

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

**26th Meeting of the Standing Committee,
Gland, Switzerland, 3-7 December 2001**

DOC. SC26-3

Agenda item 7

**Report from the 10th meeting of the Scientific and Technical
Review Panel (STRP) (Gland, 25-29 June 2001)**

Action requested. The Standing Committee is invited to note the issues in this Report that address STRP matters not covered by other agenda items for the 26th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee may also wish to commend the STRP on its significant achievements during this triennium, and the Chair of the STRP, Jorge Jimenez, for his work in ensuring these achievements.

1. The Scientific and Technical Review Panel met in Gland between 25 and 29 June 2001 for its 10th meeting. The Panel determined that this would be its final meeting of the triennium, and that any further work needed from several of its expert Working Groups to complete their preparation of draft guidelines and other reports for consideration by the Standing Committee for transmission to COP8 would take place by electronic communication.
2. Despite its resource and capacity limitations, by the end of the triennium the STRP will have delivered a very substantial part of its ambitious work plan developed from the long list of tasks requested of it by COP7.
3. The substantive products from the STRP are covered in the papers under Agenda items 12.3 (b) to (e), and 12.3 (g) to (j) of this meeting of the Standing Committee. The STRP determined that significant further work was needed to complete certain products, and that these would be completed for consideration by the Standing Committee's Subgroup on COP8 when it meets in May 2002.
4. The STRP's involvement in the further work of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) is covered under Agenda item 11 (DOC. SC26-7).
5. The Panel also debated an early draft of the Bureau's review of the *modus operandi* of the STRP, and their advice has been incorporated in DOC. SC26/COP8-23 for consideration under Agenda item 12.3 (k).
6. The STRP determined that certain activities in its work plan as approved by the 25th meeting of the Standing Committee could not be progressed during the remainder of this triennium. These are:
 - a) the preparation by the expert Working Group on Management Planning of a selected bibliography of relevant citations, which would rather now be addressed

through establishing a set of up-to-date links on the Ramsar Web site and encouraging input to CIESIN's Ramsar Data Deposit (Decision STRP10.10);

- b) the planned development by the expert Working Group on Wetland Restoration of a restoration experts database and a paper on small dams and restoration (Decision STRP10.15);
 - c) the expert Working Group on Impact Assessment's reviews of existing EIA guidelines from a wetland perspective and of strategic environmental assessment, owing to a lack of resources (Decision STRP10.17); and
 - d) the expert Working Group on Incentives' review of incentives guidelines, owing to lack of resources (Decision STRP10.18).
7. However, the STRP also determined to provide certain additional elements of guidance for consideration by the Standing Committee and COP8, designed to enhance the utility of its outputs. These are:
- a) principles and guidelines for wetland restoration (see DOC. SC26/COP8-19); and
 - b) concerning invasive species, a recommendation to the Standing Committee that COP8 be invited to adopt a Resolution endorsing the CBD Guiding Principles on the topic for Ramsar use, but that these be accompanied by additional guidance for wetland managers on their application (see DOC. SC26/COP8-17);
8. In addition the expert Working Group on ICZM had undertaken some further work in drafting guidelines for the designation of seagrass beds as Ramsar sites. The Panel acknowledged that this work was not included in the STRP's revised work plan approved by the 25th meeting of the Standing Committee, but encouraged the Working Group to complete this guidance if it could be delivered on the agreed timetable for inclusion in Standing Committee papers (Decision STRP10.29). In the event, the Bureau has not received these further developed guidelines, and so this wetland type is not included for consideration by the Standing Committee (see DOC. SC26/COP8-11).
9. In an indication of the increasing commitment to closer collaboration on scientific and technical matters of common interest, the Standing Committee may wish to note that the 10th meeting of the STRP included the attendance as observers by members of the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Migratory Species, and the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, and that these representatives made valuable contributions to the issues addressed by the Panel.