

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

POSITION VACANCY

AT THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION (the Ramsar Bureau)

Gland, Switzerland

POST: Secretary General. This is a position funded from the Convention's core budget, currently occupied by Mr. Delmar Blasco, whose contract comes to an end on 31 July 2003.

DUTIES

The post is the most senior position in the 20-member Ramsar Bureau, the Convention's secretariat established pursuant to Article 8 of the Convention. The principal responsibilities of the Secretary General are:

1. To implement the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee that are addressed to the Secretary General/Ramsar Bureau.
2. To provide leadership to the Ramsar Bureau in the implementation of the annual work plans approved by the Standing Committee and derived from the triennial work plan adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
3. To ensure an effective management of the Ramsar Bureau budget, including the submission of audited accounts for each financial year to all Contracting Parties, through the Standing Committee.
4. To raise additional funds beyond the Ramsar Bureau core budget for project implementation.
5. To represent the Convention in international fora and to act as the Convention's spokesperson.
6. To provide leadership for the further implementation of the Convention by all Contracting Parties, and to this end to bring new initiatives for consideration by the Standing Committee and eventually by the Conference of the Parties.
7. To promote and ensure effective synergies with other environment-related treaties, appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions, and the private sector.
8. To prepare the annual meetings of the Standing Committee and the triennial meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.
9. To maintain effective and harmonious working relations with the host institution of the Ramsar Bureau, namely IUCN – The World Conservation Union.

The Secretary General is answerable to the Standing Committee of the Convention and ultimately to the Conference of the Parties.

REQUIREMENTS

1. The principal qualities required of the incumbent are enthusiasm, a commitment to nature conservation and sustainable use, proven leadership qualities, demonstrated high level representational skills, especially in an international context, and the ability to motivate staff and others.
2. Applicants should have a university degree (preferably a post-graduate degree) or an equivalent demonstrated level of knowledge in at least one subject relevant to wetland conservation and sustainable use, such as geography, biology, hydrology, marine sciences, natural resources management, land-use planning, and socio-economic aspects of sustainable development.
3. Extensive work experience and evidence of achievements in the area of nature conservation and/or sustainable use issues, and a minimum of ten years' work experience in senior positions, are indispensable. Experience and evidence of achievements in the areas of policy development, financial and people management, and programme administration within government agencies and/or non-governmental organizations will constitute a clear advantage.
4. Exposure to and a good understanding of world current affairs is necessary, including the workings of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental institutions, in particular the UN system. Familiarity with and understanding of the workings of national and international non-governmental organizations are also important requirements.
5. Candidates are also required to have a solid understanding of cultural diversity and gender issues and should be naturally inclined to take them into account in the management of the Ramsar Bureau and in his or her relations with the Ramsar constituency.
6. Applicants should have well-developed computer skills and be able and prepared to perform the duties of the position in a fairly independent manner, with limited assistance from support staff.
7. The Ramsar Bureau's working languages are English, French, and Spanish. The ability to work independently in English is essential and knowledge of at least one of the other two languages will be strongly preferred. An ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing is essential.
8. The incumbent should be prepared to travel extensively to all parts of the world.

STARTING DATE: 21 July 2003 or as soon as possible thereafter.

The schedule for the selection process is as follows:

- a) applications are due by **30 September 2002**;
- b) short list for interviews: applicants should be informed of whether or not they are on the short list by 15 December 2002;
- c) interviews will be carried out at the Ramsar Bureau on 3-4 February 2003;
- d) final decision should be communicated not later than 15 February 2003.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

While the Convention on Wetlands is fully recognized by the international community as an intergovernmental agreement outside the UN System, its secretariat, the Ramsar Bureau, is under the special circumstance of being administered by an international NGO, namely IUCN – The World Conservation Union, and shares the premises provided to IUCN and the Convention by the Government of Switzerland, located in the small town of Gland in the vicinity of Geneva. However, the Ramsar Bureau is under the authority of the Standing Committee of the Convention and ultimately of its Conference of the Parties. Legally, Ramsar Bureau staff are IUCN employees, and their contracts are governed by the IUCN Staff Rules and Swiss labor law. IUCN does not have the status of an international organization in Switzerland: consequently, for foreign staff IUCN must obtain a Swiss work permit (B permit valid for one year and automatically renewed at the employer's request). Ramsar staff do not have diplomatic immunity or international civil servant (UN) status. Work permits for spouses are possible, but not automatic. Companions could obtain a permit to live in Switzerland, but at present this requires a separate request to the Swiss authorities and IUCN/Ramsar cannot guarantee a positive outcome.

The incumbent will be offered an initial 4-year contract with expiry date on 31 July 2007, subject to a three-month probation period.

This position is graded at level 15 in the IUCN Classification Standard of 1-16. Depending upon the qualifications of the successful candidate, the remuneration will be a minimum of 180,000 Swiss francs and a maximum of 210,000 per annum, subject to income tax and social security deductions, which represent some 25 per cent of the gross salary.

The following additional benefits are provided: full accident insurance and a fixed contribution for health insurance (for the employee only, not his/her family); a salary entitlement in case of illness or accident; possibility of an education allowance; a home-leave travel allowance if the country of origin is not in Europe; and installation and repatriation costs.

APPLICATIONS

Applications should be submitted **in English** and reach the Ramsar Bureau not later than **30 September 2002** and should include:

- a) the attached application form;
- b) an application letter of **no more than two pages**, briefly describing the suitability of the candidate for the post in relation to **each** of the eight requirements stated above;
- c) a maximum **one-page** statement on the applicant's interpretation of the main challenges facing the Convention for achieving its Mission (as stated in the Strategic Plan);
- d) a curriculum vitae, including a recent photograph.

The applications should be addressed to:

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