

7th Session of the Meeting of Parties

Brussels, Belgium, 15 – 17 September 2014

Report of the Chair of the Standing Committee



In the period since the 6th Session of the Meeting of Parties (Prague, Czech Republic, September 2010) the Standing Committee has met annually to discuss administrative and financial matters as well as other relevant business pertaining to the Agreement.

5th Meeting of the Standing Committee, Prague, Czech Republic, 22 September 2010

At MoP6 Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Italy and Ukraine were elected as members of the Standing Committee. In addition, Germany as host country of the Secretariat and United Kingdom as Depositary are both permanent members. The 5th Meeting took place on the last day of MoP6 in order to welcome the newly elected members and to elect the Chair and Vice Chair for the term 2011 – 2014. Dr. Michel Perret (France) was re-elected as Chair and Dr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine) was re-elected as Vice Chair of the Standing Committee.

6th Meeting of the Standing Committee, Bonn, Germany, 22 March 2011

The Committee dealt with administrative matters including income and expenditures of the financial year 2010, the Trust Fund status and financial projections for 2011. Another key topic was the “Year of the Bat Campaign” and how to successfully carry it through the rest of 2011 before the CMS Secretariat would take the lead for the second year of the campaign in 2012.

A special item on the agenda was the “Evolution of the relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme and the multilateral environmental agreements that it administers”. A discussion between UNEP and all MEA Secretariats had been triggered by a document submitted by UNEP to the 26th Session of the UNEP Governing Council in February 2011. The CMS Family Secretariats as well as other MEA Secretariats had approached the UNEP Executive Director with concerns regarding certain statements made as well as questions raised in the document. Core issues that had had to be discussed among the Parties to CMS and related Agreements concerned the question whether or not the budgets and Party’s contributions could continue to be in Euro and if

the budget cycles of the Conventions as well as Agreements could divert from UNEP's biannual cycle.

The Standing Committee was also informed about the draft "Delegation of Authority" by the UNEP Executive Director to the Executive Secretaries of the CMS Family Secretariats. This delegation of authority was being negotiated between UNEP HQ and the MEA Secretariats. The MEA Secretariats were for instance being given greater responsibility for the recruitment of staff below the P5 grade. The CMS Family had ensured that a specific reference to the role of the Parties in assigning roles to the Executive Secretaries was included in the delegation of authority, thereby entrenching the wishes of the Parties. The delegation of authority would not allow MEAs to deviate from UN rules and regulations, but autonomy on issues of substantive policy would be retained. The main aim was to reduce bureaucracy by removing the need for MEAs to seek approval from UNEP Headquarters for even quite routine business. Overall authority and accountability would remain with the Executive Director.

7th Meeting of the Standing Committee, Paris, France, 28 March 2012

Apart from its routine business to review the previous financial year and overall financial situation, the Committee discussed the way forward for the recruitment of the new post of a scientific officer at the P2 level as mandated by MoP6. Although an international recruitment at 50% post occupancy appeared to be potentially difficult, the Committee decided to at least try this approach and that the recruitment should be initiated as soon as possible.

The CMS Secretariat gave presentations on the activities already started and further planned with regard to the second year of the "Year of the Bat Campaign" and about the ambitious CMS Family project of a joint internet platform.

Following up on discussions at CMS CoP10 (Bergen, Norway, November 2011) on capacity building on bats in Africa the Committee reviewed the cooperation with FAO on capacity building started in previous years but it was not yet clear how this would continue. Although no workshops were scheduled yet, FAO had expressed interest to organise and take EUROBATs on board.

The Committee took also note of a project on capacity-building for bat species monitoring in countries of the enlarged Agreement area (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). The project was expected to become an excellent opportunity for transboundary capacity building and was envisaged to be extended to other countries in the region in future years.

8th Meeting of the Standing Committee, London, United Kingdom, 21 March 2013

Apart from its routine business the Committee took note of the newly designed website for the Agreement and the Online Workspace created for the Intersessional Working Groups of the Advisory Committee.

The Committee further took note of an upcoming Memorandum of Understanding to be concluded between UNEP and the Standing Committee, as it was the case for all UNEP administered MEAs. It was agreed to follow this matter up once a draft would become available.

The Committee also reviewed the progress made in the establishment of the new post for a scientist and what the main functions of this post would be.

9th Meeting of the Standing Committee, Heraklion, Greece, 7 – 10 April 2014

As usual in the year of a MoP, the meeting was held jointly with the 19th Meeting of the Advisory Committee. In separate sessions and in addition to its routine business, the Standing Committee intensively discussed the draft budget scenarios prepared by the Secretariat and developed modified scenarios to be presented to the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties.

In very fruitful joint sessions with the Advisory Committee all other draft resolutions were to the extent possible finalised for submission to MoP7

The existence of the Standing Committee continues to be very useful in the light of the experience made in the past eight years. The meetings allowed to examine deeply budgetary and administrative issues. A very close cooperation has continued between the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee and the Executive Secretary. The experience of the Committee allowed to prepare efficiently draft resolutions to be submitted to MoP7, especially during its last meeting and the participation of the Chair of the Advisory Committee to its meetings ensured a close linkage between the two bodies of the Agreement.