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7th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999

Delegates' Credentials and Visas

The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) presents its compliments and has the honour to refer to the following:

To avoid possible difficulties at the time of the Conference, the Bureau would like to reiterate the following rules concerning delegates' credentials and visas:

Credentials: At the time of registration delegates of Contracting Parties will be required to present a statement of credential in English, French or Spanish. These should be on appropriate letterhead and should be **originals, not copies**, signed by **the Head of State or Government and/or the Minister of Foreign Affairs**. A facsimile copy (fax) will not be acceptable to the Credentials Committee.

In the event that another Ministry or agency is empowered to accredit representatives at international meetings, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should inform the Ramsar Bureau of this fact in advance of the Conference.

Visas: The host country has assumed the obligation to grant visas to representatives of all Contracting Parties and observers invited by the Convention's Secretariat. Representatives requiring visas should, nonetheless, complete the required formalities **well in advance**. Visas will be issued on arrival in San José, **provided that the participant has received from the authorities in Costa Rica previous confirmation that the visa has been authorized and will be granted. To do so participants should obtain from the Ramsar Bureau a form specially prepared for Ramsar COP7. With the form, the Bureau will provide instructions on how to proceed.** Participants are advised not to fly to Costa Rica until they have received confirmation from the Costa Rican authorities that their visas have been authorized.

Participants requiring visas should possess a passport which is **valid for at least six months**.

The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands respectfully requests that the content of the present Note be communicated to the competent national authorities and avails itself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of its highest consideration.

Gland, 22 February 1999