



10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Healthy wetlands, healthy people”

Changwon, Republic of Korea,
28 October-4 November 2008

Report of the Meeting

Opening Ceremony, First & Second Plenary Sessions

Tuesday 28 October 2008, 17.00–19.00 (Agenda Items I & II)

Wednesday 29 October 10.00–13.00 (Agenda Items III–VIII & X)

Wednesday 29 October 15.00–18.00 (Agenda Items IX & XI)

Agenda Item I: Opening of the Meeting

Agenda Item II: General Statements

a) Opening ceremony

1. The opening ceremony was preceded by music and dance performed by Korean artists.
2. Following the entrance of **His Excellency Lee Myung-bak**, President of the Republic of Korea, a short introductory video was screened and the Ramsar flag was formally handed over from the government of Uganda, host of the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP9), to the government of the Republic of Korea, host of COP10.
3. Welcome addresses were made by **Mr Lee Maanee**, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, and **Mr Kim Tae-ho**, Governor of Gyeongnam Province, Republic of Korea.
4. **Mr Anada Tiéga**, Ramsar Secretary General, delivered his opening address.
5. The Congratulatory Address was given by **His Excellency Lee Myung-bak**, President of the Republic of Korea.
6. Children representing each of the 10 countries that have hosted Ramsar COPs presented the ‘Children’s Message for Ramsar’.
7. Addresses were delivered by:
 - **Mr Ban Ki-Moon**, UN Secretary General (by video)
 - **Mr Chung Jong Hwan**, Minister of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs, Republic of Korea
 - **Ms Choo Miae**, Chairperson of Environment & Labour Committee, National Assembly, Republic of Korea
 - **Ms Julia Marton-Lefèvre**, Director General, IUCN
 - **Mr David Coates** on behalf of **Mr Ahmed Djoghla**, Executive Secretary, CBD

- Mr Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP

b) Presentation of Ramsar Awards

8. **Mr Anada Tiéga**, Ramsar Secretary General, **Mr Paul Mafabi**, Chair of the Ramsar Standing Committee, and **Mr Franck Riboud**, Chief Executive Officer of the Danone Group, presented the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards 2008, comprising the Evian Special Prize of USD 10,000 per award category, a sculpture, and the 'Ramsar Jewel' to the following recipients:

- Education Category: **Prof Sansanee Choowaew** (Thailand)
- Management Category: **Mr Denis Landenbergue** (Switzerland)
- Science Category: **Mr David Pritchard** (UK)
- Recognition of Excellence: **Prof Jan Květ** (Czech Republic)

c) 10th Anniversary of the Danone-Evian Initiative

9. **Mr Anada Tiéga**, Ramsar Secretary General, and **Mr Franck Riboud**, Chief Executive Officer of the Danone Group, made addresses to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Danone-Evian Initiative. A video showcased some of the activities and achievements under the Initiative and Mr Riboud announced the further strengthening of Danone's environmental commitment through a pledge to reduce the Group's carbon footprint by 50% by 2011, and through the establishment of the 'Danone Fund for Nature' to be jointly administered by Ramsar and IUCN in partnership with Danone. The three partners then proceeded to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation concerning the establishment and operation of the Fund.

Agenda item III: Adoption of the agenda

10. As President, representing the Host Government of COP9, **Ms Maria Mutagamba**, Minister of Environment of Uganda, expressed her sincere thanks and appreciation to the government and people of the Republic of Korea for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to COP10 delegates and for the perfect preparation of the COP. Noting the impetus that hosting COP9 had given to Uganda's wetland protection efforts, the Minister presented the Secretary General with a copy of a newly produced handbook 'Implementing the Ramsar Convention in Uganda – A Guide to the Management of Ramsar Sites in Uganda'.
11. The new Ramsar promotional video, production of which has been made possible with the generous support of the Republic of Korea, was screened.
12. The **President** referred delegates to document Ramsar COP10 DOC. 1 Rev.2 *Provisional Agenda*. The **Deputy Secretary General** confirmed that there had been no substantive changes to the overall agenda items and schedule as presented in earlier versions of the document.
13. There being no objections, the **President** declared the agenda adopted by consensus.

Agenda item IV: Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

14. At the President's request the **Deputy Secretary General** referred to document Ramsar COP10 DOC. 2 Rev.1 *Rules of Procedure* and drew attention to amendments proposed by the Standing Committee and by the COP9 Credentials Committee to Rule 5, Rule 18.2 and Rule 21 (the latter also involving consequent amendments to Rules 23 and 24).
15. There being no comments from the floor, the **President** declared the Rules of Procedure, as amended, adopted by consensus.

Agenda item V: Election of the President and Vice-Presidents; Remarks by the President

16. The acting **President** noted that the Conference Committee had nominated **Mr Lee Maanee**, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, as COP10 President.
17. **Mr Lee's** nomination was accepted by acclamation and he was invited to the podium to take up his role as COP10 President.
18. **Mr Lee** expressed his gratitude to Uganda for contributing to the development of the Ramsar Convention as Host of COP9 and briefly reviewed some of the key issues confronting COP10. He noted that the Changwon Declaration would reach out to the world community to further the protection of wetlands.
19. COP10 elected by acclamation the nominees of the Conference Committee for the following positions:
 - Alternate COP10 President: **Mr Kim Chan-woo**, Director General, International Cooperation Office, Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Korea
 - COP10 Vice-President: **Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Republic of South Africa
 - COP10 Vice-President: **Mr Patrick van Klaveren**, Minister Counsellor of Monaco

Agenda item VI: Appointment of the Credentials Committee and any other committees

20. In conformity with Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure, the nominations made by the Standing Committee for individuals to serve on the Credentials Committee were adopted by consensus as follows:
 - Africa – **Mr Manikchand Puttoo** (Mauritius)
 - Asia – **Ms Nirawan Pipitsombat** (Thailand)
 - Europe – **Ms Camille Barnetche** (France)
 - Neotropics – **Ms Nancy Cespedes** (Chile)
 - North America – **Ms Mónica Herzig** (Mexico)
 - Oceania – **Ms Deb Callister** (Australia), Chair
21. The **Secretary General** noted that the Secretariat had appointed **Mr David Pritchard** to act as secretary to the Credentials Committee.

22. The **Deputy Secretary General** urged Contracting Party delegations that had not yet done so to submit their credentials at the registration desk as soon as possible. The report of the COP9 Credentials Committee referred to unresolved problems regarding the credentials of some Central Asian Contracting Parties and asked the Secretariat to explore the issues involved. The Secretariat had concluded and reported to the Standing Committee that no amendments to the Rules of Procedure were required, as an appropriate mechanism already existed under Rule 18.3.
23. In conformity with Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure, the COP adopted by consensus the Standing Committee's proposal that the **COP10 Committee on Finance & Budget** (COP10 Finance Committee) be composed of the members of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, namely:
 - Africa – **Benin**
 - Asia – **China**
 - Europe – **Czech Republic**
 - Neotropics – **Ecuador**
 - North America – **USA** (Chair)
 - Oceania – **Samoa**

plus, in addition, one additional Contracting Party from each Ramsar Region.

24. The **Secretariat** had already been advised of the additional Contracting Party for three of the six regions:
 - Asia – **Japan**
 - Europe – **France**
 - Oceania – **Australia**

No proposals had yet been received from Africa, the Neotropics, or North America.

25. The **President** ruled that the composition of the COP10 Finance Committee would be finalised as soon as nominations of an additional Contracting Party had been received from each of these three regions.
26. The **Secretariat** confirmed that meetings of the COP10 Finance Committee (and other Conference Committees) were, in principle, open to observers, unless the Committee Chair ruled, exceptionally, that a closed session was required.

Agenda item VII: Admission of Observers

27. The **President** referred delegates to document COP10 DOC. 39 *List of Registered Observers*. There being no objections, the observers listed were duly admitted by consensus.

Agenda item VIII: Report of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee

28. The **Chair of the Standing Committee (SC)**, **Mr Paul Mafabi, Uganda**, presented his report contained in conference document Ramsar COP9 DOC. 4.

29. The **President** commended the work of the outgoing SC and opened the floor to comments and statements.
30. Many delegations expressed their gratitude to the government and people of the Republic of Korea for hosting COP10 and offered congratulations to the President of COP10 on his election.
31. **Egypt** underlined that one of the most important emerging issues is to build capacity for proper implementation of the Convention at national level.
32. The **Republic of Korea** expressed its pleasure in being a member of the Standing Committee as host of COP10.
33. **Japan** recognised key issues such as the Secretariat's legal status and long-term budgetary matters that would be discussed during the COP.
34. **Bahamas, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa** and the **United Republic of Tanzania** all thanked the Standing Committee and its Chair for the efforts and achievements of the last triennium and pledged continued support for the Convention's activities during the forthcoming intersessional period.
35. The **Chair of the Standing Committee** thanked delegations for the compliments paid to the Standing Committee and confirmed that he had taken note of the points raised by Contracting Parties.
36. The **President** declared the Report of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee duly adopted by consensus.

Agenda item IX: Report by representative of the World Wetland NGOs conference

37. **Ms Park In Ja**, Association of Consumers' Cooperatives and Co-Chair of the NGO Network that had met in Suncheon City, Korea, from 25–27 October 2008, presented the 'Suncheon NGO Declaration' (Annex V of this report). This included, *inter alia*, specific concerns and proposals relating to COP10 DR 1 (Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009–2014), DR 8 (Convention's Programme on CEPA 2009–2014), DR 13 (Status of sites in the Ramsar List), DR 23 (Wetlands and human health and well-being), DR 25 (Wetlands and biofuels), DR 28 (Wetlands and poverty reduction), and DR 31 (Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems). In addition, the NGOs expressed concern over inadequate implementation and follow-up of COP7 Resolution VII.21 (Costa Rica, 1999) regarding mangroves and COP9 Resolution IX.15 (Uganda, 2005), notably the paragraph relating to the Saemangeum reclamation project in the Republic of Korea.
38. The **President** acknowledged the message from NGOs and civil society, which, he added, was highly valued. He urged NGOs to discuss DRs of particular concern directly with the Contracting Parties.

Agenda item X: Report of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

39. The **Chair of the STRP, Dr Heather MacKay**, presented her report contained in conference document Ramsar COP10 DOC. 5. She drew particular attention to the need for the global network of national STRP focal points to function more effectively and for the Convention to treat issues of wetlands, water, biodiversity loss, and climate change more holistically.
40. Referring to specific sites within its territory, **Algeria** called for the process of adding and removing sites to/from the Montreux Record to be clarified and simplified. This call was endorsed by **Australia** and **Egypt**.
41. **Venezuela** was concerned that Cuare Ramsar site was listed in COP10 information documents as being at potential risk of change to its ecological character due to a proposed tourism development. Cuare should be removed from such lists as any threat to the site had been averted.
42. Responding to points made by **Mauritius** and **Egypt**, the **STRP Chair** drew attention to DR 21 concerning avian influenza.
43. **Sudan** concurred with the **STRP Chair** that CEPA should be fully integrated with work on scientific and technical matters in order to support implementation.
44. **India** raised a number of issues of concern that it felt warranted further attention, including avian influenza, climate change, and wetland restoration. There should also be more emphasis on ensuring appropriate institutional mechanisms, including possible expansion of the STRP to deal with new emerging issues. The weakness of the Small Grants Fund pointed towards the need for Ramsar to have its own financial mechanism.
45. **Ecuador** urged the COP to provide more support to the STRP. If necessary, the COP should even consider increasing the core budget allocation made available for the STRP's work.
46. **Ecuador** and **Egypt** called for regional meetings of STRP focal points, similar to the one held recently for European STRP focal points.
47. The **Republic of Korea** fully agreed with the importance of ensuring that national focal points functioned effectively and looked forward to further consideration of this matter during consideration of DR 9.
48. With regard to priorities for the future, the **STRP Chair** suggested that delegates should engage in the discussion of DR 10, while issues of concern related to the Montreux Record would come up under DRs 15 and 16.
49. The **President** declared the STRP Chair's Report to be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item XI: Report of the Secretary General and overview of the implementation of the Convention at the global level

50. The **Secretary General** presented his report contained in conference document Ramsar COP10 DOC. 6 *Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention at the global level*. He emphasized his own personal views of the current status and way forward for the

Convention. Complementary reviews of implementation of the Convention in each Ramsar region are available as conference documents COP10 DOC. 8 to DOC. 13, inclusive.

51. The **President** invited comments from the floor.
52. **Austria** was concerned that the huge workload derived from the Strategic Plan is increasingly overloading the Secretariat. The Secretariat's approach to include all relevant players and especially the private sector should be continued, but this clearly can't be done without more capacity. Austria appreciated the good interlinkages between the SC, STRP, IOPs and Secretariat at global level and recommended extending this to the national level.
53. **Brazil** was concerned by the reference to biofuels in paragraph 18 of DOC. 7 and regretted that other topics identified by Contracting Parties had not been included in the Secretary General's report. This point was endorsed by **Argentina, Cuba, and Paraguay**, who drew particular attention to the outcomes of the COP10 Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Americas.
54. **China** reported on national progress with Ramsar implementation, including establishment of the China National Ramsar Commission, designation of more than 550 National Wetland Reserves, a total of 36 Ramsar Sites, and a network of more than 70 Wetland Parks. With regard to the Annexes to COP10 DOC. 7, China wished to make two clarifications: Annex 1 should be updated to include six recently designated Ramsar sites. Annex 3b includes mention of Dalai Lake, but the proposed mining project at this site has been stopped by local authorities and the Central Government and the original status of the site will be restored as soon as possible.
55. **Malawi** stressed the importance of CEPA and said that this area needs more support, especially for African countries, if Ramsar is to be well understood.
56. **Sudan** pointed out that there were other major African lake basins where urgent action was needed, in addition to the example of Lake Victoria mentioned by the Secretary General.
57. **Suriname** underlined the need to find a sustainable solution to the problem of securing sufficient funding to bring sponsored delegates to Ramsar COPs.
58. **Egypt** called for greater regional interaction through the holding of more regional meetings. Furthermore, the language barrier for certain countries could be solved at the same time that the Convention's legal status is settled. More needs to be done to promote CEPA and the recognition of the cultural value of wetlands.
59. **Chile** wished to see the issues of wetlands and climate change and wetlands and extractive industries listed under regional priorities.
60. **Mali** reported on the early phases of a process for developing a major protection programme for the Inner Niger Delta, in cooperation with international partners.
61. **Japan** was concerned that paragraph 7 of COP10 DOC. 7 proposes incorporating the costs of hosting the COP into the Convention's core budget and expressed its

understanding that this in no way prejudged the outcomes of discussions to be held by the Conference Finance Committee. Japan has designated four new Ramsar Sites in recent days and that will be celebrated at a side event during COP10. Japan reiterated its ongoing strong support for the Convention.

62. **India** fully agreed with the challenges set out by the Secretary General and summarised some of its activities in support of the Convention at national level. The National Environment Policy 2006 gives due importance to wetland conservation and a draft Regulatory Framework for the Conservation and Management of Wetlands has been opened to comment from stakeholders. Other key policy documents include the National Wetland Conservation Programme initiated in 1987 and the National Lake Conservation Plan. The designation of further Ramsar sites, adding to India's current total of 25 Ramsar sites, is in the pipeline.
63. **Iraq** concurred with Egypt's observation that language remains a significant barrier for some countries. There were nearly 20 Arabic-speaking Contracting Parties and other non-Contracting Party observers. Iraq strongly believed that the use of Arabic as a working language of the Convention would assist in recruiting new Contracting Parties. An informal consultation meeting among Arabic-speaking countries had been held during the morning of 29 October. The Arab League was understood to be taking a proactive approach to this issue. Iraq proposed setting up an informal contact group to discuss a possible initiative, which would be fully funded by additional voluntary contribution, with a long-term commitment, but with no impact on the core budget of the Convention.
64. **Kenya** drew attention to the plight of Lake Turkana, suffering from siltation and shrinkage owing to degradation of the Mao Forest. Kenya also called on donors to support its national wetland inventory so that more important sites could be designated for the Ramsar List.
65. **Thailand** felt that the Secretary General's report should have highlighted key messages from the Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Bangkok.
66. **Republic of Korea** recalled that it was establishing the Ramsar Regional Centre for East Asia to promote the Changwon Declaration and implementation of the Convention in general in East Asia, with a special focus on capacity building in developing countries. Korea requested delegates to support this initiative.
67. **Congo** reported on progress with Ramsar implementation since COP9. Four Ramsar sites were recently added, covering 6.47 million hectares. This had been possible thanks to WWF and the Ramsar Secretariat through the Swiss Fund for Africa, and thanks were due to all of these partners. Congo also supported the call by Malawi for increased awareness-raising about the Convention.
68. **South Africa** recognised the need for strengthening the Secretariat and underlined the benefits of partnerships, as demonstrated by the Working for Wetlands programme in South Africa, which harnessed government departments and agencies, NGOs, the private sector and local people to work together for mutual benefits.

69. **Costa Rica** called for the Convention to include children in its activities and announced the impending designation of the 12th Costa Rican Ramsar site, a wetland shared with Nicaragua.
70. **Samoa** felt that much more needed to be done to further the implementation of the Convention. The dire situation of the Small Grants Fund was of particular concern. Capacity building, training needs and raising of public awareness were especially important in developing countries. A linked issue was the legal status of the Secretariat. Dialogue with all partners, including the UN, must be continued, as should learning from other MEAs. Greater synergies were needed on issues such as climate change and food security as well as streamlining of national reporting requirements. A partnership approach between governments and local communities was critically important for the effective implementation of the Ramsar Convention. Finally, greater recognition should be given to the important traditional and cultural uses of wetlands.
71. **Greece** was concerned that only 26% of responding Contracting Parties had developed management plans for all Ramsar sites within their territory and reported on the progress made by Greece concerning the establishment of legal protection status and the setting up of management bodies for its Ramsar sites. Greece was continuing its collaboration at Mediterranean level through the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) and continued to host the Secretariat Unit of the MedWet Initiative.
72. **Sri Lanka** reported its intention to designate a fourth Ramsar site in the next year and confirmed that a further 40 candidate sites had been identified. An action plan for the next four years had been prepared and significant resources for wetland protection had been invested.
73. **Nigeria** had recently designated nine new Ramsar sites, making 11 sites in total. Management plans are in preparation but there is a strong need for assistance through the Convention, especially for capacity building.
74. **Tanzania** commended the synergies between Ramsar and CBD and involvement with other global bodies such as the World Water Forum and FAO. Tanzania looked forward to seeing the COP10 theme of 'Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People' taken forward with WHO. Climate change and wetlands was also a crucial issue for the Convention to address, as shown by examples in East Africa.
75. **Malaysia** reported on the recent designation of its sixth Ramsar site.
76. **WWF** welcomed the Secretary General's comments regarding the many challenges faced by the Convention, but was concerned in particular by the situation in Oceania and Greece. 84% of Oceania's designated sites are in Australia and, according to COP10 documentation, 22 of Australia's 65 sites have experienced actual or potential change in ecological character, yet none is listed on the Montreux Record. WWF called on the COP to encourage all Contracting Parties, especially Australia, to use the Montreux Record to recognise the sites that have experienced ecological change as referred to under Article 3.2 of the Convention. With regard to Greece, Resolution IX.15 paragraph 27 xi) requested a report on the steps taken at the seven Greek Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record and the measures taken to maintain the ecological character of the three sites

removed from the Montreux Record in 1999. WWF also called on Greece to consider adding the Evros Delta to the Montreux Record.

77. The **Secretary General** thanked Contracting Parties for their comments, statements and proposals for improving the report. He stressed that his report aimed to provide a global overview and that much greater detail on regional implementation could be found in the relevant Regional Overviews. With regard to regional priorities, the ‘Call to Action’ contained in DOC.7 represented the Secretary General’s personal views and included only a few illustrative examples. Delegates should again refer to the Regional Overviews for analysis of information from National Reports and Regional Meetings. With regard to comments on specific Ramsar sites, this issue would be addressed in detail during consideration of DR13.

Special Presentation on Conservation and Sustainable Development of Wetlands in the Republic of Korea

78. This Special Presentation was made by **Mr Kim Ji-tae**, Director General, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, who noted that some 7.7% of the country is covered by wetlands, many of which form an important part of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway for migratory birds. Unfortunately, wetlands have been destroyed owing to a lack of awareness of their values, especially as a result of reclamation and landfill between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, when 880 km² of wetlands were lost in just ten years. Since then, awareness of wetland values has increased, including better understanding of their socio-economic importance.
79. Korea joined the Ramsar Convention in 1997 and this marked the start of epoch-making change. The Wetland Conservation Act was enacted in 1999 and on the basis of the Act, a five-year wetland management plan drafted and implemented alongside a range of international projects and initiatives, including the proposed establishment of the Ramsar Regional Centre for East Asia.
80. Wetlands of high conservation value are designated as Wetland Protection Areas, of which there are 20 to date. There are now 11 Ramsar Sites, of which three were added to the Ramsar List this year.
81. Among plans for the future are the restoration of 10% of the tidal flats lost or damaged in recent decades and the consideration of a ‘no net loss of wetlands’ policy. By 2012, up to 10 additional Wetland Protection Areas (WPAs) will be designated and, by 2017, the goal of having 20% of Korea’s coastline covered by WPAs will be pursued. The precautionary approach will be applied to secure a harmonious balance between development and conservation and importance will be given to wetland restoration in urban areas. The Low-carbon Green Growth Strategy announced by President Lee Myung-bak this year will provide the national framework for Korea’s sustainable development.

Third and Fourth Plenary Sessions

Thursday 30 October 2008, 10.00–13.00 (Agenda Items XII & XIII)

Thursday 30 October 2008, 15.00–16.00 (Agenda Item XIV)

82. The 3rd Plenary Session opened with the screening of a trailer for ‘Crimson Wing – Mystery of the Flamingos’, the new Disneynature film on Lake Natron and its Lesser Flamingos. Lake Natron was designated as a Ramsar site by the United Republic of Tanzania in 2001. A Ramsar Advisory Mission to the site was conducted in 2008.
83. Following the video presentation, **Dr Batilda S. Burian, Minister of State for the Environment of Tanzania**, welcomed a new partnership between the government of Tanzania, Ramsar, and Disneynature to establish the Lake Natron Trust Fund. She acknowledged with gratitude the assistance of AEWA/CMS, BirdLife partners and others to mobilise the Fund, and welcomed the support of Danida and other donors and, in particular, the pledge of Disneynature to be the first contributor to the Fund.
84. Reiterating Tanzania’s unfaltering commitment to Ramsar implementation, the Minister confirmed her awareness of concerns regarding proposals for a soda-ash plant at Lake Natron and assured the COP that any such development would be treated with a precautionary approach to avoid, minimise and mitigate any adverse impacts on the lake’s ecosystem.
85. The **Deputy Secretary General** warmly thanked Disneynature for making available an excerpt from the film.

Agenda item XII: Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties [item held over from yesterday]

86. The **Secretariat** recalled that the Standing Committee and Conference Committee had reviewed the various requests and instructions contained in previous COP Resolutions for reporting back to COP10. The great majority of such issues were addressed in COP10 draft Resolutions (DRs), in information papers, or in the Secretary General’s Report and associated Regional Overviews. Two issues, however, needed to be addressed separately:
 - a) the legal status of the Convention Secretariat
 - b) COP9 DR 6 on Transnational/transboundary Ramsar sites
87. In relation to item (b), the **Deputy Secretary General** outlined progress since COP9, as summarised in conference document Ramsar COP10 DOC.38. He noted that the matter was further discussed during the 38th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC38) on 27 October 2008, which had decided as follows (quotation from SC38 Report):

“Decision SC38-6: Following further consideration of issues arising from COP9 DR 6, and noting that the broader issues of international river basin and water management and international cooperation on such matters are already covered by other guidance adopted by Contracting Parties, and confirming that such matters are of continuing high implementation importance for Parties, as is recognized in the draft Strategic Plan 2009-2014 (COP10 DR 1), the Standing Committee recommended that:

- i) [COP9] DR 6 should not be reopened for negotiation during COP10;
- ii) the further study on this issue called for in the COP9 Conference Report should be pursued, resources permitting, and the Secretariat is requested to further explore with IUCN and other interested organizations and Parties ways and means of undertaking this; and

- iii) the STRP should be requested to review the adequacy of the current guidance for designation and management of transboundary Ramsar sites in the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* and other relevant guidance adopted by Parties, and as appropriate to prepare further guidance for Contracting Parties on these matters.

The Standing Committee recommends that this should form the basis of COP10 discussion and that a decision on this matter should be recorded in the Report of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.”

88. The **President** asked if there were any views from the floor that differed from those expressed in the SC38 decision.
89. **Brazil** considered that the expression “international river basin” used in the SC38 decision should be replaced, since it is not a term well recognized and defined in international fora, with “basins with water resources that bathe two or more countries”.
90. There being no further comments, the SC decision and recommendations contained therein were endorsed by consensus, noting the reservation expressed by Brazil.
91. **Iraq** raised concerns over the drying out of Hawizeh Marsh Ramsar site, in the Mesopotamian Marshes, a process that Iraq considers to be due to water-resource development in neighbouring and upstream countries. Iraq hoped that the Ramsar Secretariat would be able to facilitate dialogue between the parties concerned.
92. **Turkey** and the **Islamic Republic of Iran** took issue with the views expressed by Iraq and considered that the drying of the Mesopotamian Marshes was principally caused by the large-scale drainage operations carried out by the former Iraqi regime.
93. The **President** requested Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Turkey to enter into informal discussions on this issue.
94. The **President** opened discussion of sub-item (a), legal status of the Convention Secretariat.
95. The **Secretary General** introduced the relevant conference documentation on this item including:
 - Ramsar COP10 DOC. 20 *Review of Ramsar Secretariat legal status options*
 - Ramsar COP10 DOC. 20 Addendum 1 *Additional information concerning the legal status of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat*
 - Ramsar COP10 DOC. 35 *Report on Legal Personality of the Ramsar Secretariat*
96. He noted that there were essentially three options on the table:
 - Option 1 – ‘status quo’ with improvements
 - Option 2 – becoming an independent international organization
 - Option 3 – joining the UN system

and summarised his personal perspective on each of these, noting that Option 2 appeared unworkable. He emphasized that the Convention could be as strong or as weak as the Parties wanted it to be; this matter was essentially in the hands of the Contracting Parties, not the Secretariat.

97. The **President** opened the floor for discussion.
98. Diverse views were expressed and **Ecuador** proposed that a contact group be set up to discuss this matter. This was supported by many other Contracting Parties, including: **Uruguay, Chile, China, Russian Federation, Japan, France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Suriname, India, Argentina, Monaco, New Zealand, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Malaysia** and **Kenya**.
99. The **President** determined that a contact group should be established to take forward discussion of this issue and noted that the group should also be charged with reviewing the related DR 5 *Facilitating the work of the Ramsar Secretariat at international level*.
100. There being no objections the contact group was formally constituted and a provisional schedule of meetings was announced by the **Secretariat**.
101. In response to a question raised by **Gabon**, the Secretariat confirmed, with regret, that there would be no interpretation facilities in the contact group due to resource constraints. This was nevertheless in line with normal practice for informal session at MEA conferences and delegates were urged to make informal arrangements among themselves.

Agenda item XIII: The Convention's draft Strategic Plan 2009-2014: introduction and first general discussion

102. Conference document Ramsar COP10 DR 1 *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2014* was introduced by **Mr John Bowleg, Bahamas** (Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee and Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on the Strategic Plan), who outlined the process established and conducted by the Standing Committee to generate DR 1.
103. The **President** opened the floor for discussion.
104. The following Contracting Parties and organizations made comments, requested clarifications, or submitted proposed amendments to DR 1: **Thailand, New Zealand, UAE, Indonesia, Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Turkey, Chile, India, Brazil, Switzerland, Sudan, Japan, Kenya, Tanzania, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, WWF**, and **Korean Wetland Institute**.
105. The **Secretariat** requested that all proposed amendments be submitted in writing and committed to incorporating these into a revision of DR 1. All other points raised by delegations would also be taken into account.

Agenda item XIV: Financial report by the Chairperson of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee and proposed budget for the triennium 2009-2011

106. Owing to an over-run of the 3rd Plenary Session during the morning of 30 October, at which this agenda item was due to be discussed, the **Chair of the Conference Committee**

on Finance & Budget (Mr Herb Raffaele, USA) proposed that it be taken up by a special plenary session to be held from 15.00 to 16.00 on 30 October. This proposal was accepted by consensus.

107. During the special (4th) Plenary Session, the **President** invited the **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** to introduce this agenda item.
108. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** presented a brief overview of the activities of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance during the past triennium and noted his personal view that the Convention's finances were being more soundly managed at present than at any time in his many years of experience.
109. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** tabled conference documents DR 2 *Financial and budgetary matters* and its associated Annexes, as well as an additional paper summarising the implications of the four budget scenarios presented in the DR, namely:
 - Option 1: zero nominal growth
 - Option 2: 3% annual increase, which represented zero real growth
 - Option 3: 4% annual increase, to enable modest growth
 - Option 4: 11.75% annual increase, to cover proposed future secretariat needs
110. **Norway** drew attention to the fact that compared to other nature conservation conventions Ramsar has a very small staff, while the numbers of both Contracting Parties and sites were increasing. These facts alone made it clear that the Ramsar Secretariat should be strengthened. Norway therefore strongly supported Option 4 and urged other countries to do the same.
111. **Ecuador** believed that the budgetary exercise should not lead to a reduction in funding for regional initiatives and technical activities; these needed more resources, not fewer.
112. **The Republic of Korea** supported adoption of a budget that will maintain the quality of services from the Secretariat and full implementation of the Strategic Plan.
113. **Canada** appreciated the growing demands faced by Ramsar, but in relation to conventions in general preferred zero nominal growth, Option 1.
114. **The Islamic Republic of Iran** called for enhanced financial support for partnership and regional activities, especially through provision of technical support. The Regional Ramsar Centre in Iran received 30% of its funding through the Convention budget, and it was hoped this would continue. **Iran** supported Option 3.
115. While the legal status of the Secretariat remained unresolved, **Venezuela** would support the option of zero nominal growth.
116. The **Russian Federation** pointed out that the titles of the first and second columns of Annex 2 to DR 2 appeared accidentally to have been transposed. The Russian Federation welcomed zero nominal growth.

117. In response to a question from **Costa Rica**, the **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** confirmed that “4% increase” meant 4% annually, for every year of the intersessional period (regardless of whether it was three or four years).
118. **Panama** and **Iraq** supported the statement of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** concerning the importance of regional initiatives and were also in favour of Option3.
119. There being no further requests for the floor, the **President** ruled that further discussion of DR 2 be taken forward by the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget, as constituted during the first Plenary Session on 29 October, with the addition of the second representatives from the African, Neotropical and North American regions, which had now been confirmed as Kenya, Jamaica and Mexico, respectively.
120. The **Secretariat** announced the provisional schedule for meetings of the Conference Committee on Finance.

Fifth and Sixth Plenary Sessions

Friday 31 October 2008, 11.00–13.00 (Agenda Item XV)

Friday 31 October 2008, 15.00–18.00 (Agenda Item XV cont.)

Special Presentation: Human health and wetlands interactions – issues for healthy wetlands and healthy people in the future

121. The **Vice-Chair of the STRP, Ms Rebecca D’Cruz**, summarised the STRP’s work on human health and wetland interactions to inform the deliberations on COP10 DR 23 *Wetlands and human health and well-being*. She also referred delegates to conference document COP10 DOC. 28 *Healthy wetlands, healthy people – a review of wetlands and human health interactions*, which contains a draft Executive Summary and key messages from the report the STRP is currently working on, including the issues of:

- Ecological character and ecosystem health
- Ecosystem services and benefits for human health
- Health effects of disrupted wetland ecosystems
- Economic values and incentives
- Global trends affecting human health
- Responses and interventions

COP10 DOC. 28 also contains recommendations for future action that can be implemented by Contracting Parties working in partnership with others.

122. The **President** asked for questions or comments to be held over until discussion of DR 23.

Agenda item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions and Recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

123. The Secretariat introduced the sequence in which Draft Resolutions (DRs) would be handled.

124. DR 6 *Regional initiatives 2009-2012 in the framework of the Ramsar Convention* was introduced by the **Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, Mr Herb Raffaele**.
125. Following discussion, during which observations and/or proposed amendments were tabled by: **China, Hungary** (on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Australia, Samoa, Brazil, Switzerland, Argentina, Ecuador, Tanzania, Panama, WWF, Japan, Mali, Paraguay, Islamic Republic of Iran and Cameroon**, the **President** requested the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text of DR 6, taking account of the interventions made. Delegates who had made specific proposals for text amendments were urged to provide these to the Secretariat, in writing, as soon as possible.
126. DR 7 *Optimizing the Ramsar SGF during the period 2009-2012* was introduced by the **Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, Mr Herb Raffaele**.
127. During discussion, interventions were made by: **Chile, UK** (on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Namibia, Switzerland, Samoa** (on behalf of the Oceania region), **Tanzania, Japan, Uganda, and Malaysia**, and the **President** requested the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text of DR7, taking account of these statements and incorporating proposed amendments.
128. The **Secretary General** drew the attention of Contracting Parties to the fact that, in addition to the Ramsar SGF, other opportunities for funding are available at national, regional and international levels (including other small grant funding systems, but also much larger mechanisms such as GEF).
129. The **Republic of Korea** announced its pledge to contribute USD 100,000 to the Small Grants Fund. This commitment was warmly welcomed by the COP.
130. Brief progress reports were made by the **Chairs of the Credentials Committee, the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget, and the Contact Group on the Legal Status of the Secretariat**.
131. DR 3 *The frequency and timing of the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, and of regional meetings* was introduced by the Secretariat.
132. Interventions were made by: Switzerland, Barbados (on behalf of the Americas), **Georgia, Chile, Samoa** (on behalf of the Oceania region), **Egypt, Malaysia, New Zealand, China, Kenya, India, Japan, USA, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Tanzania, Malawi, and Argentina**.
133. The COP decided to not adopt DR 3 but urged Contracting Parties to consider hosting meetings of the Standing Committee, resources permitting.
134. **Georgia** invited the Standing Committee to meet in Georgia in 2009 and committed to covering organizational and logistical costs.
135. DR 4 *Establishing a Transition Committee of the Management Working Group* was introduced by the **Secretary General**.

136. The DR was supported by **Switzerland** and by **France** (on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10). **Ecuador** proposed one minor amendment.
137. Subject to the incorporation of the amendment tabled by **Ecuador**, DR 4 was adopted by consensus.
138. DR 8 *The Convention's Programme on communication, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2009-2014* was introduced by the **Secretariat**.
139. Interventions were made by **Austria** (on behalf of the CEPA Oversight Panel, which had been involved in the drafting of DR 8 and its annexes), **Thailand, Venezuela, New Zealand, Tanzania, Republic of Korea** and **Uganda**.
140. The **President** requested the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text of DR 8, taking account of these statements and incorporating proposed amendments.
141. DR 10 *Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention* was introduced by the **Chair of the STRP**.
142. Interventions were made by the **UK** (on behalf of the EU Member States present), **Armenia, El Salvador, Australia, Venezuela, Indonesia, Argentina, Brazil, Tanzania, Norway**, and **UNEP/WCMC**.
143. The **President** requested the Secretariat, working with the Chair of the STRP, to bring forward a revised text of DR 10, taking account of these statements and incorporating proposed amendments.
144. DR 9 *Refinements to the modus operandi of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)* was introduced by the **Chair of the STRP**.
145. Interventions were made by **Switzerland, Japan, Brazil**, and **Indonesia**.
146. In response to concerns raised by **Indonesia**, the **Deputy Secretary General** noted that the Report of the Meeting should show the very high importance attached by the COP to the STRP's work on socio-economic issues, including the value of ecosystem services, and that every effort will be made to ensure that appropriate expertise is provided through STRP observers and the IOPs. If this does not prove satisfactory, the STRP would be able to co-opt an expert.
147. The **President** requested the Secretariat to bring forward Rev. 1 of DR 9, incorporating the amendments tabled.
148. DR 12 *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector* was introduced by the Secretary General.
149. Following interventions from **Egypt, Germany** (on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Indonesia, Tanzania, Sudan, Thailand, Gabon, New Zealand, Nigeria** and **Senegal**, the President ruled that further discussion of this DR should be held over to the 7th Plenary Session.

Seventh and Eighth Plenary Sessions

Saturday 01 November 2008, 11.00–13.00 (Agenda Item XV)

Saturday 01 November 2008, 15.00–18.30 (Agenda Item XV cont.)

Agenda item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions and Recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

150. The COP continued its deliberations of DR 12 *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector*.
151. Following interventions by **Argentina, Chile, Mauritius, Japan and Brazil**, the **Vice-President from South Africa** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward a revised text of DR12 for the COP to consider.
152. DR 24 *Climate change and wetlands* was introduced by **Prof. Max Finlayson** on behalf of the STRP.
153. Interventions were made by **Switzerland, Slovenia** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Ecuador, Argentina, Chile, Japan, Thailand, Bahamas, New Zealand, China, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, WWF** (speaking also on behalf of Wetlands International), **FAO, Global Environment Centre, Indonesia and Costa Rica**.
154. **Brazil** made a statement that it requested be included in the record of the meeting:

“First of all Brazil would like to congratulate the STRP and the Standing Committee for working on a Resolution to deal with such a complex issue that is climate change. Indeed, nowadays, much has been said about this topic, and little has been concluded. Hence, we appreciate the efforts undertaken in the Ramsar Convention on the relations between wetlands and climate change.

As our delegation has mentioned before, due to its complexity, States agreed a UN Convention aimed at discussing each and every topic regarding climate change. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the international forum with clear mandate to decide on climate change matters – and the agreements reached there are the ones we should be looking at, in order to avoid duplicating efforts, contradicting what has been already decided or even anticipating conclusions that have not yet been reached.

In this regard, the Brazilian delegation considers important not to confuse the concepts of mitigation and adaptation. In climate change mitigation, developing countries were very successful in guaranteeing the recognition by all Parties to the UNFCCC of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. This same principle should be reflected throughout all the text of the Draft Resolution. Also, the role of conservation and forest management in climate change mitigation has not been decided yet in the UNFCCC. Therefore, it would not be convenient to make conclusions here on the potential environmental services of wetlands in climate change mitigation, since not even IPCC, the Scientific Panel created by UNEP and endorsed by the UN GA, concluded on that.”

155. The **STRP Chair** suggested that the DR might not require the establishment of a formal contact group and that many of the issues raised could be resolved by informal discussions. The STRP would be available to work informally with Contracting Parties and the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text.
156. The **Vice-President** ruled that an informal working group, to be facilitated by Prof. Max Finlayson on behalf of the STRP, would be constituted to produce the revised version of DR 24.
157. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comment on DR 25 *Wetlands and "biofuels"*.
158. Interventions were made by the **Netherlands** (on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Australia, Malaysia, Honduras, Costa Rica, India, USA**, and **Wetlands International** (speaking on behalf of the IOPs).
159. The **Vice-President** requested an informal working group, to be facilitated by **STRP Vice-Chair Rebecca D'Cruz** and the **Secretariat**, to take forward the discussions on this DR and to prepare a revised text.
160. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comment on DR 26 *Wetlands and extractive industries*.
161. Interventions were made by **Guatemala, Chile, Argentina, Germany** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Thailand**, and **Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region).
162. The **Vice-President** requested an informal working group, to be facilitated by **STRP Chair Heather MacKay** and the **Secretariat**, to take forward the discussions on this DR and to prepare a revised text.
163. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR11 *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*, which was introduced briefly by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
164. Interventions were made by **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Australia, Thailand, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of Africa), **Indonesia, Japan, CBD Secretariat, UNEP, WWF** (also speaking on behalf of Wetlands International), **India**, and **Austria**.
165. The **Secretariat** committed to bringing forward a revised text of DR 11 for plenary to consider.
166. Following a brief introduction from **Mr Dave Pritchard, on behalf of the STRP**, the **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 14 *A Framework for Ramsar data and information needs*, DR 15 *Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and data needs and formats for core inventory: harmonized scientific and technical guidance*, and DR 16 *A Framework for processes of detecting, reporting and responding to change in wetland ecological character*. Further background information and rationale could be found in conference document COP10 DOC. 27.

167. Interventions were made by **France, Tanzania, Australia, India, Japan, Thailand, New Zealand, Ecuador, Argentina, Lebanon, Chile, El Salvador, WWF, and Wetlands International.**
168. The **Deputy Secretary General** invited any other Party having precise text amendments to pass these to the Secretariat. WWF and Wetlands International were invited to liaise with the Chair of the STRP concerning the substance of their intervention. The Secretariat would bring forward revised versions of these three DRs to plenary.
169. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 17 *Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: updated scientific and technical guidance.*
170. Interventions were made by **Brazil, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Turkey, Chile** and **China.**
171. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that only a small number of relatively minor amendments had been proposed.
172. At the invitation of the **Vice-President**, DR 17 was adopted by consensus, subject to inclusion of the few amendments tabled.

Agenda item XV: Consideration of the draft Resolutions and Recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee (continued)

173. The **Vice-President from Monaco** invited the Republic of Korea to introduce DR 32 *Changwon Declaration.*
174. **The Republic of Korea** recalled that the Changwon Declaration had arisen from the COP10 theme of 'Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People'. Korea was committed to working closely with the Standing Committee, STRP, Contracting Parties, Regional Initiatives, the Secretariat and the IOPs for implementation of the Declaration and asked all delegations for their unstinting support.
175. **The Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 32.
176. Interventions were made by **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Switzerland, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **USA, Japan** and **China.**
177. In response to concerns raised by the **USA** and **Japan** in relation to late circulation of this DR, the **Deputy Secretary General** affirmed that the text had been submitted entirely in line with the Rules of Procedure, which provide for Resolutions on emerging issues.
178. The **Secretariat** confirmed that it would work with **Korea** to bring forward a revised text, taking account of the comments made.
179. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 18 *The application of response options from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) within the Ramsar Wise Use Toolkit.*

180. Interventions were made by **Thailand, Slovenia** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), and **Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region).

181. **Argentina**: made the following statement for the record [Rapporteur's note: the following is an informal translation into English by the Secretariat; the Spanish text is authoritative].

“The Argentinean Delegation wishes to thank the STRP for the work done in relation to this draft Resolution.

Since this draft Resolution is linked to Information Document 22 *The global use of terminologies concerning ecosystem services*, the Argentinean Delegation wishes to make comments in relation to the issue of payment for ecosystem services as mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 7 and request that these comments be included in the final report of the meeting.

In particular, we wish to make reference to the contents where there are references to payment for environmental services, and to differentiate ecosystem services from environmental services.

Although Argentina considers positively efforts in favour of ecosystem management and the raising of awareness about the services provided by ecosystems, such as environmental benefits, payments for ecosystem services should be compatible with the norms of the WTO, which deals with such payments in the context of the Agreement on Agriculture of the WTO.

In this sense, the possibility of making payments to farmers under the heading of remuneration for ecosystem services, outside of the present limitations of Annex II to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, could allow some developed countries to lessen the subsidy reductions that they should otherwise make as a result of negotiations in the current WTO Doha Development Round.”

182. The **Vice-President** requested the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text, taking into account the amendments tabled.

183. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 19 *Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance*.

184. The **Deputy Secretary General** clarified that this DR simply provided a consolidation of the Convention's two sets of existing guidance related to this topic.

185. Interventions were made by **Slovenia** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Ecuador, Brazil, Iraq, Turkey, Thailand, Venezuela, Argentina, China, UAE, Germany, Switzerland, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), and **Japan**.

186. The **Chair of the STRP** referred delegates to conference document COP10 DOC. 22 for further background and clarification on some of the terminology issues raised. She invited interested Parties to work together to seek consensus and to advise her accordingly by the end of the evening. She would gladly speak informally with Parties, outside of the plenary session, with regard to concerns raised about specific terminology, as well as the issue of water pricing.

187. The **Vice-President** asked the Chair of the STRP and the Secretariat to facilitate informal discussions among Contracting Parties so that a revised text could be brought forward to plenary.
188. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 20 *Biogeographic regionalization in the application of the Strategic Framework for the List of Wetlands of International Importance: scientific and technical guidance*.
189. The **Deputy Secretary General** reported that he had already received two proposed amendments and that these would be incorporated into any revision of the text.
190. Interventions were made by **Australia, Indonesia, Argentina, WWF, Canada, and Austria**.
191. There being no further requests for the floor, the **Vice-President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward a revised text of DR 20, taking into account the tabled amendments.
192. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 21 *Guidance on responding to the continued spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1*.
193. Interventions were made by **Japan, USA, UK** (speaking on behalf of the EU), **Thailand, New Zealand, and Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region).
194. The **Vice-President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward a revised text of DR 21, taking into account the tabled amendments.
195. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 22 *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways*.
196. Interventions were made by: **Japan, Kazakhstan, Germany** (speaking on behalf of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation), **Australia** (speaking as Chair of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership), **Thailand, Pakistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, China, India, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Cuba, Mexico, Russian Federation, and UK**.
197. The **Secretariat** committed to bringing forward a revised text, taking into account the concerns raised and the amendments tabled.
198. The **Vice-President** opened the floor for comments on DR 23 *Wetlands and human health and well-being*.
199. Interventions were made by: **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Thailand, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Brazil, Venezuela, USA, Argentina, India, and Ecuador**.
200. The **Chair of the STRP** responded to some of the issues raised by delegations.

201. The **Vice-President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward a revised text, taking account of the amendments tabled.
202. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 27 *Wetlands and urbanization*.
203. Interventions were made by **Chile, Sweden** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Thailand, Indonesia, and Venezuela**.
204. The **Secretariat** confirmed that it would bring forward a revised text incorporating the small number of amendments tabled.
205. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 28 *Wetlands and poverty reduction*.
206. Interventions were made by **Thailand, Brazil, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Japan**, and **IWMI**.
207. The **Vice-President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward a revised text, taking into account the views expressed and small number of amendments tabled.
208. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 29 *Clarifying the functions of agencies and related bodies implementing the Convention at the national level*.
209. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that this was one of three DRs submitted directly by Contracting Parties; in this case **France**.
210. **France** briefly introduced the text, thanking French-speaking African countries for their assistance. Speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10, France also tabled minor amendments.
211. Other interventions were made by **Brazil, Tanzania** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **New Zealand, Argentina, Australia, Mexico** and **WWF**.
212. The **Secretariat** committed to bring forward a revised text, taking into account the amendments tabled, though noting it might not be possible to amend the graphics annexed to the DR until after the COP.
213. At the invitation of the **Vice-President**, DR 30 *Small Island States and the Ramsar Convention* was introduced briefly by Bahamas.
214. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments.
215. Interventions were made by **Tanzania** (on behalf of the Africa region), **Samoa** and **Mauritius**, and **Japan**, but no specific amendments were tabled.
216. The **Secretariat** asked any delegate who wished to make a specific amendment to submit a written proposal. The Secretariat would bring forward a revised text if this proved necessary.

217. The **Vice-President** opened the floor to comments on DR 31 *Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems*, which had been briefly introduced by the co-sponsor **Japan** (also speaking on behalf of the second co-sponsor, the **Republic of Korea**).
218. Interventions were made by **Norway, Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Thailand, Tanzania, El Salvador, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Brazil, Ecuador, China, Venezuela, Japan, Paraguay, Australia**, and **IWMI**.
219. Because there was a range of sometimes diverging views, the **Vice-President** urged all interested delegations to meet in an informal working group with **Japan** and the **Republic of Korea** later in the evening and asked the co-sponsors to work with the Secretariat to bring forward a revised text.
220. The **Vice-President** asked the **Deputy Secretary General** to comment briefly on DR 13 Rev.1 *The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance*.
221. The **Deputy Secretary General** requested that any party with specific amendments concerning individual Ramsar sites or other national implementation matters referred to in DR 13 Rev.1 should submit such amendments, in writing, to the Secretariat, so that a second revised text could be prepared.
222. **Austria** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) tabled a general amendment, concerning overall operation of the Montreux Record mechanism.
223. The **Deputy Secretary General** underlined that all amendments to DR 13 Rev.1 and to any other draft Resolution should be provided in writing to the Secretariat as soon as possible, and in all cases by 13h00 on Sunday 2 November. It would not be possible for the Secretariat to include amendments received after this deadline, owing to the logistics of integrating new text, making translations, and copying and distributing documents. Delegates should check regularly at the documentation centre for revised texts, which would also be posted on the Ramsar Web site, as they became available, to facilitate consultation with capitals.
224. The **Vice-President** urged the regions to coordinate internally concerning the content of revised DRs so that regional spokespersons could convey consensus views, in plenary, as far as possible.

Report of the Ninth and Tenth Plenary Sessions

Monday 3 November 2008, 10.00–13.00 (Agenda Items XVI–XVIII)

Monday 3 November 2008, 15.00–18.00 (Agenda Item XVIII cont.)

Agenda item XVI: Report of the Credentials Committee

225. **Australia, Chair of the Credentials Committee**, presented the Committee's report. As of the morning of 3 November, the Committee had approved the credentials of 100 Contracting Parties. The Committee was seeking the COP's advice with regard to holding this agenda item open until the end of the morning plenary session on 4 November, to

enable additional time for those delegations still making efforts to submit originals of their credentials.

226. The **Credentials Committee** is also recommending potential changes to the Rules of Procedure for possible adoption at COP11, namely
- a proposed amendment to remove a current anomaly between Rules 18.1 and 18.3;
 - a proposed amendment to Rule 18.6.
227. **China** and **Canada** provided additional information concerning the status of their delegations' credentials.
228. The **COP** concurred with the Committee's suggestion that its report should not be finalised until the end of the morning plenary session on 4 November. The **President** asked the Committee to take into account the comments on China and Canada in finalising its report.

Agenda item XVII: Report on the discussions, conclusions and recommendations in the preceding sessions

229. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget**, the **Chair of the Contact Group on Legal & Institutional Matters**, and the **Chairs of informal working groups** established to consider certain draft Resolutions presented brief progress reports indicating the status of revised texts that had already been provided to delegates, or would be provided shortly.

Agenda item XVIII: Adoption of Resolutions and Recommendations

230. The **President** opened the floor for comments on DR 13 Rev.2 *The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance*. He noted that all specific amendments should be submitted in writing directly to the Secretariat.
231. Interventions were made by **Costa Rica, Iraq, Russian Federation, Argentina, Ukraine, Turkey, Algeria, China, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Australia, Republic of Korea, Chile, Romania, Venezuela, BirdLife International, WWF, Spain, Inland Rivers Network (Australia), Japan, Croatia, and Slovenia** [see para. 356 below].
232. The **President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward DR 13 Rev.3 for plenary to consider, taking into account the amendments tabled. He asked those Contracting Parties for whom there were contentious transboundary issues referred to in DR 13 to consult bilaterally or trilaterally and to submit consensus text to the Secretariat by the afternoon plenary on 3 November.
233. The **President** opened the floor for comments on DR 1 Rev.2 *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2014*.
234. Interventions were made by **Mexico, Brazil, Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Australia, IUCN, Republic of Korea, Japan, and Armenia**.

235. Clarifications were provided by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
236. The **President** requested the **Secretariat** to bring forward DR 1 Rev.2.
237. The **President** opened the floor for comments on *DR 6 Regional initiatives 2009-2012 in the framework of the Ramsar Convention*.
238. Interventions were made by **Ecuador** (speaking on behalf of the Americas region), **Hungary** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Panama**, **Chile**, **China**, **Costa Rica**, **Mexico**, **Wetlands International**, **Japan**, and **Brazil**.
239. The **President** noted apparent confusion over which was the correct version of the document under consideration and ruled that discussion be suspended for the time being. He asked **Hungary** to lead further informal consultations during the lunch break and to report back to the afternoon plenary session.
240. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 7 Rev.1 *Optimizing the Ramsar Small Grants Fund during the period 2009-2012*.
241. DR 7 Rev.1 was adopted, subject to the inclusion of amendments tabled by **Brazil**, **Ecuador**, and **Japan**.
242. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 8 Rev.1 *The Convention's Programme on communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2009-2014*.
243. DR 8 Rev.1 was adopted subject to the inclusion of an amendment tabled by **Australia**.
244. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 11 Rev.1 *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*.
245. DR 11 Rev.1 was adopted subject to inclusion of amendments tabled by **Australia**, **Ecuador**, **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Switzerland**, and **WWF**.
246. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 14 Rev.1 *A Framework for Ramsar data and information needs*.
247. DR 14 Rev.1 was adopted without further amendment.
248. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 18 Rev.1 *The application of response options from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) within the Ramsar Wise Use Toolkit*.
249. DR 18 Rev.1 was adopted subject to inclusion of an amendment tabled by the **USA**.
250. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 28 Rev.1 *Wetlands and poverty reduction*.
251. DR 28 Rev.1 was adopted without further amendment.
252. The **President** opened the floor for discussion on DR 30 (original text) *Small Island States and the Ramsar Convention*.

253. The original text of DR 30 was adopted without amendment.

Special Presentation

254. A Special Presentation on climate change and wetlands was made by **Prof. Max Finlayson** on behalf of the STRP.

Agenda item XVIII: Adoption of Resolutions and Recommendations (continued)

255. The **President** opened the floor for comments on DR 5 Rev.1 *Facilitating the work of the Ramsar Convention and its Secretariat*.

256. The **Co-Chairs of the Contact Group on Legal and Institutional Matters (Ecuador and Australia)** thanked all delegations who participated in the Contact Group, as well as the legal adviser, IUCN, UNEP, and the Secretariat for their assistance.

257. **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) thanked the **Co-Chairs of the Contact Group** and expressed support for the revised text, which represented a fair compromise.

258. At the invitation of the **President**, the **COP** thanked by acclamation the Co-Chairs for their efforts.

259. DR 5 Rev.1 was adopted subject to the incorporation of an editorial correction to operative paragraph 12, as well as several language amendments to the Spanish text.

260. The **President** opened the floor for comments on DR 16 Rev.1 *Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and data needs and formats for core inventory: harmonized scientific and technical guidance*.

261. DR 16 Rev.1 was adopted without further amendment.

262. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 32 Rev.1 *Changwon Declaration*.

263. Interventions were made by **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Brazil, Iraq, Japan, Chile, Argentina, Philippines, Australia, and Costa Rica**.

264. Clarifications were made by the **Secretary General** and **Deputy Secretary General**.

265. The **President** invited those Contracting Parties with remaining concerns to discuss these with the delegation of the **Republic of Korea**, so that a consensus Rev.2 text could be brought forward by the Secretariat for final adoption at the closing plenary session on 4 November.

266. The **President** reopened the floor to comments on DR 6 *Regional initiatives 2009-2012 in the framework of the Ramsar Convention* (resuming the discussion suspended during the 9th plenary session). He clarified that delegates should be referring to Rev.2 of this document and

- invited Hungary to report back on the outcome of the informal consultations held during the lunch break.
267. **Hungary** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) introduced amendments to two operative paragraphs and to six paragraphs of the Annex, which had been agreed by the informal working group on this DR.
 268. DR 6 Rev.2 was adopted subject to inclusion of the amendments tabled by Hungary.
 269. The **Secretary General** expressed his pleasure at the adoption of this Resolution, but drew Parties' attention to the fact that its implementation would add to the time and resource pressures on the Secretariat.
 270. **Turkey** made a presentation concerning its hosting of the 5th World Water Forum, to be held in Istanbul in March 2009. All delegates were warmly invited to attend and advised to visit www.worldwaterforum5.org for further information.
 271. The **Secretary General** thanked Turkey for this presentation and expressed his gratitude to both **Turkey** and **The Netherlands** for their offers to facilitate Ramsar input to the 5th World Water Forum, including promotion of the Changwon Declaration.
 272. Following a short recess, the **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 21 Rev.1 *Guidance on responding to the continued spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1*.
 273. DR 21 Rev.1 was adopted subject to inclusion of minor amendments tabled by **India, Japan, USA, Wetlands International, and UK**.
 274. The **President** opened the floor to comments on DR 22 Rev.1 *Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways*.
 275. **Japan** noted its concern that inclusion of Annex 2 might set an inappropriate precedent. There were many important meetings and workshops that related to the conservation and wise use of wetlands in a broad context. It would be acceptable simply to refer to the outcomes of such meetings in the preamble, where the outcomes were of particular relevance to a given draft Resolution. However, Japan would not block consensus.
 276. The **President** thanked **Japan** for this understanding and noted that Annex 2 was being included to recognize that the International Symposium on East Asian Coastal Wetlands had been held in Changwon as a pre-COP10 event.
 277. The **President** opened the floor for comments on DR 27 Rev.1 *Wetlands and urbanization*.
 278. DR27 Rev.1 was adopted without further amendment.

Special Presentation

279. A Special Presentation on "Integrated water management – prospects and challenges for the next decade", was made by the **Chair of the STRP, Dr Heather MacKay**.

280. **Australia**, speaking as Co-Chair of the recently concluded Contact Group on Legal and Institutional Matters, encouraged Contracting Parties to enter into informal consultations and to advise as soon as possible which two Parties from each Ramsar Region would participate in the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on Administrative Reform established through the earlier adoption of DR 5 Rev.1.
281. The **President** urged Contracting Parties to hold informal discussions during the farewell dinner and to advise him prior to the close of the COP of which Parties were being nominated to participate in the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Report of the Eleventh and Twelfth Plenary Sessions

Tuesday 4 November 2008, 09.00–13.00 (Agenda Item XVIII cont.)

Tuesday 4 November 2008, 15.00–19.00 (Agenda Items XVIII cont., XIX, XX, XXI & XXII)

Agenda item XVIII: Adoption of Conference Resolutions and Recommendations (continued)

282. The **Alternate President** asked the **leader of the informal working group on climate change** to report.
283. **Prof Max Finlayson** (on behalf of the STRP) stated that good progress had been made, but that further informal consultations would be required to progress some remaining issues.
284. The **Alternate President** asked **Prof Finlayson** to facilitate further discussions and to report back to Plenary in due course.
285. The **Secretary General** advised delegates that the late running of discussions on the climate change Draft Resolution meant that it was now logistically impossible for the Secretariat to arrange for translation and distribution of a revised text in all three languages. He asked for the indulgence of delegates to consider working from a revised English text – which would be distributed as soon as it was available.
286. The **Alternate President** invited the **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** to report on progress.
287. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget, Mr Herb Raffaele** (USA) thanked all members of the Committee for their efforts, acknowledging especially the exceptional contribution made by Japan. The Committee had reached consensus on a way forward and was tabling DR 2 Rev.2 with three accompanying Annexes. DR2 Rev.2 presented a four-year budget (2009-2012), based on an annual increase of 4% per year. Apart from 2.9% cost-of-living and 1.3% performance increases for Secretariat staff and an increase in the IUCN budget line, all other existing line items showed zero increase. The remainder of the overall budget increase was to be dedicated to the establishment of a new Secretariat position for partnership development. Suggested priorities for this new position were contained in Annex III. The budgets for the first two years (2009 and 2010) contained only a limited amount of funding for partnerships and would not be sufficient on their own to permit the recruitment of a permanent position. It was therefore

recommended that the Secretary General, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance, should decide how to move forward.

288. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** drew attention to operative paragraph 22 of DR 2 Rev.2, which required an editorial correction needed to read “Ramsar Regional Centre for Central and West Asia”.
289. **Kenya**, speaking on behalf of the African region and a member of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget, announced that those African Parties presently contributing the minimum annual contribution of CHF 1,000 had agreed that they would now contribute 100% more, i.e. CHF 2,000 per annum. The region recommended that the sum represented by this voluntary increase be earmarked for the Africa region budget line. The region was further urging all African Parties with payments in arrears to meet their obligations. Finally, the Africa region urged all Contracting Parties from other regions outside Africa who are also currently contributing the minimum CHF 1,000 to consider increasing their contributions as appropriate.
290. **Ecuador**, supported by **Costa Rica** and **Chile**, proposed amending operative paragraph 13 with the addition of: “and that in no case will negatively affect the items pertaining to Regional Initiatives, nor the work of the STRP”.
291. The **USA** made the following statement for the record:

“The United States continues to maintain a position of zero nominal growth with respect to the budget. However, the U.S. will not block consensus on the proposed budget as presented by the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance. The United States considers its contribution to the Ramsar Convention to be strictly voluntary. While we strive to keep our annual contribution at or near previous levels, the actual level of our contribution will be determined through our domestic budgeting process. We request this statement be included in full in the official record.”
292. Speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10, **France** congratulated the Committee and its Chair and also recorded special thanks to Japan. The budget presented in DR 2 Rev.2 represented a fair and equitable compromise. France and the EU Member States also expressed their gratitude to those African Contracting Parties that had accepted an increase in their minimum contribution.
293. **China** also congratulated the Chair of the Committee for his efforts to reach consensus. Although China was not quite satisfied with the allocation of the increased budget, it would nevertheless support DR 2 Rev.2. China requested the Secretariat to brief Parties on progress with establishment with the new staff position for partnership development and hoped to see this result in effective fundraising for regional implementation. Finally, it would be appropriate to recognize the welcome initiative announced by the Africa region within the text of the Draft Resolution.
294. **Venezuela** stated for the record its position in favour of zero nominal growth so long as the legal status of the Secretariat remains unresolved.

295. DR 2 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus, subject to the correction tabled by the Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget and inclusion of the amendments proposed by Ecuador and China.
296. The **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** clarified that the voluntary increase in the minimum annual contribution accepted by African Contracting Parties would be committed for use on the Africa Regional Centre and would not constitute part of the core budget. He tabled specific text for new operative paragraphs 23 and 24, which gave effect to China's proposed amendment and clarified the status of the voluntary increase.
297. The wording tabled by the **Chair of the Conference Committee on Finance & Budget** was adopted by acclamation.
298. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 31 Rev.2 *Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems*.
299. **Japan** was pleased to announce that the informal working group on this DR had reached consensus on the outstanding paragraphs, and extended sincere gratitude to all Parties that had contributed to the process.
300. **China** expressed gratitude for the great efforts made by Japan and the Republic of Korea. Nevertheless, the DR remained idealistic. While humanity needed idealism to protect its only planet, there was a gap between idealism and reality. China would try its best in practice to achieve what it could.
301. The **USA** made the following statement for the record:
- “In light of the insertion of the language, ‘consistent and in harmony with the Convention, the internationally agreed development goals and other relevant obligations’ in DR 31, para 12, and in DRs 24 and 26, the United States would like to make a statement to be submitted in full for the record. Recognizing that this language was negotiated during the recent CBD COP, the United States was not involved in its negotiation and expresses a reservation to its use here. The reference to the internationally agreed development goals as ‘relevant international obligations’ is erroneous, as many of these goals are not obligatory but rather aspirational. The United States considers there to be many internationally agreed development goals that are not in fact relevant international obligations as such, and therefore, we read this language to refer to only those internationally agreed development goals that may be properly understood as international obligations on the States taking action under these Resolutions.”
302. DR 31 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus without further amendment.
303. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 9 Rev.1 *Refinements to the modus operandi of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)*.
304. The **Deputy Secretary General** pointed out an editorial oversight in paragraph 17, where reference to the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education should have been included.

305. Also referring to paragraph 17, **Australia** requested inclusion of the following statement in the record of the meeting:

“In accepting the words of paragraph 17, Australia is not necessarily agreeing that there are ‘matters of common interest’ between the Ramsar Convention and the Antarctic Treaty.”

306. DR 9 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus without further amendment.
307. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 12 Rev.2 *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector*.
308. Interventions were made by **Germany** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Argentina**, **New Zealand**, **Australia**, **Paraguay**, **Brazil**, **Switzerland**, **Chile**, **Tanzania**, and **Mexico**.
309. DR 12 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of amendments agreed by the COP.
310. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 15 Rev.1 *Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and data needs and formats for core inventory: harmonized scientific and technical guidance*.
311. Interventions were made by **Argentina**, **El Salvador** and **Australia**.
312. DR 15 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus, subject to the inclusion of an amendment tabled by Argentina.
313. The **Alternate President** asked the STRP and Secretariat to work together in finalising the text.
314. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 20 Rev.1 *Biogeographic regionalization in the application of the Strategic Framework for the List of Wetlands of International Importance: scientific and technical guidance*.
315. Following interventions by the **UK** and **Argentina**, it was decided to omit from the final version of the Annex the map and table entitled *Marine Ecoregions of the World*.
316. The **UK** announced that during COP10 it had designated two additional Ramsar sites, thereby bringing the UK total to 171. The UK was also pleased to announce that it would provide CHF 25,000 towards a joint Ramsar/AEWA project to review the impact of extractive industries on wetlands. It was hoped that a further sum of CHF 25,000 would be confirmed in the near future to support the work of the STRP.
317. **Hungary** announced that thanks to the efforts of Mrs Louise Lakos, former Chair of the Standing Committee, Hungary was allocating CHF 10,000 for the Small Grants Fund, in spite of the difficult economic circumstances at present.
318. DR 20 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus subject to removal of the map and associated table from the Annex.

319. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR23 Rev.1 *Wetlands and human health and well-being*.
320. Subject to the inclusion of amendments tabled by **Ecuador** and **Venezuela**, DR 23 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus.
321. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 25 Rev.1 *Wetlands and 'biofuels'*.
322. Interventions were made by the **Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Kenya, Japan, Costa Rica, Brazil, Switzerland, Norway, Honduras, USA, Australia, Malaysia** and **IWMI**.
323. The **Alternate President** ruled that further informal consultations should be held on this DR during the lunch break, with the aim of bringing forward a consensus text to the final plenary session.
324. The **Deputy Secretary General** stressed that it was too late for the Secretariat to be able to provide translations or to distribute a revised text. When the informal consultation group reported back to plenary, it would therefore need to speak to the Rev.1 text and table amendments orally through the interpreters.
325. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR32 Rev.2 *The Changwon Declaration*.
326. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that an amendment tabled by Japan during a previous plenary session had accidentally been omitted from Rev.2.
327. Interventions were made by **Armenia, China, France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), and **Japan**.
328. The **Alternate President** confirmed that in finalising the text of this DR, the Secretariat should harmonise terminology and language with other relevant DRs, especially DR 24 on climate change and wetlands.
329. Delegates applauded the **Alternate President's** declaration that DR 32 Rev.2 concerning the Changwon Declaration was adopted (subject to inclusion of the amendment previously tabled by Japan).
330. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 29 Rev.1 *Clarifying the functions of agencies and related bodies implementing the Convention at the national level*.
331. Interventions were made by **France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Australia, Brazil, Mexico, China** and **Cameroon**.
332. Noting that there appeared to be some confusion over terminology, especially between the three different language versions of the text, the **Alternate President** asked **France** to lead further informal consultations on this DR with a view to being able to adopt a consensus text during the afternoon plenary session.

333. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 10 Rev.1 *Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention*.
334. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that this was another DR that would require careful harmonization to take account of decisions reached in the adoption of other COP10 Resolutions.
335. DR 10 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus without further amendment.
336. The **Alternate President** turned to consideration of DR 19 Rev.1 *Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance* and asked the **Chair of the STRP, Dr Heather MacKay**, to make a brief introduction.
337. The **Chair of the STRP** noted that the amendments agreed in the previous plenary discussion of this DR had been incorporated. There had been no consensus on use of terminology referring to either “shared” or “transboundary” river basins, so an explanatory note had been added at the front of the document. Both terms were already in use in Ramsar Resolutions, though there was some tendency towards the use of “transboundary”, rather than “shared”. The drafting group had made sure that the use of both terms was contextually correct wherever they appeared in DR 19 Rev.1.
338. Interventions were made by **Germany** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Costa Rica, Switzerland, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, USA, Venezuela, Japan, Russian Federation, Norway and Paraguay**.
339. **Turkey** made the following statement:

‘Mr President, the Turkish delegation would like to refer to the whole document ‘Ramsar COP10 DR. 19, Rev.1’ including the annex titled ‘Consolidated Guidance for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management’. As we mentioned in our previous intervention (01.11.2008), there are various phrases which are ‘shared aquifer’, ‘shared river basin’, ‘sharing a drainage basin’, ‘shared water resources’ and ‘international river basin’. In this context, my delegation suggested to replace the words ‘shared’, ‘sharing’, and ‘international’ with the word ‘transboundary’ in the whole draft resolution. Unfortunately, my delegation was not able to see that, those amendments are not reflected in the mentioned document. Also, the explanatory note at the beginning of the Annex, page 4 of the English version, as well as in footnote 2 on page 13 of the revised text, is not acceptable to my delegation.

Mr President; We would also like to refer to the revised document, page 58 of the English version, new para. 243. In this new paragraph, direct reference to ‘UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (New York, May 1997)’ was eliminated. Instead of it, new items introduced to the para. 243 which are indirectly referring to the above mentioned UN Convention. Thus, newly introduced first bullet item refers to Convention on Biological Diversity decision IX/19, paragraphs 2 and 3. Para. 2 of CBD decision IX/19 addresses Resolutions VIII.1 and IX.1 of Ramsar Convention which Turkish delegations have put reservation on. Moreover, para. 3 of CBD decision IX/19 recalls para. 22 of CBD decision VIII/27 which reads as ‘Urges Parties and other Governments to ratify and implement the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses’. And, second bullet item of

para. 243 of the document Ramsar COP10 DR.19, Rev.1, addresses two UN watercourse conventions provided by the CBD. These mentioned conventions are ‘UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses’ and the ‘Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes’. So, Turkish delegation thinks that the reference to the said Convention should not figure in the draft resolution and offers elimination of first and second bullet item of para. 243 of the revised text.

Mr President and distinguished delegates; Lastly, we would like to refer the revised text, page 49 of English version, para. 197. Turkish Delegation would kindly like to draw attention to the ‘Report of the World Commission on Dams (WCD)’. The report of the WCD has no worldwide acceptance and it has been subject to criticism. In addition, the report consists of references to the 1997 UN Convention. In this context, Turkey is of the view that the Report of the WCD should not be a basic reference document for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. Thus my delegation offers the deletion of para. 197. Thank you, Mr. President.”

340. Responding to arguments for and against inclusion of language relating to the WTO and trade-related agreements, the **Chair of the STRP** proposed a way forward, pointing out that the document simply constituted guidance and was not binding on any party. She suggested that any specific references to WTO or trade-related instruments be removed and that she should go through the document to do this and thereby leave the issue flexible for Parties to interpret according to their own needs. The whole point of such technical guidance was to promote flexibility.
341. The **Alternate President** considered the STRP Chair’s advice to be reasonable and called for delegates to consider adopting DR 19 Rev.1 by consensus, subject to removal of references to the WTO and trade-related agreements. Any Contracting Party unable to join the consensus could have its position noted through a ‘statement for the record’.
342. Confirming that it would join the consensus, **Argentina** underlined the understanding that the document constituted guidance only and requested that the beginning of operative paragraph 7 be amended to “INVITES...” instead of “URGES...”.
343. The **Alternate President** invited the COP to adopt DR 19 Rev.1 subject to this additional amendment and subject to the approach recommended by the Chair of STRP.
344. There being no objection, the **Alternate President** ruled that DR 19 Rev.1 had been adopted by consensus. This announcement was met with applause.
345. The **Alternate President** opened the floor for comment on DR 26 Rev.2 *Wetlands and extractive industries*.
346. Interventions were made by the **USA** (supported by **New Zealand**), **Chile**, and **Australia**.
347. DR 26 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus subject to the deletion of square-bracketed text at the end of paragraph 20, requested by **Chile**, and insertions tabled by the **USA** and **Australia**.

Agenda item XVI: Report of the Credentials Committee

348. Recalling that this agenda item had been held open to enable the resolution of as many outstanding credentials issues as possible, the **Alternate President** invited **Ms Deb Callister, on behalf of Australia, Chair of the Credentials Committee**, to present the Committee's final report. The report is appended, in full, to this *Report of the Meeting* as Annex I *Report of the Credentials Committee*. In summary, the Committee met on six occasions and confirmed the credentials submitted by delegates of 105 Contracting Parties. Based on its experience at COP10, the Credentials Committee has proposed amendments to Rules 18.1, 18.3 and 18.6 of the Rules of Procedure.

Agenda item XVIII: Adoption of Conference Resolutions and Recommendations

(continued)

349. The **Alternate President** opened the floor to comment on DR 1 Rev.2 *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2014*.
350. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that, in common with DR 10 and other draft Resolutions, this DR 1 would require careful editorial harmonization to take account of decisions reached in the adoption of other COP10 Resolutions.
351. Interventions were made by **The Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Thailand, Samoa and Australia**.
352. DR 1 Rev.2 was adopted by consensus subject to inclusion of amendments tabled by **The Netherlands** and **Thailand**.
353. The **Alternate President** opened the floor to comment on DR 13 Rev.3 *The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance*.
354. Amendments were tabled by **Costa Rica, Chile, Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Iran, Venezuela, Honduras, China, Namibia, Gabon, the Republic of Korea**, and the **Korea NGO Network**.
355. **Croatia** provided the following statement to be included in the Conference Report:

“The Republic of Croatia welcomes the efforts of the Republic of Slovenia in implementing the Convention on Wetlands. Nevertheless, in Ramsar COP10 DR13 Rev.1, Article 10 (15), page 5, Slovenia expresses concerns about ‘environmental impact assessments to avoid changes in the ecological character of Skocjan Caves Ramsar site due to new installations for drinking water supply, and on possible hunting impacts from the Croatian neighbourhood of the Secovlje salt pans Ramsar site.’

Croatia states that the part of its border territory south of the Saint Odorik channel is neither protected under the Law on Nature Protection nor proposed for the Ramsar list in Croatia. This area by its natural characteristics is mainly dry karstic slope and has no significance to waterfowl.

Croatia states also that this area is used as a hunting reserve on the basis of the provisions of the Croatian Hunting Law and hunting is permanently prohibited

there. With that the possibility of a negative impact of hunting from the Croatian territory on the neighboring Secovlje salt pans Ramsar site in Slovenian is excluded; it does not exist.

Therefore, Croatia would like to ask to delete the part of the sentence ‘and on possible hunting impacts from the Croatian neighborhood of the Secovlje salt pans Ramsar site’ of Ramsar COP10 DR13 Rev.1, Article 10 (15), on page 5.”

356. **Slovenia** provided the following statement to be included in the Conference Report:

“We agree on the deletion of last part of the bullet point under para 10 (DR13), but would like to express our concern since the Croatian hunting societies do not respect the protected area and the Ramsar site designated on the boarder with Croatia.

Slovenia is concerned about the ecological character of the entire wetland ecosystem of the salina and wants to work constructively with the neighboring country, Croatia.

In 1989, Sečovlje Salina was protected as the landscape park, and since 2001, the Decree on the designation of the Sečovlje Salina as the Nature Park has provided legal protection of the area, including its wildlife. It was included on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance in 1993. This is further ensured by the strict prohibition of hunting over the entire area. Last year, on the southern side of the Dragonja River hunters were increasingly introducing hunting activities, including setting up hunting hides in wetland for shooting ducks within the protected area and the Ramsar site, which threatened the ecological character of the Ramsar wetland.

In February 2007, Slovenia reported the illegal interference of the two Croatian hunting associations that installed two signposts marking a hunting area on the southern side of the Dragonja River within the Sečovlje Salina Ramsar site in the protected area declared by Slovenian legislation and part of the Slovenian territory. The prompt intervention of the management authorities prevented any adverse changes to the ecological character and negative impacts to occur. Thanks also to the Ramsar Secretariat in promptly contacting the Croatian Ministry of Culture and assisting in resolving the issue. In July 2008, the two Croatian hunting associations reinstalled the signposts. We immediately called upon the responsible ministries in Croatia and informed the Ramsar Secretariat. We still have not received any response from the respective ministries to resolve the issue. Additionally, during this meeting on 2 November 2008 hunting occurred again on the same location in the protected area and the Ramsar site.

Slovenia regrets that the issue has not been resolved before this conference and activities with negative impacts on an internationally important wetland continue. Following our national law and international legislation, Slovenia will fulfil its obligations and act accordingly to prevent any damage to the ecological character to the Ramsar site. We have also requested the responsible Croatian ministries to intervene in accordance with the international legislation and bilateral agreements. We are working in good faith with Croatia towards resolving the problem.”

357. DR 13 Rev.3 was adopted by consensus subject to incorporation of the amendments tabled.

358. The **Alternate President** returned to consideration of DR 29 Rev.1 *Clarifying the functions of agencies and related bodies implementing the Convention at the national level* and invited France to report on the outcome of further informal consultations.
359. **France** confirmed that further discussions had been held with **Australia, Brazil, China, Mexico** and other Contracting Parties. Consensus had been reached on some specific language edits, which applied especially to the Spanish text, to ensure that clear and appropriate terminology was used throughout. The French delegation would provide the **Secretariat** with the agreed amendments in written form, showing annotations to each language version.
360. Subject to inclusion of the amendments negotiated by **France**, DR 29 Rev.1 was adopted by consensus.
361. The **Alternate President** invited Prof Max Finlayson, on behalf of the STRP to report on the outcome of the further informal working group consultations on DR 24 Rev.2 *Climate change and wetlands*.
362. **Prof Finlayson** referred delegates to a document that had been drawn up and circulated by the working group earlier in the day, in English only, as DRAFT UNEDITED DR 24 Rev.2. He then guided delegates through parts of the text where square brackets indicated that the working group had been unable to reach consensus.
363. Interventions were made by **Brazil, Czech Republic, Botswana, Argentina, Slovenia** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **China, India, Philippines, Norway, Switzerland, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Comoros, El Salvador, Australia, Costa Rica, France, and Uganda**.
364. The **USA** made the following statement for the record:
- “In light of the insertion of the language, ‘consistent and in harmony with the Convention, the internationally agreed development goals and other relevant obligations’ in DR 24, para 30, as well as in DRs 26 and 31, the United States would like to make a statement to be submitted in full for the record. Recognizing that this language was negotiated during the recent CBD COP, the United States was not involved in its negotiation and expresses a reservation to its use here. The reference to the internationally agreed development goals as ‘relevant international obligations’ is erroneous, as many of these goals are not obligatory but rather aspirational. The United States considers there to be many internationally agreed development goals that are not in fact relevant international obligations as such, and therefore, we read this language to refer to only those internationally agreed development goals that may be properly understood as international obligations on the States taking action under these Resolutions.”
365. Recognizing that consensus on some square-bracketed text remained elusive, the **Alternate President** granted an additional 30 minutes for final informal consultations and asked **Slovenia** to facilitate this process and report back to plenary.

366. **Slovenia** reported subsequently that a compromise had been reached and read out agreed amendments.
367. Further interventions were made by **China, Philippines, Brazil, Indonesia**, the **Chair of the STRP**, and the **Deputy Secretary General**.
368. At the **Alternate President's** request, the **Deputy Secretary General** read amendments to paragraphs 1, 27, 28, 30, and 35 of the unedited text of DR 24 Rev.2.
369. The **Alternate President** proposed adoption of DR 24 subject to inclusion of the final amendments read out by the **Deputy Secretary General**.
370. In response to a point raised by **China**, the **Deputy Secretary General** clarified that a square bracket shown at the end of paragraph 7 was an editorial artefact and held no significance.
371. The **Alternate President's** declaration that DR 24 Rev.2, was adopted by consensus, as amended was greeted by applause.
372. The **Alternate President** returned to DR 25 *Wetlands and 'biofuels'*.
373. The **Deputy Secretary General** announced that DR 25 Rev.2 had been distributed recently in English only.
374. The **Alternate President** invited **Ms Rebecca D'Cruz, STRP Vice-Chair** and leader of the informal working group on this text, to introduce the changes made following consideration by plenary of DR 25 Rev.1
375. The **STRP Vice-Chair** drew delegates' attention to remaining square-bracketed text in paragraphs 10 ter and 11 ter.
376. Concerning paragraph 10 ter, interventions were made by **The Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) and **Australia** (supported by **Brazil, Argentina** and **Paraguay**).
377. The **Alternate President** ruled that the square-bracketed wording in paragraph 10 ter should be deleted and invited any Contracting Party with an opposing view to record its position in the Report of the Meeting.
378. **The Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) underlined the great importance attached to net reduction of greenhouse gas emission and therefore its preference for retaining the deleted text.
379. Turning to paragraph 11 ter, **The Netherlands** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10) proposed alternative wording, with a consequent amendment to paragraph 11.
380. Following interventions from the **USA, Brazil** and **New Zealand**, the **Alternate President** ruled that paragraph 12 be amended to read "application of the precautionary approach as defined in principle 15 of the Rio declaration."

381. Subject to inclusion of the amendments summarised above, the **Alternate President** proposed that DR 25 Rev.2 be adopted by consensus. This proposal was greeted by applause.
382. **Mexico** stated for the record that it cannot accept the wording of Section 11ter and subsequent sections in the sense of “promoting the production and use of biofuels”. Mexico is not against the sustainable production of biofuels but it feels that their explicit promotion is not consistent with the spirit of the Convention.
383. The **Alternate President** referred delegates to DR 33 *Thanks to the host country, the Republic of Korea*.
384. The **Deputy Secretary General** tabled a new paragraph 5 bis: “RECORDS its thanks to the President, the Alternate President and the Vice-Presidents for their effective and efficient chairing of the Meeting.”
385. DR 33 was adopted by acclamation.
386. Resuming his role as **COP10 President, His Excellency Lee Maanee, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Korea**, expressed his sincere thanks to the Alternate President, the two Vice-Presidents and to all delegates for their work over recent days.

Agenda item XIX: Election of the Contracting Parties for the Standing Committee

387. The **President** invited each Ramsar region to nominate Standing Committee representatives for the forthcoming intersessional period.
388. The following nominations were made:
- Africa:** Cameroon, Mauritius, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Tunisia. Tunisia was proposed provisionally on the understanding that it would become a Standing Committee member as soon as the requisite number of 49 Contracting Parties had been reached to trigger an additional member for the Africa region. In addition, the region nominated Tanzania to be Vice-President of the Standing Committee.
- Asia:** China, Lebanon and Thailand.
- Europe:** Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland and Georgia.
- Neotropics:** Jamaica, Panama, and Paraguay. In addition, the region nominated Paraguay to be Vice-President of the Standing Committee.
- North America:** Mexico.
- Oceania:** Republic of the Marshall Islands.
389. Noting that the COP10 host country, Republic of Korea, and the COP11 host country, yet to be determined, would also serve on the Standing Committee, the **President** enquired if he could take it that the Standing Committee was elected unanimously.
390. The new **Standing Committee** was elected by acclamation.
391. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that the 39th meeting of the Standing Committee would take place 30 minutes after the close of plenary with the primary objectives being to

elect a Chair and Vice-Chair, to elect one member from each region to serve on the Subgroup on Finance (and for those Subgroup members to elect their Chair), and to determine the date and venue of the 40th Standing Committee Meeting.

Agenda item XX: Date and venue of the next Ordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

392. The **President** opened the floor to comments and statements.
393. **Romania** stated that it had great pleasure in taking the floor on this item. Since 2005, Romania had expressed its interest in hosting a COP of this very important Convention. Since becoming a Contracting Party in 1991 Romania has deployed all efforts to achieve the aims of the Convention for the goal of sustainable development. The Romanian delegation therefore wished to present a formal letter of invitation to COP11, signed by the Prime Minister of Romania. As the letter clearly stated, Romania stood ready to meet all its obligations as host of the COP and would enter into detailed discussions with the Standing Committee and Secretariat. Following the wonderful example of the Korean hosts of COP10, Romania would do everything possible to facilitate the smooth running of COP11. In conclusion, it was sincerely hoped that the invitation of Romania to host COP11 would be accepted by COP10
394. The statement by **Romania** was welcomed by acclamation.
395. The **President** sought confirmation that the generous offer of the government of Romania was accepted. This request was greeted by further warm applause.
396. The **President** confirmed that Romania's invitation to host COP11 had been accepted, and he conveyed his sincere gratitude on behalf of all participants to the government of Romania.
397. The **Deputy Secretary General** noted that there was not yet a fixed date for COP11, but that the 37th Meeting of the Standing Committee had determined that the COP should be held in the first half of 2012. The Secretariat and the new Host Country would confer on a suitable date, with a key criterion being to avoid overlap with other relevant international processes.
398. **Uruguay** wished to thank and applaud Romania for its kind invitation to host COP11. Uruguay also announced that it had initiated the procedure for hosting COP12 and looked forward to welcoming delegates in due course.
399. The **President** thanked Uruguay.
400. **China, Ecuador, India, France** (speaking on behalf of the EU Member States present at COP10), **Mozambique** (speaking on behalf of the Africa region), **Samoa** (speaking on behalf of the Oceania region), and the **Islamic Republic of Iran** (speaking on behalf of the Asia region) expressed their gratitude for the warmth, hospitality and outstanding facilities made available by the government and people of the Republic of Korea in hosting COP10, as well as for the generous offer of the government of Romania to host COP11 and the announcement by the government of Uruguay that it hoped to host COP12. Speakers also acknowledged the significant role played by the IOPs at COP10 and

extended their thanks to the President, Alternate President, Vice-Presidents and Secretariat. Mozambique specifically suggested that consideration be given to holding a Ministerial segment or roundtable at future Ramsar COPs.

Agenda item XXI: Any other business

401. **Wetlands International**, speaking on behalf of the five IOPs (also including **BirdLife International**, **IUCN**, **IWMI**, and **WWF**) presented the statement appended in full to this *Report of the Meeting* as Annex II: *Closing remarks of the International Organization Partners*.
402. Taking the floor on behalf of the **Arabic-speaking Contracting Parties present at COP10, Morocco** reported that the Arabic-speaking Parties had met twice informally to take forward discussions on the possibility of Arabic becoming a working language of the Ramsar Convention. The group had asked the Secretariat for details of the financial costs that this would involve, so that efforts could be made to seek the necessary financing. Thanks were due to the Secretariat for their support; the group was willing to do the work necessary to reach the noble goal of Arabic becoming a language of the Convention. It was intended to set up an informal intersessional working group that would look further at this issue, so that COP11 could take a specific view. Finally, the Arabic-speaking Parties wished once again to express deep gratitude for the warm welcome afforded by the Republic of Korea at COP10.
403. This sentiment was echoed by **Japan**, which wished also to raise an important substantial issue. Resolution VIII.45 adopted by COP8 directed the Standing Committee to take the measures necessary to make the work of the Convention as efficient and effective as possible. The Secretariat had asked for comments as follow-up to this Resolution regarding the organization and implementation of COP10 and Japan hoped that all Contracting Parties would use this opportunity. Japan would welcome an indication from the Standing Committee as to how comments and suggestions for improvements would be taken forward.
404. The **Deputy Secretary General** confirmed that the Secretariat would review and consolidate all suggestions received and make a summary available to the 40th Meeting of the Standing Committee.
405. The **Korea NGO Network** presented the statement appended to this *Report of the Meeting* as Annex III.
406. The **Deputy Secretary General** announced the designation of **Mr Clayton Rubec, Canada, as a Wetland Person of International Importance**. The citation (Annex IV) accompanying this important designation, welcomed by COP10 through warm applause, highlighted Mr Rubec's long career working for the wise use of wetlands and for the objectives of the Ramsar Convention in particular.

Agenda item XXII: Adoption of the report of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

407. The **President** noted that four documents containing the draft reports of the Opening Ceremony and all Plenary Sessions up to and including Monday, 3 November, had been distributed in the three Ramsar languages. In line with established practice, the report of

Tuesday, 4 November, would be drafted by the Rapporteur for review by the Secretary General and review and approval by the Chair of the Standing Committee.

408. The **Rapporteur** confirmed that he had received editorial corrections and amendments from a number of delegations and that these would be incorporated into the final version of the reports already circulated, as would any further such corrections or amendments submitted in writing.
409. The **President** ruled that the report of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties was adopted, subject to editorial amendments and subject to approval by the Chair of the Standing Committee of the report of the final day.

Agenda item XXIII: Close of the meeting

410. A video containing highlights of COP10 was screened.
411. Closing remarks were made by the **Secretary General** and the **President**.
412. The **Secretary General** recalled his first visit to the Republic of Korea in November 2007. Since then, the Secretariat had worked very closely with the government of Korea and especially with the members of the Task Force for COP10, to whom sincere thanks were due. The Secretariat and Task Force had worked as a team and special thanks were due to Ms Jiyoung Hwang, who spent six months based in Switzerland facilitating the team effort. It had really been a pleasure to work with the Republic of Korea, which had shown the warmest hospitality from the bottom to the top. It was especially significant that the President of the Republic had visited COP10 in person, thereby demonstrating the highest political commitment to Korea's policy Green Growth. The Ramsar Centre for East Asia, the Wetland Foundation, and the Centre on Cultural Aspects of Wetlands were all signs of implementation of the Green Growth Initiative, as was the Changwon Declaration. In closing Mr Tiéga renewed his thanks and appreciation from the heart for all the efforts made by the government and people of the Republic of Korea.
413. The **President** reflected on the falling of the curtain on COP10. He thanked delegates for their active participation and invited everyone involved to recognize the achievements of the past two weeks. These had included adoption of the Changwon Declaration and agreement on the new Ramsar Strategic Plan for 2009-2015. COP10 had also supported the Convention's renewed CEPA Programme and had addressed such complex issues as climate change, poverty reduction, biofuels, and human health. All of the Resolutions adopted held the same importance and had been the subject of serious negotiations to find solutions to differing points of view. Now came the implementation phase, however, and an immense amount of work needed to be done, requiring in turn substantial financial and technical support. The Republic of Korea looked to all delegates to implement the Changwon Declaration. In return Korea would continue to contribute financially to the Ramsar Convention. Finally, His Excellency wished delegates a pleasant remainder of their stay in Korea and a smooth journey home. With the words "Let's meet in Romania in 2012", the President declared COP10 closed.

Annex I

Report of the Credentials Committee

presented to the Plenary of the 10th Conference of the Contracting Parties on 3 and 4 November 2008

1. Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure provides for a Credentials Committee composed of one Party from each of the Ramsar regions, elected at the first session of each ordinary meeting on the basis of a proposal from the Conference Committee, which shall examine the credentials and submit its report to the Conference of the Parties for approval.
2. On the basis of Rule 19 and a proposal from the 38th meeting of the Standing Committee meeting immediately prior to the COP, the Conference elected the following members to the Credentials Committee:

For Africa: Mauritius (Mr Manikchand PUTTOO); for Asia: Thailand (Ms Nirawan PIPITSOMBAT); for Europe: France (Mme Camille BARNETCHE); for the Neotropics: Chile (Ms Nancy CESPEDDES); for North America: Mexico (Ms Mónica HERZIG); for Oceania: Australia (Ms Deb CALLISTER). Australia was named Chair. The Ramsar Secretariat assigned Mr Dave Pritchard as Secretary to the Committee.

3. The Committee referred to Rule 18.1 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides that “the original of the statement of credentials of the head of delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives, and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary General of the Convention or to his/her designated representative if possible not later than twenty-four hours after the opening of the meeting. Any later change in the composition of the delegation shall also be submitted to the Secretary General or the representative of the Secretary General”. Moreover, the Committee referred to Rule 18.5 of the Rules of Procedure which provides that “a representative may not exercise the right to vote unless his/her name is clearly and unambiguously listed in the credentials”.
4. The Committee met on six occasions. In accordance with the requirements above, the Committee confirms the credentials submitted by delegates of 105 Contracting Parties, as follows:

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The FYR of

Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen.

5. The Committee encountered a variety of challenges in the course of its work, and appreciated the efforts that were made by many of the Contracting Parties concerned in resolving them.
6. The Committee has used its discretion to accept credentials from one country who provided credentials with an original signature but on a letter which appeared to be a photocopy.
7. Credentials have also been accepted from some countries who provided translations of non-Ramsar language originals without a signature or seal on the translations – this is strictly in conformity with the English and French versions of Rule 18.6, but not with the Spanish version, and not with what the Committee believes to be the logical intent of Rule 18.6. A recommendation for amending this Rule is accordingly made in paragraph 12 below.
8. The Committee also determined that translations styled as “unofficial” could be accepted, on the basis that while there are stipulations in the Rules as to provenance of translations, there are none relating to whether or not they are styled as “official”.
9. The Committee determined that the several cases of signature by an “acting Minister” were acceptable, but the several cases of signature by a “Deputy Minister” were not.
10. A number of delegations have requested more time to secure the delivery of their credentials. Although mindful of the deadlines in the Rules of Procedure, the Committee has sought to be accommodating where possible, or where particular extenuating circumstances appear to apply. One such case concerns the situation of Canada, where a changeover of Ministers has coincided with the Ramsar COP.
11. Ecuador availed itself of the provision in Rule 18.3 to submit a letter explaining that its Minister of Foreign Affairs is unable to sign the letter of credentials, and that it was being signed by another authority. The Rule also stipulates an unqualified deadline for such notifications, of “either in advance of the meeting or not later than 48 hours after the opening of the meeting”. Ecuador’s letter was received one further day after this deadline had passed. After lengthy consideration, and a great deal of understanding for Ecuador’s position, the Committee determined that the Rules were clear and the only decision it could reach was to decline the letter, in the interests of fairness to those other Parties who had observed the deadline. The Committee however believes that it would be preferable for the Rules to have more flexibility on this matter in future, and is accordingly proposing an amendment to Rule 18.3 (see paragraph 12 below).
12. Based on its experiences, the Committee recommends that the following amendments be made to the Rules of Procedure:
 - (a) Rules 18.1 and 18.3 be amended to remove the anomaly whereby the deadline for submitting credentials has flexibility but the deadline for notifying the ability of authorities other than the Minister of Foreign Affairs to issue credentials has none;

so that these Rules would read as follows (new text in bold type, proposed deletions in struck-through text):

“1. The original of the statement of credentials of the head of delegation and other representatives, alternate representatives, and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary General of the Convention or to his/her designated representative [~~if possible~~] not later than twenty-four 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. **Acceptance of credentials submitted after the deadline shall be at the discretion of the Credentials Committee.**”

“3. The credentials shall 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 either in advance of the meeting or **as soon as possible** [~~not later than 48 hours~~] after the opening of the meeting.”

- (b) Rule 18.6 be amended to remove inconsistencies between different language versions of the Rules, and to remove ambiguity as to authentication of translations of credentials, so that the Rule would read as follows (new text in bold type):

“6. If credentials are submitted in a language other than one of the official languages of the Convention (English, French and Spanish), they shall be accompanied by a translation into one of those three languages, and **the translation shall** be produced and sealed **or otherwise duly authorised** by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or its diplomatic representation, or the office of the Head of Delegation or the office of one of the delegates whose name is listed in the Credentials.”

13. The Central Asian Contracting Parties which at COP9 experienced the issues provided for in Rule 18.3 have not raised problems at COP10, but certain other countries (Ecuador, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates) have been in an analogous position on this occasion, and clear operation of Rule 18.3 has been important.
14. Finally it is noted that following the adoption on the first day of the COP of amendments to Rule 18.2 concerning changes to Heads of Delegation, one Party immediately availed itself of the new provision, which was found to be clear to operate.

Annex II

Closing remarks of the International Organization Partners

Speaking on behalf of the five IOPs, Wetlands International congratulates the Republic of South Korea for their excellent arrangements for COP10. The extraordinary hospitality and immaculate organisation of the conference has been greatly appreciated by all. We thank you sincerely.

We also thank the Ramsar Secretariat and fabulous volunteers for their dedication and stamina during the COP processes and for enabling the participation to COP10 of as many Contracting Party delegates as possible, especially from the developing countries. We also ask you to note the IOP efforts to support the participation of delegates to this Conference.

We further congratulate to the Republic of South Korea on announcing their significant commitments to wetland conservation and implementation of the Convention, and especially their commitments to conserve intertidal wetlands. We remain concerned about the threats, and ongoing reclamation in the Yellow Sea but are pleased by the adoption of a comprehensive resolution on flyways, which provides a strong foundation for international collaboration for the conservation of migratory waterbirds along all of the world's major flyways.

The IOPs are pleased by the commitments made by Parties with regard to Resolution 13 on the status of Ramsar Sites, especially with regard to Lake Natron in Tanzania, the Tana Delta and Lake Naivasha in Kenya. However, we are concerned by the on-going degradation of Ramsar Sites around the world. We feel this is not fully recognized at this COP and deserves closer scrutiny and action over the next triennium.

The IOPs consider that the Ramsar Convention has a responsibility to champion the need to sustain and restore wetlands as an effective means to address the major, global issues including water security, food security and climate change.

In this respect, we think that the theme "Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People" has served us well at COP10. We welcome the considerable focus on water in many of the resolutions as well as the increasingly inter-sectoral approach that is being promoted, for example through the resolutions on partnerships and on extractive industries. We believe that continuing the focus on water and wetland management in relation to food security, human health and poverty will be important and necessary in the next triennium. The IOPs are ready to support this work.

We are pleased that Parties recognised the increasing importance of the Ramsar Convention in developing solutions to global environmental problems. This was demonstrated by the almost unanimous decision to retain the 3-year frequency of COP meetings and to modestly increase the budget. We especially welcome the voluntary contribution made by Africa and call on other countries to follow their good example. We recognize that it is vital to ensure that the Secretariat has the staff and tools needed to fulfill the expectations of Parties. This is in our view, far more important than where they sit. But in this respect, the mechanisms put in place by R5 to resolve a number of immediate administration and hosting issues are welcome.

Turning to some of the other substantive issues dealt with by the COP, we note with concern that, in seeking consensus, the outcome of negotiations have tended to shy away from influencing the current water, climate and development policies and processes. This does not sit

well with the Convention's wish to become more visible and effective at the global level. Nor does it serve the goals of the Convention and the need today, for integrated and cross-sectoral approaches to solving environmental problems including most especially climate change. We note that after all the discussions, the active text of the Climate Resolution (Resolution X.24) has only inched forward compared to that developed in COP8. We feel sure that in the following years, Parties will reflect on this missed opportunity in Changwon to ensure that wetlands are at the heart of the UNFCCC considerations.

Finally, the IOPs welcome the great progress on many Regional Initiatives in last triennium, that have encouraged Contracting Parties to work together - such as in Andes, Lake Chad and Niger Basins. We call on Parties to enhance development of other Regional Initiatives, such as Himalayas, and the proposed regional initiatives in the Amur Basin, Congo River Basin, la Plata Basin and Black Sea. We will work with the Secretariat to facilitate knowledge exchange and lessons learnt among/across these regional initiatives, including on effective means on addressing climate mitigation and adaptation.

Despite some disappointments, we are confident this Conference provides a renewed enthusiasm and commitment to Ramsar implementation. The IOPs remain committed and look forward to working closely with Ramsar Administrative Authorities, the Standing Committee and Secretariat over the next triennium – and to the COP11 in Romania.

Annex III

Statement by the Korea NGO Network

Thank you, Mr Chairman, we appreciate the chance to express our point of view as part of Ramsar COP10.

Korean NGOs have been working hard to prepare NGO involvement in the Ramsar COP10, holding an international NGO meeting with 400 delegates from 31 countries just before COP10, and producing the Suncheon International NGO Declaration, available in English, French and Spanish [Annex V below].

NGOs carry out a vital role in delivering wise use of wetlands on the ground. We monitor, report, and lobby for wetland sites. We also actively involve local people in protection of local wetland sites and deliver CEPA activities. We are an essential part of achieving the goal of wise use of wetlands and protection of specific sites, not only Ramsar sites.

As NGOs we range from small community groups to networks of active groups, but we work in a very different way to the government agencies and international IOPs. We do not have the support and resources that they have, but we do have the enthusiasm and experience of local people who are actively involved with their local sites.

Smaller NGOs have traditionally been under-represented in the Ramsar process, and we have decided to create a support network of wetland NGOs called the World Wetland Network, which will serve to develop an international tool for communication among NGOs about conservation and wise use of wetlands. The WWN will aim to carry out the following objectives:

1. Facilitate and coordinate the preparation of NGOs' statement and draft resolutions prior to every Ramsar COP.
2. Create an international platform to share knowledge about the best practices for wetland conservation and wise use.
3. Facilitate a technical space for the identification of conservation gaps in wetlands locally and globally.
4. Establish working groups on specific issues related to the wise use of wetlands.

We anticipate that this will allow NGOs to have a much stronger voice in wetland conservation in general and to play a more active role in the Ramsar Convention in particular.

Once again, I thank you for your time and look forward to the successful development of the World Wetland Network.

Annex IV

Statement by the Deputy Secretary General in presenting the certificate of 'Wetland Person of International Importance' to Clayton Rubec

It is with great pleasure that I wish to acknowledge one of our own, a person who has been associated with wetlands and Ramsar for longer than most can remember.

Clay Rubec has recently retired from the government of Canada, where he has had a distinguished career in remote sensing, wildlife habitats, policy and stewardship, both within and outside of Canada

Clay's involvement in wetlands goes back to the early 1980s when he was part of the Canadian Wetlands Working Group with the Canada Committee on Ecological Land Classification.

Since then Clay has contributed seminal work on Canadian Wetland Classification, the federal policy on wetlands, the Canadian Ecological Gift Program and numerous stewardship programs involving industry, non-government organizations and community groups. Clay was instrumental in the formative years of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan through his work with the NA Wetlands Conservation Council in Canada.

Clay has brought his passion for wetlands to us here at the Ramsar Convention. He has gained the respect of his peers through the work that he has undertaken on behalf of the Convention since his first COP in 1990. Since then Clay has attended every COP, where he has provided his expertise to delegates, IOPs and observer organizations and states.

I am sure Clay will continue to contribute to our important work as we know his passion for wetlands, their wise use, and his extended family within the Ramsar Community will not end with his retirement from government.

Please join me in congratulating Clay on his distinguished career and future successes.

Annex V

Suncheon NGO Declaration

27 October 2008

Suncheon City, Republic of Korea

1. We, the members of the World NGO Conference on Wetlands, are very much honoured by the opportunity to deliver a Declaration to the 10th Conference of Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
2. Aware of the participatory principles of the Convention, the World NGO Conference on Wetlands 2008 has been a multi-stakeholder conference attended by more than 400 members of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), indigenous peoples, local communities and local government administrations from 31 countries on 6 continents, all of whom are committed to the conservation and restoration of wetlands. The Conference was held at Changnyeong County, Gyeongsang-nam-do Province, and Suncheon City, Jeolla-nam-do, Republic of Korea from 25 to 27 October, 2008. We, the participants of the World NGO Conference on Wetlands, unanimously appreciate the Suncheon City and Changnyeong County governments for generously providing us facilities and support for our NGO Conference.
3. Considering recommendations made at the closing ceremony of COP9 (2005) for the active participation of NGOs, the Korean NGO Network facilitated the World NGO Conference on Wetlands to discuss issues and confirm the roles and responsibilities of NGOs in the conservation and restoration of wetlands. Presentations focused on wetlands Communication, Education, Participation, and Awareness (CEPA), biodiversity of rice paddies, the wise use and non-wise use of wetlands, and evaluation of the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. Extensive discussions led to the drafting of the Suncheon NGO Declaration.
4. Noting the need for effective networking of stakeholders in the implementation process of the Convention, a “World Wetland Network” was formed to facilitate and enhance information sharing and transfer of “best practices” in regards to planning, monitoring, and management of wetlands and to create a shared vision among stakeholders.
5. In relation to Draft Resolution X.1 “The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2014”: We urge the Conference of the Contracting Parties to emphasize to each contracting party the importance of the following points in the implementation of the convention. The agencies carrying out development projects and the agency in charge of the convention should hold an inclusive consultative process on the resolutions of the Convention. Contracting Parties should organize a national wetland committee comprised of related government agencies, local governments, experts, and NGOs, and develop strategies for the wise use of wetlands. Contracting Parties and the International Organization Partners should cooperate more with NGOs, local and indigenous people. A broad-based management committee involving local stakeholders should be established for each Ramsar site.
6. In relation to DR X.8 “The Convention’s Programme on communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2009-2014”: We support this draft resolution in that it

- focuses on the importance of “participation” in CEPA activities. However, the number of parties that have not yet specified CEPA Focal Points, especially NGO Focal Points, is considerable. We urge Contracting Parties to appoint focal points as soon as possible so that NGOs can easily participate in CEPA programmes. We envisage the facilitation of the participation of NGOs by the Contracting Parties by financial means, where needed.
7. In relation to DR X.13 “The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance”: The Ramsar Convention aims for the conservation and wise use of all wetlands as well as designated wetlands of international importance. We urge the Contracting Parties to identify all wetlands in the country which fit the criteria to be listed as a Ramsar Site, to prioritise these sites and then to designate sites according to a clearly defined timetable. Each country should aim to designate the best example of each type of wetland habitat under their jurisdiction as a Ramsar Site.
 8. We urge the COP to respect the deep concern expressed by Resolution IX.15 of COP9 (2005) about the Saemangeum Reclamation project, and to introduce a new Resolution to protect and restore sites which are eligible for designation as Ramsar sites, but where the national governments have not yet done so. (Article 6.2d). The Saemangeum Reclamation project and recently adopted Coastal Area Development Law are indicative of destructive development projects and policies that ignore the voices of those people who value the cultural and ecological aspects of wetlands, especially those whose livelihoods depend on wetlands.
 9. We support DR X.23 “Wetlands and human health and well-being” and the COP10 Theme of “Healthy Wetlands and Healthy People” as we recognize the central link between healthy ecosystems and human health.
 10. In relation to DR X.28 “Wetlands and poverty reduction,” we are very concerned that many people are losing their jobs and livelihoods, cultural diversity and/or traditional life, and forced to live in poverty. We should stop unsustainable and destructive developments and use wetlands wisely for poverty reduction. National policies should promote the wise use of wetlands as integral to poverty reduction through local food production, ecotourism, recreation activities and other ecosystem services.
 11. DR X.31 “Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems”: We support this draft resolution X.31 particularly due to the following three points. Sustainable rice paddy agriculture supports biodiversity including waterbirds and provides vital wetland habitats. It raises awareness about the value of rice paddies for biodiversity in the lead-up to the Convention of Biological Diversity COP10 to be held in Japan in 2010. Finally, we applaud the receptiveness of the Japanese and Korean governments to this NGO-led proposal for DR X.31. Although we support sustainable rice paddy agriculture in preference to urbanization and dry agriculture, rice paddies should not replace natural wetlands.
 12. Recognizing the fact that resolutions from previous COP have not been fulfilled, especially Resolution VII.21 adopted by COP7 (1999) regarding mangroves, participants of the World NGO Conference on Wetlands met informally to discuss these issues. We urge governments to implement these resolutions, particularly Resolution VII.21 which calls on governments to suspend the promotion, creation of new facilities and expansion of unsustainable aquaculture activities harmful to coastal wetlands.

13. In relation to DR. 25 “Wetlands and Biofuels,” we express deep concern about the increasing demand for biofuel crops as it is a direct threat to wetlands and wetland-friendly agricultural practices and the local communities relying on them. Also, biofuel crops should not compromise food security and biodiversity within countries.
14. We propose to set up an “International Wetlands Restoration Award” to encourage Contracting Parties to restore wetlands damaged by past development or natural causes. This award would recognize the efforts of the government, NGOs, and people in the awarded country, and disseminate best and forward-looking practices to other countries for them to put into practice in the future. The restoration efforts should be conducted in a sustainable and ethical manner, without further destruction of the surrounding environment.
15. Finally, we NGOs, local and indigenous people pledge to continue our efforts, in co-operation with Convention Secretariat, national governments, and IOPs to disseminate what the Convention has achieved and to promote wise use of wetlands, carrying out activities based on the local sites themselves. Moreover, we will disseminate traditional and indigenous knowledge of community groups through the CEPA process, in order to conserve wetland sustainability while respecting local customs.

Adopted and signed

This day 27 October 2008.

In Suncheon, Republic of Korea