

Notification 2003 / 4

Agenda for the 30th Meeting of the Ramsar Convention Standing Committee 13-16 January 2004

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 30th Meeting of the Standing Committee will be held at the Ramsar Bureau in Gland, Switzerland, from 13-16 January 2004. Enclosed is the Draft Agenda and Programme for the meeting.

Voting members of the Standing Committee are: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Botswana, Canada, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran (Vice Chair), Japan, Morocco, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Romania, Slovenia (Chair), Spain, and Uganda. The Netherlands and Switzerland have the status of Permanent Observers. The official International Organization 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 would 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 30 November 2003**, so that working papers may be dispatched when finalised. The working documents can also be consulted on the Ramsar Web site from early December, 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 from 14-16 January 2004, but not at the Subgroup meetings on Tuesday, 13 January 2004.

Likewise, financial constraints prevent the Bureau from providing financial support to assist Observer states in attending. Such support can only be offered to eligible voting members of the Standing Committee, upon request.

Those Contracting Parties that 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, 9 October 2003