

COP11 Draft Resolution XI.xx

Adjustments to the terms of Resolution VII.1 on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention

[Proposed amendments to Resolution VII.1 paragraphs are shown below as **bolded red text**.]

1. RECOGNIZING the value of keeping under periodic review the terms of Resolution VII.1 (1999) so as to ensure that the work of the Standing Committee continues to be delivered in as effective and cost-efficient a manner as possible;
2. AWARE of Decisions SC41-5 and SC42-31, -32, and -33 of the 41st and 42nd meetings of the Standing Committee concerning issues of the composition and organization of the Standing Committee and its meetings; and
3. RECALLING that Resolution IX.24 (2005) established a Management Working Group reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties and that Resolution X.4 (2008) also established a transition committee of the Management Working Group; RECOGNIZING that aspects of the work of these groups is also embodied in the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee itself; and AWARE of the intersessional Standing Committee oversight of the Secretariat now conducted on its behalf between meetings of the Standing Committee by its Executive Team (Chair, Vice Chair, and Chair of Subgroup on Finance) with the Secretary General; and EXPRESSING APPRECIATION to the members of the Management Working Group for their work;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

4. ADOPTS the text in Annexes 1-4, based upon amendments that update Resolution VII.1 (1999) on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Ramsar Standing Committee and its appended list of Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties belonging to the six Ramsar regional groups;
5. REAFFIRMS that all other terms and paragraphs of Resolution VII.1 and its annexes, apart from those amendments, continue to be appropriate for guiding the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee;
6. ~~STRESSES RECOGNISES~~ the desirability of the Executive Team (Standing Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and Finance Subgroup Chair) being able to conduct work in a common language ~~(normally English, which is the common language of the Secretariat)~~, for the effectiveness of conducting their own business within the Team and between the Team

and the Secretariat, both during Standing Committee meetings and intersessionally, including in relation to their responsibilities of chairing other Convention processes such as the CEPA Oversight Panel and STRP Oversight Committee;

7. RETIRES Resolution IX.24 establishing a Management Working Group and INSTRUCTS the Transition Committee established by Resolution X.4, the Standing Committee itself, and the Committee's Executive Team to address any such matters as needed concerning review of the management of Convention processes;
8. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to incorporate the adopted amendments into a final text of the annexed document and to make that finalized text available to the Parties; and
9. CONFIRMS that this updated text and its annexes supersede those adopted as Resolution VII.1, which is retired.

Annex 1

The composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention

1. Considering that it is useful for the effective functioning of the Ramsar Convention that Contracting Parties should have a clear process for the operation of its Standing Committee, in Resolution VII.1 (1999) the Conference of the Contracting Parties adopted guidelines on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and the regional categorization of countries under the Convention. In Resolution XI.xx (2012), the Parties amended that text and the list of countries understood to be associated with the six Ramsar regions in order to bring them up to date.
2. The Ramsar Convention ~~shall~~will have the following regional groups:
 1. Africa
 2. Asia
 3. Neotropics
 4. Europe
 5. North America
 6. Oceania
3. Contracting Parties and those countries that are eligible to join the Convention are assigned to the above regional groups, but those Contracting Parties which are near to the boundaries of the allocated region, as given in Annex 2, can at their own request, based on the existence of similar natural conditions, participate¹ within an alternative region, while remaining a member of their geographical region, upon formal notification of this intent to

1 "Participate" is defined in this context as different from membership within the alternative region. Participation confers to the state the right to be present in meetings, to speak, to exchange information, to submit reports, to cooperate on a scientific and practical level, to contribute to joint projects. It does not include the right to be a representative of this alternative region nor to participate in the nomination of its representative(s). It does not confer the right to vote within the alternative region.

the COP, provided that the preconditions for this request are not objected to by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel.

4. The composition of the Standing Committee will be determined by means of a proportional system, by which each regional group in paragraph 2 above will be represented by voting members in the Standing Committee according to the following criteria:
 - a) one representative for regional groups with 1 to 12 Contracting Parties,
 - b) two representatives for regional groups with 13 to 24 Contracting Parties,
 - c) three representatives for regional groups with 25 to 36 Contracting Parties,
 - d) four representatives for regional groups with 37 to 48 Contracting Parties,
 - e) five representatives for regional groups with 49 to 60 Contracting Parties.
5. The host countries of the most recent and the next meeting of the COP are also voting members of the Standing Committee.

Amended to: “The ~~[host country of the Ramsar Secretariat and] [the host country of the Ramsar Secretariat (which has permanent observer status) may also stand for election as a voting member of the Standing Committee for any triennium]² and the host countries of the most recent and the next meeting of the COP and the host country of the Ramsar Secretariat are also voting members of the Standing Committee. The host country of the Ramsar Secretariat may, for any triennium, alternatively stand for election as a voting member of the Standing Committee representing the Europe region”~~

6. The regional representatives shall will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups established in paragraph 2 above.

Amended to: “The regional representatives shall will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups established in paragraph 2 above. **Initial consideration of nominations by regional groups shall will be undertaken at any pre-COP regional preparatory meetings which take place and finalization of nominations shall will be made by regional groups in their meetings at the COP venue immediately prior to COP, so that appointments of the new members of the Standing Committee can be made as early as possible in the COP proceedings, thus permitting the members of the new Committee to participate in Conference Committee meetings during COP.**”

7. The terms of office of the regional representatives shall will commence at the close of the meeting of the COP at which they have been elected and shall will expire at the close of the next ordinary meeting of the COP, and each Contracting Party may serve on the Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms;
8. Contracting Parties that are voting members of the Standing Committee shall will convey to the Ramsar Secretariat, through their diplomatic channels, the name of the officer(s) in

² ~~Secretariat Note. The two text options in square brackets remain under consideration by Switzerland at the time of preparation of this Draft Resolution text.~~

the designated national Ramsar Administrative Authority who act as their delegates on the Standing Committee, as well as the name of their substitutes, should they be needed;

9. The Contracting Party which hosts the Bureau of the Convention and the Contracting Party which hosts the International Office of Wetlands International shall continue to have the status of Permanent Observers in the Standing Committee.

Amended to: **“The body or Party acting as the depositary for the Convention shall will have the status of Permanent Observer in the Standing Committee.”**

[Reference to the Party which hosts the international office of Wetlands International has been removed.]

10. The Ramsar Secretariat shall will continue to notify all Contracting Parties of the date and agenda of meetings of the Standing Committee at least three months in advance of each meeting, so that they may, as appropriate, make arrangements to be represented at the meeting as observers.
11. Countries that are not Contracting Parties but have expressed an interest in joining the Convention may be also admitted as observers at meetings of the Standing Committee.
12. The Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel shall will be invited as an observer to Standing Committee meetings, as well as other experts and/or institutions that the Standing Committee may deem appropriate for assisting in its consideration of particular agenda items.
13. International organizations which are official International Organization Partners in the work of the Convention shall will be invited to participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee.
14. If an extraordinary meeting of the COP is held between two ordinary meetings, the host country shall will participate as an observer in the work of the Committee on matters related to the organization of the meeting, provided that the country in question is not already present in the Committee as a member or permanent observer.
15. The Contracting Parties in regional groups with one representative in the Standing Committee shall will use a rotation system for the nomination of the regional representative, and in regional groups with two or more representatives the selection shall will be made in such a manner as to achieve a balance in relation to biogeographical, geopolitical, and cultural considerations.
16. At its first meeting immediately after the close of the COP the Standing Committee shall will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the members and chair of the Subgroup on Finance established by Resolution VI.17 of COP6.
17. The Standing Committee shall meet at least once each year, normally at the seat of the Convention Bureau. The costs of participation of Committee members from developing countries and countries with economies in transition shall be borne by the Convention.

Amended to: “The Standing Committee ~~shall~~will meet ~~at least~~ once each year, normally at the seat of the Convention **Secretariat, according to the indicative schedule provided as the Annex 4 to this Resolution; a further meeting of the Subgroups on COP and Finance may be envisaged during the year before COP, if required, in order to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of COP.** The costs of participation of Committee members eligible for sponsorship ~~shall~~will be borne by the Convention.

18. Within the policies agreed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the functions of the Standing Committee ~~shall~~will be to:
- a) carry out, between one ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the next, such interim activity on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary, giving priority to matters on which the Conference has previously recorded its approval;
 - b) make preparations on issues, including *inter alia* draft Resolutions and Recommendations, for consideration at the next meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
 - c) supervise, as a representative of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the implementation of policy by the Ramsar **Secretariat**, the execution of the **Secretariat**'s budget, and conduct of the **Secretariat**'s programmes;
 - d) provide guidance and advice to the Ramsar **Secretariat** on the implementation of the Convention, on the preparation of meetings, and on any other matters relating to the exercise of its functions brought to it by the **Secretariat**;
 - e) act as Conference Committee at meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;
 - f) establish subgroups as necessary to facilitate the carrying out of its functions;
 - g) promote regional and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
 - ~~h) submit proposals to the COP for the election of members of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP); [STRP members are presently appointed by the STRP Oversight Committee following COP, according to the terms of Resolutions IX.11 (2005) and X.9 (2008).]~~
 - h) approve the work plan of the STRP on the basis of the decisions of the COP, receive the reports of the STRP on the progress made with its implementation, and provide guidance for its future development;
 - i) adopt for each triennium the Operational Guidelines for the Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use and decide on the allocation of funds;
 - j) review each triennium the criteria for and select the laureates of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award established by Resolution VI.18;

- k) report to the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the activities it has carried out between ordinary meetings of the Conference.
19. The tasks of the regional representatives elected to serve in the Standing Committee shall will be those contained in **Annex 3** of this **document**.
20. **The Contracting Parties shall will endeavor to secure additional voluntary funding to enable simultaneous interpretation at meetings of the Subgroup on Finance and Subgroup on COP.**
21. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties. Will take into consideration the desirability of having interpretation for its Subgroup meetings when it is requested by its members.
224. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, shall will be governed, *mutatis mutandis*, by the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference.

Annex 2

Allocation of Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties to the six Ramsar regional groups [updated]

NOTE: Names of countries in capital and bold letters denote Contracting Parties to the Convention at the time of approval of this Resolution.

1. AFRICA

ALGERIA	Eritrea	NIGERIA
Angola	Ethiopia	RWANDA
BENIN	GABON	SAO TOME AND
BOTSWANA	GAMBIA	PRINCIPE
BURKINA FASO	GHANA	SENEGAL
BURUNDI	GUINEA	SEYCHELLES
CAMEROON	GUINEA-BISSAU	SIERRA LEONE
CAPE VERDE	KENYA	Somalia
CENTRAL AFRICAN	LESOTHO	SOUTH AFRICA
REPUBLIC	LIBERIA	SUDAN
CHAD	LIBYAN ARAB	South Sudan
COMOROS	JAMAHIRIYA	Swaziland
CONGO	MADAGASCAR	TOGO
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	MALAWI	TUNISIA
DEMOCRATIC	MALI	UGANDA
REPUBLIC OF THE	MAURITANIA	UNITED REPUBLIC
CONGO	MAURITIUS	OF TANZANIA
DJIBOUTI	MOROCCO	ZAMBIA
EGYPT	MOZAMBIQUE	Zimbabwe
EQUATORIAL	NAMIBIA	
GUINEA	NIGER	

2. ASIA

Afghanistan
AZERBAIJAN
BAHRAIN
BANGLADESH
Bhutan
Brunei Darussalam
CAMBODIA
CHINA
Democratic People's
Republic of Korea
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN, ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF
IRAQ
ISRAEL

JAPAN
JORDAN
KAZAKHSTAN
Kuwait
KYRGYZSTAN
LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC
LEBANON
MALAYSIA
Maldives
MONGOLIA
MYANMAR
NEPAL
Oman
PAKISTAN

PHILIPPINES
Qatar
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
SRI LANKA
SYRIAN ARAB
REPUBLIC
TAJIKISTAN
THAILAND
TURKMENISTAN
UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES
UZBEKISTAN
VIETNAM
YEMEN

3. NEOTROPICS

ANTIGUA AND
BARBUDA
ARGENTINA
BAHAMAS
BARBADOS
BELIZE
BOLIVIA
BRAZIL
CHILE
COLOMBIA
COSTA RICA
CUBA

Dominica
DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EL SALVADOR
Grenada
GUATEMALA
Guyana
Haiti
HONDURAS
JAMAICA
NICARAGUA

PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
Saint Kitts and Nevis
SAINT LUCIA
Saint Vincent and the
Grenadines
SURINAME
TRINIDAD AND
TOBAGO
URUGUAY
VENEZUELA

4. EUROPE

ALBANIA
Andorra
ARMENIA
AUSTRIA
BELARUS
BELGIUM
BOSNIA &
HERZEGOVINA
BULGARIA
CROATIA
CYPRUS
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK

ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GEORGIA
GERMANY
GREECE
Holy See
HUNGARY
ICELAND
IRELAND
ITALY
LATVIA
LIECHTENSTEIN

LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
MALTA
MOLDOVA
MONACO
MONTENEGRO
NETHERLANDS
NORWAY
POLAND
PORTUGAL
ROMANIA
RUSSIAN
FEDERATION

San Marino

SERBIA

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

SLOVENIA

SPAIN

SWEDEN

SWITZERLAND

THE FORMER

YUGOSLAV

REPUBLIC OF

MACEDONIA

TURKEY

UKRAINE

UNITED KINGDOM

5. NORTH AMERICA

CANADA

MEXICO

UNITED STATES OF

AMERICA

6. OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

Cook Islands

FIJI

Kiribati

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Micronesia (Federated States of)

Nauru

NEW ZEALAND

Niue

PALAU

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SAMOA

Solomon Islands

Tonga

Tuvalu

Annex 3

Tasks of Contracting Parties elected as Regional Representatives in the Standing Committee

The Contracting Parties that have accepted to be elected as Regional Representatives on the Standing Committee ~~shall~~will have the following tasks:

1. To designate their delegates to the Standing Committee taking into account their significant responsibilities as Regional Representatives, according to paragraph 10 of this resolution, and to make every effort that their delegates or their substitutes attend all meetings of the Committee.
2. When there is more than one Regional Representative in a regional group, to maintain regular contacts and consultations with the other regional representative(s).
3. To maintain regular contacts and consultations with the Contracting Parties in their regional group, and to use the opportunities of travel within their regions and of attending regional or international meetings to consult about issues related to the Convention and to promote its objectives. To this effect, when there is more than one regional representative, they ~~shall~~will agree among themselves which Contracting Parties will be the responsibility of each regional representative.
4. To canvass the opinions of the Contracting Parties in their regional group before meetings of the Standing Committee.
5. To advise the **Secretariat** in setting the agenda of regional meetings.
6. To assume additional responsibilities by serving as members of the subgroups established by the Standing Committee.
7. To provide advice as requested by the Chairperson and/or the chairs of subgroups and/or the **Secretariat** of the Convention.
8. In the regions concerned, to make deliberate efforts to encourage other countries to join the Convention.

Annex 4

Indicative schedule for Standing Committee intersessional meetings post-2012, and for the 2013-2015 triennium

Note. This schedule is predicated on future cycles being three calendar years, with the meetings of the Conference of the Parties in May/June of the final year of each cycle.

	General timelines, post-2012	2013-2015 triennium
1st full meeting	9 months after COP	SC46 – Feb/March 2013
2nd full meeting	18 months after COP	SC47 – Feb/March 2014
Subgroup on COP (if required)	1 year before COP	Subgroup on COP12 (if required) – May/June 2014
3rd full meeting	6 months before COP	SC48 – December 2014/January 2015
Pre-COP meeting	immediately prior to COP, at COP venue	SC49 – May/June 2015