

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

**Meeting of the Standing Committee Subgroup on COP9
Gland, Switzerland, 7-10 March 2005**

Standing Committee Subgroup on COP9

Decisions of the Meeting

Agenda item 4: Arrangements for a high-level segment to COP9 and the Kampala Declaration

Decision COP9 SG-1: The Subgroup endorsed the proposal to hold a high-level ministerial segment and requested the Secretariat and host country to proceed with the preparations.

Agenda item 5: Resolution VIII.45 on streamlining COP Resolution processes

Decision COP9 SG-2: The Subgroup on COP9 instructed the Secretariat to send a diplomatic notification to the Parties requesting them to submit all draft Resolutions for COP9 to the Standing Committee in advance of its 31st meeting, and to circulate all such draft Resolutions with technical content to the STRP for review and advice to the SC and COP, and it requested the Secretariat to review the COP Rules of Procedure with a view to institutionalizing that process. The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to draft a COP9 Resolution urging Parties to implement the guidance in existing Resolutions in preference to drafting new Resolutions, to promote dissemination of existing decisions to stakeholders, and to develop an index of existing Resolutions.

Agenda item 6: Report from the STRP and technical Resolutions for COP9

Decision COP9 SG-3: The Subgroup welcomed the report from the STRP and congratulated the Panel on its successful work. It expressed concern about the STRP's onerous work programme, but welcomed the proposal for a Technical Reports series. The Subgroup approved the plan to bring to the COP two technical draft Resolutions, one containing proposed guidance as annexes and the other recommending future work.

STRP report on the wise use concept (DOC. COP9 SG-5)

Decision COP9 SG-4: The Subgroup on COP9 approved of the approach presently being taken by the STRP in reviewing the wise use concept and requested the STRP and the Secretariat to finalize the documents for consideration by SC31.

STRP's work on water-related guidance (DOC. COP9 SG-6)

Decision COP9 SG-5: The Subgroup on COP9 approved of the approach presently being taken by the STRP on water-related guidance and requested the STRP and the Secretariat to finalize the documents for consideration by SC31, and to make

draft documents in progress available to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its next meeting.¹

Agenda item 7: STRP *modus operandi* for 2006-2008

Decision COP9 SG-6: The Subgroup on COP9 urged that the STRP and Secretariat further develop the recommendations in the draft *modus operandi* for SC31, with the inclusion of a mechanism for articulating the priorities and financial implications both before and during COP9. The Subgroup requested that a costed programme should be included as an annex to the draft technical Resolution on future priorities.

Agenda item 8: Synergies with other conventions, and national reporting

Decision COP9 SG-7: The Subgroup on COP9 requested that the Secretariat report fully to COP9 on synergies with other conventions and international environmental structures, and that it prepare a draft Resolution on harmonization of national reporting in the context of the work of the Biodiversity Liaison Group.

Agenda item 9: Transboundary Ramsar sites

Decision COP9 SG-8: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft Resolution for consideration by SC31 on dealing with transboundary Ramsar sites, ensuring that it will be facilitative rather than prescriptive and careful in its use of language.

Agenda item 10: Ramsar sites that cease to fulfill or never fulfilled the Ramsar Criteria

Decision COP9 SG-9: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to continue its work on an information paper and draft Resolution, to be considered by SC31, on procedures for dealing with Ramsar sites that cease to fulfill or never fulfilled the

¹ Turkey requested (para. 144 below) the following statement to be recorded: "Turkey would like to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for its fruitful efforts to further develop the activities on the conservation of wetlands in the context of sustainable use of water resources. Turkey attributes great importance to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention since its accession. Turkey also supports the international cooperation in environmental matters. However, Turkey is of the view that transboundary water management is out of mandate of Ramsar Convention. Because each transboundary water course has unique ecological, social and political character, it would not be a valid approach to prepare a guidance on water management without taking into consideration these aspects totally. In addition to that transboundary water management is an issue that should be carefully evaluated by taking into the consideration of technical, political, environmental matters. Therefore, we are of the opinion that the framework guidance on water stated in the document of DOC.COP9.SG-6, should be prepared based on these facts."

"Turkey also would like draw your kind attention to the same document, Box 1, which deals with the core water related guidance documents intended for COP9 and those proposed as priorities for future STRP work. In this context, Turkey would like to reiterate its reservation on Resolution VIII.2 on World Commission on Dams Report adopted during COP8. The Report of the WCD has no worldwide acceptance and it has been subject to criticism of many countries. In addition, the Report consists of references to the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses which has not entered into force. In this context, Turkey is of the view that the Report of the WCD should not be a basic reference document for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention."

Criteria, and to circulate the draft for comment as soon as possible. The draft Resolution should note that maintaining a threatened site on the Ramsar List can help in achieving management measures to respond to the threat.

Agenda item 11: Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and proposed revised approach for 2006-2008

Decision COP9 SG-10: The Subgroup on COP9 requested the Secretariat to progress the drafting of a revised Strategic Plan for 2006-2008, based upon the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 adopted by COP8, in coordination with the Subgroups on COP9 and Resolution VIII.45, and to incorporate as appropriate budgetary aspects and relevant elements in the proposal from WWF International on Key Performance Measures.

Agenda item 12: Regional initiatives

Decision COP9 SG-11: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to circulate the proposed application form for regional initiatives to the Contracting Parties as soon as possible, and to ask the Parties to complete and submit the forms by 30 April for preparation for discussion at SC31.

Agenda item 13: The Convention's Communications, Education, and Public Awareness programme

Decision COP9 SG-12: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to bring the CEPA discussion forward to SC31, preferably with concrete proposals on the way forward.

Agenda item 14: The role of the Convention in natural disaster prevention, mitigation, and adaptation

Decision COP9 SG-13: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft Resolution on the prevention and response to natural disasters for consideration by SC31.

Agenda item 15: Use of the term "Secretariat" in place of the traditional "Bureau"

Decision COP9 SG-14: The Subgroup requested the Secretariat to progress the draft Resolution on the change of name from "Bureau" to "Secretariat" and present it to SC31 for its consideration.

Agenda item 20: Review of the reports of the meetings

Decision COP9 SG-15: The Subgroup on COP9 adopted the report of the first two days of the meeting and requested the Chair to approve the report of the final day on its behalf.

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

**Meeting of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance
Gland, Switzerland, 9 March 2005**

Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance

Decisions

Agenda item 2. Core budget 2005

Decision Finance SG-1: The Subgroup on Finance requested the Secretariat to prepare options for the recovery of unpaid annual contributions by Parties and to provide these to the next meeting of the Subgroup on Finance.

Agenda item 4. Small Grants Fund 2004

Decision Finance SG-2: The Subgroup on Finance:

- a) approved the following list of eight A1-rated projects for immediate funding under SGF2004, subject to the resolution by the Secretariat of any clarifications needed on project proposals prior to the issuing of contracts:**

Jamaica (SGF/04/JM/1)
Kazakhstan (SGF/04/KZ/1)
Lesotho (SGF/04/LS/1)
Liberia (SGF/04/LR/1)
Nicaragua (SGF/04/NI/1)
India (SGF/04/IN/1)
Samoa (SGF/04/WS/1)
Slovenia (SGF/04/SI/1)

- b) also approved the following list of six A2-rated priority projects as a reserve list for funding should further funds become available, in order of priority of assessment score:**

Malaysia (SGF/04/MY/01)
Thailand (SGF/04/TH/2)
Côte D'Ivoire (SGF/04/CI/01)
Palau (SGF/04/PW/01)
Mexico (SGF/04/MX/1)
Ukraine (SGF/04/UA/2)²

² At the request of Romania and assent of the USA, the following text is appended: "With respect to project SGF/04/UA/2, the United States of America, supported by Romania, questioned the appropriateness of funding projects in a country which appeared to be violating its responsibilities under the Convention."

Agenda item 5. COP9 budget issues – proposal to charge a registration fee

Decision Finance SG-3: The Subgroup on Finance:

- a) does not support the establishment of a COP9 registration fee at this point in time, and requests the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee to consider this matter as a general policy issue for possible COP9 consideration, including in relation to future core budgets for the Convention;
- b) requests the Secretariat and Uganda to consider seeking to cover some shortfall in any costs required through other means including *inter alia* charging for exhibition space and side event facilities; and
- c) expressed concern that delaying opening COP9 registrations until after the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee would cause undue delays to an efficient registration process, and requested the Secretariat to proceed with arrangements for opening COP9 registration as soon as possible, without the imposition of a registration fee.

Agenda item 6. Status of Ramsar Endowment Fund

Decision Finance SG-4: The Finance Subgroup will prepare a report to the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee summarizing the process since COP8 to date, including reporting that no consensus on establishing such a fund could be reached, as part of a recommendation to SC31 on how to proceed with this issue to COP9. This will include the preparation a draft COP9 Resolution to include identification of alternative funding mechanisms and opportunities for better accessing other existing funding sources.

Agenda item 7. Draft Core Budget proposals for 2006-2008

Decision Finance SG-5: The Finance Subgroup expressed support for further examining different budget scenarios at the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee, including for enhancing regional initiatives and for enhancing technical support; and requested the Secretariat to:

- a) provide a narrative and explanation of the thinking behind the different budget line items, their costs and their underlying policy implications, and to present budget scenarios showing percentage and total sum increases on a year to year basis;
- b) prepare also a scenario option for a zero increase in budget, including explanation of the implications of such a budget; and
- c) circulate these scenarios and supporting explanations as soon as possible to all Standing Committee members, so that they may fully consider the options prior to the 31st meeting of the Standing Committee.