

**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.3 Rev.1

**Draft session report
Day 3 – Monday 7 November (Morning plenary session)**

10.30 – 12:10 Plenary session

Agenda item 5: Election of the President and Vice-Presidents and remarks by the President

1. Based on proposals made by the Standing Committee, in accordance with Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure, **H.E. Mr Li Chunliang**, Deputy Administrator of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration and Director General of the Endangered Species Import and Export Management Office, China, was elected President of COP14, and **Dr Wu Zhimin**, Deputy Director General, Department for Wetland Management, National Forestry and Grassland Administration, China, was elected Alternate President, both by acclamation.
2. For Vice-Presidents of the meeting, **Ms Jacey Scott** (Canada) had been nominated by the North American region and **Ms Laura Bermudez Wilches** (Colombia) by the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Both were elected by acclamation.
3. The **President** welcomed delegates and wished them a successful meeting, thanking the outgoing President, H.E. Mr Mohamed Al Afkham, Director General Fujairah Municipality (United Arab Emirates), for all his hard work.
4. The **Alternate President** expressed thanks to Switzerland for its role in facilitating the meeting, and wished the delegates a successful, ambitious and practical meeting.

Agenda item 3.1: Adoption of the provisional agenda

5. The provisional agenda in document COP14 Doc.3.1 was introduced by the **Alternate President**, acting as **President**, who noted the withdrawal of the draft resolution proposed by Sweden on how to structure, write and handle Convention documents and messages (document COP14 Doc.18.7). **Sweden** suggested creating an informal group, led by the Secretariat, for interested Contracting Parties to carry out further discussion.
6. The provisional agenda in document COP14 Doc.3.1 was adopted, noting the withdrawal of Sweden’s draft resolution.

Agenda item 3.2: Adoption of the provisional working programme

7. The **Secretariat** introduced the provisional working programme in document COP14 Doc.3.2.2 Rev.1, noting that the Conference Bureau had recommended the inclusion, in that document, of the Bureau meeting that had taken place that morning (Monday 7 November 2022) before the plenary session. The **Secretariat** further noted that the amended working programme would be published on the Convention website upon its adoption.
8. **Czechia, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU)**, stressed the important role of sovereignty in undertaking conservation and restoration work, noted the EU's condemnation of the aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation, drawing attention to the impact on people and the environment, including Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites), and demanded that the Russian Federation immediately withdraw and respect international law.
9. **Indonesia**, supported by **Brazil** and the **Russian Federation**, drew attention to the definition of the term "consensus" used in the Rules of Procedure, noting its disagreement with the legal interpretation, provided during the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee, that the term indicates that participants are generally in agreement. Indonesia believed that the term should be interpreted to mean unanimity, and encouraged the Conference of the Parties to accept this definition to be consistent with the use of the term in other international frameworks.
10. **Iran** noted the need for enhanced international cooperation in the sustainable management and utilization of wetlands, as well as the promotion of capacity building and technology transfer for developing countries.
11. The **Russian Federation** cautioned against politicizing the discussion, rejected the intervention made by the EU, and asked that the meeting focus on the mandate and principles of the Convention.
12. Noting the interventions on procedural matters by Brazil, Indonesia and the Russian Federation, and on the suggestion of the President, the **Secretariat** stated that it would work with the Legal Adviser to resolve the definition of "consensus" and provide clarification to the Conference at a later date.
13. The provisional working programme in document COP14 Doc.3.2.2 Rev.1 was adopted.

Agenda item 4: Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

14. The **Secretariat** introduced the existing Rules of Procedure in document COP14 Doc.4, noting that these had been adopted at COP13 and remained in effect.
15. The existing Rules of Procedure in document COP14 Doc.4.2 were adopted.

Agenda item 6: Appointment of the Credentials Committee and any other committees

16. The **Secretariat** reported that the Conference Bureau had received the following regional nominations for membership of the Credentials Committee, in accordance with Rule 19:
 - Africa: Zambia;
 - Asia: Indonesia;

- Europe: Armenia;
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Panama;
- North America: United States of America; and
- Oceania: Fiji.

17. The Credentials Committee was established by acclamation with membership as listed above.
18. The **President** invited Contracting Parties to establish the Committee on Finance and Budget with the same composition as the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee and open to all Parties as in previous COPs.
19. The Committee on Finance and Budget was established.

Agenda item 7: Admission of observers
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20. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP14 Doc.7, drawing attention to paragraph 7, which lists bodies or agencies seeking approval to attend COP14 as observers.
21. The organizations listed in paragraph 7 of document COP14 Doc.7 were approved to participate as observers.

Agenda item 8. Report of the Chair of the Standing Committee

22. The **Chair of the Standing Committee**, H.E. Mr Mohamed Al Afkham (United Arab Emirates), summarized his report as contained in document COP14 Doc.8, recalling the particular challenges faced by the Committee arising from the COVID-19 crisis, and extended his best wishes to the meeting.
23. The Conference took note of this report, with the **President** acknowledging the work of the Chair of the Standing Committee in advancing the work of the Convention.

Agenda item 9.1: Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention: Global implementation
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24. The **Secretary General** summarized document COP14 Doc.9.1, outlining the status of key indicators and the assessment of progress and implementation of the Convention against the fourth Strategic Plan over the past four years. She drew particular attention to the high rate of submissions of national reports by Contracting Parties, highlighting the importance of the availability of national data to successful implementation.
25. **China** commended the report.
26. **Iran** recalled the financial issues faced by developing Contracting Parties, and called on the Conference to focus on mechanisms to share knowledge and technology amongst Parties.
27. **Sweden, speaking as Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel**, thanked the Secretariat for its support to the Panel.

28. **Colombia** noted the progress made by the Convention despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis, and underlined the need to achieve conservation and restoration objectives that contribute to reducing poverty.
29. The **President** encouraged Parties to submit their national reports to the Secretariat, recalling their importance in facilitating the Convention's implementation.
30. The meeting took note of the report contained in document COP14 Doc.9.1.

Agenda item 9.2: Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention: Work of the Secretariat

31. The **Secretariat** presented a summary of document COP14 Doc.9.2, and drew attention to the following thematic areas of work addressed over the last triennium: strengthening service to Contracting Parties' decision-making and accountability; increasing relevance of wetlands and the Convention to global sustainable development policy objectives; strengthening support and enabling implementation; enhancing the visibility of wetlands and the Convention; and strengthening the Secretariat's efficiency and effectiveness.
32. The **Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** commended the Convention on its progress, noting that the agricultural sector is reliant on wetlands and can negatively impact them through water-use and pollution. It drew attention to the UN 2023 Water Conference, to be hosted in March 2023 in New York, United States of America, and to the Rome Water Dialogue, to be held on 29 November 2022 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, which would enable discussions between the wetlands, water and agricultural sectors, to develop and agree on a suite of commitments for future collaboration. It invited interested Parties to join this Dialogue online or in person.
33. The meeting took note of the report contained in document COP14 Doc.9.2.

Agenda item 10: Report of the Secretariat pursuant to Article 8.2 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

34. The **Secretariat** briefly summarized document COP14 Doc.10 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance. Regarding the request in the report to the Conference on providing guidance to Contracting Parties and the Secretariat on how to manage Ramsar Sites which are designated in areas not recognized by the UN as being part of the territory of the designating country, the Secretariat requested that interventions on this issue be made during discussions on the draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.15 on *the status of Sites in the List of Wetlands of International Importance*.
35. **Mauritius** made an intervention, and requested that this be recorded in the report of this meeting.¹ Supported by the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, it suggested that consideration of the request of the Secretariat for guidance be deferred to the next Conference of the Contracting Parties.
36. **South Africa** expressed its concern regarding the increase of cases under Article 3.2, and general comments were made by **Colombia**, which noted the need for further monitoring

¹ See Annex xx.

initiatives, and by **China**, which proposed to establish a Ramsar Site Information Sheet and Ramsar Site effectiveness working group.

37. The **President** closed the session at 12h10.

Annex xx
Statement by Mauritius

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

Agenda Item 10: Report of the Secretariat pursuant to Article 8.2 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance

Chairperson,

With reference to paragraph 30 of the report of the Secretariat pursuant to Article 8.2 on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, my delegation requests that consideration of the request of the Secretariat for guidance in respect of the objection of Mauritius to the United Kingdom's extension of the Ramsar Convention to the so-called "British Indian Ocean Territory" be deferred to the next Conference of the Contracting Parties.

My delegation requests that this statement be recorded in the report of this meeting.

Thank you.