

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
59th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Resumed session
Gland, Switzerland, 23-27 May 2022

Decisions of the resumed session of the 59th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda

Decision SC59/2022-01: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional agenda in document SC59/2022 Doc.2 Rev.1, with Agenda item 27 amended to: Consideration of the potential consequences of environmental changes of 20 Ramsar Sites in Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the provisional working programme

Decision SC59/2022-02: The Standing Committee adopted the provisional working programme in document SC59/2022 Doc.3 Rev.1 as amended.

Agenda item 4: Admission of observers

Decision SC59/2022-03: The Standing Committee admitted the observers listed in document SC59/2022 Doc.4.

Agenda item 5: Report of the Executive Team and Chair of the Standing Committee

Decision SC59/2022-04: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59/2022 Doc.5.

Agenda item 7.2: Report of the Management Working Group

Decision SC59/2022-05: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59/2022 Doc.7.2.

Agenda item 6: Report of the Secretary General

Decision SC59/2022-06: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59/2022 Doc.6.

Agenda item 21.2: Report of the Secretariat on the Ramsar Regional Initiatives

Decision SC59/2022-07: The Standing Committee took note of the annual reports submitted by the Ramsar Regional Initiatives for 2021 in accordance with Resolution XIII.9 on *Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021*.

Decision SC59/2022-08: The Standing Committee approved the proposed new reporting format for Ramsar Regional Initiatives contained in Annex 2 of document SC58 Doc.22.2.

Decision SC59/2022-09: The Standing Committee approved the proposal for a new Ramsar Regional Initiative in the Southern African Development Community region, within the framework of the Convention, in line with paragraph 12 of Resolution XIII.9, contained in document SC59 Doc.21.2.

Decision SC59/2022-10: The Standing Committee took note of and approved the review by the Secretariat's Legal Advisor of existing relevant Resolutions and decisions on Ramsar Regional Initiatives, in line with paragraph 30 of Resolution XIII.9 and contained in document SC58 Doc.22.4.

Decision SC59/2022-11: The Standing Committee took note of the summary assessment of the operations and achievements of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives operating during the period 2019-2021, in Annex 3 of document SC59 Doc.21.2, prepared by the Secretariat for submission to COP14 in line with paragraph 28 of Resolution XIII.9.

Agenda item 24.18: Proposed draft resolution on how to structure, write and handle Convention documents and messages (*Submitted by Sweden*)

Decision SC59/2022-12: The Standing Committee decided to forward the draft resolution on how to structure, write and handle Convention documents and messages contained in document SC59/2022 Doc.24.18 to COP14 for further consideration with all the document's text in square brackets.

Agenda item 24.2: 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 (*Submitted by Algeria*)

Decision SC59/2022-13: The Standing Committee decided to forward the 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, in document SC59 Doc 24.2, to COP14 for further consideration with all the document's text in square brackets.

Agenda item 22: Report of the Co-chairs of the Independent Advisory Committee on Wetland City Accreditation

Decision SC59/2022-14: The Standing Committee took note of the 25 cities that had been approved for Wetland City Accreditation and accepted the report of the Co-chairs of the Independent Advisory Committee on Wetland City Accreditation in document SC59/2022 Doc.22.

Agenda item 12: Review of the Rules of Procedure

Decision SC59/2022-15: The Standing Committee noted document SC59 Doc.12.

Agenda item 13: Review of all previous Resolutions and decisions

Decision SC59/2022-16: The Standing Committee agreed to forward document SC59 Doc.13.2 *Draft list of Resolutions that are effectively defunct* to COP14 for its consideration.

Decision SC59/2022-17: The Standing Committee requested that the Secretariat produce options to continue the review of all previous resolutions and decisions for consideration at COP14. It should cover:

- Options for prioritizing the consolidation of Resolutions by theme, including but not limited to, ranking from a list of identified topics, or undertaking a consolidation exercise associated with new resolutions;
- An estimate of the timeframes and resources required for the Secretariat to undertake this work.

The Standing Committee requested that the Secretariat prepare a draft resolution with the above elements for consideration and approval by COP14.

Agenda item 18: Work plan of the Secretariat for 2022

Decision SC59/2022-18: The Standing Committee took note of and approved the Integrated Secretariat Annual Plan for 2022 in document SC59/2022 Doc.18.

Agenda item 27: Consideration of the potential consequences of changes of 20 Ramsar Sites in Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression

Decision SC59/2022-19: The Standing Committee took note of the intervention made by Ukraine.

Agenda item 11: Report of the Effectiveness Working Group

Decision SC59/2022-20: The Standing Committee approved the draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Com.3 on *Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Ramsar Convention* and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 15: Roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee

Decision SC59/2022-21: The Standing Committee approved the draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.15 Rev.1 on *Roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee* for forwarding to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 10: Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group

Decision SC59/2022-22: The Standing Committee approved the draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.10 Rev.2 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* as amended and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 17.1: Report of the Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel

Decision SC59/2022-23: The Standing Committee approved document SC59/2022 Doc.17.1 Rev.1 and agreed to forward the draft resolution in Annex 2 of the document to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.4: Draft Resolution on Guidance on Conservation and Management of Small Wetlands (*Submitted by China, cosponsored by the Republic of Korea*)

Decision SC59/2022-24: The Standing Committee approved document SC59/202 Doc.24.4 Rev.1 and agreed to forward the draft resolution in the document to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.5: Draft Resolution on Integrating wetland conservation and restoration into national sustainable development strategy (*Submitted by China*)

Decision SC59/2022-25: The Standing Committee approved the draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.24.5 Rev.1 with amendments to paragraphs 2 and 3 as agreed by the Committee, and agreed to forward this to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 23: Update on the status of Sites on the Lists of Wetlands of International Importance

Decision SC59/2022-26: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59 Doc.23 Rev.1 *Update on the status of Sites on the Lists of Wetlands of International Importance* and agreed to include in the report by the Secretariat to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14) pursuant to Article 8.2 of the Convention concerning the List of Wetlands of International Importance the request on paragraph iv) of document SC59 Doc.23 Rev.1 and the read out statements of Mauritius and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Agenda item 24.6: Draft resolution on Wetland education in the formal education sector (*Submitted by China and Republic of Korea*)

Decision SC59/2022-27: The Standing Committee accepted the draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.24.6 Rev.1 on *Wetland education in the formal education sector* as amended, and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.7: Draft resolution on the Ramsar Wetland Awards (*Submitted by Sweden*)

Decision SC59/2022-28: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.24.6 Rev.1 on *The Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards* and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.8: Draft resolution on Updating the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention (*Submitted by Republic of Korea, Tunisia, Austria and China*)

Decision SC59/2022-29: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.24.8 Rev.1 on *Updating the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention* and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.12: Draft resolution on Strengthening Ramsar Connections Through Youth (*Submitted by Australia and Costa Rica*)

Decision SC59/2022-30: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.24.12 Rev.1 on *Strengthening Ramsar Connections Through Youth* and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.1: Proposed draft resolution on Protection, management and restoration of wetlands as Nature-based solutions to address the climate crisis (*Submitted by Spain*)

Decision SC59/2022-31: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.24.1 Annex 1 Rev.1 on *Protection, management and restoration of*

wetlands as [nature-based solutions][ecosystem-based approaches] to address the climate crisis and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 24.13: Draft Resolution on Waterbird population estimates to support new and existing Ramsar site designations under Ramsar Criterion 6 – use of alternative estimates (Submitted by Australia, in consultation with the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel)

Decision SC59/2022-32: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.24.13 Rev.1 on *Waterbird population estimates to support new and existing Ramsar site designations under Ramsar Criterion 6 – use of alternative estimates*, with the removal of the text in square brackets, and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 26: Draft Resolution on Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2023-2025 (Submitted by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel)

Decision SC59/2022-33: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.26 Rev.1 on *Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2023-2025* and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 21.1: Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2022-2024
Agenda item 24.9: Proposed draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives – the basics (Submitted by Sweden)
Agenda item 24.10: Proposed draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives – COP14-COP15 (Submitted by Sweden)
Agenda item 24.10: Proposed draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives – addressing old decisions (Submitted by Sweden)

Decision SC59/2022-34: The Standing Committee asked the Secretariat to revise the draft resolution in document SC59 Doc.21.1 Rev.1 ensuring that the original text of the draft resolution prepared by the Working Group will be retained as well as the alternative text proposed by the contact group. Any text not in the original draft should be placed in square brackets. All references to “shall” in the document will be removed. The Standing Committee agreed to forward the draft resolution to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 16: Enhancing the Convention’s visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

Decision SC59/2022-35: The Standing Committee accepted the revised draft resolution in document SC59/2022 Doc.16 Rev.1 *Enhancing the Convention’s visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions* with the proposed amendments in square brackets and agreed to forward it to COP14 for its consideration.

Agenda item 8: Financial and budgetary matters

Decision SC59/2022-36: The Standing Committee approved the report of the Subgroup on Finance in document SC59/2022 Com.2 Rev.1 (Annex 7 of this report), including the following Decisions SC59/2022-37 to SC59/2022-42.

Decision SC59/2022-37: The Standing Committee:
i. took note of the status of annual contributions;

- ii. noted the actions listed in paragraphs 12 and 13 of document SC59/2022 Doc.8.2 on group confirmation of outstanding contributions as part of the audit process;
- iii. noted the actions listed in paragraphs 16, 18, 19 and 20 of document SC59/2022 Doc.8.2 to continue encouraging the payment of annual contributions by the Contracting Parties;
- iv. noted the changes in annual contributions receivable and in the annual provision against contributions receivable; and
- v. noted the status of the African voluntary contributions.

Decision SC59/2022-38: The Standing Committee:

- i. accepted the 2021 audited financial statements as of 31 December 2021;
- ii. noted the core budget results for 2021;
- iii. noted the status of the non-core balances and voluntary contributions for 2021;
- iv. approved the Secretariat's proposed adjustments to 2021, as described in paragraphs 9.f, 13, 14 and 15 and presented in column H of the table in Annex 2 of document SC59/2022 Doc. 8.1; and
- v. approved that the pre-committed funds in amount of CHF 765,000 are carried forward from 2021 to 2022, as included in column C of the table in Annex 1 Core Budget 2022 of the Subgroup on Finance report contained in document SC59/2022 Com.2 Rev.1 (see Annex 1 of Annex 7 of this report).

Decision SC59/2022-39: The Standing Committee:

- i. took note of the contents of document SC59/2022 doc.8.3;
- ii. instructed the Secretariat, due to exceptional circumstances, to present to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties only one budget scenario A, representing a 0% increase compared to the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 triennia and 2022, as described in document SC59/2022 Doc.8.3; and
- iii. approved the draft resolution on the financial and budgetary matters to be considered at COP14, as presented in the Annex 2 of the report of the Subgroup on Finance contained in document SC59/2022 Com2. Rev1 (see Annex 2 of Annex 7 of this report).

Decision SC59/2022-40: The Standing Committee took note of the projected administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions submitted to SC59/2022 which would be revised on the basis of the draft resolutions agreed by the SC59/2022.

Decision SC59/2022-41: The Standing Committee:

- i. approved allocation of 2021 surplus and approved option a) to allocate CHF 228,000 to cover the budget gap as per the Resolution XIII.2, paragraph 15, as described in paragraph 40 of document SC59/2022 Doc. 8.1;
- ii. approved allocation of 2021 surplus of CHF 360,000 for the increase of outstanding provisions in 2023-2025 triennium with the condition that any unused portion be returned to the surplus for further allocation at the end of each year within 2023-2025 triennium; and
- iii. noted the intersessional allocation of funds to adjust the ExCOP3-approved core budget for 2022, as described in paragraphs 22 and 38 of document SC59/2022 Doc 8.1. and as presented in Annex 1 of the report of the Subgroup on Finance contained in document SC59/2022 Com2.Rev1 (see Annex 1 of Annex 7 of this report).

Decision SC59/2022-42: In the event of COP14 being held in Geneva in November 2022 ("Plan B"), the Standing Committee approved on a one-time exceptional basis the allocation of up to CHF 250,000 from the 2019-2021 core surplus, to supplement the non-rent expenses related to hosting the event, as necessary. This contingency allocation should not be considered as setting a

precedent for future COP-related budget discussions (see report of the Subgroup on Finance in Annex 7 of this report).

Agenda item 9: Urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands to receive enhanced attention: Best practices in the development of wetland inventories

Decision SC59/2022-43: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59 Doc.9.

Agenda item 17.3: Implementation of Resolution XIII.1 on World Wetlands Day (declaration by the United Nations General Assembly)

Decision SC59/2022-44: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59/2022 Doc.17.3.

Agenda item 19: Managements of requests for data

Decision SC59/2022-45: The Standing Committee took note of document SC59 Doc.19.

Agenda item 24.16: Draft Resolution on the Establishment of the International Mangrove Center in the Framework of the Ramsar Convention (Submitted by China and cosponsors)

Decision SC59/2022-46: The Standing Committee agreed to forward the draft resolution on the *Establishment of the International Mangrove Center in the Framework of the Ramsar Convention* in document SC59/2022 Doc.24.16 to COP14 for its consideration, with the entire resolution in square brackets.

Agenda item 29: Adoption of the report of the meeting

Decision SC59/2022-47: The Standing Committee approved the report of the resumed session of the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee in documents SC59/2022 Rep.1, Rep.2, Rep.3, Rep.4, Rep.5 and Rep.6 as amended.

Decision SC59/2022-48: The Chair of the Standing Committee noted that the Standing Committee would approve the report of the final day of the resumed session of the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee on the basis of comments received by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 20.1 Report of the Subgroup on COP14

Decision SC59/2022-49: The Standing Committee decided to delay the final decision on the definitive venue of COP14 until 20 June 2022, by which time the SC shall receive a final answer from China on the possibility of holding the COP14 by China as decided at SC 57 (Decision 57-17). In case a final answer, encompassing the full modalities regarding the holding of COP14 in 2022, as agreed at SC57, is not received by 20 June 2022, or the dates proposed are beyond 2022, the Chair of the Standing Committee will convene an emergency virtual SC meeting on 21 June 2022. At that meeting, the Standing Committee will decide on the definitive venue and dates of COP14.