

Agenda item 18.1

**Report of the CEPA Programme Officer**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the information provided in the report.

1. This document reports on the activities of the Advisory Board for Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention and the CEPA Oversight Panel as well as briefly reflecting on two significant Secretariat milestones.

**Advisory Board for Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention**

2. During Standing Committee 40 the Secretary General reported on the progress of the Advisory Board on Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention in finalizing the Capacity Building Framework, a key product of the work of the Board targeted specifically but not exclusively at the Ramsar Administrative Authorities. While the Board intended to complete this Framework by the end of 2009, due to the ill-health of the consultant this has not proved possible, and it is hoped that the Framework will be completed by the middle of this year. The Board decided at its meeting in March 2009 that it would not meet again until the final draft of the Framework is available and this continues to be the case.

**CEPA Oversight Panel**

3. The composition of the Panel and its work plan for the period 2009-2012 was agreed at Standing Committee 40. Since then the Panel has begun some of its work by e-mail. The Panel will meet at the end of Standing Committee on the afternoon of the 1<sup>st</sup> May and the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May and from that point on will most likely continue working only by e-mail in delivering its work plan.

**Secretariat update**

4. As noted in DOC. SC41-23, the Convention's 'new' web site was launched on 10 August 2009, replacing the original web site first launched in 1996. These events are linked to a particular staff member, Dr Dwight Peck, who created the first web site, has developed and managed the site ever since, and has overseen the redevelopment and launching of the new web site. In January this year Dwight reached the age of retirement after 17 years of untiring work for the Convention as the Secretariat's Communications Officer. The Secretariat takes this opportunity to applaud his multi-skilled contributions to the Convention during this period. The Secretariat considers itself fortunate being able to retain the services of Dwight Peck, now as the Secretariat's Documentation Officer, working on a part-time basis. The new Communications Officer, Ms Oana Penea, took up her position in March of this year.

5. 2010 is also a special year for the Secretariat for a second reason: the celebration of 25 years of uninterrupted service to the Convention of Ms Mireille Katz, the only member of staff to have served with the Secretariat since its birth as a distinct unit in 1987. The Secretariat applauds her dedication to the Convention and notes that Ms Katz has NOT reached the age of retirement and continues in her role as Executive Secretary to the Secretary General.