

## Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform to the 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee

**Action requested.** The Standing Committee is invited to review the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group and consider the alternative Draft Resolutions provided by the Working Group, potentially for consideration by the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

**Note from the Secretariat:** This report of the Ad Hoc Working Group is presented as received from the Chair of the Working Group on 5 September 2011.

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group (WG) continues its deliberations pursuant to Decision SC42-30 of the Standing Committee. In principle, the mandate of the Working Group was (a) to elect new officers and (b) to report on a consensus position whether the Ramsar Secretariat should be provided by UNEP or continue to be hosted by IUCN, or, if that were not possible, to report on the main positions within the WG with clear, precise, complete and comparable information.
2. The WG held two meetings: the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting was held on 6 June 2011 and the 9<sup>th</sup> was held on 29 June 2011. At each meeting, there were 25 countries participating. In the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, the WG elected Mr. Mohammad Koba (Indonesia) as the new chair and Ms. Victoria Romero (Mexico) and Mr. Ainsley Henry (Jamaica) as the vice chairs.
3. The WG Chair sent letters to UNEP, IUCN and the Ramsar Secretariat inviting them to submit further information as stated in Decision SC42-30. On 20 June 2011, UNEP and IUCN responded by providing additional information. The Ramsar Secretariat also responded and indicated that it had no further information than that provided in the letter sent to the co-chairs of the WG in November 2010.
4. At the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the WG, it was concluded that the main tasks of the WG had been fulfilled according to the mandate of Resolution X.5 and the Decisions SC41-4 and SC42-30, except for the drafting of a COP Resolution for consideration by the Standing Committee.
5. After discussions in nine meetings, and after careful and thorough review of the extensive information collected from UNEP, IUCN and the Ramsar Secretariat, including the most recent submissions, the WG was unable to reach consensus on whether the Ramsar Secretariat should be provided by UNEP or continue to be hosted by IUCN. Recent information does not provide for more robust conclusions than those in the November 2009 report presented to the WG by the independent consultant, Mr. Kofi Addo.
6. Therefore, the two options are still on the table. In this regard, the WG presents two Draft Resolutions for the Standing Committee to consider, one advocating moving to UNEP and the other staying with IUCN (DOC. SC43-13).