

RESOLUTION 2.9

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SMALL CONSERVATION GRANTS FUND FOR THE AGREEMENT

Taking into account article V, paragraph 4, of the Agreement, which encourages Parties to provide inter alia, financial support to other Parties on a multilateral and bilateral basis to assist them to implement the provisions of the Agreement,

Recalling Resolution 1.7, adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its first session (South Africa, 1999), regarding the establishment of a Small Grants Fund to become operational as of the second session of the Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling further paragraph 2 of Resolution 1.7, which instructed the Agreement Secretariat, taking into account the advice of the Technical Committee and learning from the experience of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use, to submit to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties proposals for the operation of the Fund, including administration, eligibility criteria, submission and evaluation of proposals, allocation of funds and fund-raising,

Concerned that since the first session of the Meeting of the Parties no voluntary contributions have been made by Contracting Parties and other donors for the purpose of providing small grants for the implementation of the Agreement intersessionally,

Noting the value of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use in facilitating the implementation in developing countries and countries with economies in transition of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Wildfowl Habitats,

Noting further the concerns of the Ramsar Convention regarding the operation of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund and in particular the proposal from the Ramsar Standing Committee Subgroup on Finance for a resolution of the Conference of the Parties regarding establishment of an endowment fund to resource the Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use,

Aware of the fact that in the African-Eurasian region there might be an overlap in activities under the Ramsar Small Grants Fund and the AEWA Small Grants Fund;

The Meeting of the Parties:

1. *Reiterates* its conviction that an AEWA Small Grants Fund could become an extremely useful tool to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement by developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
2. *Urges* Contracting Parties and other donors to make voluntary contributions to the Agreement budget, for the purpose of providing small grants for the implementation of the Agreement in eligible countries;
3. *Decides* that the following conditions shall apply to the award of grants from the Small Grants Fund:

- (a) Only developing countries and countries with economies in transition shall be eligible for funding;
 - (b) The proposed activities should clearly contribute to the implementation of the Agreement;
 - (c) The proposed activities should be a response to emergencies affecting a population of AEWA species and/ or sites used by AEWA species;
 - (d) The award for any single project will not exceed US \$15,000;
4. *Authorizes* the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Technical Committee, to review and decide upon applications received for small grants taking into account the conditions in paragraph 3 above and the budget available;
5. *Instructs* the Agreement Secretariat with the assistance of the Standing Committee to consult with Parties and potential sponsors concerning sponsorship;
6. *Further instructs* the Agreement Secretariat to develop, in close consultation with the Ramsar Convention, a procedure for consideration of applications to the Small Grants Fund to avoid duplication of efforts;
7. *Invites* the Ramsar Convention to consider establishing a common Wetlands and Waterbirds Endowment Fund, which could resource both the Ramsar and Agreement Small Grants Funds and requests the Agreement Secretariat to discuss this further with the Ramsar Bureau and to report back to the Meeting of the Parties at its third session;
8. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to channel the 13 per cent overheads charge levied on voluntary contributions to the Small Grants Fund back into the Fund.