

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

24th Meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee  
Gland, Switzerland: 29 November – 2 December 1999

DOC. SC24-4

Agenda item 7.2

## World Wetlands Day/Week 2000 and other promotional activities

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to note and offer comments as appropriate on any of the matters introduced under this Item.

### Background

1. **Theme for World Wetlands Day/Week 2000.** Since the inception of World Wetland Day celebrations in 1997 each year has been given a specific theme and Contracting Parties, non-governmental organizations, and others undertaking promotional activities on that day have been encouraged to pursue events and campaigns focused around such themes.
2. On August 1999 the Bureau sought, via Diplomatic Notification to the member countries of the Standing Committee, agreement to the proposed theme for World Wetlands Day 2000 of **Celebrating our Wetlands of International Importance**. This was proposed by the Bureau as an appropriate follow-up action to the adoption of the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Resolution VII.11) by the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP7) in Costa Rica. By the deadline for comments of 30 September, the Bureau had received no objections to this theme from the members of the Standing Committee, and it was duly advertised and appropriate promotional materials have been developed and made available by the Bureau.
3. **Publication of COP7 materials.** Following COP7 the Bureau worked to finalize the texts of the Resolutions and Recommendations as soon as possible, and these were provided in hard-copy form to all Contracting Party and other participants at COP7 during August. Following this the Bureau is now working to prepare these products of COP7 for publication as a handbook series, with generous financial support from the Government of Spain. It is hoped that by the time of the Standing Committee meeting these handbooks will be available, at least in their English versions. (See attachment.)
4. **Production of Ramsar briefing kit for Ministers and high-level decision makers.** Since COP7 the Bureau has also prepared a Ramsar Convention briefing kit for Ministers and high-level decision-makers. This has included a leaflet summarizing the key aspects of the Convention's work and the decisions of COP7. As part of the kit the Bureau will include a copy of the new Ramsar Convention video which was premiered at COP7.
5. **Production of special leaflet on the wetlands of western Asia.** In 1998, as part of its efforts to promote growing membership of the Convention, the Bureau produced a special leaflet on Small Island States. This has now been followed by a similar leaflet focusing on

the wetlands of western Asia, and is supported by a detailed technical paper also. Both have been prepared for publication by the current intern from Asia, Ms Parastu Mirabzadeh.

6. **Updated version of the Ramsar Information Pack.** The Bureau is working on the production of an updated version, in content and presentation, of the Ramsar Information Pack that has been available in the three languages for the last three years. The Pack has been translated and distributed in Chinese in China with financial support from the Bureau, and it has been translated into Russian by the Bureau and into Arabic but the Administrative Authority in Jordan, also with financial assistance from the Bureau. The Arabic language version will also be updated with the new elements generated by COP7 before it is distributed. A version in Farsi, financed by the Bureau, is under preparation.
7. **The Web site.** The Ramsar Web site continues to grow with news, announcements, reports of meetings, and important documents. The results of COP7, including Conference Report, Resolutions and Recommendations, participants list and photographs, were available on the site in summer 1999. The Bureau Work Plan for 2000 includes a number of planned new ventures for the Web.
8. **Annotated Ramsar List.** The basic work has been completed on an expanded edition of the List of Wetlands of International Importance, including a descriptive paragraph on each Ramsar site in addition to the basic information. This document will soon be ready for publication in photocopied form and on the Web.