

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

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

DOC. SC26-18

Agenda item 12.2

## Report on Ramsar Regional Meetings

**Action requested.** The Standing Committee is requested to note the results of the Ramsar Regional Meetings held so far and received the observations and/or proposals of Contracting Parties that have hosted the meetings or participated in them.

1. Following Decision SC25.25 of the Standing Committee on the Ramsar Regional Meetings before COP8, the Bureau proceeded to raise the necessary funds, identify host countries, and organize the series of meetings.
2. In total, the Bureau has been able to raise SFR 642,881 for the regional meetings. Most of this money has already been received. A total of SFR 167,000 is still required to cover the costs of two subregional meetings in Africa. The US has pledged, in principle, support for the two additional meetings to be held in the Neotropics in 2002.
3. The meetings held so far have been:
  - 3.1 **Ramsar Subregional Meeting for South America**, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 10-12 September 2001. The meeting was fully funded by Argentina, with a transfer to the Bureau SFR 87,000 to cover all the costs, including tickets and per diem for sponsored delegates. Some 55 representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, and intergovernmental institutions and non-governmental organizations participated. The meeting was hosted by the Secretariat of Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy, Ministry of Social Development and the Environment. The meeting report (available only in Spanish) can be found in the Ramsar web site at [http://ramsar.org/mtg\\_reg\\_suramerica2001\\_rpt.htm](http://ramsar.org/mtg_reg_suramerica2001_rpt.htm)

Two important issues should be highlighted from the report of the meeting:

Paragraph 35.1 of the report: [The meeting decided] “to request Argentina, as the Regional Representative, to submit a proposal to the Standing Committee for a decision requesting the Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to develop a new criterion, with the corresponding guidelines for application, for the designation of wetlands of international importance based on the socio-economic and cultural values of wetlands, for submission to COP8”.

Paragraphs 54-63 of the report contained a decision related to the preparation of a South American Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention, which should be finalized for presentation by Argentina at the forthcoming meeting of the Standing Committee.

- 3.2 **Ramsar Regional Meeting for Central America, the Caribbean and North America**, San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 26-28 September 2001. Over 60 delegates from Central America, the Caribbean and North America, representing Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Lucia, Suriname, the United States of America, and Argentina (as Regional Representative for South America in the Standing Committee), participated in the meeting. Other organizations participating included The Central American Environment and Development Commission (CCAD), IUCN-The World Conservation Union, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and other non-governmental agencies. The report of the meeting can be consulted in the Ramsar Web site at [http://ramsar.org/mtg\\_reg\\_centroamerica2001\\_rpt\\_e.htm](http://ramsar.org/mtg_reg_centroamerica2001_rpt_e.htm)
  - 3.3 **East Asian Subregional Meeting**, Bangkok, Thailand, 1-3 October 2001. More than 70 people attended, including representatives of 8 Contracting Parties (China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, and Thailand), 2 observer states (Lao and Myanmar), environment-related organizations of the United Nations, the Convention on Migratory Species, international, regional and local non-governmental organizations, and development assistance agencies. The report of the meeting is available in the Ramsar web site at [http://ramsar.org/mtg\\_reg\\_eastasia2001\\_rpt.htm](http://ramsar.org/mtg_reg_eastasia2001_rpt.htm).
  - 3.4 **4th European regional meeting on the Ramsar Convention**, Bled, Slovenia, 13-18 October 2001. The meeting was attended by some 150 participants, including representatives of 38 Contracting Parties, international organizations and NGOs. The report of the meeting will be available in the Ramsar Web site by 15 November 2001.
4. Other regional meetings are planned as follows, in chronological order:
- 4.1 **Subregional Meeting for Eastern and Southern Africa**, Lusaka, Zambia, 12-14 November 2001, involving the following CPs: Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, and the following non-CPs: Angola, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mozambique, Sudan and Zimbabwe.
  - 4.2 **Subregional meeting for West and Central Asia**, Teheran, Iran, 3-5 February 2002, involving the following CPs: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, and the following non-CPs: Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Turkmenistan.
  - 4.3 **Subregional meeting for the Middle East**, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 18-20 May 2002 (dates to be confirmed), involving the following CPs: Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, and the following non-CPs: Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen.
  - 4.4 **Subregional meeting for Central and North Africa**, 20-22 March 2002, Algiers, Algeria, involving the following CPs: Algeria, Chad, Congo, D.R. of Congo, Gabon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, and the following non-CPs: Burundi, Cameroon, CAR and Rwanda.

- 4.5 **Subregional meeting for West Africa and Island States**, Cotonou, Benin (dates not yet fixed), involving the following CPs: Benin, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo, and the following non-CPs: Cape Verde and Liberia.
- 4.6 **2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Meeting for Central America, the Caribbean and North America**, Nassau, Bahamas, 10-12 June 2002 (to be confirmed)
- 4.7 **2<sup>nd</sup> Subregional Meeting for South America**, Guayaquil, Ecuador, 17-20 June 2002 (to be confirmed)