**Guidance note on preparation of submissions for draft resolutions**

**Process and timeline**

1. The 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP13) will take place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 21 to 29 October 2018.

2. According to Rule 5.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions is 60 days before the Standing Committee meeting at which recommendations are made for documents for consideration by Contracting Parties at the COP. The 54th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC54) will take place from 23 to 27 April 2018. Therefore, **draft resolutions to be considered at COP13 must reach the Secretariat no later than 22 February 2018**.

3. However, **the Secretariat encourages Contracting Parties to submit draft resolutions as early as possible before 23 January 2018**,so that they can be published in the official languages of the Convention three months before SC54, with the other documentation for that meeting.

4. An early submission of draft resolutions will ensure that Contracting Parties have adequate time to review them in advance of SC54 and in particular before and during the regional pre-COP meetings to be held in February and March 2018. An early submission will also enable the Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel to consider the draft resolutions during its 21st meeting, to be held in January 2018, in order to make technical inputs where appropriate prior to SC54.

5. **Submissions should be sent by email to the Documentation Officer** at the following address: jennings@ramsar.org. Any questions regarding the process or content of submission should be sent to the same address.

**Content of submissions to Standing Committee**

6. Documents submitted for consideration by the Standing Committee should include:

i) A summary introduction for the Standing Committee, including a list of the potential implications for the Secretariat budgets of the implementation of the Resolution;

ii) The text of the draft resolution, including numbered preambular and operative paragraphs; and

iii) Any annexed guidance or text which the Conference of the Parties may adopt or endorse.

7. Existing Resolutions, which may provide useful models, are found on the Ramsar website [at](http://www.ramsar.org/search?sort=field_sort_date&order=desc&f%5b0%5d=field_document_type%3A530&search_api_views_fulltext=): <http://www.ramsar.org/search?sort=field_sort_date&order=desc&f%5b0%5d=field_document_type%3A530&search_api_views_fulltext>=.

**Guidance for each element**

*All sections*

8. The Secretariat will not edit the submissions, but it will proof read them for typographical errors and inconsistencies. It will also ensure the formatting is in line with standards for Standing Committee documents. To facilitate this process, Parties are asked to use, as far as possible, the formatting of the present document and the template in Annex 1.

*Summary introduction*

9. The introduction should include as a minimum an invitation to the Standing Committee to review and approve the draft resolution for consideration at COP13.

10. In addition it may include background information to inform the decision of the Standing Committee. The rationale for the proposed draft resolution itself should be made explicit within the preambular paragraphs.

11. The introduction should include a table indicating the potential impact on the Secretariat's core or non-core budgets of each action included in the operative paragraphs. The table should describe the action, and the cost in Swiss francs (CHF). Any recurrent costs should be made clear. The Secretariat can identify the sum required, as long as the submitting Party identifies the constituent actions, as in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: Example of information on financial implications of implementing draft resolutions*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Paragraph | Action  | Cost (CHF) |
| 20.REQUESTS the Standing Committee to prepare a summary report… | Secretariat to coordinate drafting project, consultant to draft report (10 days) | CHF 5,000 (one-off cost) |

*The resolution text*

12. All paragraphs of a draft resolution, including preambular and operative paragraphs, should be numbered consecutively 1,2, 3, etc., starting with the first paragraph of the preamble. Subparagraphs should be numbered i), ii), iii), etc.

13. Preambular paragraphs present the background to the actions proposed for agreement by the Contracting Parties in the operative paragraphs. They must begin with a verb in the form of a participle or an adjective (e.g. “Concerned”, “Having considered”, “Acknowledging”, etc.).

14. Operative paragraphs contain the actions that the Contracting Parties agree to take. These paragraphs begin with an action verb (such as “Approves”, “Calls upon”, “Emphasizes”, “Invites”, “Notes”, “Recommends”, “Requests”, or “Urges”).

15. The verb used should correspond to the role of the body called to act. For example, it is appropriate: to encourage, call upon or urge Contracting Parties to act; to request an action of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP); and to instruct the Secretariat.

*Annexes*

16. The text contained in annexes may be approved, endorsed or acknowledged by the COP, according to the wording of the relevant operative paragraphs.

17. An annex may provide links to further background information in an online document. Before the COP, a Contracting Party may submit such information as an Information Document. These documents are not presented for discussion and are not translated by the Secretariat.

18. Annexes are numbered: Annex 1, Annex 2, etc., following the order in which they are referred to in the draft resolution. Each annex should start on a new page.

19. Paragraphs should be numbered consecutively 1,2 3, etc. Subparagraphs should be numbered i), ii), iii) etc. Bullet points may be used for lists, but note that numbering where possible is clearer.

20. Any tables or figures should be titled as such and numbered consecutively, e.g. *Figure 2: Process for identifying key ecosystem services*.

**Suggested length**

21. It is suggested that proposals for draft resolutions should be a maximum of 12 pages in length (6,000 words), including the summary introduction, the draft resolution and any annexes.

22. This limit will:

i) enable Standing Committee members and observer Parties to read all the documents, and understand the issues in advance of meetings;

ii) maintain the focus on the key issues and avoid discussion of unnecessary details in a crowded agenda;

iii) help the Secretariat publish related documents, such as the summary of costs of implementing the proposed draft resolutions, in good time; and

iv) save translation time and funds.

**Annex 1**

**Template for submissions for draft resolutions to Standing Committee**

This template provides a basis for the summary introduction and the text of the proposed draft resolution.

THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

54th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 23–27 April 2018

**SC54-xx**

**Draft Resolution on [insert subject]**

*Submitted by [insert Contracting Party name]*

**Action requested:**

* The Standing Committee is invited to review and approve the attached Draft Resolution for consideration by the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
* [Insert any other actions requested of the Standing Committee]

**Introduction**

*Information for Standing Committee*

(delete this section if not applicable)

*Financial implications of implementation*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Paragraph (number and key part of text) | Action  | Cost (CHF) |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Draft Resolution XIII.xx**

**[insert subject]**

1. RECALLING…;

2. ALSO RECALLING…;

3. FURTHER RECALLING…;

4. AWARE of …:

i. This…;

ii. That…; and

iii. The other…:

5. ACKNOWLEDGING…; and

6. CONCERNED that…;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. AFFIRMS…;

8. REQUESTS…;

9. ENCOURAGES…;

10. ALSO ENCOURAGES …;

11. URGES …; and

12. CALLS ON… .