

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

25th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland: 23- 27 October 2000

DOC. SC25-22

Agenda item 22.2

Review of 2000 core and projects income and expenditure

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to receive the report of the Subgroup on Finance concerning:

- i) the core budget income and expenditure for the current fiscal year; and
- ii) implementation of projects managed by the Bureau.

i) Core budget income and expenditure for 2000

1. Attached are the charts showing core budget income and expenditure at 31 August 2000 and a forecast to 31 December 2000.
2. The forecast income to 31 December 2000 shows an increase in relation to the approved budget due to an allocation from the 1999 surplus of SFR 44,686 in order to cover the forecast expenditure.
3. Concerning expenditures, there are some deviations from the forecast expenditures approved by the Standing Committee, as follows:
 - a) Staff costs: i) more expenditure in staff hiring costs due to the need to interview more candidates than expected from distant places, and more costs than expected in relocation and repatriation of staff members and their families; and ii) the need to hire temporary staff to undertake a number of unavoidable tasks.
 - b) Travel on official business: some over-expenditure due to demands for Bureau staff presence in additional meetings and additional visits to the field.
4. Overall the forecast to 31 December 2000, with the allocation from the 1999 surplus, indicates that the fiscal year should be closed with a balanced budget.

ii) Status of projects managed by the Convention Bureau

5. The following charts present a summary report of the financial transactions during the period 1 January – 31 August 2000 related to some 20 projects managed by the Bureau. These are activities for which earmarked contributions have been received. Some of them are on-going activities, such as the Ramsar Advisory Missions and the Small Grants Fund mechanisms; others are one-off activities, such as the publication of a book or the organization of a meeting.

6. The chart provides in the first column a brief explanation of the type of activity. Ramsar Bureau staff will be happy to provide detailed reports on the actions undertaken in the past, or being carried out, under each of the projects. The financial books are also available to provide details about income and expenditure.
7. As requested by the Standing Committee at its 1999 meeting, the report on COP7 income and expenditure in Gland and San José is attached. The balance of transactions in Gland shows an over-expenditure of SFR 129,367.40. This was predictable, given the fact that the Costa Rica government had to rely mostly on grants from abroad to cover its commitments vis-à-vis the costs of the Bureau that in the absence of a budget for this purpose have to be provided for by the COP host. Given the fact that the host government was not in a position to provide a significant cash contribution to the COP budget, only the dedication and hard work of the COP7 secretariat in San José has made it possible to have a very successful Conference of the Parties, with adequate services and infrastructure, and yet end up with such small deficit in Gland. This deficit should be covered with an allocation from the 1999 surplus.