14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

"Wetlands Actions for People and Nature"
Wuhan, China and Geneva, Switzerland, 5-13 November 2022

Ramsar COP14 Doc.18.2 Rev.1

Note from the Secretariat:

At the resumed session of its 59th meeting, the Standing Committee in Decision SC59/2022-21 approved the draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.15 Rev.1 on *Roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee* for forwarding to COP14 for its consideration.

Draft resolution on the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention on Wetlands

1. RECOGNIZING the value of keeping under periodic review the responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee so as to ensure that the work of the Standing Committee continues to be delivered in as effective and cost-efficient a manner as possible;

2. RECALLING that in Resolution IX.24 (2005), on *Improving management of the Ramsar Convention*, the Conference of the Contracting Parties established a Management Working Group reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties;

3. AWARE that the Standing Committee's oversight of the Secretariat is conducted on its behalf between meetings of the Standing Committee by its Executive Team (Chair, Vice Chair, and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance) with the Secretary General; and

4. RECOGNIZING the role of the Standing Committee in recommending draft resolutions to be discussed by the Conference of the Parties;

~~4. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION to the members of the Executive Team and the Management Working Group for their work; and~~

~~5. NOTING WITH APPRECIATION the steady improvement in performance, management, and optimization of resources by the Secretariat team over the past triennium;~~

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

~~6. EXPRESSES its gratitude to the outgoing Chair and members of the Standing Committee for their support and willingness to provide additional oversight over the activities and the implementation of the Convention during the 2018-2021 triennium;~~

5. ~~FURTHER~~ EXPRESSES its gratitude to the Contracting Parties that will serve as the Chair and members of the Standing Committee following the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14), for their willingness to take on the responsibility to govern the activities and the implementation of the Convention for the coming triennium;

~~8. ALSO EXPRESSES its satisfaction with improvements made by the Secretariat in performance, management, and optimization of resources and its full support for the efforts of the Secretary General in this regard;~~

6. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to define a specific process, including criteria, for use by the Standing Committee for the approval or rejection of draft resolutions prior to being recommended for discussion during meetings of the Conference of the Parties;

7. ADOPTS the text in Annexes 1-4, based upon amendments that update Resolution XIII.4 (2018) on *The responsibilities, roles and composition of the Ramsar Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Ramsar Convention*; and

8. CONFIRMS that the present Resolution and its annexes supersede those adopted as Resolution XIII.4, which is replaced by the present Resolution.

Annex 1
The responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Convention

1. Considering that it is useful for the effective functioning of the Ramsar Convention that Contracting Parties should have a clear process for the operation of its Standing Committee, in Resolution VII.1 (1999) the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP) adopted guidelines on the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Standing Committee and the regional categorization of countries under the Convention. In Resolution XIII.4 (2018), the Parties amended that text and the list of countries and Contracting Parties assigned to each of the six Ramsar regions in order to bring them up to date.

2. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands will have the following regional groups:
   - Africa
   - Asia-Oceania
   - Europe
   - The Americas ~~Latin America and the Caribbean~~
   - ~~North America~~
   - ~~Oceania~~

3. Contracting Parties and States that are eligible to accede to the Convention are assigned to the above regional groups, but Contracting Parties that are geographically near to the boundaries of the allocated region, as given in Annex 2, may, at their own request, participate in the activities of a neighbouring alternative regional group, while remaining a member of their allocated geographical regional group, upon formal notification of this intent to the COP.[1]

4. The composition of the Standing Committee will be determined by means of a proportional system, by which each regional group listed in paragraph 2 above will be represented by voting members in the Standing Committee according to the following criteria:
   a. one representative for regional groups with 1 to 12 Contracting Parties;
   b. two representatives for regional groups with 13 to 24 Contracting Parties;
   c. three representatives for regional groups with 25 to 36 Contracting Parties;
   d. four representatives for regional groups with 37 to 48 Contracting Parties; and
   e. five representatives for regional groups with 49 to 60 Contracting Parties.

5. Each region may appoint an Alternate Member for each appointed Member with full power to represent the region, if the representative member is unable to participate in a meeting of the Standing Committee.

6. The host countries of the previous and next meetings of the COP are also voting members of the Standing Committee.

7. The regional representatives and their alternate Party representatives will be elected by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of nominations received from the regional groups established in paragraph 2 above. Initial consideration of nominations by regional

[1] See resolution X1.19. “Participate” is defined in this context as different from membership within the alternative region. Participation confers to the state the right to be present in meetings, to speak, to exchange information, to submit reports, to cooperate on a scientific and practical level, and to contribute to joint projects. It does not include the right to be a representative of this alternative region nor to participate in the nomination of its representative(s). It does not confer the right to vote within the alternative region.

groups will be undertaken at any intersessional regional COP preparatory meetings that take place, and nominations will be finalized by regional groups in their regional meetings at the COP venue preferably early during the COP ~~immediately prior to the opening of the COP~~, so that appointments of the new members of the Standing Committee can be made as early as possible in the COP proceedings, thus permitting the new members of the Committee to participate as observers in Conference Bureau meetings during the COP.

8. The terms of office of the regional representatives will commence at the close of the meeting of the COP at which they have been elected and will expire at the close of the next ordinary meeting of the COP, and each Contracting Party may serve on the Standing Committee for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

9. Contracting Parties that are voting members of the Standing Committee will convey to the Secretariat, through their diplomatic channels, the name(s) of the officer(s) in the designated national Ramsar Administrative Authority who act as their delegates on the Standing Committee, as well as the names of their substitutes, should they be needed.

10. The Contracting Party acting as host country of the institutional host of the Secretariat will continue to have the status of permanent observer in the Standing Committee. If the host country of the institutional host of the Secretariat stands for, and is elected as, a member of the Standing Committee representing its regional group, it will have voting status for that triennium in lieu of its permanent observer status.

11. The Secretariat will, according to what is stipulated in the Rules of Procedure ~~continue to~~ notify all Contracting Parties of the date and agenda of meetings of the Standing Committee ~~at least three months in advance of each meeting~~, so that they may, as appropriate, make arrangements to be represented at the meeting as observers.

12. Countries that are not Contracting Parties but that have expressed an interest in acceding to the Convention may also be admitted as observers at meetings of the Standing Committee.

13. The Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) will be invited as an observer to Standing Committee meetings, as well as other experts and/or institutions that the Standing Committee may deem appropriate for assisting in its consideration of particular agenda items.

14. The United Nations and its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as any State not a Contracting Party to the Convention, and the international organizations that are official International Organization Partners in the work of the Convention will be invited to participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee.

15. If an extraordinary meeting of the COP is held between two ordinary meetings, the host country may participate as an observer in the work of the Committee on matters related to the organization of the meeting, provided that the country in question is not already present in the Committee as a member or permanent observer.

16. The Contracting Parties in regional groups with one representative in the Standing Committee will use a rotation system for the nomination of their regional representative. In regional groups with two or more representatives the selection will be made in such a manner as to achieve a balance in relation to biogeographical, geopolitical, and cultural considerations.

17. At its first meeting immediately after the close of a COP, the Standing Committee will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the members and Chair of the Subgroup on Finance established by Resolution VI.17 (1996).

18. The Standing Committee will normally meet once each year, normally at the seat of the Convention Secretariat~~, according to the indicative schedule provided as Annex 4 to this Resolution~~. The Standing Committee must schedule their meetings so that the time for the meetings suits the coming COP. The Standing Committee will meet immediately after the close of each regular meeting of the COP.

18. bis Meetings ~~Further meetings~~ of the Subgroup on COP and the Subgroup on Finance may be envisaged during the year before COP, if required and if sufficient funds are available, in order to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of the COP. The costs of participation of Committee members eligible for sponsorship will be borne by the Convention.

19. Within the policies agreed by the Conference of the Parties, the functions of the Standing Committee will be to:

    a. carry out, between one ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the next, such interim activity on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary, giving priority to matters on which the Conference has previously recorded its approval and noting that the Standing Committee is not mandated either to take decisions that would normally be taken by the Conference of the Contracting Parties or to amend any decision taken by the Conference of the Parties;

    b. make preparations on issues, including *inter alia* draft Resolutions and Recommendations, for consideration at the next COP~~;~~, but only by bracketing texts, not totally censoring suggested texts in draft resolutions or whole resolutions;

    c. supervise, as a representative of the Conference of the Parties, the implementation of activities by the Secretariat, the execution of the Secretariat's budget, and conduct of the Secretariat's programmes;

    d. provide guidance and advice to the Secretariat on the implementation of the Convention, on the preparation of meetings, and on any other matters relating to the exercise of its functions brought to it by the Secretariat;

    e. act as Conference Bureau at COPs in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;

    f. establish subgroups and working groups as necessary to facilitate the carrying out of the Convention's work ~~its functions~~;

    g. promote regional and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands;

    h. approve the work plan of the STRP on the basis of the decisions of the COP, receive the reports of the STRP on the progress made with its implementation, and provide guidance for its future development;

    i. ensure that the Committee follows the responsibilities about ~~review each triennium the criteria for~~ the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award as established by Resolution ~~VI.18 and~~

~~select the laureates~~; and

j. report to the COP on the activities it has carried out between ordinary meetings of the Conference.

20. The tasks of the Regional Representatives elected to serve in the Standing Committee are contained in Annex 3 of this document.

21. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, shall take into consideration, within available resources, the need for interpretation at its subgroup meetings when it is requested by its members.

22. The Contracting Parties and the Secretariat will endeavour to secure additional voluntary funding to enable simultaneous interpretation at meetings of the Subgroup on Finance and the Subgroup on COP.

23. The Standing Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, will be governed, *mutatis mutandis*, by the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Conference.

Annex 2
Allocation of Contracting Parties and non-party States to the four ~~six~~ regional groups

NOTE: Names of countries in capital and bold letters denote Contracting Parties to the Convention at the time of approval of this Resolution.

AFRICA:

ALGERIA
ANGOLA
BENIN
BOTSWANA
BURKINA FASO
BURUNDI
CABO VERDE
CAMEROON
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
CHAD
COMOROS
CONGO
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
DJIBOUTI
EGYPT
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
Eritrea
ESWATINI
Ethiopia
GABON
GAMBIA
GHANA
GUINEA
GUINEA-BISSAU
KENYA
LESOTHO
LIBERIA
LIBYA
MADAGASCAR
MALAWI
MALI
MAURITANIA
MAURITIUS
MOROCCO
MOZAMBIQUE
NAMIBIA
NIGER
NIGERIA
RWANDA
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE
SENEGAL
SEYCHELLES
SIERRA LEONE
Somalia
SOUTH AFRICA
SOUTH SUDAN
SUDAN
TOGO
TUNISIA
UGANDA
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
ZAMBIA
ZIMBABWE

ASIA:

Afghanistan
BAHRAIN
BANGLADESH
BHUTAN
Brunei Darussalam
CAMBODIA
CHINA
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
IRAQ
JAPAN
JORDAN
KAZAKHSTAN
KUWAIT
KYRGYZSTAN
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
LEBANON
MALAYSIA
Maldives
MONGOLIA
MYANMAR
NEPAL
OMAN
PAKISTAN
PHILIPPINES
Qatar
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
SRI LANKA
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
TAJIKISTAN
THAILAND
TURKMENISTAN
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
UZBEKISTAN
VIET NAM
YEMEN

EUROPE:

ALBANIA
ANDORRA
ARMENIA
AUSTRIA
AZERBAIJAN
BELARUS
BELGIUM
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
BULGARIA
CROATIA
CYPRUS
CZECHIA
DENMARK
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GEORGIA
GERMANY
GREECE
Holy See
HUNGARY
ICELAND
IRELAND
ISRAEL
ITALY
LATVIA
LIECHTENSTEIN
LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
MALTA
MONACO
MONTENEGRO
NETHERLANDS
NORTH MACEDONIA
NORWAY
POLAND
PORTUGAL
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
ROMANIA
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
San Marino
SERBIA
SLOVAKIA
SLOVENIA
SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TÜRKIYE
UKRAINE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
ARGENTINA
BAHAMAS
BARBADOS
BELIZE
BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)
BRAZIL
CHILE
COLOMBIA
COSTA RICA
CUBA
Dominica
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EL SALVADOR
GRENADA
GUATEMALA
Guyana
Haiti
HONDURAS
JAMAICA
NICARAGUA
PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
Saint Kitts and Nevis
SAINT LUCIA
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
SURINAME
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
URUGUAY
VENEZUELA (BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF)

NORTH AMERICA:

CANADA
MEXICO
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

OCEANIA:

AUSTRALIA
Cook Islands
FIJI
KIRIBATI
MARSHALL ISLANDS
Micronesia (Federated States of)
Nauru
NEW ZEALAND
Niue
PALAU
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
SAMOA
Solomon Islands
Timor-Leste
Tonga
Tuvalu
VANUATU

Annex 3
Tasks of Contracting Parties elected as Regional Representatives in the Standing Committee

The Contracting Parties that are elected as Regional Representatives on the Standing Committee will have the following tasks:

1. To designate their delegates to the Standing Committee taking into account their significant responsibilities as Regional Representatives, and to make every effort to ensure that their delegates or their substitutes attend all meetings of the Committee.

2. When there is more than one Regional Representative in a regional group, to maintain regular contacts and consultations with the other Regional Representative(s).

3. To maintain regular contacts and consultations with the Contracting Parties in their regional group, and to use the opportunities of travel within their regions, and of attending regional or international meetings, to consult about issues related to the Convention and to promote its objectives. To this effect, when there is more than one Regional Representative, they will agree among themselves which Contracting Parties will be the responsibility of each Regional Representative or if any of them are to have the main responsibility for certain issues for the whole region.

4. To solicit the opinions of the Contracting Parties in their regional group before meetings of the Standing Committee.

5. To advise the Secretariat in setting the agenda of regional meetings.

6. To assume additional responsibilities by serving as members of the subgroups established by the Standing Committee.

7. To provide advice as requested by the Chair of the Standing Committee, the chairs of subgroups, or the Secretariat of the Convention.

8. In the regions concerned, to make efforts to encourage other countries to accede to the Convention.

9. Members of the Subgroup on Finance to~~To~~ encourage Parties in the region which the Party represents to pay on time their annual contributions to the Convention.

Tasks and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee

10. The Chair and Vice-Chair provide guidance to the Secretariat with regard to preparations for, and conduct of, meetings of the Standing Committee.

11. The Chair shall declare the opening and closing of meetings of the Committee, preside at the sessions of the meeting, ensure the observance of these Rules, rule on points of order, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions.

12. The Chair may propose to the Standing Committee the closure of the list of speakers, limitations on the time to be allowed to speakers, and on the number of times each Standing

Committee member or observer may speak on a question, the adjournment or the closure of the debate, and the suspension or the adjournment of a session.

13. The Chair may declare a session of the meeting open and permit the debate to proceed if at least one-third of the Contracting Parties members of the Standing Committee are present, and may have decisions taken when representatives of at least two-thirds of the Contracting Parties are present and voting.

14. During the course of a debate, the ~~President~~ Chair may announce the list of speakers, and with the consent of the meeting, declare the list closed. The ~~President~~ Chair may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if a speech delivered after the list has been closed makes this desirable.

15. The Chair, in the exercise of the functions of that office, remains under the authority of the Standing Committee.

16. The Chair and the Vice-Chair shall participate in meetings in that capacity and can also ~~shall not at the same time~~ exercise the rights of a representative of a Contracting Party as long as it is made clear in what role they speak. ~~The Party concerned shall designate another representative who shall be entitled to represent the Party in the meeting and to exercise the right to vote.~~

17. If the Chair is absent from a session or any part thereof or is not fulfilling other duties, the Vice Chair shall replace the Chair or take initiative to make things happen.

[Annex 4
Indicative schedule for Standing Committee intersessional meetings post-2022, and for the 2023-2025 triennium

NOTE: This schedule is predicated on future cycles being three calendar years, with the meetings of the Conference of the Parties in October/November of the final year of each cycle, based on COP14 taking place in November 2022.

	General timelines, post-2022	**2023-2025-triennium**
Work straight after the COP	2023	2023
First full meeting	9/7 months after COP14 or earlier if practical	**SC62** – June ~~July/August~~ 2023, or earlier if practical
Second full meeting	21 months after COP14	**SC63** – June ~~July/August~~ 2024
Subgroup on COP (if required)	1 year before COP15	**Subgroup on COP15** (if required) – July/August 2024
Third full meeting	6 months before COP15	**SC64** – May 2025
Pre-COP meeting	Immediately prior to COP15, at COP venue	**SC65** – October/November 2025

]