

Agenda item 18.2

World Wetlands Day themes for 2011 and 2012

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to note the information on WWD 2011 and requested to take a decision on (a) the linking of the theme for WWD 2012 with the COP11 theme and (b) the COP11 theme itself.

World Wetlands Day 2011

1. Standing Committee Decision SC40-36 confirmed the suggested theme for World Wetlands Day 2011 as “Wetlands and Forests”, in support of the decision by the UN to declare 2011 the International Year of Forests.
2. This Decision also “urged the Parties to consider planning some special local, national, and regional celebrations for the 40th anniversary of the Convention; requested the Secretariat to prepare a suitable 40th anniversary commemoration in collaboration with the Parties and the International Organization Partners”. While a more detailed report to Standing Committee on the plans for the 40th anniversary celebrations is provided under Agenda item 18.3, under the present Agenda item the Secretariat can confirm that WWD2011 will have an additional focus on celebrating the 40 years of the Convention. This will be achieved through the launching of a 40th anniversary booklet on the Convention on 2nd February as well as through references to the 40th anniversary, as appropriate, in the regular WWD materials.

World Wetlands Day 2012

3. The Standing Committee chose to link the theme of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) with the World Wetlands Day theme in the same year (Healthy Wetlands – Healthy People). Although this was not confirmed as a standard procedure for future COPs, the Committee may wish to confirm whether or not this should be the case for COP11 as well.
4. In Decision SC40-36 the SC determined to revisit the subject of the theme for WWD 2012 at its 41st meeting, noting the theme of “Wetlands and Tourism” or “Wetlands and Ecotourism” proposed by the Secretariat. It is pertinent to note that on World Wetlands Day 2010, a memorandum of cooperation between the Ramsar Secretariat and the World Tourism Organization was signed recognising the value of wetlands to the tourism industry and the potential value of tourism in alleviating poverty, also highlighting the need to ensure the sustainability of tourism in or near wetlands.
5. Based on this, in discussions between the Secretariat and the hosts of COP11 in February of this year, it was agreed to conclude discussions on the COP11 theme, and thus perhaps

the WWD 2012 theme as well, during the meeting of the Subgroup on COP11 at SC41 and to make a proposal for the full Standing Committee at that time.