

**CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

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

**DOC. SC26-16**

Agenda item 15

**Procedure and timetable for the selection of the new  
Secretary General**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to adopt the procedure and timetable for the selection of a new Secretary General. To this effect, the Chair of the Standing Committee submits the proposal included in this document, which was circulated for comment to all Standing Committee members on 3 July 2001.

**The timetable**

1. The contract of the Secretary General, Delmar Blasco, expires on 31 July 2003. The new Secretary General should commence duty, if at all possible, by Monday 21 July 2003, in order to provide for a handover period of nine working days.
2. Thus, the timetable for the selection process should be as follows:
  - a) announcement of the vacancy: 1 April 2002
  - b) closing date for applications: 30 September 2002
  - c) initial consideration of the applications by the First Selection Panel (see below): October 2002
  - d) finalization of the short list of candidates to be interviewed: 26 November 2002 (during COP8)
  - e) interviews by the Second Selection Panel (see below): 4-5 February 2003, immediately before the first meeting of the Standing Committee elected by COP8
  - f) formal consideration of the recommendation of the Second Selection Panel at the Standing Committee meeting of February 2003.
3. In particular this timetable seeks to take into account the following:
  - sufficient time to attract a good field;
  - an allowance of at least three months for a successful candidate to take up duty at the Bureau;
  - appropriate transition arrangements in recognition of the fact that a new Standing Committee will be in place following COP8;
  - an opportunity for formal signoff of an appointment by Standing Committee; and
  - maximum use of existing scheduled meetings (COP8 and Standing Committee in February 2003) as an opportunity for selection Panel meetings in order to contain costs.

### **Search procedure**

4. It is proposed that the vacancy announcement be sent by diplomatic note to all Contracting Parties, posted on the Ramsar Web site, and circulated as an insert in the Ramsar Newsletter, currently with some 5,000 addressees on its mailing list.
5. In addition, members of the Standing Committee would be encouraged to identify suitable candidates and approach them with an invitation to apply for the position.

### **Selection procedure**

#### **A First Selection Panel**

6. It is proposed that at its meeting on 3-7 December 2001 the Standing Committee agree the composition of a First Selection Panel responsible for the shortlisting of candidates. This First Selection Panel could be composed of the Standing Committee Chair, the Vice Chair, the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance, and one Regional Representative from each of the six Ramsar Regions (with the exception of Oceania, which is represented in the Standing Committee only by the Chair). The Secretary General should be an ex-officio member to assist the Panel in its work.
7. To assist the shortlisting process, it is suggested that a form to evaluate the applications initially be prepared by the Secretary General and approved by the Chair. By 15 October 2002, the Secretary General should circulate the applications received to all members of the Panel, with a recommendation as to the applicants to be further considered and those who should be eliminated.
8. Each Panel member would be asked to fill out the forms and return them to the Secretary General by courier by 30 October 2002. The SG would then circulate all the evaluation forms to all members by 15 November 2002.
9. Based upon the evaluations by Panel members, the Chair would then submit to the Panel his proposal for short-listing. The Panel could then meet at appropriate times for two or three evenings during Ramsar COP8 to finalize the short list of candidates, which in principle should be limited to five in order to keep the interview process focused and to limit travel costs of candidates to be met by the Convention. If need be, the Panel could hold a final meeting after the close of Ramsar COP8 on 26 November 2002.

#### **Interviews – The Second Selection Panel**

10. Under this timetable, short-listed candidates would be approached during December 2002 and would be invited for an interview on 4/5 February 2003, at the Ramsar Bureau.
11. Interviews would be carried out by a Second Selection Panel composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee and the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance elected at Ramsar COP8, Regional Representatives of the six Ramsar regions identified by the Chair through appropriate consultations, and the Director General of IUCN.

12. The Chair should distribute in advance a proposal for how to conduct the interviews. It may be appropriate, for example, to invite each candidate to prepare a 15- to 20-minute presentation on his or her vision of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 that will have been approved by COP8.

#### **Final decision**

13. If at all possible the Second Interview Panel should present its recommendation for the appointment of the new Secretary General to the Standing Committee at its meeting to be held immediately after the interviews (6-8 February 2003), so that the appointment can be formally made by the Standing Committee. It would be necessary for the appointment to be considered in closed session by voting members of Standing Committee only.
14. The decision of the Standing Committee should be communicated to the selected candidate in the week of 10 February 2003. All Contracting Parties should be informed by diplomatic notification as soon as the Bureau has received written acceptance of the job offer.

#### **Vacancy announcement**

15. Attached to this document is the proposed vacancy announcement spelling out the responsibilities of the Secretary General, the requirements, and the conditions of service. The announcement is based upon an expansion of the documentation prepared for the filling of the Deputy Secretary General position in 1999. The conditions of service are those that currently apply for the position of Secretary General.

## CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

### POSITION VACANCY

#### AT THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION (the Ramsar Bureau) Gland, Switzerland

**POST: Secretary General.** This is a position funded from the Convention's core budget, currently occupied by Mr. Delmar Blasco, whose contract comes to an end on 31 July 2003.

#### DUTIES

The post is the most senior position in the 18-member Ramsar Bureau, the Convention's secretariat established pursuant to Article 8 of the Convention. The principal responsibilities of the Secretary General are:

1. To implement the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee that are addressed to the Secretary General/Ramsar Bureau.
2. To provide leadership to the Ramsar Bureau in the implementation of the annual work plans approved by the Standing Committee and derived from the triennial work plan adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
3. To ensure an effective management of the Ramsar Bureau budget, including the submission of audited accounts for each financial year to all Contracting Parties, through the Standing Committee.
4. To raise additional funds beyond the Ramsar Bureau core budget for project implementation.
5. To represent the Convention in international fora and to act as the Convention's spokesperson.
6. To provide leadership for the further implementation of the Convention by all Contracting Parties, and to this end to bring new initiatives for consideration by the Standing Committee and eventually by the Conference of the Parties.
7. To promote and ensure effective synergies with other environment-related treaties, appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions, and the private sector.
8. To prepare the annual meetings of the Standing Committee and the triennial meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.
9. To maintain effective and harmonious working relations with the host institution of the Ramsar Bureau, namely IUCN – The World Conservation Union.

The Secretary General is answerable to the Standing Committee of the Convention and ultimately to the Conference of the Parties.

#### REQUIREMENTS

1. The principal qualities required of the incumbent are enthusiasm, a commitment to nature conservation and sustainable use, proven leadership qualities, demonstrated high level representational skills, especially in an international context, and the ability to motivate staff and others.

2. Applicants should have a university degree (preferably a post-graduate degree) or an equivalent demonstrated level of knowledge in at least one subject relevant to wetland conservation and sustainable use, such as geography, biology, hydrology, marine sciences, natural resources management, land-use planning, and socio-economic aspects of sustainable development.
3. Extensive work experience and evidence of achievements in the area of nature conservation and/or sustainable use issues, and a minimum of ten years' work experience in senior positions, are indispensable. Experience and evidence of achievements in the areas of policy development, financial and people management, and programme administration within government agencies and/or non-governmental organizations will constitute a clear advantage.
4. Exposure to and a good understanding of world current affairs is necessary, including the workings of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental institutions, in particular the UN system. Familiarity with and understanding of the workings of national and international non-governmental organizations are also important requirements.
5. Candidates are also required to have a solid understanding of cultural diversity and gender issues and should be naturally inclined to take them into account in the management of the Ramsar Bureau and in his or her relations with the Ramsar constituency.
6. Applicants should have well-developed computer skills and be able and prepared to perform the duties of the position in a fairly independent manner, with limited assistance from support staff.
7. The Ramsar Bureau's working languages are English, French, and Spanish. The ability to work independently in English is essential and knowledge of at least one of the other two languages will be strongly preferred. An ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing is essential.
8. The incumbent should be prepared to travel extensively to all parts of the world.

**STARTING DATE:** 21 July 2003 or as soon as possible thereafter. The schedule for the selection process is as follows:

- a) applications are due by **30 September 2002**;
- b) short list for interviews: applicants should be informed of whether or not they are on the short list by 15 December 2002;
- c) interviews will be carried out at the Ramsar Bureau on 4-5 February 2003;
- d) final decision should be communicated not later than 15 February 2003.

## **CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

While the Convention on Wetlands is fully recognized by the international community as an intergovernmental agreement outside the UN System, its secretariat, the Ramsar Bureau, is under the special circumstance of being administered by an international NGO, namely IUCN – The World Conservation Union, and shares the premises provided to IUCN and the Convention by the

Government of Switzerland, located in the small city of Gland in the vicinity of Geneva. However, the Ramsar Bureau is under the authority of the Standing Committee of the Convention and ultimately of its Conference of the Parties. Legally, Ramsar Bureau staff are IUCN employees, and their contracts are governed by the IUCN Staff Rules and Swiss labor law. IUCN does not have the status of an international organization in Switzerland: consequently, for foreign staff IUCN must obtain a Swiss work permit (B permit valid for one year and automatically renewed at the employer's request). Ramsar staff do not have diplomatic immunity or international civil servant (UN) status. Work permits for spouses are possible, but not automatic. Companions could obtain a permit to live in Switzerland, but at present this requires a separate request to the Swiss authorities and IUCN/Ramsar cannot guarantee a positive outcome.

The incumbent will be offered an initial 4-year contract with expiry date on 31 July 2007, subject to a three-month probation period.

This position is graded at level 15 in the IUCN Classification Standard of 1-16. Depending upon the qualifications of the successful candidate, the remuneration will be a minimum of 180,000 Swiss francs and a maximum of 210,000 per annum, subject to income tax and social security deductions, which represent some 25 per cent of the gross salary.

The following additional benefits are provided: full accident insurance and a fixed contribution for health insurance (for the employee only, not his/her family); a salary entitlement in case of illness or accident; possibility of an education allowance; a home-leave travel allowance if the country of origin is not in Europe; and installation and repatriation costs.

## APPLICATIONS

Applications should reach the Ramsar Bureau not later than **30 September 2002** and should include:

- a) the attached application form;
- b) an application letter of **no more than two pages**, briefly describing the suitability of the candidate for the post in relation to **each** of the eight requirements stated above;
- c) a maximum **one-page** statement on the applicant's interpretation of the main challenges facing the Convention for achieving its Mission (as stated in the Strategic Plan);
- d) a curriculum vitae, including a recent photograph.

The applications should be addressed to:

Ms Annette Keller  
Administration Coordinator  
Rue de Mauverney 28  
CH-1196 Gland  
Switzerland  
Tel: 41-22-999.01.70 - Fax: 41-22-999.01.69 - E-mail: [keller@ramsar.org](mailto:keller@ramsar.org)

NOTE: More details about the Ramsar Convention and its work can be found on the Ramsar Web site: [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)

**Convention on Wetlands  
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

**Position of Secretary General**

**Application Form - Deadline for Submission: 30 September 2002**

(Please use no more than the assigned space; explanations may be included in an attachment.)

Family name:		Given name(s):	
Gender:	Place and date of birth:	Nationality(ies):	
Current address, including telephone, fax, and email:			

**Education/Training**

<b>Most relevant degree/experience for the post:</b>
University/institution:
<b>Any other relevant degree/training:</b>
University/institution:

**Employment Record**

<b><u>Present employment</u></b> since:	Post:
At:	
Responsibilities:	
<b><u>Previous employment</u></b> 1. From:                      to:	Post:
At:	
Responsibilities:	

2. From:                      to:	Post:
At:	
Responsibilities:	
3. From:                      to:	Post:
At:	
Responsibilities:	
4. From:                      to:	Post:
At:	
Responsibilities:	

**Languages**

Language	Level of proficiency in speaking				Level of proficiency in writing		
	Impeccable	Fluent	Correct	Basic	Impeccable	Correct	Basic

**Family Situation**

Single person <input type="checkbox"/>	With family <input type="checkbox"/> Number of children and ages:
Would your family join you in Switzerland? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Availability**

If you were offered the post in February 2003, how soon would you be able to move to Switzerland to take up the post?

Please provide (on a separate sheet) three referees, indicating full name, position and institution, telephone, fax, and email.



