

**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 Rep.11

**Draft session report
Day 8 – Saturday 12 November
(Morning plenary session)**

10.15 – 12.55 Plenary session

Agenda item 17: Election of Contracting Parties to the Standing Committee for 2022-2025

1. The following nominations for membership were received by the Conference of the Parties:
 - For the Africa Region:
 - Central Africa: **Gabon** (Alternate member: **Equatorial Guinea**);
 - North Africa: **Libya** (Alternate member: **Morocco**);
 - East Africa: **Rwanda** (Alternate member: the **United Republic of Tanzania**);
 - West Africa: **Burkina Faso** (Alternate member: **Liberia**);
 - Southern Africa: **Lesotho** (Alternate member: **Madagascar**);
 - For the Asia Region:
 - South Asia: the **Lao People’s Democratic Republic** (Alternate member: **Indonesia**);
 - East Asia: **Japan** (Alternate member: the **Republic of Korea**);
 - West Asia: **Iraq** (Alternate member: **the Islamic Republic of Iran**);
 - For the Europe Region:
 - **Belgium** (Alternate member: **Austria**);
 - **Czechia** (Alternate member: **Slovakia**);
 - **Georgia** (Alternate member: **Montenegro**);
 - **Sweden** (Alternate member: **Slovenia**);
 - For the Latin America and the Caribbean Region:
 - South America: **Brazil** (Alternate member: **Colombia**);
 - Central America: **Costa Rica** (Alternate member: **Guatemala**);
 - Caribbean: **Saint Lucia** (Alternate member: **Dominican Republic**);
 - For the Oceania Region:
 - **Samoa** (Alternate member: **Australia**);
 - For the North America Region:
 - **Canada** (Alternate member: **Mexico**).
2. The composition of the Standing Committee for the 2022-2025 triennium, as shown above, was approved by acclamation.

Agenda item 19: Report of the Credentials Committee

3. **Indonesia, as Chair of the Credentials Committee**, provided an update on its progress, recalling Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure and noting that it held meetings from 7 to 11 November 2022, during which submitted credentials, in original and digital form, were examined and reviewed. It stated that 119 credentials out of 125 submitted had been validated, and that consequently, the threshold for quorum for COP14 of 115 Contracting Parties had been met. This was acknowledged by the **Secretariat's Legal Advisor** and noted by the **President**.

Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee **(continued)**

18.24 Draft resolution on environmental emergency in Ukraine relating to the damage of its wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression

4. Recalling the outcome of discussion of this draft resolution by the Conference Bureau, the **President** drew attention to the new revision available on the Convention website as document COP14 Doc.18.24 Rev.2.
5. **Ukraine** introduced the revised document, acknowledging the engagement of Contracting Parties from all regions during the informal discussions held, and highlighted that all concerns had been addressed and accommodated in the revised draft resolution. It underlined that the second revision of the draft resolution addresses the urgent need for the Convention to respond to the situation in Ukraine and to prevent harm and destruction to Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). It stressed that the draft resolution establishes a clear framework to address these issues. Ukraine called on all Parties to support adoption of the draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.24 Rev.2 by consensus.
6. Support for adoption of this draft resolution by means of consensus was expressed by **Canada, Czechia on behalf of the Member States of the European Union (EU), Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay**. Comments were made by these Parties to note the urgency of this matter; to express support for the proposed assessment of the affected Ramsar Sites in order to provide a report on future conservation and restoration measures; and to emphasize that the provisions of the draft resolution are within the scope of the Convention.
7. The **Russian Federation** emphasized that the proposed text remained beyond the mandate of the Convention, expressing concerns that the document contained politicized proposals and provided an unbalanced view of the situation. It further noted the lack of applicable and substantive data and proof of damage to wetlands protected under the Convention. Stressing that the draft resolution could cause harm to cooperation under the Convention, it rejected the draft resolution.
8. **China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nicaragua and Venezuela** also expressed opposition to this draft resolution, with China and Nicaragua further noting that no substantial changes to the intention of the draft resolution were reflected in the revised document.
9. Concerns that the proposals were beyond the mandate and scope of the Convention were expressed by **China, Cuba, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Democratic People's**

Republic of Korea, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation and Venezuela. Indonesia and the Islamic Republic of Iran urged the Parties to focus on the technical and scientific mandate of the Convention, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea underlined that the draft resolution could set a negative precedent for the work of the Convention. The **Islamic Republic of Iran** further recalled concerns expressed in earlier plenary discussions that the Ramsar Convention was not the appropriate forum for this issue.

10. The **Dominican Republic** and **El Salvador** noted their abstention with respect to this draft resolution, to be recorded in the report of the meeting.
11. Following advice from the Legal Advisor, and recalling Rule 39.1, the **President** noted that the divergence in the views expressed by Contracting Parties remained apparent, and that a decision by consensus was unlikely. He therefore proposed to proceed to a vote. The Secretariat noted that there would be final checks on credentials and voting cards during the lunchtime break.

18.1 Draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters

12. The **President** recalled the report presented by the Chair of the Committee on Finance and Budget at the last plenary session, and noted that the Chair had no further update to provide, and that no additional proposals or comments had been received. He drew the Conference's attention to the revised draft resolution available online in document COP14 Doc.18.1 Rev.1, and proposed adoption of this clean text.
13. The draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.1 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation without further amendment.

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

14. The **President** introduced the revised version of this draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.2 Rev.1, noting that the document had several amendments proposed by Parties, possibly requiring additional consultation. He noted the confirmation by the **Secretariat** that all comments received in writing had been incorporated in the revised text.
15. **Czechia, on behalf of the Member States of the EU**, proposed amendments, to be submitted to the Secretariat, aiming to retain the original text in the revised draft resolution and its annexes.
16. **Australia** expressed support for a number of the amendments proposed by Czechia on behalf of the Member States of the EU, including **Sweden**, which noted it had withdrawn its proposal on adjusting the number of regional groups, as detailed in the annexes to the draft resolution. Australia requested that this be reflected in a second revision of this draft resolution. Its intervention was supported by **Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Mexico**, and the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, with further amendments to the draft resolution proposed by **Brazil, Japan and Mexico**.
17. Following the proposed amendment by Brazil **to delete** the new operative paragraph 6, **Canada** noted its withdrawal of its proposed inclusion of this paragraph.

18. **Sweden** stressed the importance of adjusting the number of groups for regional representation and suggested that it be addressed at the following COP, further noting it could be recorded in the Conference reports instead of the draft resolution.
19. **Zambia** noted that Sweden's original proposal on regional groupings would have strong impacts on the present Contracting Parties, emphasizing that the draft resolution text should retain the original six regions. **Colombia** requested that the discussions on this issue be undertaken in a contact group, to ensure open, structured and multilateral consultations.
20. **Brazil**, supported by **Australia** and **Canada**, **requested** that a second revision of the draft resolution, taking account of withdrawn amendments by Canada and Sweden, be made available to Parties.
21. The **President** invited interested Contracting Parties to carry out additional informal consultations on the draft resolution and deferred further consideration to a later session. He urged careful consideration by all Contracting Parties on issues such as the adjustment of regional groups, noting its effects on the governance, implementation and operation of the Convention, and encouraged Parties to ensure adequate consultation was undertaken on the issues being submitted to the Conference of the Parties.

18.3 Draft resolution on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ramsar Convention

22. **The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, as Chair of the Effectiveness Working Group, introduced the revised version of the draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.3 Rev.1, noting the agreement reached through the productive consultations undertaken with all interested Parties.
23. With no further comments, the **President** thanked the Chair of the Working Group, and the draft resolution in document COP14 Doc. 18.3 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation.

18.4 Draft resolution on review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Convention on Wetlands, additions for the period COP14-COP15 and Framework for the fifth Strategic Plan

24. **Australia**, as Chair of the contact group, introduced the revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.4 Rev.1, noting that proposed amendments by Contracting Parties had been incorporated and the contact group had resolved the remaining issues. It also noted additional minor amendments suggested to this revised draft by Canada.
25. The revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc. 18.4 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation with the amendment suggested by Canada.

18.14 Draft resolution on strengthening Ramsar connections through youth

26. **Australia**, as co-proponent, noted that following consultations with interested Contracting Parties, the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.14 Rev.1 was agreed upon. It outlined two minor amendments, noting that Brazil and Switzerland had proposed changes directly to the Australian delegation: that the envisaged Ramsar Youth Working Group be established intersessionally rather than at the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee; and to remove "in line with national circumstances and priorities" in paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, which encourages Contracting Parties to explore and support strategies to engage,

collaborate and involve youth in the implementation of the Convention. **Youth Engaged in Wetlands** expressed its strong support for this initiative, highlighting the engagement and progress achieved thus far within the Ramsar Convention, as well as by Parties on a domestic scale.

27. The revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc. 18.14 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation with the two amendments proposed by Australia.

18.13 Draft resolution on wetland education in the formal education sector

28. The **Republic of Korea** introduced the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.13 Rev.1, noting that, following constructive informal consultations, especially with Canada, the draft resolution was strengthened by including references to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as well by acknowledging the importance of synergies with the informal and non-formal education sectors. The Republic of Korea reported that a suggestion by the EU, to direct proposed work to the CEPA Oversight Panel, rather than “a small working group consisting of CEPA experts”, was not included in the revised draft resolution, following advice by the CEPA Oversight Panel.
29. **Czechia, on behalf of the Member States of the EU**, agreed with the exclusion of its earlier amendment, and proposed two minor technical amendments. **Sweden**, as Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel during the last triennium, supported the exclusion of this amendment, and confirmed that the Oversight Panel is overloaded with work.
30. The revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc. 18.13 Rev.1 was adopted by acclamation.

18.16 Draft resolution on the Ramsar List

31. **Algeria** reported that the contact group had reached a compromise regarding document COP14 Doc.18.16 Rev.1 *Amended Draft resolution on the Ramsar List* and document COP14 Doc.18.15 Rev.1 *Draft resolution on the status of Sites in the List of Wetlands of International Importance*. It underscored that the compromise included: transferring from draft resolution 18.16 to draft resolution 18.15 the reference to Article 2.1 of the Convention and the request to the Secretariat to prepare a relevant technical report; thus deferring consideration of draft resolution 18.16 to COP15. Algeria requested that its interventions on this draft resolution be captured in the official record of the meeting.
32. Following agreement by the Conference, the **President** deferred a decision on draft resolution 18.16 until after draft resolution 18.15 was discussed.

18.8 Draft resolution on enhancing the Convention’s visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

33. The **Secretariat** noted that the revised version of this draft resolution, incorporating all comments submitted by Parties to the Secretariat, was available on the Convention website as document COP14 Doc.18.8 Rev.1. It requested that the Conference focus its discussions on the bracketed text of this document and pointed out that amendments proposed by observers needed to be sponsored by at least one Contracting Party in order to be taken into account.

34. **Mexico** noted that it had proposed amendments, which were agreed during the informal consultations that took place after this draft resolution was first addressed in plenary, but which were not incorporated in the revised version of the draft resolution. It called on the Conference to adopt the draft resolution with its proposed amendments included.
35. **Switzerland**, supported by **Brazil, Finland on behalf of the Member States of the EU, Japan** and **Zimbabwe**, indicated that more time for informal discussions was needed to review Mexico's proposed amendments prior to adoption. Zimbabwe added that the suggestions of the Africa Region were not reflected in the current revised draft.
36. **Brazil** and **Ecuador** proposed further amendments, and Brazil noted the need to clarify the regional scope of the synergies in the draft resolution. **Japan** requested that a revised document incorporating these amendments be made available to Parties before these discussions takes place.
37. **China** sponsored the amendments proposed by **BirdLife International**. Responding to a request for clarification by **New Zealand** to ensure that there was no duplication in the content of draft resolutions, BirdLife International noted that its suggested amendment would highlight the relevance of the Convention's work in contributing to a larger network of area-based conservation measures. BirdLife International further recalled that this amendment had been suggested by the IOPs when this draft resolution was first addressed in plenary.
38. The **Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations** requested a minor correction to its name as it is referred to within the draft resolution.
39. The **President** invited Parties to carry out informal consultations, and to submit comments and further proposed amendments to the Secretariat, which would make the revised document available to the informal group. He deferred further consideration of the draft resolution to a later session.

18.10 Draft resolution on the new CEPA approach
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40. **Sweden**, as Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel, introduced the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.10 Rev.1, noting that it would facilitate the CEPA Oversight Panel's work and ensure its timely establishment.
41. **Germany, on behalf of the Member States of the EU**, supported the revised draft resolution, and suggested amendments to the list of CEPA priorities to be included in the fifth Strategic Plan. **Brazil** opposed the revisions, encouraging Contracting Parties to abide by agreed language.
42. **Norway** supported the revised draft resolution, suggesting an amendment to appoint an additional communication officer to underpin implementation of the new CEPA approach.
43. **Zambia** supported the revised draft resolution, which added reference to local communities, and **Canada** underlined the importance of further discussions on wording related to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
44. **Australia**, speaking as a member of the Oversight Panel, noted that none of the suggested changes had been circulated or agreed upon by the Oversight Panel.

45. Noting that the revised draft resolution will be revisited at a later session, the **President** invited interested Contracting Parties to continue informal consultations to reach consensus.

18.9 Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives – Operational Guidelines

46. **Costa Rica** introduced the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.9 Rev.1, providing an update on the work of the relevant contact group. Addressing the operational guidelines, Costa Rica highlighted numerous issues that these should consider, underscoring that the revised guidelines, annexed to the document, were the best option that the contact group could present to the Conference. It noted that the new revised draft resolution had been forwarded to the Secretariat.
47. **Colombia** and **Mexico** noted the efforts of the contact group to reach consensus on the proposed revisions to the draft resolution, adding that they expected approval of the draft resolution once the revised version was made available on the Convention website for Contracting Parties to consider.
48. The **President** thanked the contact group participants for their constructive engagement and deferred the final decision on the draft resolution to a later session.

18.11 Draft resolution on the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards

49. **Sweden** introduced the revised version of the draft resolution, contained in document COP14 Doc.18.11 Rev.1, expressing its satisfaction with the result of discussions.
50. **Australia** and **New Zealand** suggested minor amendments to the criteria for the newly established Ramsar Wetland Indigenous Peoples Conservation and Wise Use Award, underscoring connections of Indigenous Peoples to their lands, seas and territories and the need to involve Indigenous Peoples in the nomination process.
51. The revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc. 18.11 Rev.1 with the suggested amendments by New Zealand and Australia was adopted by acclamation.

18.17 Draft resolution on future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2023-2025

52. **New Zealand** introduced the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.17 Rev.1, providing an update of the work conducted in collaboration with the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP).
53. **Sweden** reiterated its suggestion for an additional paragraph on encouraging the STRP to present in a draft resolution to COP15 priority tasks for the triennium after 2025 on the classification of wetlands of international importance, noting its late submission.
54. Responding to Sweden, **New Zealand** noted that the suggestion is not included in the revised draft resolution, proposing it be included as an ad hoc task for the STRP at the request of the Standing Committee.

55. The **President** deferred the discussion on draft resolution 18.17 to a later session to allow time for informal consultations with the STRP Chair.

18.18 Draft resolution on enhancing the conservation and management of small wetlands
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56. **China** introduced the revised draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.18 Rev.1, highlighting two proposals by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
57. In response to **Pakistan**'s request for a definition of small wetlands, **China** noted that the draft resolution encourages Parties to undertake work relative to their national circumstances, and recalled Resolution XIII.21 on the conservation and management of small wetlands, which notes the current lack of a clear definition, and that small wetlands, such as springs, ponds and headwater streams, can occur in the landscape either independently or as part of larger wetland complexes.
58. In response to the in-session discussion between **Brazil, China, the EU and the Islamic Republic of Iran**, it was agreed to delete the terms "ecosystem-based approaches" and "nature-based solutions" from the draft resolution.
59. Following clarifications on the proposed modifications, the revised draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.18 Rev.1, with the amendments proposed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was adopted by acclamation.
60. The **President** closed the session at 12.55.