

**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.4**

**Draft session report  
Day 3 – Monday 7 November  
(Afternoon plenary session and Ramsar Awards ceremony)**

**14.00 – 17:35 Plenary session**

**Agenda item 11: Report on implementation of the CEPA Programme 2016-2024**

1. The **Secretariat** presented document COP14 Doc.11, noting the review of progress in the implementation of the CEPA Programme, as well as the recommendation on the new approach to CEPA implementation, and further noted that the recommendations pertaining to document COP14 Doc.18.10 on the draft resolution on the new CEPA approach would be addressed during the discussions on that agenda item.
2. The Conference took note of the report and approved the recommendations contained in document COP14 Doc.11.

**Agenda item 12: Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)**

3. The Chair of the STRP, **Dr Guangchun Lei** (China), introduced document COP14 Doc.12 which described the activities and progress of the STRP over the past triennium. He noted the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic in convening in-person meetings, and highlighted the special edition of the *Global Wetland Outlook*, which had been released on the occasion of the Convention’s 50th anniversary.
4. **China** thanked the STRP for its work.
5. The Conference took note of the report of the STRP and approved the recommendations contained in document COP14 Doc.12.

**Agenda item 13: Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties**

6. The **Secretariat** noted that all relevant issues were reflected in the documents submitted for the current meeting.

7. With no comments from Contracting Parties, the **President** noted that no further action was required under this agenda item.

**Agenda item 14:** Secretariat report on administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions

8. The **Secretariat** presented document COP14 Doc.14, highlighting two distinct categories of financial implications related to additional staff days and estimated cash expenses, and noting that the projected implications were the best estimates based on the current text of the draft resolutions.
9. The **President** invited Parties to take into account the administrative and financial implications when considering the draft resolutions, including the one on financial and budgetary matters (document COP14 Doc.18.1), and noted that no further action was required under this agenda item.

**Agenda item 15:** Financial report for 2019-2021 by the Chair of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee, and proposed budget for the 2023-2025 triennium

10. The **Chair of the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee**, Ms Mariana Olivera West (Mexico), introduced document COP14 Doc.15, highlighting its three sections: a summary of the core budget results for 2019-2021 and the approved budget for 2022; the proposed budget for 2023-2025; and the status of assessed contributions. She drew attention to the following points:
  - following Decision SC59/2022-39 of the Standing Committee, a single scenario of a 0% increase in the budget for the 2023-2025 triennium was being presented to the Conference;
  - the reallocation to the next triennium of surplus funds in the core budget resulting from underspending during the previous triennium, owing in part to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, had been approved; and
  - the level of outstanding contributions was equivalent to approximately one third of the annual income.She suggested that the Committee on Finance and Budget meet on Tuesday 8 November to consider the draft resolution on budgetary matters included in document COP14 Doc.18.1.
11. **Colombia** expressed support for the decision for a 0% nominal increase.
12. **Mexico** urged all Contracting Parties to identify strategies which would enable them to pay their outstanding and future contributions, and added that adjustments to the budget should be reserved for exceptional circumstances.
13. The **President** noted that the Committee on Finance and Budget would consider this document and report back on its work at a later session.

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

14. The **Secretariat** noted that it had submitted to the Conference Bureau a new suggested running order for consideration of the draft resolutions. This order sought to take into account the Contracting Parties' differing views on how best to address the time constraints of the coming days, and had been accepted thanks to their willingness to compromise. The

Secretariat further noted that delegates were able to initiate informal discussions on draft resolutions prior to the formal discussions taking place during plenary sessions. The running order was contained in Annex 1 to the working programme in document COP14 Doc.3.2.2 Rev.1.

#### 18.1 Draft resolution on financial and budgetary matters

15. The **President** noted that discussion of the draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.1 would be deferred to a later session, after the Subgroup on Finance had concluded its deliberations.

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

16. The **Secretariat** introduced document COP14 Doc.18.2, highlighting tasks for Standing Committee members contained within it and a proposal for the cycle of meetings of the Standing Committee and the COP for the coming triennium.
17. **Czechia, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union (EU) with a reservation from Sweden**, suggested delaying the proposed meetings of the Standing Committee by a month, to take place in August or September 2023 and 2024.
18. **Sweden** suggested amendments to the responsibilities of members of the Standing Committee, and provided a further suggestion, opposed by **Brazil**, to reduce the number of Ramsar Regions from six to four, to overcome difficulties associated with the wide differences in the numbers of Parties in each region.
19. Responding to the proposal by the Member States of the EU, **New Zealand** suggested bringing the first meeting of the Standing Committee forward, to allow timely approval of the STRP workplan and allow sufficient time for its work. The **Secretariat** responded that the scheduling of a meeting in June 2023 should be feasible.
20. **Canada**, supported by **Mexico**, suggested amendments, which included instructing the Secretariat to propose a process that would incorporate criteria for the Standing Committee to decide whether to forward draft resolutions for consideration by the COP.
21. **Brazil** responded by recalling that the Standing Committee is a Contracting Party-led process and any changes in the *modus operandi* should be approved by the Conference of the Parties.
22. The **President** invited Contracting Parties to send their proposed amendments to the Secretariat for production of a revised draft resolution for discussion at a later session.

#### Agenda item 18: Consideration of the draft resolutions and recommendations submitted by Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee

23. **Ukraine** delivered a joint statement on behalf of 28 Contracting Parties, underscoring the impacts of the Russian Federation's unjustified aggression on critical ecosystems and Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) in Ukraine, and emphasizing that the war in Ukraine undermined the Convention's ability to deliver effective conservation and management of the Ramsar Site network, and noting that it had proposed a draft resolution.

24. The **President** noted that the new draft resolution submitted by Ukraine would be reviewed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure at the next meeting of the Conference Bureau, which would decide on its admissibility for discussion in plenary.

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

25. The **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the Effectiveness Working Group (EWG)**, presented the draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.3, highlighting the EWG's sustained work over the past triennium to develop the draft resolution, through which it had succeeded in narrowing down options for actions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention. It further highlighted the remaining bracketed text related to the cost of implementation of the draft resolution, and suggested that unspent funds from the EWG budget be allocated for use.
26. **Cambodia, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, France on behalf of the Member States of the EU, Iran, Mexico, New Zealand, and South Africa on behalf of the Africa region** supported the draft resolution, and expressed thanks to the EWG for its work.
27. **Canada, Costa Rica, France on behalf of the Member States of the EU, Mexico and New Zealand** suggested amendments.
28. In response to **South Africa's** suggestion that the Secretariat support Contracting Parties in preparation of draft resolutions, the **President** responded that the Secretariat could provide guidance or training on how to prepare draft resolutions.
29. The **President** noted that the draft resolution had received wide support, and invited interested Parties to submit proposed amendments for consideration at a later session.

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

30. The draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.4 was introduced by **Australia**, speaking as interim Chair of the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG), outlining the results of the SPWG's mid-term review of challenges faced by Contracting Parties in implementing the fourth Strategic Plan, and noting the need to enhance existing guidance and share this with Parties. It highlighted the addition of three thematic annexes: on wetland conservation actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal targets; on the new CEPA approach and wetland policies and practices; and on gender-responsive wetland policies and practices. It advised that proposed amendments would be submitted to the Secretariat, and suggested that the President form a contact group.
31. **Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia and Sweden** provided comments on the text.
32. **Argentina, Czechia speaking on behalf of the Member States of the EU with a reservation from Sweden**, and the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** welcomed the interim Chair's report, and noted the upcoming discussions on the targets of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity at CBD COP15 in December 2022. All intervening Parties suggested that further discussion take place once the outcome of these negotiations had been finalized, to align the relevant text in the current

draft resolution. **Argentina and Czechia on behalf of the Member States of the EU with a reservation from Sweden** proposed amendments.

33. **Namibia on behalf of the Africa Region** expressed support for the draft resolution.
34. **China, Costa Rica, Iran, Malaysia, Switzerland and Tunisia** supported the draft decision, and advised that they would propose amendments.
35. The **President** established a contact group to take forward discussion of the draft resolution, appointing the interim Chair of the SPWG as Chair.

#### **18.14 Draft resolution on strengthening Ramsar connections through youth**

36. **Australia**, as co-proponent with Costa Rica, introduced the draft resolution in document COP14 Doc.18.14, highlighting its general objective of encouraging Parties to explore and support strategies to engage, collaborate with and involve youth in the work of the Convention. Engaging energetic young people who are passionate about wetlands would be a cost-effective way to implement innovative and impactful projects. It drew attention to minor amendments already submitted to the Secretariat by Brazil, France, Japan, and Wetlands International.
37. **Colombia, Ecuador, France on behalf of the Member States of the EU, the Republic of Korea, Malawi on behalf of the Africa Region, Mexico, Nepal, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** expressed general support for the draft resolution, noting its timeliness and importance, and advised that they would propose amendments.
38. **Canada** supported the draft resolution, noting national policy efforts on youth engagement, and advised that it had submitted amendments to Costa Rica directly during the prior regional meetings.
39. **China** supported the draft resolution, and Australia acknowledged its request for a clarification within the text regarding the relevant meeting of the Standing Committee.
40. **Switzerland** supported the draft resolution, while noting that calls for national efforts should reflect that individual Parties determine domestic implementation. It drew attention to the potential role of the Junior Professionals within the Secretariat in engaging and integrating youth, and expressed support for the use of virtual meetings to increase global youth engagement.
41. **Malaysia** supported the draft resolution, stressing the need for additional resources and knowledge-sharing for effective implementation, and urged Parties to provide technical and financial support to this end. **Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iran and the Philippines** all proposed amendments.
42. The **Dominican Republic, Peru and Venezuela** supported the draft resolution without further amendment.
43. **Brazil** supported the draft resolution, noting Australia's acknowledgment of the proposals for amendments that it had previously submitted.

44. **Japan** supported the draft resolution, noting its potential to strengthen international cooperation, and requested further clarification on the nomination processes and rules on regional representation of a working group.
45. **Costa Rica**, as co-proponent of the draft resolution, emphasized the need to recognize the valuable contributions of young people, and thanked the Parties for their contributions.
46. The **President** requested that the Secretariat prepare a revised version of the draft resolution for consideration at a later session.

#### **18.13 Draft resolution on wetland education in the formal education sector**

47. The **Republic of Korea**, as co-proponent with China, introduced document COP14 Doc.18.13, noting its recommendations to help Contracting Parties enable and facilitate more effective wetland education in schools, and inviting participants to a side event at which these would be presented in greater detail.
48. **Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Czechia on behalf of the Member States of the EU, China, Colombia, Gabon, Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka** expressed support for the draft resolution.
49. **Canada, Czechia on behalf of the Member States of the EU, Colombia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka** proposed amendments.
50. **Canada**, supported by **Colombia**, suggested including non-formal and informal education practices, to acknowledge the various ways of transmitting knowledge, including indigenous knowledge.
51. The **Republic of Korea** noted that the original aim had been the agreement of a resolution dedicated to formal education.
52. The **President** invited Parties to engage in informal consultations so that a revised version might be addressed at a later session.

#### **18.16 Draft resolution on review of the Ramsar Criteria, and delisting of Ramsar Sites located in territories which are not recognized at the UN level as part of the territory of the submitting country**

53. As proponent, **Algeria** introduced the draft resolution contained in document COP14 Doc.18.16, noting that it aimed to initiate reflection on the listing of Ramsar Sites, and stated that it had prepared a revised draft, taking account of comments received, and had amended the title to *Draft Resolution on the Ramsar List*.
54. **Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Pakistan, Senegal, Togo** and the **United States of America** opposed the draft resolution, suggesting a focus on conservation rather than political designation of wetlands. Niger, Senegal and Togo proposed that the draft resolution be discussed at COP15.

55. **Tunisia** reminded Contracting Parties that a significant proportion of the Ramsar Information Sheets and associated Ramsar Site maps presented challenges, indicating the need to use authoritative documents as the basis for necessary technical and scientific information.
56. Noting its understanding of the proposal's background, **China** expressed hope that Contracting Parties might resolve disagreements through friendly consultations.
57. **Czechia** requested clarification regarding the version of the draft resolution being discussed, noting that despite substantial amendments, the document was not yet available to Contracting Parties.
58. The **President** suggested adjourning the discussion until the following plenary session so that the revised version might be prepared and advice sought from the Legal Adviser.
59. The **President** closed the session at 17:35.

#### **17:40 - 18:30 Ramsar Awards ceremony**

<b>Ramsar Wetlands Conservation Awards ceremony</b>
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The session concluded with the presentation of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards 2022.

60. The Ramsar Convention Award for Young Wetland Champions was presented to Ms Fernanda Samuel of Angola, in recognition of her achievements on mangrove restoration.
61. The Ramsar Convention Award for Wetland Wise Use was presented to Mr Kurechi Masayaki of Japan, for his work in relation to sustainable agriculture and conservation of waterbird habitat in rice paddies.
62. The Ramsar Convention Award for Wetland Innovation was presented to Ms Carla Ximena Giraldo Malca of Peru, for her work on education for wetland conservation and engaging youth.
63. The Ramsar Conservation Merit Award was presented to Mr Jerome Bignon of France, for his work on the conservation and sustainable management of the Somme Bay and the wetlands of Amiens.
64. Drawing the event to a close, the **Secretary General** observed that the Contracting Parties at COP6 in Brisbane, Australia, had recognized the need for awards for such individuals engaged in action on the ground, which are key in implementing this pragmatic Convention.