

Notification 2001 / 7

Agenda for the 26th Meeting of the Ramsar Convention Standing Committee 3-7 December 2001

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

As required by Resolution VII.1, the Ramsar Bureau is pleased to inform that the 26th meeting of the Standing Committee will be held at the Ramsar Bureau in Gland, Switzerland, from 3-7 December 2001. Enclosed is the Draft Agenda and Programme for the meeting.

Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 December will be devoted to meetings of the Subgroup on Finance, the Subgroup on the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP8), the Subgroup on the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008, and the Subgroup on the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP). The plenary meetings of the Standing Committee will be held from 5-7 December 2001.

Voting members of the Standing Committee are: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia (Chair), Costa Rica, France, India, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Slovak Republic, Spain, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, and Uganda (Vice Chair). The Netherlands and Switzerland have the status of Permanent Observers. The official International Organisation Partners of the Convention (BirdLife International, IUCN, Wetlands International, and WWF International) are also invited to attend.

All other Contracting Parties are entitled to attend as observers, and, as indicated by COP7 Resolution VII.1 (paragraph 13), "countries which are not Contracting Parties but have expressed an interest in joining the Convention may be also admitted as observers".

The Ramsar Bureau will be grateful if Contracting Parties wishing to attend the meeting as Observers and those non-Contracting Party countries seeking Observer status at the meeting would notify their intention to participate in that capacity by 15 October 2001, so that working papers may be dispatched when finalised. The working documents can also be consulted on the Ramsar website from 15 November 2001, at: http://ramsar.org/key_sc_index.htm

It should be noted that, due to financial constraints, the working papers for the Standing Committee, with the exception of the draft agenda and programme, are produced in

English only. Simultaneous interpretation in the three official languages (English, French and Spanish) will be provided during the plenary sessions on 5-7 December 2001, but not at the Subgroup meetings.

Likewise, financial constraints prevent the Bureau from providing financial support to assist Observer states in attending. Such support can only be offered to the voting members of the Standing Committee from developing countries and those in economic transition.

Those Contracting Parties which are unable to attend the meeting as Observers are invited to note the enclosed Agenda and, as appropriate, offer views and opinions on the issues and matters that will be under discussion to the Regional Representative(s) from their region, or to transmit them to the Ramsar Bureau.

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, 21 August 2001

Encl: Draft Agenda and Programme