

Agenda item 11

Review of the utility of the COP10 National Report Format, and development of the format for National Reports to COP11

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to consider this report on the COP10 form and advise on the development of a National Report Format for COP11.

COP10 National Report Format

1. Following Standing Committee discussions during the 2006-2008 triennium, the National Report Format (NRF) for the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP10) was developed by the Secretariat, approved by Standing Committee, and issued to all Contracting Parties.
2. Following Contracting Party experiences with the COP9 National Report Format, it was determined that the COP10 format should be much simplified and reduced in size, with a small number of indicator questions for each Strategic Plan Strategy, developed from the Key Result Areas in Resolution IX.8. For each Strategy two additional text fields were provided for Parties to have the option to add further information if they so wished.
3. Comments received from Parties, and the experiences of the Secretariat in handling National Reports, have indicated that this simplified approach has proved generally helpful to Parties in providing their National Reports to COP10. In all, COP10 National Reports were received from 143 Contracting Parties, of which 131 were received in sufficient time prior to COP10 to be included in the global and regional analyses submitted to the COP as Information Papers. This continues the impressive reporting record of Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention and reflects the commitment of Parties to providing up-to-date information on their implementation of the Convention.
4. All information provided by Parties in their National Reports was entered into a Secretariat database developed for the purpose of providing analyses of the information submitted, and these data were used as the basis of the Secretary General's reports to COP10 (COP10 DOCs 6 and 7); regional implementation reports (COP10 DOCs 8 to 13) and the overview of the implementation of the Convention's CEPA Programme for 2006-2008 (COP10 DOC. 16).
5. The Secretariat now holds National Report information from COP8, COP9 and COP10 National Reports in databases which permit, for indicator questions that have been consistent in each of these National Reports, analyses of trends in implementation over time since the 2002-2005 triennium.

6. The COP10 NRF information is also importantly a key data source for the STRP in its work assessing the indicators of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention (see also DOC SC40-18).
7. In addition, under the 4th CBD/Ramsar Joint Work Plan and Ramsar's lead implementation role for wetlands for the Convention on Biological Diversity, the COP10 NRF indicators are being used during 2009 as a key source of information to assess and report to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010 as part of the in-depth review of its Programme of Work on the Biological Diversity of Inland Waters.

Issues and timings for developing a National Report Format for COP11

8. Although COP11 will not take place for some three years, the COP11 NRF will need to be developed and approved by the Standing Committee considerably in advance so that it can be issued to the Parties with sufficient time for them to complete and submit their reports for analysis some months prior to COP11.
9. This means that the Secretariat will need to develop proposals for the COP11 NRF during late 2009/early 2010, for approval by the Standing Committee at its 41st meeting (and certainly not later than late 2010), so that the COP11 NRF can be issued to Parties approximately one year in advance of the dates of COP11. A more precise timetable will be developed once the dates for COP11 are agreed.
10. Thus, and in light of experiences in using the COP10 NRF, it would be helpful for the Secretariat to receive the guidance of the Standing Committee at its present meeting concerning the overall approach and structure of the COP11 NRF. In doing so, the Standing Committee might wish to take into account that:
 - i) the COP11 NRF should be structured in line with the Goals and Strategies of the new 2009-2015 Ramsar Strategic Plan adopted at COP10 as Resolution X.1;
 - ii) the indicators included in the COP11 NRF should speak to the Key Result Areas established by Resolution X.1 for each Strategy in the Plan;
 - iii) for continuity, and to permit time-series analysis and report of implementation progress, COP11 NRF indicators should as far as possible be consistent with those in previous NRFs, particularly those of the COP10 NRF;
 - iv) the advice and experience of the STRP should be sought concerning the utility and any adjustments to, or additional need for, indicators in relation particularly to the Panel's experience in using the COP10 NRF indicators in its analyses of effectiveness indicators; and
 - v) the advice of the CEPA Oversight Panel should likewise be sought concerning indicators for the CEPA Strategy of the Strategic Plan.
11. The Standing Committee may wish to confirm the overall structure and approach to the development of the COP11 NRF, affirm the aspects of the approach to its development listed in paragraph 10 above, and request the Secretariat to prepare a draft COP11 NRF for consideration at its 41st meeting in 2010.