

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

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

DOC. SC24-13

Agenda item 9.2.vi

Issues arising from COP7 requiring action by the Standing Committee – Preparation of a revised Strategic Plan 2003-2008

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to consider, and agree upon, a process by which a new Strategic Plan for the period 2003-2008 can be prepared for consideration by COP8.

Background

1. Paragraph 22 of Resolution VII.27 reads: The COP “INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee to prepare for consideration and adoption at Ramsar COP8 a revised Strategic Plan for the Convention to cover the period 2003-2008, in consultation with the Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners, other convention secretariats and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions.”
2. In considering this task, the Standing Committee may wish to reflect on the process that was used to develop and prepare for adoption at COP6 the current Strategic Plan. In that instance the Standing Committee established a Subgroup comprising representatives of five regions plus IUCN and the then-IWRB (now Wetlands International). Kenya (Mr Anderson Koyo) chaired the Subgroup. The Bureau prepared a preliminary draft of the Strategic Plan which was reviewed and revised by a workshop held in Gland in March 1995. Following this, drafts of the Strategic Plan were reviewed by regional meetings in Europe, Asia, the Americas, and Africa. The STRP and the Convention’s International Organization Partners were also invited to offer comments. Following these extensive consultations, the Subgroup presented its final draft of the Strategic Plan to the 16th meeting of the Standing Committee in September 1995. This meeting approved the transmission of the draft to COP6 in May of the following year.
3. The process for preparing the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 was a highly effective one and resulted in a comprehensive and workable plan of action for the Convention. It is notable that Resolution VII.27 has urged the Standing Committee to include as part of the consultations for the preparation of the new Strategic Plan “other convention secretariats and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions”, which was not the case with the current Plan. This is in clear recognition of the gains which have been made by the Convention in developing partnerships with such bodies and organizations in the past triennium.
4. In considering this matter, the Standing Committee should also give consideration to involving the STRP in the preparation of the new Strategic Plan, possibly by including the Chair of the STRP as part of a drafting Subgroup, if one is formed.

5. On the basis of the above, the Bureau submits to the consideration of the Standing Committee the following proposal:
 - a) Establish a **Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 Drafting Group** and designate its Chairperson.
 - b) The Drafting Group could include:
 - i) a representative from each of the six Ramsar regions (either an expert from the CPs that are members of the Standing Committee, or an expert from the Administrative Authority of another CP in the region, selected by the Regional Representative(s);
 - ii) the Chairperson of the STRP;
 - iii) a representative of each International Organization Partner;
 - iv) the Secretary General, as an ex-officio member.
 - c) The Drafting Group should be authorized to co-opt members to assist in the drafting of particular sections of the Strategic Plan if there is not sufficient expertise in the Drafting Group on those areas.
 - d) Consider the following series of actions and timetable:
 - i) the Ramsar Bureau prepares a first draft, engaging, if necessary, external consultants from the Ramsar network, by 30 June 2000;
 - ii) the Bureau mails the draft to the Drafting Group members for comments, with a deadline by 31 August 2000, and incorporates the input received;
 - iii) the Drafting Group meets in Gland two days in advance of the Standing Committee meeting in 2000 and reports progress to the Standing Committee;
 - iv) the third draft is translated into French and Spanish and is distributed for comments to all Contracting Parties, other conventions, and relevant intergovernmental institutions and NGOs in January 2001, with a deadline for comments by 30 April 2001;
 - v) the Bureau incorporates the input received and circulates a revised draft to the Drafting Group by the end of May 2001;
 - vi) the Drafting Group holds a meeting in late June/early July 2001 and adopts a final draft for submission to the Standing Committee meeting in 2001;
 - vii) the Standing Committee considers and approves the final draft at its meeting in 2001 for submission to COP8 in 2002.