

Annotations to the agenda

Introduction

1. The host country of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties has proposed postponing COP14 until 21-29 November 2022. Subsequently, the Standing Committee during its 59th meeting held the week of 22-25 June 2021 (SC59) approved 21-29 November 2022 as the proposed new dates for COP14 through Decision SC59-10, and agreed to submit these dates to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in 2021
2. The budget of the Convention on Wetlands is normally approved each triennium for three calendar years. The budget for the current triennium (2019-2021) was approved by the Conference of the Parties at its Thirteenth Meeting, held in 2018. The budget for the next triennium (2022-2024) was to be approved at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which was originally scheduled to be held in October 2021. However, the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be postponed due to the global COVID-19 pandemic situation. The approval of the budget for the next triennium through an ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties this year is therefore not possible. The Standing Committee SC59 through Decision SC59-31 approved the one-year core budget for 2022 for submission to the extraordinary meeting based on budget Scenario A at 0% increase.
3. Given the COVID-19 situation and the difficulty of convening a face-to-face meeting with full representation of Contracting Parties in the fourth quarter of 2021 as originally planned and after further consultation at Standing Committee 59, it became necessary to convene of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the purpose of 1) considering and approving a budget for the operation of the Convention in 2022, and, 2) the postponement of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) provided that the request for an extraordinary meeting received the support of at least one third of the Parties, in accordance with rule 4.3 of Rules of Procedure of the Convention.
4. In accordance with Rule 4.3 of the Rules of Procedure, a proposal to convene an Extraordinary Meeting for the above purposes was submitted by the Chair of the Standing Committee. Accordingly, the Secretariat through Diplomatic Note 2021/6 notified Contracting Parties on 9 July of the request made by the Chair of the Standing Committee to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention.
5. By 20 August 2021, the Secretariat had received letters from 61 Parties to the Convention, communicating their support for the convening of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention. The communications received represent support for the request by more than one third of the Contracting Parties. Therefore, according to Rule 13 the Third

Extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties will take place online from 25-29 October 2021 (see working programme ExCOP3 Doc.3.2). The Provisional Agenda and draft Resolutions on the budget for 2022 and on the postponement of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) are available at the Convention's web site:

<https://www.ramsar.org/event/extraordinary-meeting-of-the-conference-of-the-contracting-parties-2021>.

6. In accordance with Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the Secretariat has notified the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not Party to the Convention, of this meeting, so that they may be represented as observers.

7. In accordance with Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat has issued notifications to those bodies and agencies, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands which have informed the Secretariat of their wish to be represented at the meeting, so that they may be represented as observers.

Monday 25 October

13:00-16:00 pm (CEST)

Items 1. and 2. Opening of the meeting and welcoming statements

8. The Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, will open on Monday, 25 October 2021, at 1:00 pm Switzerland time (CEST) by the President of the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. The President and the Secretary General will make welcoming statements.

Item 3. Adoption of the provisional agenda and working programme

9. The Provisional Agenda and working Programme (ExCOP3 Doc.3.1 and ExCOP3 Doc.3.2) were prepared by the Secretariat, in accordance with Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure, which requires the Provisional Agenda for an extraordinary meeting to consist only of those items proposed in the request for the holding of the extraordinary meeting. In that regard, item 8 below, which refers to the draft Resolutions for the 1) proposed budget for 2021, and, 2) the postponement of COP14 constitute the main agenda of this extraordinary meeting. The President will put for consideration the approval of the provisional agenda and working programme.

Item 4. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure: Provisional Rules of Procedure

10. Article 6.4 of the Convention provides that the COP "shall adopt rules of procedure for each of its meetings". The Conference will consider document ExCOP3 Doc.4.1 Provisional Rules of Procedure as approved at COP13, and will adopt the Rules for the Third Extraordinary Meeting.

Item 5. Officers of the Meeting, President and Vice-Presidents

11. Consistent with Rule 21, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, the current President (United Arab Emirates) and Vice Presidents (Finland and Uganda) will serve as the Conference Bureau of the Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Item 6. Appointment of the Credentials Committee

12. Pursuant to the Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference will appoint a Credentials Committee composed of one Contracting Party from each of the Ramsar regions, on the basis of proposals made by the Conference Bureau. The Credential Committee shall examine all credentials deposited with the Secretariat and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties. The Credentials Committee will meet on 26 and 27 October from 1:00-16:00 (CEST).
13. As indicated in notification 2021/6 and 2021/7 representatives of Contracting Parties shall submit credentials in accordance with Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
14. According to Rule 18.1 of the Rules of Procedure, “credentials of the Head of the Delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives and advisers (specifying the individual named as the Head of Delegation) shall be submitted to the Secretary General, no later than 48 hours after the opening of the meeting. Any later change in the composition of the delegation shall also be submitted to Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General”.
15. The credential must “be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or his/her equivalent. If other authorities in a Contracting Party are entitled to issue credentials for international meetings, this should be notified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with an original letter to the Secretary General at the time of submitting their credentials. Submission of credentials may be done in either hardcopy or digital form, with digital submission requiring authentication by a valid digital signature” as stipulated by Rule 18.3.
16. In order to assist Contracting Parties in fulfilling the requirements of Rule 18, the Secretariat has circulated, along with the notifications 2021/6 and 2021/7 issued on 9 July and 20 August 2021 regarding the extraordinary meetings, an information note on the requirements and modalities of submission of credentials, and sample formats of appropriate credentials.
17. Given the relevance of the matters to be discussed and decided at the Third Extraordinary Meeting, it is critical that Contracting Parties participate in the meeting noting Rules 29 and 39 below:

Rule 29 Quorum

“The President may declare a session of the meeting open and permit the debate to proceed if at least one third of the Contracting Parties to the Convention are present, and may have decisions taken when representatives of at least two thirds of the Contracting Parties are present and voting”

Rule 39 Consensus and voting

“The Contracting Parties present and voting shall make every effort to reach agreement on all matters of substance by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement reached, the decision shall, as a last resort, be taken by a simple majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting, unless otherwise provided by the Convention, such as in the case of:

- a) the adoption of the budget for the next financial period, which shall require a two-third majority of Contracting Parties present and voting (Article 6.5 of the Convention);

Item 7. Admission of observers

18. Rules 6 and 7 of the Rules of Procedure foresee the participation of observers in two categories:

- the United Nations, its specialized agencies and States not party to the Convention; and
- any body or agency qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

The Conference of the Parties is invited to approve the participation in the Third Extraordinary Meeting of observers representing the States, organizations and agencies listed in document ExCOP3 Doc.7 unless one-third of the Parties present object.

Item 8. Consideration of draft Resolutions

19. Draft Resolutions will be introduced on 25 October under this item with the Conference of the Parties expected to discuss two draft Resolutions on 1) the postponement of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14), and, 2) on financial and budgetary matters for the 2022 budget of the Convention on Wetlands.
20. Concerning postponement of COP14, the Standing Committee approved 21-29 November 2022 as the new proposed dates for COP14 through Decision SC59-10, and agreed to submit these dates to an extraordinary meeting to be held in 2021.
21. Regarding financial and budgetary matters, the Standing Committee SC59 through Decision SC59-31 approved the one-year core budget for 2022 for submission to the extraordinary meeting based on budget Scenario A at 0% increase.

Thursday 28 October

13:00-16:00 (CEST)

Item 9. Report of the Credentials Committee

22. The Chair of the Credentials Committee will present the report of the credentials deposited with the Secretariat and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties.

Item 10. Adoption of Resolutions

23. Under this item, the Conference of the Parties is expected to adopt the Resolutions on 1) postponement of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14), and, 2) on financial and budgetary matters for the 2022 budget of the Convention on Wetlands.

Item 11. Adoption of the report of the Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

24. The President will present the report of the meeting for adoption by the Conference. The Conference Bureau will approve the draft daily report of the final day of the extraordinary meeting.

Friday 29 October

13:00 -16:00 (CEST) Plenary Session (this session will continue in case agenda items are not concluded on Thursday 28 October).

Logistic information for the meetings

Kudo Platform

The virtual meetings will be held on KUDO, a platform for multilingual Web Conferencing (<https://kudoway.com/>). KUDO uses standard video and audio conferencing technologies and is compatible with many devices. It offers the possibility of simultaneous interpretation and gives the chair control over who can speak.

For each session, registered participants will receive a link ahead of the meeting, which can be used to connect at the beginning of the session.

Participants are invited to test their equipment before the actual meeting. At <https://live.kudoway.eu/test> it is possible at any time to check if computer hardware fulfils the requirements. Additionally, the Secretariat organizes live test sessions where participants can connect and talk to a technical support representative a few days ahead of the meeting. The links for these test sessions are sent to registered participants along with the registration confirmation.

During the meeting, dedicated operators from KUDO are available to help with any technical issue. A specific chat window will allow to you communicate directly with them and solve the problem. If connection is not possible, participants can write to preregistration@ramsar.org to reach the Secretariat for assistance.