

Adjustments to the *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel

Action requested. The Standing Committee is invited

- i) to comment on the attached Draft Resolution and, since further adjustments may be needed following any recommendations on these matters from the informal working group established by Decision SC42-23,
- ii) to request the Secretariat to circulate electronically to the Standing Committee by 31 December 2011 a further draft of this DR, if needed, for Standing Committee approval for its consideration by the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

1. The Standing Committee (SC) will recall that it is necessary to update at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) certain time-limited aspects of the Resolutions on the *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP).
2. The Committee will also recall that discussions are ongoing with the SC, the Secretariat, and the STRP on how the Panel should work most effectively in the future to meet the evolving needs of the Convention and its Parties. In particular, the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee established an informal working group to undertake a review of these matters, including the drafting of a Draft Resolution for COP11:

Decision SC42-23: The Standing Committee recognized the importance of the work of the STRP as a key mechanism for supporting and guiding the delivery of wetland conservation and wise use on the ground, and it recognized that the mechanisms and strategies for achieving these objectives should evolve over time. To ensure that the STRP's objectives and strategies for their delivery are as targeted and as effective as possible in a rapidly changing world, the SC decided to establish an informal working group to draft a COP11 Resolution for SC43 consideration designed to review and take these matters forward. The Committee requested the Secretariat to establish this group and invited those interested in contributing to the work of this group to contact the Secretariat.

3. The work of this informal working group is still ongoing, and its recommendations, which are not yet available, will likely need to be reflected in certain aspects of the attached Draft Resolution and/or the *modus operandi* itself as annexed to Resolution X.9 (2008). The attached Draft Resolution for COP11 updates only certain aspects of the preambular and operative paragraphs of Resolution X.9.
4. The Standing Committee is requested to comment on these proposed adjustments so far, and the Committee will also wish to request the Secretariat, working with the informal working group, to prepare a further version of this Draft Resolution which takes into

account any working group recommendations and recirculate it by 31 December 2011 for the Committee's approval for its consideration by COP11.

5. In the Draft Resolution that follows, updated text is shown in **red**.

Draft Resolution XI.xx

Adjustments to the *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) for the 2013-2015 triennium

1. RECALLING the establishment by Resolution 5.5 (1993) of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), which was to be made up of members with appropriate scientific and technical knowledge, appointed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP), but participating as individuals and not as representatives of their countries of origin;
2. ALSO RECALLING Resolutions VI.7, VII.2, VIII.28, IX.11, and X.9 on this matter, which made successive modifications in the way in which the STRP and its work were organized;
3. THANKING members of the STRP and its observer organizations and invited experts for their contributions since COP10 and for their expert advice on numerous scientific and technical issues important for implementation of the Convention, including the new and revised guidelines and reports provided to this meeting of the Conference [as the Annexes to Resolutions X.14 to X.21] and others being prepared as Ramsar Technical Reports and STRP Briefing Notes;
4. ALSO THANKING the governments of Finland, Norway, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), UN HABITAT, and the Danone Group for their financial contributions in support of the work of the STRP during 2009-2012, and BirdLife International, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), the Society of Ecological Restoration (SER), the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT, UK), and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC-UK) for their in-kind support to the work of the Panel;
5. WELCOMING the fact that the STRP has indicated that its revised *modus operandi* for the 2009-2012 triennium, with the budget provided for its work by Resolution X.2 (2008), has continued to enable the Panel to develop and deliver its work plan and required priority tasks;
6. RE-EMPHASIZING the need to continue establishing closer links between the STRP and the network of scientists and experts in each Contracting Party, so that the Convention may benefit from the array of existing knowledge and experience, but CONCERNED that the STRP continues to report difficulties in establishing effective contact and working relationships with many STRP National Focal Points;

7. THANKING the government of the **Republic of South Africa** for its initiative in calling and hosting an intersessional meeting for **African STRP National Focal Points**, and **WELCOMING** the offers made at the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee from the **Asian regional Ramsar centres (RRC-EA and RRC-WA)** to host a meeting of **Asian STRP NFPs**;
8. RECOGNIZING the importance for the STRP to work in partnership with the scientific and technical bodies of the conventions and programmes with which Memoranda of Cooperation and/or joint work plans are in place, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species (**and its Agreements**), the Convention to Combat Desertification, the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, and other conventions and agreements;
9. ALSO RECOGNIZING the need for continuing cooperation between the STRP and a number of expert networks, specialist groups and societies that exist, some in association with the official International Organization Partners of the Convention; and
10. FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the high priorities for the work of the STRP for **2013-2015** are identified in the annexes to [**COP11 DRxx**] on *Future implementation of the scientific and technical aspects of the Convention*;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

11. REAFFIRMS the critical importance to the Convention of the work and advice of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in providing reliable guidance to the Conference of the Contracting Parties for the Parties' implementation of the Convention;
12. CONFIRMS that the *modus operandi* for the STRP adopted by Resolution IX.11 (2005) shall, [**with the refinements listed in the annex to this Resolution**], apply for the **2013-2015** period and for subsequent periods unless further amended by COP decisions;
13. AGREES that:
 - i) **14** expert members shall be appointed to the Panel by the STRP Oversight Committee for **the 2013-2015 triennium, taking into account the priority thematic areas and tasks for the 2013-2015 triennium, as adopted in the annex to [COP11 DRxx]**;
 - ii) **one appointed member shall have CEPA expertise; and**
 - iii) **at least one expert member shall be appointed from each of the six Ramsar regions;**
14. AGREES that **for work areas and tasks** indicated in the annexes to [**COP11 DRxx**], the Panel shall seek additional expertise as and when required through various means, including through collaboration with the scientific advisory bodies of other international conventions and agencies, and through the International Organization Partners, STRP invited observers, and STRP invited experts;
15. CONFIRMS that the Standing Committee will continue to have overall responsibility for the work of the STRP, that the Chair of the STRP will report to each Standing Committee meeting on the Panel's progress with its programme of work and priorities as established by the COP (**[COP11 DRxx]**) and Standing Committee, and that the STRP will report to

Standing Committee on any adjustments to its programme it considers necessary and on new tasks proposed during the intersessional period in relation to emerging issues;

16. ALSO CONFIRMS that the STRP support functions will continue to be provided during the 2013-2015 triennium from the Ramsar Secretariat;
17. RECOGNIZES the continuing need to ensure both that the Panel is provided with the necessary resources to undertake its work effectively and that the Ramsar Secretariat has sufficient capacity to support this work, and URGES Contracting Parties and others to contribute to securing continuity of such funding;
18. REVISES the list of bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings of the STRP and INVITES the following bodies and organizations to consider establishing close working cooperative arrangements with the STRP on matters of common interest:
 - the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
 - the Scientific Council of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
 - the Technical Committee of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)
 - the Committee on Science and Technology of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
 - the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
 - the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the Global Environment Facility
 - the Secretariats of the CBD, CMS, CITES, UNCCD, UNFCCC, the World Heritage Convention (WHC); UNESCO – Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the UNECE “Water Convention”, and the Council for Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)
 - the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
 - the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - the UNEP – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
 - the World Health Organization (WHO)
 - UN-HABITAT
 - UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education
 - the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS)
 - the Coordinating Committee for the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands (GGAP-CoCo)
 - the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA)
 - the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)
 - The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
 - Conservation International (CI)
 - Ducks Unlimited (DU)
 - the Global Water Partnership (GWP)
 - the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)

- the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)
 - the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE)
 - the European Space Agency – ESRIN (ESA-ESRIN)
 - the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
 - **Group on Earth Observation – Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO-BON)**
 - **the International Crane Foundation**
 - **the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program (BBOP)**
 - **United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH)**
 - **ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability**
 - **the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) Secretariat**
19. URGES Contracting Parties to ensure that the persons they appoint as their STRP National Focal Point are appropriately qualified for this role as defined in the Terms of Reference provided as the appendix to this Resolution; that their STRP National Focal Points have contact with national experts relevant to the work areas of the Panel; that their STRP National Focal Points are involved in all Ramsar processes within the Contracting Party (including participating in any National Ramsar or Wetland Committee); and that the contact information for their STRP National Focal Points are kept up-to-date and functional;
20. ALSO URGES the [xx] Contracting Parties¹ that have not thus far appointed an STRP National Focal Point to do so without delay, taking into account the Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points in the appendix to this Resolution;
21. FURTHER URGES those Contracting Parties that have designated their STRP National Focal Point to review the skills and capacity of that person in relation to the Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points in the annex to Resolution X.9 and, as appropriate, determine if an alternative appointment should be made, and if so to advise the Secretariat accordingly;
22. REQUESTS the STRP, working with the STRP National Focal Points, to consider mechanisms for identifying task-based national expert contacts to undertake a) participation in specialist work on specific STRP tasks and b) review of draft documents;
23. REQUESTS the STRP and Secretariat to identify opportunities and mechanisms for holding intersessional regional or subregional meetings of STRP National Focal Points; and
24. EMPHASIZES the value of participation by STRP members in meetings of the COP and Standing Committee and REQUESTS Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Secretariat to seek to secure any additional funding that might be necessary for this purpose.

¹ **[To be updated in December 2011]**As at 4 November 2008: Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Djibouti, Finland, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malta, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and South Africa.