rule 21 (1):

“At the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting, a President and two Vice-Presidents shall be elected from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting, on the basis of a proposal put forward by the Conference Committee. In preparing its proposal on this matter, the Conference Committee shall consider first the candidate(s) put forward by the host country of the meeting for the post of President of the meeting.”

Whilst Rule 22 covers what happens if the COP President has to be temporarily absent from a plenary session or part of a plenary session (a Vice-President then takes over the role), Rule 23 covers what happens if the COP President or a Vice-President is unable to continue to undertake the responsibilities of their role throughout the COP:

“If the President and/or the Vice Presidents resign or are otherwise unable to complete the assigned term of office or to perform the functions of the office, a representative of the same Party shall be named by the Party concerned to replace the said officer for the remainder of that officer’s mandate.”

Increasingly, the nature of the office of COP President is of such importance that the host country proposes the appointment of a very senior person as President, in some cases a minister. However, such senior people have many demands on their time and in the past have been able to attend only one or two plenary sessions, such as the opening and closing plenaries. In such a case, under current Rule 23 a senior person appointed as COP President should step down after the first plenary and appoint a replacement President from that delegation, and then cannot return as President towards the end of the COP process. The Secretariat notes that this situation arose at COP9 but on that occasion the Rules of Procedure on this matter were not followed.

Following discussion with the Republic of Korea it is likely that this situation will arise at COP10 – it is anticipated that a minister will be proposed for appointment as President but will be able to attend the COP only on its opening and closing days.

Accordingly the Secretariat and Republic of Korea propose an amendment to the Rules of Procedure in order to address this matter for COP10 and subsequent meetings of the COP, whereby the COP is invited to appoint both a President and an Alternate President from the host country (as well as the two Vice-Presidents). This

will permit continuity of the Presidency through the COP and also permit the return of the President to preside over the closing plenary session. The Secretariat notes that precisely this approach, and the reasons for it, were addressed by CITES under its Rules of Procedure in 2007.

This proposal requires some wording adjustments to Rules 21-24 concerning Officers of the COP and to certain other Rules where mention is made of the COP President. These are provided in COP10 DOC. 2 Rev. 1.

Since the Rules of Procedure for COP10 will be adopted under Agenda item IV, prior to the Election of COP Presidents under Agenda item V, the appointment of a COP10 Alternate President can then be made subject to the adoption of these proposed amendments.

The Standing Committee is invited to recommend these further Rules of Procedure amendments to COP10 for adoption.

## **5. Nomination of COP10 President and Vice-Presidents**

The Rules of Procedure (as proposed for amendment above) state that “At the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting, a President, [an Alternate President], and two Vice-Presidents shall be elected from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting, on the basis of a proposal put forward by the Conference Committee. In preparing its proposal on this matter, the Conference Committee shall consider first the candidate(s) put forward by the host country of the meeting for the post[s] of President [and Alternate President] of the meeting.”

The Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Korea will bring forward proposals for the presidency. The Secretariat will bring proposals for the two Vice-Presidents, taking into account geographical distribution, official languages, and Parties that have held these positions in previous COPs.

## **6. Appointment of the Credentials Committee**

The Rules of Procedures state that: “A Credentials Committee composed of one Party from each of the Ramsar regions, elected at the first session of each ordinary meeting on the basis of a proposal from the Conference Committee, shall examine the credentials and submit its report to the Conference of the Parties for approval.”

The Secretariat will consult with pre-registered delegates about their willingness to serve in the Committee and will bring proposals for nomination, and it anticipates that this matter will also be discussed and as necessary finalized during the planned regional group meetings on 28 October 2008, before appointments are made under Agenda item VI on 29 October.

The Secretary General has designated Mr Dave Pritchard to serve the Committee on the Secretariat's behalf during the COP.

The proposed initial schedule of meetings of the Credentials Committee is as follows:  
Wednesday, 29 October, 13:15-14:45; 18:15-19:45 (CECO Room 8, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)  
Thursday, 30 October, 13:15-14:45 (CECO Room 8, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

The Credentials Committee needs to have completed its work not later than 18:00 on Saturday, 1 November, in order to be able to prepare its report to plenary under Agenda item XVI. At its meeting on 30 October the Committee, if its work should still be unfinished, will determine a schedule of times and location of future meetings to achieve the deadline.

In its COP9 report, the Credentials Committee noted that there had been unresolved problems with the Credentials from several central Asian Parties, and the Parties at COP9 requested the Secretariat to explore options to resolve this situation before COP10. The Secretariat has explored this matter further, including with the secretariats of other environmental conventions. A short note on this matter is provided in DOC. SC38-5.

The Secretariat has concluded that no further amendments to the Rules of Procedure are necessary at this time, since Rule 18, paragraph 3, already provides a mechanism for addressing this issue, and the Parties concerned have been informed of this provision.

## **7. Establishment of COP10 Committees**

The draft Agenda for the COP includes: “Item VI. Appointment of the Credentials Committee and any other committees.” Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure, the COP may wish to establish, as is usual practice, a Committee on Finance and Budget. The Secretariat is not proposing the establishment of any other COP10 Committees, but Standing Committee members may wish to bring up additional needs.

The Standing Committee should note that some delegates will be staying in hotels 30 minutes or more away from the COP venue and, owing to the anticipated daily transport arrangements for delegates between hotels and the COP venue, committees and any contact groups that are established may need to meet mostly during the lunchtime period (13:15-14:45), although the opportunity for some early evening meetings is likely.

### **7.1 Committee on Finance and Budget**

The Secretariat proposes that the core group of this Committee be the members of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee, namely USA (Chair), Benin, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, and Samoa.

In addition, consistent with achieving regional balance, the Secretariat suggests inviting some additional Parties to serve on the Committee. The Secretariat will bring a list of possible Parties in case this proposal is accepted. In any event, as established by the Rules of Procedure, meetings of the Committee should be open, unless otherwise decided by the Committee. The Secretary General will serve on this Committee *ex officio*, assisted by the Secretariat's Finance Officer, Anna Goodwin, supported by the outgoing Finance Administrator, Paulette Kennedy.

Since the draft Resolution (COP10 DR2) on financial and budgetary matters will be introduced in plenary under Agenda item XIV on the morning of Thursday, 30 October, the schedule of meetings of the Committee is proposed as follows:

Thursday, 30 October, 13:15-14:45; 18:15-19:45 (Room 6, floor 3)

Friday, 31 October, 13:15-14:45; 18:15-19:45 (Room 6, floor 3)

Saturday 1 November, 13:15-14:45 (Room 6, floor 3)

However, once the Committee has been established under Agenda item VI, it may wish to begin its work as soon as possible, in which case it could also meet on Wednesday, 29 October, as follows: 13:15-14:45 (Room 6, floor 3); 18:15-19:45 (Room 607). Additional meetings could be agreed by the Committee, if required.

**14:00 – 18:00**

## **8. Establishment of contact groups**

A number of draft Resolutions may prove to require consultations among Parties outside of the plenary sessions in order to arrive at a consensus text. It may therefore be necessary for the COP President to establish open-ended contact groups in such cases. The Secretariat will conduct informal consultations with registered Contracting Party delegations in order to identify potential Lead Parties for contact groups, should they need to be established.

As far as possible, a senior member of Secretariat staff will be made available to provide support and advice to any contact group established by the COP, and where a contact group is consulting on a draft Resolution with scientific and technical content, members of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) will also be available to provide technical advice.

Some meeting rooms have been earmarked for contact groups to conduct their work, should they be needed – the Standing Committee should note, however, that the availability of such rooms is limited. Furthermore, in order to facilitate participation in contact groups by all Contracting Party delegations who wish to take part, including Parties with small delegations, the Secretariat will endeavour as far as possible to arrange for no more than two contact groups to be meeting simultaneously.

Where possible, when consultations among Parties are needed, the COP President will seek to encourage these to be undertaken through informal consultations and groups, especially if one or more contact groups has already been established.

Since most draft Resolutions will be introduced in plenary on the morning of Thursday, 30 October, the first time any such contact group could meet is the lunchtime break on that day. However, if any issues are raised under Agenda item XII (Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties) on the afternoon of Wednesday, 29 October, which need the establishment of a contact group, it could first meet briefly at the close of the plenary on that day, before the Host Country reception. Since there are host country and other receptions in the evenings of 29 and 30 October, most of the work of contact groups should take place during the lunchtime break.

Times available for any contact groups to meet are as follows:

Wednesday, 29 October, 18:15-19:00  
Thursday, 30 October, 13:15-14:45; 18:00-19:30  
Friday, 31 October, 13:15-14:45; 18:15-19:45  
Saturday 1 November, 13:15-14:45  
Sunday 2 November, 10:00-13:00

Contact groups will need to complete their work no later than 13:00 on Sunday, 2 November, so as to give time for the Secretariat to finalise, translate and copy any revised draft Resolutions for circulation to delegates on Monday, 3 November, for final plenary approval.

## **9. Issues arising from previous COP Resolutions and Recommendations**

Under this Agenda item XII, scheduled for the afternoon plenary session of Wednesday, 29 October, the COP will consider any issues from previous COPs that may not have been covered by the reports of the Standing Committee Chair, the STRP Chair, and the Secretary General, or by COP10 draft Resolutions.

The Secretariat is aware of two such issues which would most appropriately be addressed under this Agenda item and will advise the Standing Committee if any others are identified before COP. These two issues are summarised below.

### **9.1 COP9 draft Resolution 6 on Transboundary Ramsar Sites**

A note from the Secretariat is provided in DOC. SC38-6, which outlines intersessional activities and discussions on this matter and proposes to the Standing Committee how this issue could best be addressed during COP10 under COP10 Agenda item XII.

### **9.2 The legal status of the Secretariat**

Information on further progress achieved by the Secretariat on this matter since SC37 is provided in COP10 Information Paper COP10 DOC. 20. That paper noted that at the time of its preparation further legal advice consultancy work was underway. At the time of preparation of this agenda, the consultant's draft report has recently been received and is under review by the Secretariat, and it is anticipated that the Secretariat will be able to provide Standing Committee and COP10 with a further Information Paper on these matters shortly before COP.

COP9 Resolution IX.10 requested the Secretary General to report back to COP10 on progress on this matter. Whilst this is fulfilled by the information provided in the Report of the Secretary General and the COP10 Information Papers, it can be anticipated that Parties will wish to consider the issue further in some depth during COP10, and this might be best achieved under Agenda item XII, particularly as this is early in the COP agenda and would permit the maximum time during COP should Parties wish to establish a working group or other COP process to progress the matter.

Alternatively COP10 DR5 on “Facilitating the work of the Ramsar Secretariat at international level” is also relevant to this matter, and the COP debate on Secretariat legal status could also be taken following the introduction of that draft Resolution under Agenda item XV.

#### **10. Consideration of draft COP10 Resolution on “The Changwon Declaration”**

At Standing Committee 37, the Committee agreed to the Republic of Korea’s proposal to submit a “Changwon Declaration” to COP10 as a draft Resolution. It was agreed (Decision SC37-14) that preparation of the draft Resolution would take place following SC37 and then be brought to SC38 and the Conference Committee for submission to COP10 under Rule of Procedure 35.

This draft Resolution (COP10 DR32) has, as agreed, been prepared by a drafting group from the Republic of Korea, the STRP, and the Secretariat. This is provided in English in DOC. SC38-7 for approval for submission to COP10. An explanatory note from the Secretariat in DOC. SC38-7 outlines the process followed, as well as the purpose and objectives for the Declaration and its use following COP10.

At the start of COP10 the Secretariat will arrange for COP10 DR32 to be translated into French and Spanish, so that it can be made available early in the COP in all official languages.

#### **11. COP10 opening ceremony and social functions**

The Secretary General and host country representative will provide a review of the arrangements and procedures. A programme for the opening ceremony, which includes the presentation of the Ramsar Awards scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, 28 October, will be available at the meeting.

At the time of preparation of this agenda paper, the Secretariat is aware of the following planned social functions:

28 October, 19:00 hrs: Reception hosted by the Republic of Korea Minister of the Ministry of the Environment

29 October, 19:00 hrs: Reception hosted by the Republic of Korea Minister of the Ministry of Land, Transportation and Maritime Affairs

30 October, 19:30 hrs: Cocktail party hosted by the EU Presidency

3 November, 19:00 hrs: Reception hosted by the Governor of the Gyeongnam Provincial Government

#### **12. Conference Committee**

Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure (as proposed for amendment – see para 4 above) indicates that:

“The voting members of the Standing Committee of the Convention shall constitute the Conference Committee, which shall also include the elected President [and Alternate President] and Vice Presidents of the current meeting. Observers may be invited to attend meetings of the Conference Committee, if required. The

Conference Committee shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Standing Committee during the period previous to the current meeting.

The Conference Committee shall meet at least once daily to review the progress of the meeting, including the draft of the report of the previous day prepared by the Secretariat, and to provide advice to the President in order to ensure the smooth development of the rest of the proceedings.”

Thus, under Rule 26 the meetings of the Conference Committee are closed, and not generally open to observer Parties or organizations, unless an observer Party or organization is invited specifically by the Committee to contribute to an issue or issues.

It is proposed that the Conference Committee meet every day from 08:45 to 09:45 in The Grand Conference Room, starting from Wednesday, 29 October. Should the Standing Committee feel it necessary, the Conference Committee could also meet on 28 October, but as the COP will not have formally started by that time, it may not be necessary. Likewise, on the day of field excursions (Sunday, 2 November), it may not be necessary for the Conference Committee to meet.

According to Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure, “(c) There shall be no requirement to provide interpretation in committee or working group sessions, including the Conference Committee.” For COP10, however, thanks to the generosity of the host country, simultaneous interpretation will be provided for the Conference Committee meetings. However, the Standing Committee practice of providing documentation only in English must also apply to the Conference Committee, for reasons of cost as usual but particularly because of inadequate turnaround times for translation and because the translation teams will be otherwise engaged on COP documents throughout the COP.

In line with established practice, the Secretary General and/or Deputy Secretary General will be available *ex officio* at Conference Committee meetings so as to provide advice on issues and processes as needed.

### **13. Approval of Small Grants Fund 2008 projects**

See document SC38-8.

### **14. Agenda for the 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee**

The 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee will take place in the Grand Conference Room, CECO, on Tuesday, 4 November, from 18:30 to 19:30 hours.

This will be the first meeting of the new members of the Standing Committee elected under COP Agenda item XIX. It is a short meeting with three main purposes:

- i) for the new Standing Committee to elect from its members the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee;
- ii) for the Committee to elect one member from each Ramsar region to serve on the Standing Committee’s Subgroup on Finance, and from those members to elect the Chair of the Subgroup; and



iii) to agree the date and venue of the Committee's next meeting, its 40<sup>th</sup>.

The proposed outline agenda for the 39<sup>th</sup> meeting is thus as follows:

Agenda item 1: Opening remarks

Agenda item 2: Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 3: Election of the Subgroup on Finance

Agenda item 4: Date and venue of the next meeting

Agenda item 5: Any other business

Agenda item 6: Closing remarks

**15. Any other business**