

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
64th meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 20-24 January 2025

Decisions of the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda

Decision SC64-01: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional agenda in SC64 Doc.2 Rev.1 as amended.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the provisional working programme

Decision SC64-02: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional working programme in document SC64 Doc.3 Rev.1.

Agenda item 4: Admission of observers

Decision SC64-03: The Standing Committee admitted as observers:

States not Party to the Convention:

- Guyana
- Holy See
- Saudi Arabia

Bodies or agencies seeking approval which have met the criteria included:

- Arcus reflexus
- Environment and Food Foundation (E2F)

Agenda item 5: Report of the Executive Team and the Chair of the Standing Committee

Decision SC64-04: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Executive Team and Chair of the Standing Committee published as document SC64 Doc.5.

Agenda item 6: Report of the Secretary General

Decision SC64-05: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Secretary General published as document SC64 Doc.6.

Agenda item 7.1: Report of the Management Working Group: Report on the activities of the Management Working Group

Decision SC64-06: The Standing Committee took note of the report on the activities of the Management Working Group as found in document SC64 Doc.7.1.

Agenda item 11: Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group

Decision SC64-07: The Standing Committee took note of the report of the Strategic Plan Working Group.

Agenda item 18: Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel

Decision SC64-08: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel.

Agenda item 19: Draft resolution on the future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2026-2028

Decision SC64-09: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.19 on the future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2026-2028 to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 20: Draft resolution on the establishment of the Waterbird Estimates Partnership (WEP) and the delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE2027)

Decision SC64-10: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.20 to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 21: Draft resolution on the application of Criteria 6 and 9 to new and existing Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC64-11: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.21 on the application of Criteria 6 and 9 to new and existing Wetlands of International Importance to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 13: Roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee

Decision SC64-12: The Standing Committee:

- i. instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.13 on responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention on Wetlands to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee; and**
- ii. confirmed that paragraph 6 of Annex 1 and paragraph 5 of Annex 3 to the draft resolution replace outstanding Decisions reported in document SC64 Doc.8, which can be considered “implemented” and removed from the list of “outstanding” decisions in accordance with Decision SC63-18.**

Agenda item 8: Report of the Secretariat on the implementation of the Decisions of the Standing Committee

Decision SC64-13: The Standing Committee took note of the report and instructed the Secretariat to invite members of the Standing Committee to provide suggestions for actions to close outstanding Decisions and to include these suggestions in the Secretariat's report on outstanding decisions to be presented to the Committee's 67th meeting (SC67).

Agenda item 16: Report of the Youth Working Group

Decision SC64-14: The Standing Committee took note of the progress of the Youth Working Group as presented in SC64 Doc.16.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Working Group on Institutional Strengthening

Decision SC64-15: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the Working Group on Institutional Strengthening and instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64.12 on Institutional Strengthening to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 15.1: Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA): Report of the Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel

Decision SC64-16: The Standing Committee took note of the Report of the CEPA Oversight Panel as found in document SC64 Doc.15.1.

Agenda item 15.2: Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA): Draft resolution on CEPA

Decision SC64-17: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.15.2 on Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 14: Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

Decision SC64-18: The Standing Committee:

- i. **took note of the progress since the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee in implementing Resolution XIV.6 on *Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions*; and**
- ii. **instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.14 on enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies in partnership with multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.**

Agenda item 10: Urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands to receive enhanced attention:
Update on wetlands inventories

Decision SC64-19: The Standing Committee:

- i. **noted the progress of the Secretariat in providing a support mechanism to Contracting Parties for the completion of national wetland inventories; and**
- ii. **requested the Secretariat to further expand the national wetland inventories support mechanism, including through the mobilization of resources and partnerships, to offer further training and technical support.**

Agenda item 22.3: Draft resolution on the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards

Decision SC64-20: The Standing Committee decided not to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.22.3 for consideration by the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Agenda item 17: Work plan of the Secretariat for 2025

Decision SC64-21: The Standing Committee took note of and approved the Secretariat's integrated Annual Plan for 2025 as presented in document SC64 Doc.17.

Agenda item 23: Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2025-2028

Decision SC64-22: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.23 on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2025-2028 to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 22.1: Report of the Subgroup on COP15

Decision SC64-23: The Standing Committee took note of the presentation of COP15 preparations by Zimbabwe.

Agenda item 7.2: Report of the Management Working Group: Report on the process for recruiting a new Secretary General

Decision SC64-24: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit in square brackets the draft resolution on the process for recruiting a new Secretary General, contained in Annex 1 of document SC64 Doc.7.2, to COP15 for its consideration.

Agenda item 25: Draft resolution on the Status of Sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC64-25: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.25 on the status of Sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance to COP15 for its consideration.

Agenda item 27: Report of the Secretariat on proposals on strengthening the process to include a Site on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC64-26: The Standing Committee took note of the report and decided to extend the work of interested Contracting Parties into the next triennium, and instructed the Secretariat to present to SC67 an updated report reflecting further suggestions from Parties on strengthening the process to include a Site on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, for SC67 to consider any further actions.

Agenda item 29.12: Proposed draft resolution on assessing wetland vulnerability

Decision SC64-27: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.12 Rev.2, on assessing wetland vulnerability, to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.3: Proposed draft resolution on strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway

Decision SC64-28: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.3 Rev.1, on strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of waterbird flyways, to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.10: Proposed draft resolution on recognition of river dolphins as key species for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in South America and Asia

Decision SC64-29: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.10 Rev.1, on recognition of river dolphins as key species for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in South America and Asia, to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 11: Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group

Decision SC64-30: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the report of the Strategic Plan Working Group in document SC64 Doc.11;**
- ii. invited interested Parties to submit their amendments to document SC64 Doc.11 in written form to the Secretariat by 13.00 CET on 24 January;**
- iii. asked the Co-Chairs of the Strategic Plan Working Group to take the comments received by the Secretariat and prepare a revised document, incorporating any new amendments in square brackets; and**
- iv. instructed the Secretariat to publish the revised document on the Convention website and forward it to COP15 for consideration.**

Agenda item 26: Report of the Working Group on RIS Updating

Decision SC64-31: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the progress report on the work of the Working Group on (Ramsar Information Sheet) RIS Updating established at SC63;
- ii. instructed the Secretariat to update its standard operating procedures for the review of RIS, considering the comments provided by Working Group members, as outlined in paragraphs 12 and 13 of document SC64 Doc.26 Rev.2;
- iii. instructed the Secretariat to develop a mechanism to notify Contracting Parties of milestones in the RIS update process as highlighted in paragraphs 16 and 17 of document SC64 Doc.26 Rev.2; and
- iv. instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.26 Rev.2 on RIS updating to COP15 for its consideration, with all proposed amendments in square brackets.

Agenda item 29.4: Proposed draft resolution on promoting incorporation of frontier technology and traditional ecological knowledge in wetland conservation, restoration, management, and wise use

Decision SC64-32: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.4 Rev.2 on promoting incorporation of new technology and traditional knowledge in wetland conservation, restoration, management, and wise use to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.5: Proposed draft resolution on achieving the equitable governance and effective conservation of wetlands as protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures

Decision SC64-33: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.5 Rev.1 on achieving the equitable governance and effective conservation of wetlands as protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.2: Proposed draft resolution on restoration of degraded freshwater ecosystems to support ecological character biodiversity and ecosystem services [and the Freshwater Challenge]

Decision SC64-34: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.2 Rev.1 on restoration of degraded freshwater ecosystems to support ecological character biodiversity and ecosystem services to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.8: Proposed draft resolution on youth empowerment and integration: driving engagement in and the longevity of the Convention on Wetlands

Decision SC64-35: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.2 Rev.1 on youth empowerment and integration: driving

engagement in and the longevity of the Convention on Wetlands to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.1: Proposed draft resolution on strengthening action on culture and wetlands

Decision SC64-36: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.1 Rev.1 on strengthening action on culture and wetlands to COP15 for its consideration.

Agenda item 29.9: Proposed draft resolution on promoting sustainable lifestyles for the wise use of wetlands

Decision SC64-37: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.1 Rev.1 on promoting sustainable lifestyles for the wise use of wetlands to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 29.11: Proposed draft resolution on education and participation as a basis for the management of urban and peri-urban wetlands

Decision SC64-38: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft resolution in document SC64 Doc.29.11 Rev.1 on education and participation as a basis for the management of urban and peri-urban wetlands to COP15 for its consideration, amended to take into account the inputs presented by the Committee.

Agenda item 9: Financial and budgetary matters

Decision SC64-39: The Standing Committee:

- i. noted the interim estimates of the core budget results for 2024;
- ii. noted the interim estimates of the status of the non-core balances and voluntary contributions for 2024;
- iii. noted the estimated carry-forward of pre-committed and unspent funds in amount of CHF 1,120,000 from 2024 to 2025, as included in column C of the table in Annex 1 of the Subgroup on Finance report in document SC64 Com.2;
- iv. approved the temporary use of reserve funds as a loan to supplement voluntary funding for COP15 sponsored delegate support as described in paragraphs 13, 14 and 20 of document SC64 Doc.9.1 and in Table 1 of document SC64 Com.2, to a maximum of CHF 486,000; and
- v. noted the estimated surplus balances summarized in Table 1 of document SC64 Com.2.

Decision SC64-40: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the status of annual contributions as of 31 December 2024;
- ii. acknowledged the status of assessed contributions as of 31 December 2024 as part of the audit process;

- iii. noted the actions listed in paragraphs 14, 16, 17 and 18 of document SC64 Doc.9.2 Rev.1 to continue encouraging the payment of annual contributions by Contracting Parties; and
- iv. noted the status of the voluntary contributions received from the Contracting Parties in the Africa region outlined in paragraph 19 of document SC64 Doc.9.2 Rev.1.

Decision SC64-41: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the contents of document SC64 Doc 9.3 Rev.1;
- ii. instructed the Secretariat to present the following scenarios to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties:
 - 0% nominal increase compared to 2023-2025 budget, as in Annex 2 of document SC64 Com.2;
 - 4.1% nominal increase compared to 2023-2025 budget, as in Annex 3 of document SC64 Com.2;
 - 9.6% nominal increase compared to 2023-2025 budget, as Scenario A in Annex 1 of document SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1; and
 - 11.3% nominal increase compared to 2023-2025 budget, as Scenario B in Annex 1 of document SC64 Doc.9.3 Rev.1;
- iii. requested the Secretariat to prepare a narrative and quantitative analysis explaining the respective costs and benefits, as well as policy implications for each scenario (e.g a SWOT analysis); and
- iv. approved the draft resolution on the financial and budgetary matters to be considered at COP15, as presented in Annex 4 of the Subgroup on Finance report in document SC64 Com.2.

Decision SC64-42: The Standing Committee took note of the projected administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions submitted to the Standing Committee, which will be revised on the basis of the draft resolutions forwarded for consideration to COP15.

Agenda item 24: Report of the Co-Chairs of the Independent Advisory Committee on Wetland City Accreditation

Decision SC64-43: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the process of evaluation of applications for new and renewed accreditation presented in this report; and
- ii. took note of the newly accredited Wetland Cities and the cities with renewed Wetland City Accreditation, as follows:

Newly accredited Wetland Cities:

- Argentina: Trelew
- Belgium: Mechelen
- Botswana: Kasane-Kazungula, Shakawe
- Chile: Valdivia
- China: Chongming, Dali, Fuzhou, Hangzhou, Jiujiang, Lhasa, Suzhou, Wenzhou, Yueyang
- France: Abbeville, Arles, Hampigny

- **India: Indore, Udaipur**
- **Iran (Islamic Republic of): Babol, Bandar Kiashar, Gandoman**
- **Japan: Nagoya City**
- **Morocco: Mehdyia**
- **Philippines: Balanga City**
- **Poland: Poznan**
- **Republic of Korea: Gimhae, Mungyeong**
- **Serbia: Novi Sad**
- **Switzerland: Canton de Genève**
- **Zimbabwe: Victoria Falls**

Cities with renewed Wetland City Accreditation:

- **China: Changde, Changshu, Dongying, Haikou, Harbin, Yinchuan**
- **France: Amiens, Courteranges, Pont-Audemer, Saint-Omer**
- **Hungary: Tata**
- **Madagascar: Mitsinjo**
- **Republic of Korea: Changnyeong, Inje, Jeju, Suncheon**
- **Sri Lanka: Colombo**
- **Tunisia: Ghar el Melh**

Agenda item 28: Update of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution XIV.20

Decision SC64-44: The Standing Committee took note of the update of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution XIV.20 on the Convention's response to environmental emergency in Ukraine relating to the damage of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression.

Agenda item 30: Dates and venue of the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee

Decision SC64-45: The Standing Committee decided to hold its 65th meeting (SC65) on 23 July 2025 and its 66th meeting (SC66) on 31 July 2025. Both meetings will be held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Agenda item 32: Any other business

Decision SC64-46: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to publish the proposal on amending the Rules of Procedure as an informal paper and to notify all Parties and invite comments.