

Agenda item 16

**Update 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 paragraph 18 of Resolution X.13 (2008), the Contracting Parties reaffirmed their commitment “to implement fully 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 employing all appropriate mechanisms to address and resolve as soon as possible the matters for which a site may have been the subject of an Article 3.2 report; 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 to meetings of the Conference of the Parties in order to establish a clear picture of the status and trends of the Ramsar site network”.
2. The Standing Committee began to monitor this commitment on a regular basis during its meetings following COP9 (2005). It formalized this procedure during its 35<sup>th</sup> meeting in 2007 by taking Decision SC35-28, agreeing “that the reporting on the status of Ramsar sites should be an agenda item for every Standing Committee meeting”.
3. This document fulfills those reporting requirements and provides an update on the status of Ramsar sites. The document lists changes reported to the Secretariat from the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of Standing Committee in May 2009 (SC40) to 28 February 2010. In addition, it updates any earlier information provided to SC40 in document DOC. SC40-15, or before, and additional information provided by Parties during the meeting, as listed in the Report of the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of Standing Committee.

**Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites**

*(referring to the specific cases listed in paragraph 27 of Resolution X.13)*

4. Paragraph 27 of Resolution X.13 on the status of Ramsar sites lists specific recommendations with respect to changes in ecological character at 14 Ramsar sites. Since the adoption of this Resolution at COP10, three of these cases have been resolved successfully and figure therefore no longer in this report (Dalai Lake in China, Kolleru Lake in India, and Bluefields Bay Wetland System in Nicaragua).

5. Since SC40 (May 2009), the Ramsar Secretariat has received updated information, listed below, referring to the current status of three other Ramsar sites listed in paragraph 27 of Resolution X.13:
  - i) Australia provided the Secretariat with an update on measures to address severe water shortages in The Coorong, Lake Alexandrina & Lake Albert Ramsar site, and considered that the inclusion of the site on the Montreux Record was inappropriate at this time.
  - ii) The Republic of Korea provided the Secretariat in November 2009 with an update on the marine and ecosystem monitoring being conducted in the Saemangeum area, and stated that the monitoring results will be submitted to the Secretariat within the year.
  - iii) The United Republic of Tanzania provided the Secretariat with updated information on threats to the Lake Natron Basin Ramsar site, following the publication of a call for tenders by the Tanzania Investment Centre for supply of machinery and equipment for a soda ash/caustic soda processing plant to be located at the Ramsar site. This machinery is intended for KDCL Minerals Ltd., whose business includes prospecting and exploration of minerals.
  
6. The Ramsar Secretariat has **not** received any new information since COP10 - and in some cases even since COP9 in 2005 – concerning the current status of the remaining eight Ramsar sites listed below. The following sub-paragraphs are “quotations” from paragraph 27 of Resolution X.13 that still remain valid. The Administrative Authorities in the countries concerned are urged to follow up rapidly on the recommendations expressed by COP10, and in some cases already by COP9:
  - i) “pursuant to the recommendation in Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27. ii), that the government of Germany submit a consolidated report on the compensation measures taken under Article 4.2 and their effectiveness, concerning the Mühlenberger Loch Ramsar site, in line with Resolution VIII.20;”
  - ii) “pursuant to the recommendation in Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27. xi) and the recommendations of previous meetings of the COP, that the government of Greece advise the Secretary General on the general 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 further advise the Secretary General of steps taken to maintain the ecological character of the three sites removed from the Montreux Record in 1999;”
  - iii) “that the government of Iraq consider applying the Montreux Record procedures concerning the anticipated ecological character changes due to natural and human-made impacts on the Hawizeh Marsh Ramsar site;”
  - iv) “that the government of Kenya further consider the use of the Montreux Record procedure in relation to current issues of ecological character in the Lake Naivasha and Lake Baringo Ramsar sites, and provide the Secretary General with further information concerning any changes to proposals for major conversion of the Tana delta for sugar production;”

- v) “that the government of Malaysia provide a report to the Secretary General on the ecological character impacts to Pulau Kukup, Sungai Pulai, and Tanjung Pulai Ramsar sites from recent and planned coastal industrial developments;”
- vi) “that the government of Nepal consider applying the Montreux Record procedures concerning the recent ecological character changes due to flooding at the Koshi Tappu Ramsar site, and consider requesting a Ramsar Advisory Mission to advise on appropriate actions for the future management of this site;”
- vii) “pursuant to the recommendation in Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27. iv), that the government of Ukraine provide without delay full and updated information concerning the development of the deep water Bystroe navigation channel in the Danube Delta, including information concerning works undertaken after the adoption of Resolution IX.15 and report on progress of the transboundary cooperation with Romania and Moldova, as suggested by the Ramsar Advisory Mission in July 2008, carried out in the framework of the on-the-spot appraisal visit of the Council of Europe with the participation of other international organizations;”
- viii) “that the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) inform the Secretary General of any further developments in the proposals for canal construction and the rehabilitation of ecological character in the Ras Al Kor Ramsar site;”

### **Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites**

*(referring to the specific cases listed in paragraph 10 of Resolution X.13)*

7. The introductory paragraph 10 of Resolution X.13 lists 22 cases where 18 Parties submitted Article 3.2 reports about ecological change at Ramsar sites to the Secretariat. In addition to the cases in this list that were subsequently taken up in the operative paragraph 27 of Resolution X.13 (addressed above), the Secretariat can report on further developments, since SC40 (May 2009), on three of the cases originally listed in paragraph 10 of Resolution X.13:
  - i) Colombia provided new information to the Secretariat, pursuant to the recommendation by COP9 in Resolution IX.15, paragraph 27.vi), reporting on progress in addressing ecological status issues of the Sistema Delta Estuarino del Río Magdalena, Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta Ramsar site and agreeing to keep the Secretariat informed of any further developments.
  - ii) Denmark organized a meeting on 16 March 2009 with the national Ramsar focal point and the authorities of Greenland and the Ramsar Secretariat on proposed compensation measures and the monitoring of their success, following the establishment of infrastructures inside the Heden (Jameson Land) Ramsar site, due to the development of a molybdenum mining site nearby. Following this meeting, Ramsar Advisory Mission N°61 took place on 8-16 June 2009 to address the strategic framework for Ramsar sites in Greenland. Its report, recommendations and conclusions are available on the Convention’s website.

- iii) Peru informed the Secretariat about its efforts to avoid ecological changes at the Reserva Nacional de Paracas Ramsar site.
8. For the remaining eight Ramsar sites listed in paragraph 10 of Resolution X.13, no further information has been received at the Secretariat since COP10 (November 2008). This concerns notably the Czech Republic and Austria (Floodplain of the Lower Dyje River, Litovelske Pomoraví, Poodří, Donau-March-Thaya Auen, Untere Lobau), Belarus (Osveiski), Slovenia (Skocjan Caves) and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Prespa Lake). The Secretariat therefore calls upon these Contracting Parties to provide updated information on these cases outlined in paragraph 10 of Resolution X.13.

### **Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites**

*(referring to the specific cases listed in Annex 2 of Resolution X.13)*

9. Annex 2 of Resolution X.13 lists Ramsar sites in which human-induced negative changes have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur, as indicated in COP10 National Reports received by 1 October 2008. The Annex lists 25 additional Ramsar sites (not included in the Montreux Record, cf. below, or already addressed in paragraphs 4-8 above), where the Secretariat has not received any new information since COP10 until 28 February 2010. This concerns Ramsar sites in Armenia (Lake Sevan), Austria (Stauseen am Unteren Inn), Belarus (Yelnia, Sporovski, Zvanets), Bosnia & Herzegovina (Hutovo Blato), Comoros (Khartala, Mt Ntrigui), Iceland (Grunnafjörður, Myvatn-Laxá region, Thjörsdárver), Liberia (Mesurado River, Lake Piso), Mauritania (Parc national du Banc d'Arguin), Lebanon (Palm Islands Nature Reserve), Nigeria (Nguru Lake), Norway (Froan, Ilene/Presterødskilen, Kurefjorden, Øra), Romania (Danube Delta), Spain (Albufera de Valencia, Marjal de Pego-Oliva), Sweden (Umeälv delta), and Zambia (Kafue Flats), as listed in Annex 2 of Resolution X.13. The Parties concerned are therefore requested to pass further information on these sites without delay to the Secretariat.

### **Changes in the ecological character of specific Ramsar sites**

*(referring to additional cases where the Secretariat received information referring to Article 3.2)*

10. Furthermore, the Secretariat received information on 64 additional cases where “the ecological character of a Ramsar site has changed, is changing or is likely to change as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference” (Article 3.2) not covered in paragraphs 4-9 above. They concern the following Ramsar sites in Albania (Butrint), Algeria (Complexe des zones humides de la plaine de Guerbes-Sanhadja), Australia (Gippsland Lakes, Great Sandy Strait (including Great Sandy Strait, Tin Can Bay, and Tin Can Inlet), Maquarie Marshes, Moreton Bay), Barbados (Graeme Hall Swamp), Belize (Sarstoon Temash National Park), Benin (Basse vallée de l’Ouémé, Lagune de Porto-Novo, Lac Nokoué), Chad (Partie tchadienne du lac Tchad), China (Dalai Lake), Congo (Cayo-Loufoualeba – a Ramsar Advisory Mission is planned for 10-15 May 2010), Croatia (Delta Neretve, Kopacki Rit), Denmark (Nissum Fjord, Ulvedybet & Nibe Bredning, Ringkøbing Fjord, Vadehavet), Estonia (Endla Nature Reserve), Georgia (Ispani Mires, Wetlands of Central Kolkheti), France (Camargue), Greece (all Ramsar sites, and specifically Evros Delta), India (East Calcutta Wetlands, Sumbhar Lake), Mexico (Marismas Nacionales and Laguna Huizache Caimanero, Playa Tortuguera Xcabel/Xcabelito), Montenegro (Skadarsko Jezero), Morocco (Embouchure de la Moulouya – a Ramsar Advisory Mission is planned for 5-10 April 2010), Norway (Åkersvika – a Ramsar Advisory Mission is planned for 8-9 April 2010, Giske Wetlands

System), Peru (Zona Reservada Los Pantanos de Villa), Pakistan (Kinjhar (Kalri) Lake, Haleji Lake), Portugal (Ría Formosa), Russian Federation (Selenga Delta), Serbia (Slano Kopovo), South Africa (Verlorenvlei), Spain (Doñana, Laguna y Arenal de Valdoviños, Las Tablas de Daimiel, Txingudi, Ría del Eo, Saladar de Jandia, s'Albufera de Mallorca), Thailand (Thale Noi), Turkey (Lake Uluabat), United Kingdom (Diego Garcia, Exe Estuary, South East Coast of Jersey, Strangford Lough, Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay). The Secretariat is following up these cases in consultation with the respective Administrative Authorities.

11. The Secretariat asks the regional members of the Standing Committee to provide their support, e.g., through direct consultations with the Parties concerned, in order that “information on such changes [will] be passed without delay to the [Ramsar Secretariat]”, as stipulated in Article 3.2 of the Convention.

### **Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record of wetland sites with ecological changes**

12. COP10 expressed its concern, in paragraph 9 of Resolution X.13, “that of the 56 Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record as at 4 November 2008 only three sites have been removed from the Record since COP9”. The Secretariat can now report that during the subsequent period until 28 February 2010, an additional six sites have been successfully removed:

Algeria: The Lac Tonga and Oasis de Ouled Saïd Ramsar sites were included in the Montreux Record on 16 June 1993 and on 14 June 2001 respectively. Since COP10, consultations on their removal from the Record have been ongoing and both sites were removed from the Record on 7 September 2009.

Iran: Alagol, Ulmagol and Ajigol Lakes Ramsar site was added to the Montreux Record because of problems with illegal hunting and water extraction for a fish hatchery on 28 February 1993. Due to a range of successful measures taken, the site was removed from the Record on 17 July 2009.

Italy: Stagno di Cagliari Ramsar site was added to the Montreux Record on 4 July 1990 and successfully removed from the Record on 25 November 2008, after successful remedial efforts to reverse earlier nutrient enrichment, caused by industrial and urban effluents, and the implementation on the ground of the recommendations of a new integrated management plan by the authorities of the nearby regional capital.

Mauritania: Parc National du Diawling RS was included in the Record on 28 February 2002. Following successful resolution of the problems, the sites was removed on 8 September 2009.

Senegal: Djoudj Ramsar site was included in the Montreux Record on 16 June 1993. Following the resolution of the problems and its removal from the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in Danger, the site was also removed from the Montreux Record on 8 September 2009.

13. No further information was received by the Secretariat concerning progress with the ongoing process of removal from the Montreux Record of the German Ramsar site

Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer und Dollart, added on the Record on 4 July 1990, and mentioned in Resolution X.13.

14. In April 2009, Bulgaria requested that Srebarna Ramsar site, included in the Montreux Record on 16 June 10093, be removed. The Secretariat is clarifying with the Administrative Authority remaining questions about the removal request and the updated Ramsar Information Sheet.
15. This leaves 50 Ramsar sites currently listed on the Montreux Record. Unfortunately, no information has been received concerning the opportunity to remove any of these Ramsar sites from the Record because the causes for their ecological change have been eliminated in the meantime. The Secretariat also lacks information concerning any site where the causes creating ecological change would urgently need to be addressed and identified. In such cases, the preparation and execution of a Ramsar Advisory Mission could present an efficient way to prepare proposals for sustainable solutions. Ramsar sites listed on the Montreux Record falling in either of these categories are listed in **Annex I**.
16. In view of the situation summarized in Annex I, and making reference to paragraph 33 of Resolution X.13, which instructs “the Ramsar Secretariat to consider options for assisting and encouraging Parties in their actions in response to change or likely change in ecological character”, the Secretariat would appreciate the support from Standing Committee, providing its views, and possibly concrete instructions, on how the Secretariat can best assist and encourage Parties to deal with these cases.
17. The Secretariat would also appreciate additional voluntary financial support from Contracting Parties so as to be able to undertake Ramsar Advisory Missions to better assist relevant countries in their efforts to address challenges on Ramsar sites, especially those sites that are listed on the Montreux Record.

### **Regular updating of Ramsar sites information**

18. COP6 (1996) urged Parties in Resolution VI.13 “to revise the data provided at least every six years (i.e., every second Meeting of the Conference) for monitoring purposes.” With the increasing number of listed sites, and the limited capacities (of both Parties and the Secretariat) to revise, update and integrate Ramsar site information in the Ramsar Sites Information System, the Secretariat suggests that Parties revise and update Ramsar site information on a rolling basis, i.e. site by site whenever a particular opportunity arises. A rolling update is preferable to undertaking only major revisions and updates for all Ramsar sites at national level every six years. Providing updated Ramsar site information to the Secretariat individually for each site, whenever the need for an update arises, at intervals no longer than six years, allows better spreading of the efforts needed for revision and update across time. This helps to avoid the need to find additional resources to undertake substantial revision and updating campaigns at national level, particularly for Parties that have designated a large number of Ramsar sites.
19. Annex 1 of Resolution X.13 lists 123 Contracting Parties (77% of all Parties) from which one or more Ramsar Information Sheets or updated Sheets were needed as a matter of priority in November 2008. Since then, the Secretariat has received such information from the Bahamas, Indonesia, Lithuania, Malaysia, and Norway. For the remaining Parties, the Secretariat recalls the strong urge expressed in paragraph 31 of Resolution X.13 for “those

Parties within whose territories lie designated Ramsar sites for which official descriptions have still not been provided, and/or for which suitable maps have still not yet been submitted, to provide as a matter of the greatest urgency the Ramsar Information Sheets and/or maps in one of the Convention's official working languages".

20. The Secretariat continues to contact those 118 Parties which were not yet able to do so, as instructed in paragraph 31 of Resolution X.13. They are listed in **Annex II**, providing an update of Annex 1 of Resolution X.13.

**Annex I**  
**Ramsar sites listed on the Montreux Record (as of 28 February 2010)**

Contracting Parties	Ramsar sites with ongoing removal process from the MR	Ramsar sites where the change in ecological character is actively addressed	Ramsar sites in need of clarification if they should be removed, or if the causes of their ecological change need to be addressed
Argentina		Laguna de Llanquanelo	
Austria			Donau-March-Thaya-Auen
Azerbaijan			Kirov Bays
Belgium			De Ijzerbroeken te Diksmuide en Lo-Renige, Schorren van de Beneden Schelde
Bulgaria	Srebarna		Durankulak Lake
Chile		Carlos Anwandter Sanctuary	
Costa Rica		Palo Verde	
Croatia			Kopacki Rit
Czech Republic			Litovelske Pomoravi, Floodplain of lower Dyje River, Poodří, Trebon fishponds
Democratic Republic of Congo			Parc national des Mangroves
Denmark			Ringkøbing Fjord
Egypt	Lake Bardawil		Lake Burullus
Germany	Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer & Dollart		
Greece			Amvrakikos gulf, Axios Ludias Aliakmon delta, Kotychi laggons, Lake vistonis Porto Lagos Lake Ismaris & adjoining lagoons, Lakes Volvi & Koronia, Messolonghi lagoons, Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons
Guatemala			Laguna del Tigre
India			Koleado National Park, Loktak Lake

Iran (Islamic Rep. of)			Anzali Mordab complex, Hamun-e-Puzak south end, Hamun-e-Saberi & Hamun-e-Helmand, Neyriz Lakes & Kamjan Marshes, Shadegan Marshes & Mudflats of Khor-al Amaya & Khor Musa, Shurgol Yadegarlu & Dorgeh Sangi Lakes
Jordan			Azraq Oasis
Kazakhstan			Lakes of the lower Turgay & Irgyz
Kyrgyz Republic			Isyk-Kul State Reserve with the Lake Isyk-Kul
Nicaragua			Sistema de Humedales de la Bahia de Bluefields
South Africa			Blesbokspruit, Orange River Mouth
Spain			Doñana, Las Tablas de Daimiel
Tunisia			Ichkeul
Uganda			Lake George
United Kingdom			The Dee Estuary, Ouse Washes
USA			Everglades
Uruguay		Bañados del Este y Franja Costera	

## Annex II

**List of Contracting Parties from which one or more Ramsar  
Information Sheets or updated Sheets are needed as a matter of  
priority**

(as at 28 February 2010)

ALBANIA	GUATEMALA	PARAGUAY
ALGERIA	GUINEA	PERU
ARGENTINA	GUINEA-BISSAU	PHILIPPINES
ARMENIA	HONDURAS	PORTUGAL
AUSTRALIA	ICELAND	ROMANIA
AZERBAIJAN	INDIA	RUSSIAN FED.
BAHRAIN	IRAN, I. R. OF	RWANDA
BANGLADESH	IRAQ	SAMOA
BELARUS	IRELAND	SAO TOME & PRINCIPE
BELGIUM	ISRAEL	SENEGAL
BELIZE	JAMAICA	SERBIA
BENIN	JAPAN	SIERRA LEONE
BOLIVIA	JORDAN	SLOVAK REPUBLIC
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	KAZAKHSTAN	SLOVENIA
BRAZIL	KENYA	SOUTH AFRICA
BULGARIA	KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	SPAIN
BURKINA FASO	KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	SRI LANKA
CANADA	LEBANON	SURINAME
CAPE VERDE	LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA	SWEDEN
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	LIECHTENSTEIN	SWITZERLAND
CHAD	LUXEMBOURG	SYRIAN ARAB REP
CHILE	MACEDONIA, THE F.Y.R. OF	TAJIKISTAN
COLOMBIA	MADAGASCAR	TANZANIA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF
COMOROS	MALAWI	THAILAND
CONGO	MALTA	TOGO
CONGO, D.R. OF	MAURITANIA	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
CROATIA	MAURITIUS	TUNISIA
CUBA	MEXICO	UGANDA
CZECH REPUBLIC	MOLDOVA	UKRAINE
DENMARK	MONGOLIA	UNITED KINGDOM
DJIBOUTI	MONTENEGRO	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ECUADOR	MYANMAR	URUGUAY
EGYPT	NEPAL	VENEZUELA
EL SALVADOR	NETHERLANDS	VIET NAM
ESTONIA	NEW ZEALAND	
FIJI	NICARAGUA	
FRANCE	NIGER	
GABON	NIGERIA	
GAMBIA	PAKISTAN	
GERMANY	PALAU	
GHANA	PANAMA	
GREECE	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	

