

Notification 2001 / 1

The 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and Preparation of National Reports

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

The Ramsar Bureau is pleased to confirm that, as noted in the Decisions of the 25th Meeting of the Standing Committee which were circulated to all Contracting Parties on 16 November 2000, the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (Ramsar COP8) will be held in Valencia, Spain, on 18-26 November 2002.

The Provisional Annotated Agenda and Programme for Ramsar COP8 are attached. The Ramsar Bureau welcomes comments and suggestions on the agenda and programme, and would particularly welcome Contracting Parties' offers to contribute to the preparation of the Technical Sessions.

National Reports

As has been the practice for previous Meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the Bureau requests the submission of National Reports from the Contracting Parties concerning their implementation of the Convention, using the official **National Planning tool – National Report format for the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties** that was adopted by Standing Committee and distributed with Notification 2000/2 of 10 March 2000. An electronic version of the National Report format has been provided to all Ramsar Administrative Authorities and is available from the Ramsar Web site, http://ramsar.org/cop8_nr_natl_rpt_intro_e.htm, or from the Bureau.

It is important that Parties meet the deadline for submission of the National Reports, which is 28 February 2002, so that the Bureau can complete its analyses of the status of implementation for circulation to the Parties with the agenda papers in advance of COP8. The Ramsar Bureau also wishes to remind Contracting Parties, however, that the format provided in March 2000 was intended by the Conference of the Parties to serve as a National Planning tool for the implementation of the Convention, and not merely as a simple reporting

questionnaire. Therefore, the Bureau encourages countries that have not done so to begin using the format for planning purposes, in particular in relation to establishing national targets.

The Bureau wishes to remind Contracting Parties that the National Reports should be submitted in electronic form, by e-mail or on a diskette.

Finally, the Bureau wishes to point out that National Reports are considered to be an official status report by each Contracting Party on its implementation of the Ramsar Convention and Strategic Plan, and that the reports will be available to the public. Thus it is desirable that the National Reports be submitted to the Bureau under the authority of the Minister responsible for Ramsar matters or the Head of the designated Administrative Authority for the Ramsar Convention.

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 to the Permanent Mission of ... the assurance of its highest consideration.

Gland, Switzerland, 5 March 2001

Encl. Draft Annotated Agenda and Programme for Ramsar COP8