

Agenda item 8.11

**Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the  
Convention**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to consider and approve attached COP9 DR2 for consideration by COP9 and the form of presentation for the future scientific and technical implementation provided in the Annex to this DR, and is further invited to request the Secretariat to finalise the Annex to the DR so as to harmonise this with texts of the other DRs and their Annexes approved for COP9 consideration.

**Note by the Secretariat**

1. Resolution VIII.45 recognised the need to find ways and means of streamlining the process of preparation, consideration and adoption of Resolutions, including those with a technical content, by Standing Committee and COP.
2. In consideration of these matters, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel and Secretariat developed a proposal to the Standing Committee's Subgroup on COP9 for the presentation of scientific and technical materials to COP9 in the form of two draft Resolutions (DRs) – one with the various new and updated scientific and technical guidelines annexed to it (provided to the Standing Committee as COP9 DR1) and the other setting out the future scientific and technical implementation actions for the STRP and other bodies of the Convention – this COP9 DR2.
3. In Decision COP9 SG-3, the Subgroup on COP9 “approved the plan to bring to the COP two technical draft Resolutions, one containing proposed guidance as annexes and the other recommending future work.” In addition, in Decision COP9 SG-6, “The Subgroup on COP9 urged that the STRP and Secretariat further develop the recommendations in the draft *modus operandi* for SC31, with the inclusion of a mechanism for articulating the priorities and financial implications both before and during COP9. The Subgroup requested that a costed programme should be included as an annex to the draft technical Resolution on future priorities.”
4. As is outlined in DOC. SC31-5, in making these proposals, the STRP and COP9 Subgroup recognised that the approach of consolidating the suite of actions previously spread through the operative paragraphs of numerous separate technical Resolutions would have the advantage that Parties at COP will be able to consider more readily the overall pattern and balance of proposed future activities for the different bodies of the Convention, including a clear view of priorities for the work requested of the STRP in the 2005-2008 triennium.
5. In Annex 1 to COP9 DR2 below, the future scientific and technical activities for the Convention are provided under a set of thematic sub-headings. Within each, actions for

the STRP are identified separately from actions for others, which include actions for Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, the Secretariat and the International Organisation Partners (IOPs). In line with the proposed amendment to the STRP's *modus operandi* (DOC. SC31-25), for the process to operate as a six-year rolling programme, the future scientific and technical work for the Convention is presented for the period 2006-2011, with the proposed priorities for the STRP in the next triennium (2006-2008) identified.

6. In compiling the schedule of actions in Annex 1 the STRP and Secretariat has drawn upon a number of sources so as to ensure that the scientific and technical actions still active from other Convention decisions, and actions identified in STRP's strategic review, are included. These include the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008, other COP8 Resolutions, COP9 regional STRP meeting reports, actions carried over from STRP's 2003-2005 Work Plan, and new STRP-prepared guidelines (the Annexes to COP9 DR1).
7. In addition, proposed actions of a scientific and technical nature in other COP9 DRs being considered by the Standing Committee are included in Annex 1 of COP9 DR2. These are shown in square brackets [...], since they are subject to Standing Committee and COP9 approval. It will therefore be necessary to finalise the texts of Annex 1 after COP9, once the COP has approved the texts of all relevant Resolutions.
8. It will also be necessary for the Secretariat to revise the material in Annex 1 in the light of the Standing Committee's decisions on the form and content of the other DRs to go forwards for COP9 consideration, so as to ensure that the version of Annex 1 is harmonised with the other materials being considered by COP9.
9. Therefore it would be appropriate for the Standing Committee to consider and approve the approach and structure of Annex 1, and to request the Secretariat to finalise the content of Annex 1 for COP9 consideration in the light of the Committee's decisions on the other COP9 DRs.
10. It is also suggested that, subsequent to COP9 approval, Annex 1 of COP9 DR2 is compiled together with the COP9 DR9 *Strategic Framework for the Implementation of the Convention* (DOC. SC31-22), which provides the priority policy, procedural and administrative actions, so as to form the Convention's Work Plan for the coming triennium.
11. Concerning the identification of STRP's priorities for the next triennium, the Secretariat is awaiting further advice from STRP and its Working Groups on priorities under some themes, and an update will be provided under Agenda item 8.11. Similarly, the STRP is currently preparing the requested estimates for a costed programme for these priority actions, and an update will be provided under this Agenda item, for inclusion as Annex 2 of COP9 DR2.

## COP9 DR2

### Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention

1. RECALLING Resolution VIII.45, which recognised the need to make more effective and efficient the process of drafting, considering, adopting and implementing Resolutions and Recommendations;
2. RECOGNISING that with an increasingly large suite of technical and scientific guidance and other materials available to Parties, the provision of a number of overarching frameworks for different major aspects of Convention implementation, including a Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention ([COP9 DR9]); the conceptual framework for the wise use concept ([COP9 DR1 – Annex A]); an integrated framework for wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring ([COP9 DR1 – Annex B]); an integrated framework for Ramsar's water-related guidance ([COP9 DR1 – Annex C]); and the revised *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the further development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* ([COP9 DR1 – Annex D]); represents a helpful step in equipping Parties better to implement the Convention and also in identifying gaps in guidance;
3. WELCOMING the preparation of a Ramsar *Technical Report Series* with the purpose of publishing, by electronic means, detailed technical methodologies, reviews and reports on wetland ecology, conservation, wise use and management, as an enhanced information support service to Contracting Parties and the wider wetland community in support of implementation of the Ramsar Convention;
4. HAVING REGARD TO the fact that some scientific and technical implementation actions are specified in a number of other Resolutions of the present Conference of Parties and that such Resolutions have the purpose of focusing on certain specific priority areas of evolving policy under the Convention while the purpose of the present Resolution is to provide an overall picture of key scientific and technical implementation actions for the Convention for 2006-2011;
5. RECALLING that Resolution VIII.28 established a mechanism for the prioritisation of the work of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP); and
6. AWARE that it has not been possible to progress significant elements of STRP's priority work in the 2003-2005 triennium, and that full delivery of the Panel's programme remains subject to resources, in particular to voluntary contributions from Parties and others;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. APPROVES to the schedule of actions in Annex 1 to this Resolution as a scientific and technical implementation programme for the Convention for the triennium 2006-2011; and ALSO APPROVES the priority actions for the STRP as indicated in this Annex;

8. INSTRUCTS the [Secretariat] to consolidate into Annex 1 to this Resolution, as appropriate, any additional scientific and technical implementation actions arising from other Resolutions adopted by the present meeting of the Conference of Parties;
9. REQUESTS the [Secretariat] to consolidate Annex 1 to this Resolution with the Annex to Resolution [COP9 DR9] to form the Convention's Work Plan 2006-2008, and to make this available as soon as possible to Contracting Parties and others; and
10. URGES Parties, donors, intergovernmental agencies, International Organization Partners, national NGOs, and others to use this programme, including the costed programme for priority STRP actions in Annex 2 to this Resolution, in deciding priorities for their financial and other material support towards future scientific and technical implementation of the Ramsar Convention.

## Annex 1

### Schedule of actions for scientific and technical implementation of the Ramsar Convention, 2006-2011

**Important note: the actions in the sections below on “Actions by others” cover only those actions of a scientific and technical nature: other reportable actions concerning policy, procedural and administrative issues are addressed in [COP9 DR9 “A strategic framework for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention”]**

Notes by the Secretariat. Where appropriate in the actions below, the source of that action is indicated, in parentheses (...). Actions derived from other COP9 DRs are shown [...]. Further advice from the STRP concerning 2006-2008 priorities and costings for these is expected.

#### I. Issues arising from Resolution VIII.45 and the “on-going” functions of the STRP

##### I(a) Actions by the STRP

1. Review and comment on proposals from Parties for COP Resolutions with technical content, and provide this advice to the Standing Committee and COP.
2. Give increased emphasis, alongside specific mandated guidance drafting tasks, to performing a true “review” function of addressing issues of strategic scientific and technical direction for the Convention, acting as a response mechanism to give scientific and technical advice to the Convention on emerging issues, with an overall aim of achieving a balance between these proactive guidance and reactive advice functions.  
**Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
3. Maintain an overview of progress with scientific and technical aspects of the implementation of COP Resolutions, both in relation to indicators of effectiveness (see section III below) and more widely. **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
4. Continue to provide advice on the following on-going functions:
  - i) advising, when requested, on Ramsar site designation and management issues, including on Article 3.2 reports concerning change in ecological character;
  - ii) advising the [Secretariat] on requests from Contracting Parties for removing Ramsar sites from the Montreux Record of sites facing damaging change in ecological character;
  - iii) establishing and maintaining contact with STRP National Focal Points, with the assistance of the STRP Support Service, so as to ensure that their advice and expertise are fully contributed to the work of the Panel;

- iv) advising on any request from a Contracting Party to participate in the activities of a different Ramsar region to that which it is assigned under the regional categorization of the Convention;
- v) at the request of the relevant Administrative Authority, ensuring the involvement of the STRP National Focal Point in monitoring and evaluating an SGF project;
- vi) upon request, assisting Contracting Parties and bilateral development agencies in screening, developing and evaluating wetland projects;
- vii) receiving progress reports and advising on future needs and developments of the Ramsar Sites Database, maintained for the Convention by Wetlands International; and
- viii) ensuring cooperation, exchange of information, and coordination of activities, where appropriate, with other MEAs' scientific and technical subsidiary bodies (and their related processes), including through actions in Joint Work Plans;

**I(b) Action by others**

5. In general give a higher priority, as far as appropriate, to full implementation of existing Resolutions and Recommendations than to putting forward proposals for new and additional Resolutions. [CPs] (SC Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45)
6. Develop an index of current Resolutions and Recommendations by subject matter and geographic relevance, to assist Parties in concentrating on the implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations that are most relevant to their situations. [Secretariat] (SC Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45)
7. Promote outreach mechanisms to disseminate Resolutions and Recommendations to stakeholders beyond the Convention's national Administrative Authorities. [Parties, the Secretariat and others] (SC Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45)
8. When drawing up proposals for new or additional Resolutions, to endeavour to make them as concise and user-friendly as possible, with a view to their ease of use by site managers and other stakeholders, including through the use of summaries and case studies. [CPs, STRP] (SC Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45)
9. Provide to each COP at its outset, and to a meeting of the Standing Committee in advance of the COP, as complete an outline as possible of the potential scientific and technical tasks which appear from proposals and draft Resolutions tabled by that stage to be likely to be allocated to the STRP, the Secretariat and the Parties in the succeeding triennium, so that the COP will be able to make decisions informed by the overall scale of such tasks and the financial and other implications of undertaking them. [Secretariat; STRP]
10. Provide case studies of implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations where there is relevant experience to share, including wherever possible the identification of lessons learned. [CPs, IGOs, IOPs, other NGOs]

11. Support the budget for the work of the STRP with voluntary contributions, upon which the work of the Panel relies. [Parties, donors and others]

**II. Issues relating to the *Conceptual Framework for the wise use of wetlands and the maintenance of their ecological character* [DR1 Annex A]**

**II(a) Action by the STRP**

- [12. Review the range of existing Ramsar guidance, with a view *inter alia* to identifying gaps (including by reference to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment *Conceptual Framework*), repackaging older guidance into updated documents, retiring or withdrawing outdated documents, and make recommendations in this regard to COP10. (STRP12, DR1 Annex A)] **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
- [13. Elaborate ways in which to utilize to best effect for Convention implementation the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, especially regarding its findings concerning response options, including in relation to the Conceptual Framework for the wise use of wetlands and the maintenance of their ecological character [COP9 DR1 Annex A]. (STRP 12)]
14. Review the case studies in *The Wise Use of Wetlands* (Ramsar Convention Bureau, 1993) and other relevant case studies (including those requested in actions 66, 67 and 70), review subsequent implementation progress with these cases, and provide updated studies, including advice on the application of the ecosystem approach. (Strategic Plan action 3.1.2; STRP 2002-2005 work plan; STRP12 report) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
15. Having regard to such progress as may be achieved with the Convention's indicators of implementation effectiveness, to the review of gaps in guidance described in 12. above, and to the implementation of Resolution VIII.45, develop such new tools as may be necessary to assist Parties with the implementation of the wise use concept. (Strategic Plan action 17.1.5; STRP 2002-2005 work plan)
16. Assess the contribution of Ramsar sites and other wetlands to the maintenance of fisheries and recommend sustainable management practices which can contribute to the WSSD target of maintaining or restoring depleted fish stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield. (Strategic Plan action 1.2.6).
17. Examine and advise on implementation of the *Principles for a Code of Conduct for the Management and Sustainable use of Mangrove Ecosystems* prepared by the World Bank, the International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems, and the Centre for Tropical Ecosystems Research (cenTER Aarhus); including recommendations for appropriate cooperative action with the World Bank for monitoring the application of the Code. (Africa COP9 preparatory meeting)

**II(b) Action by others**

- [18. Review the use of terms covered by the guidance in [DR1 Annex A] in policy documents and other contexts, and adapt such usages where necessary in order to remain consistent with those now advised in the guidance. [CPs] (DR1 Annex A)]

- [19. [In undertaking interventions which make use of Ramsar guidance Handbooks, address choices about the focus for such interventions by reference where appropriate to the conceptual framework deriving from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and as adapted in the guidance in [DR1 Annex A]. [CPs] (DR1 Annex A)]
- [20. In relation to attention to fisheries as one example area of the application of the wise use concept, Parties to use the habitat and species conservation provisions of the Convention to support the introduction and/or continuance of spatial management approaches for fisheries. [CPs] (DR4) ]
- [21. Review, and where necessary enhance, national and regional programmes for the systematic collection of data on fisheries, including artisanal fisheries, and data on aquaculture, of relevance to Ramsar sites and associated areas.] [CPs] (DR4) ]
- [22. Fishery regulation authorities and agencies to put in place measures to minimize or prevent by-catch through the use of appropriate fishery techniques.] [CPs] (DR4) ]
- [23. Parties to institute and implement codes similar to the ICES Code of Practice on the Introductions and Transfers of Marine Organisms and the GEF/UNDP/IMO International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast Water & Sediments to ensure that Ramsar sites are not placed at risk through unplanned introductions of aquatic species. [CPs] (DR4)]
- [24. Relevant authorities within Parties to institute or reinforce as appropriate national and regional programmes for the systematic collection of fisheries data at Ramsar sites and associated areas, as a minimum to include data on species, weight and size of catch, numbers of people fishing and fishing effort, and on social and economic aspects of the fishery. [CPs] (DR4) ]
25. Parties and others to promote and disseminate research into the population dynamics and sustainable harvesting of wetland dependent species, especially migratory waterbirds; and Parties to ensure that national hunting legislation is consistent with the wise use principle for migratory waterbird and other wetland-dependent species, taking into account geographical range, life-history characteristics of species, and research on sustainable harvesting. [CPs] (Strategic Plan actions 12.2.4, 12.2.5)
26. In relation to attention to peatland ecosystems as another example area of the application of the wise use concept, and in the context of Ramsar's role in the Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands (GAP), disseminate information, monitor implementation of GAP by Parties, identify gaps, and assist in fundraising for GAP implementation. [Secretariat; GAP Coordinating Committee] (STRP12)
27. Develop and implement a survival plan for tropical peat swamp forests. [CPs, donors] (STRP12)
28. Contribute to initiatives concerning the transfer of environmentally sound technologies for the sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems (see also action 16). [CPs; others] (Resolution VIII.32)

29. Continue to review existing or evolving policy, legal and institutional frameworks to identify and promote those measures which encourage conservation and wise use of wetlands, identify and remove measures which discourage conservation and wise use, and investigate linkages between incentives and related topics including financial mechanisms, trade, impact assessment and valuation. [CPs] (Strategic Plan action 8.1.1 & Resolutions VIII.23, VIII.34 and VIII.40).
30. In consultation with and with the full support of indigenous people, to document and encourage the application of appropriate traditional knowledge and management practices of indigenous people and local communities in the conservation and wise use of wetlands. [CPs] (Strategic Plan action 6.1.2; Resolution VIII.39).
31. When reviewing land tenure policies, consider, where appropriate, wetland tenure systems and user rights in a manner that promotes fair, transparent and sustainable management of wetlands and their resources. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.34).
32. Working with others as appropriate, undertake, where possible, studies of the role of wetlands in carbon storage and sequestration and in mitigating the impacts of sea-level rise. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.3)
33. Review, in cooperation with the private sector, domestic and international trade in wetland-derived plant and animal products, both exports and imports, and as appropriate implement the necessary legal, institutional and administrative measures to ensure that harvesting is sustainable and in accordance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). [CPs] (Strategic Plan action 7.1.5).
- [34. Work with UNEP, UNDP, the UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs, the Ramsar International Organization Partners, national and international NGOs and others to undertake assessments of the economic, social, cultural and existence values of individual wetlands and wetlands in general and the services they deliver, with a view to enhancing sustainable livelihoods utilizing a wise use approach. [CPs] (DR15)]
35. Take measures to improve, on an ecologically sustainable basis, the productivity of natural resources. [CPs] (DR15)]

### **III. Issues relating to the Ramsar Integrated Framework for wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring [DR1 Annex B] and indicators of Convention effectiveness [DR1 Annex E]**

#### **III(a) Action by the STRP**

36. Develop, test and publish a hydro-geomorphically-based system of classification of wetland type, including an evaluation of how this might relate to other possible systems and to the current Ramsar classification system, having regard *inter alia* to groundwater issues and to relevant outputs of the European Space Agency GlobWetland remote sensing project, and prepare a report with advice for Parties at COP10. (STRP12)
37. Make available a Web-based wetland inventory meta-database, populated with information on all national wetland inventories, and updatable by Contracting Parties. (Strategic Plan action 1.1.4)

38. As and when the update of the *Global Review of Wetland Resources and Priorities for Wetland Inventory* (GroWI-2) can be progressed, ensure appropriate input to it is made, and drawing upon inventory meta-data information. (STRP 2002-2005 work plan)
39. In conjunction with the review of information needs relating to Ramsar sites (see [section IV below), develop a scheme of data needs for wetlands more generally, addressing separately both the global level and the site level. (STRP12)
40. Prepare advice on delineating and mapping wetlands, in conjunction with the description of their ecological character, and addressing the issues concerning digital mapping identified in Res VIII.13. (STRP 2002-2005 work plan) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
41. Prepare further consolidated guidance on the overall process of detecting, reporting and responding to change in ecological character, including guidelines for determining when such a change is too trivial to require reporting, having regard to the reasons why a given site is important and the conservation objectives set for it. (Resolution VIII.8, STRP 2002-2005 work plan) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
42. Review and evaluate the Man and the Biosphere Programme's procedure for Biosphere Reserve Integrated Monitoring (BRIM), once developed, and advise on its application to the monitoring of the ecological character of Ramsar sites and other wetlands. (Resolution VIII.7)
43. Prepare advice on redesigning the Montreux Record questionnaire, *inter alia* to ensure consistency with the Article 3.2 reporting format. (STRP 2002-2005 work plan)
44. Prepare an analysis and report of the status and trends in the ecological character of sites in the Ramsar List, set as far as possible in the context of the status and trends of wetlands more generally and drawing as appropriate on the Ramsar Sites Database, the Convention's indicators of implementation effectiveness, and the results of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and other assessment initiatives. (Resolution VIII.8, STRP 2002-2005 work plan)
45. Linked to 44. above, prepare synthesis reports on aspects of the status and trends of wetlands and their biological diversity, as an input to assessments of progress in relation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development/Convention on Biological Diversity 2010 target for significant biodiversity loss-rate reduction, and in particular to the CBD's indicators on "trends in selected biomes" and "water quality", aiming to publish one such report in 2008 (having regard also to contributions to the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and the UNEP Global Environment Outlook – GEO-4), and one in 2011. [STRP, Secretariat, IOPs] (STRP12)
- [46. Develop, test and put forward for use by Parties further indicators of effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention, including indicators addressing wise use policy issues and services provided by wetlands to humans. (DR1 Annex E)] **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**

- [47. [In addition to the mechanisms described in preceding paragraphs in this section, assist in monitoring the performance of the Convention also utilizing the Key Result Areas and associated indicators in the “Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008” annexed to [DR9]. [STRP; CPs; Secretariat] (DR9)
48. Review the ecological roles played by reservoirs and other human-made wetlands, including their use by aquatic and other water-dependent biota, and prepare guidance for Contracting Parties concerning the identification and designation of such wetlands for the Ramsar List, taking into account the experience gained by Parties that have already done so. (Resolution VIII.2; STRP 2003-2005 work plan).

### **III(b) Action by others**

49. Make use of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment experience and methods for subglobal ecosystem assessments in the assessment of wetland ecosystems at the local, national and supranational scale, including through international cooperation on the assessment of transboundary aquatic ecosystems. [CPs, others] (Resolution VIII.7)
- [50. When designing and undertaking monitoring of wetlands or wetland biodiversity according to the Ramsar Framework, consider also the possibility in appropriate circumstances of using relevant rapid assessment tools/methodologies according to the guidance in [DR1 Annex Bi] for longer term hypothesis-driven monitoring by repeated surveys using such methods. [CPs, others] (DR1 Annex Bi)
51. When undertaking national inventories of wetlands, to identify those wetlands where restoration or rehabilitation would be appropriate because of their present and/or former values and functions, on the basis of the guidelines adopted by Resolution VII.16 and VIII.6. (Resolutions VIII.16, VIII.6).
52. Finalise development of a simple form for Parties to use in recording change or potential change in ecological character of Ramsar sites under Article 3.2. [Secretariat; Wetlands International] (STRP12-33)
53. Establish contact with the relevant national contact points from within the networks of the International Association for Impact Assessment with a view to identifying sources of expertise and advice for assisting with wetland-related impact assessment. [CPs; IAIA] (Res VIII.9)
- [54. Monitor and assess the impacts of natural disasters on the ecological character of Ramsar sites and other wetlands and on the livelihoods of local communities and indigenous people dependent upon these wetlands within their territory and, for designated Ramsar sites, to report this to the Secretariat so that this information can be made available to the STRP to assist in its reporting to COPs on the status and trends in the ecological character of wetlands. [Affected CPs] (DR10)]
55. Continue monitoring and assessing the status and trends of specific wetland issues as determined in previous COP Resolutions, for example, the extent and conservation status of coastal wetlands (Res VIII.4); extent, conservation status and levels of use of mangroves (Res VIII.32); impacts of dams (Res VIII.2); threats to temporary pools (Res VIII.33), risks from

- alien invasive species (Res VIII.18), and impacts of drought and other natural disasters (Res VIII.35), where applicable in conjunction with activities related to Ramsar's indicators of implementation effectiveness. [CPs; IOPs; others] (COP Res VIII.4, VIII.32, VIII.2, VIII.33, VIII.18, VIII.35).
56. Those responsible for protecting and managing Ramsar sites establish for each site an effective monitoring programme, ideally as part of the site management plan, which is designed to detect and provide early warning of changes in ecological character, using the Convention's *Framework for designing an effective monitoring programme* and its *Wetland Risk Assessment Framework*, and additionally, linked to this, to use Ramsar sites as baseline and reference areas for national, supranational/regional, and international environmental monitoring to detect trends in the loss of biological diversity, climate change, and the processes of desertification. [CPs] (Strategic Plan actions 11.2.1 and 11.2.2).
  57. Apply waterbird monitoring data, and analyses drawn from them, when appropriate, as a means of providing objective information for site management planning and the evaluation of national or regional wetland policies. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.38)
  58. Update and submit revised Ramsar Information Sheets as frequently as necessary to record changes in the status of sites, at least at intervals of not more than six years, so that they can be used for reviewing change in ecological character and progress in achieving the Vision and Objectives of the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Handbook 7) at each COP. [CPs] (Strategic Plan action 10.2.4).
  59. Establish a repository for the contribution by Parties of summarized national (or, where appropriate, provincial) assessments of changes in the status of wetland resources, as the basis for regular analysis and improved reporting on the status of wetland resources, as a mechanism linked to the inventory meta-database (see action 37). [Secretariat] (Strategic Plan action 1.2.2)
  - [60. Establish a mechanism to collate, compile, analyze, evaluate, consolidate, report on, publish and disseminate the results and conclusions of indicators of effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention. [Secretariat; CPs; IOPs; STRP] (STRP12; DR1 Annex E) ]
  - [61. Devise and implement a system of simpler but still effective national reporting for the Convention, and work with UNEP and other conventions and agreements to advance harmonization of national reporting. [Secretariat; Standing Committee; MEAs] (DR5; Strategic Plan action 13.1.12)]
  - [62. Improve liaison at national level between focal points of the Ramsar Convention and those of related conventions and agreements, and take steps towards harmonizing their reporting on implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions.] [CPs] (DR5)
  - [63. The Global Environment Facility and the GEF Implementing Agencies to take fully into account the coordination and information management required to support both implementation and reporting for the various MEAs when financing and implementing programmes.] [GEF] (DR5)]

- [64. In addition to the mechanisms described in preceding paragraphs in this section, Parties, the Standing Committee, the Secretariat, and the Convention's International Organization Partners to monitor the performance of the Convention, also utilizing the Key Result Areas and associated indicators in the "Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008" annexed to [COP9 DR9]. [CPs, SC, Secretariat, IOPs] (COP9 DR9)]

#### **IV. Issues relating to the Integrated framework for Ramsar's water-related guidance[DR1 Annex C]**

##### **IV(a) Action by the STRP**

65. Develop in more detail an adaptation of the "Critical Path" approach for river basin management to the Ramsar context, and prepare operational guidance, including for the application of CEPA tools. (STRP 12) **Proposed priority for 2006-2008.**
66. Compile, collate and analyze case studies of river basin management using the Critical Path approach, including good practice examples of water allocation and management and case studies of environmental flows, including examples involving dams. (STRP 12)
67. Prepare a report for COP10 on successes achieved and lessons learnt from demonstrating good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining ecological functions of wetlands. (Resolution VIII.1, STRP 2002-2005 work plan)
- [68. Prepare for COP10 a consolidation of Ramsar guidance on river basin management, to bring together Wise Use Handbook 4 and the COP9 guidance in [COP9DR1 Annex Ci]. STRP12).]
- [69. Prepare additional guidance for consideration and possible adoption by COP10 on those aspects of river basin management identified in [COP9 DR1 Annex Ci] as gaps and priorities. (STRP12)]
70. Develop guidance on good practice in the integration of wetlands into Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), based on case studies to be sought from Parties, including in relation to lessons learned in responding to the impacts of the Indian Ocean tsunami. (Resolution VIII.4; Asia COP9 regional meeting) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
71. Prepare an annotated bibliography identifying *inter alia* available guidance for considering impacts of dams on wetland and river systems. (STRP12; relates also to Strategic Plan action 3.4.4)
72. Develop guidelines on water resources management in dry and sub-humid lands. (STRP 2002-2005 work plan; 3<sup>rd</sup> CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan)
73. Prepare guidelines for Parties on the implementation of environmental water requirements for wetlands, drawing upon the material and case-studies contained in the *Ramsar Technical Reports* on this topic prepared by the STRP during the 2003-2005 triennium. (STRP WG3). **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**

74. Prepare technical review reports on (i) groundwater-wetland interactions, and (ii) the use and management of groundwater to maintain ecosystem functions. (STRP12; STRP 2002-2005 work plan) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
- [75. Once the two technical papers referred to in paragraph 74. above have been prepared, review the present Integrated Framework for Ramsar's water-related guidance and prepare updating amendments as necessary. (DR1 Annex C iii)] **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
- [76. [Prepare detailed technical guidance on developing groundwater management strategies which aim at maintenance of wetland ecosystems and at minimising or mitigating the impacts of groundwater abstraction. (DR1 Annex C iii)] **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
77. Prepare guidance on how water quality is included in environmental water requirement determination and implementation, ambient water quality determination, water quality for site management, and managing the impacts of mining wastes on Ramsar sites. (STRP12)] **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
78. Prepare guidance on ambient water quality determination, water quality for site management, and managing the impacts of mining wastes on Ramsar sites. (STRP12)]
79. Prepare guidance on issues of a largely CEPA nature concerning mainstreaming Ramsar issues within the water sector. (STRP12)

#### **IV(b) Action by others**

- [80. Relevant ministries, agencies and departments within Parties to engage in cooperative planning and management processes in ways that ensure that those responsible for wetland management and those responsible for water resources management operate to a coordinated agenda, especially in relation to decision-making on water allocations. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C)]
- [81. Those responsible for drawing up and implementing plans for abstraction of water from river basins or discharge of water or waste into river basins to take into account the water requirements of wetlands, including both requirements to be met from surface runoff and those to be met from groundwater. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C)]
- [82. Water resources management authorities to ensure, given that many of the values people derive from water depend on that water being a component of healthily functioning ecosystems, that better operational linkages are made between the management of water supply and management of the water resources which are the origin of that supply. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C)]
- [83. Ensure that institutional and governance structures relating to water resources enable the voice of civil society to be integrated into planning and decision-making on water issues. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C)]
- [84. Wetland managers and groundwater managers undertake screening studies at a river basin or regional aquifer scale, to assess the potential for interaction between wetlands and

groundwater; followed by more detailed studies of water balance, etc., as appropriate, development of a conceptual model of groundwater-wetland interactions for each wetland that may be impacted by current or future groundwater exploitation, and a wider situation assessment of combined impacts, status and trends. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C iii)

- [85. Those responsible for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) ensure that such management is closely connected to approaches and initiatives for planning and management in the terrestrial, marine and atmospheric realms, and to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) at the freshwater-marine interface. [CPs] (DR1 Annex C)
- [86. Update the Integrated Framework for Ramsar's water-related guidance and relevant Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks as and when relevant additional Resolutions and items of guidance are adopted. [Secretariat] (DR1 Annex C)

**V. Issues relating to the revised *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* [DR1 Annex D]**

**V(a) Action by the STRP**

- 87. Develop an interpretation of the term 'under-represented' wetland type and investigate methods for defining targets for representation of wetland types in the Ramsar List, including in relation to relevant indicators of Convention effectiveness. (Resolution VIII.11, STRP 2002-2005 work plan, DR1 Annex E) **Proposed 2006-2008 STRP priority**
- 88. Conduct a study of different available biogeographical regionalisation schemes in the context of the application of Criteria 1 and 3, and make recommendations on a small number of preferred options for use in the selection of Ramsar sites, for consideration and possible adoption by COP10. (Resolution VIII.7; STRP12)
- 89. Conduct a review of data and information needs for Ramsar sites and of the implications for official reporting, the further development of the Ramsar Sites Information Service and the scope for harmonization of reporting with the needs of other multilateral environmental agreements (see also actions 58 and 59). (Resolution VIII.13, STRP 2002-2005 work plan) **Proposed 2006-2008 STRP priority**
- 90. In the context of the review of data and information needs referred to in paragraph 89. above, and in the light of its conclusions, conduct a fundamental review of the structure of the Ramsar Information Sheet, having regard to Resolution VIII.6 on a Framework for wetland inventory, [COP9 DR1 Annex A] on a Conceptual Framework for the wise use of wetlands and the maintenance of their ecological character, including its revised definition of the term "ecological character", and other relevant COP9 decisions. Priority issues to address include development of protocols for the electronic submission of Ramsar Information Sheets, harmonization of the layout and information fields of the RIS with the core data fields of the Framework for wetland inventory, and with guidance on the description of ecological character, approaches to handling trans-national sites, and the investigation of the possible inclusion of a core data field in the RIS to allow for the insertion of a precise site boundary description. **Proposed 2006-2008 STRP priority**

91. Prepare a revised RIS and additional guidance as appropriate from the actions in paragraph 86. above for inclusion in the accompanying RIS Explanatory Notes and Guidelines. (Resolutions VIII.7, VIII.13, and VIII.21, STRP 2003-2005 work plan)
92. Review the suite of existing guidance for selection of Ramsar sites of specific wetland types and examine its usefulness to Parties in the light of their experience of its application, in order to form an assessment of the need for additional guidance on these or other wetland types, in the context *inter alia* of a response to the request of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Decision VII/4) to elaborate additional site selection guidelines and related issues. (STRP12) **Proposed 2006-2008 STRP priority**
- [93. Work with appropriate Specialist Groups of IUCN-the World Conservation Union to further elaborate and update the list of appropriate population estimates and 1% thresholds for the application of Criterion 9, for availability by COP10 and subsequent COPs. (STRP12; DR1 Annex D)] **Proposed 2006-2008 STRP priority**
94. Review the application and utility of the Ramsar site Criteria relating to fish and their associated guidance, and make any revisions needed. (STRP12)
95. In addition to specific actions listed above concerning reviews of aspects of the Ramsar criteria, to keep the criteria as a whole under review to ensure that they reflect global wetland conservation and wise use priorities, including their relationship to other relevant schemes such as Annex I of the Convention on Biological Diversity. (Strategic Plan 17.1.5, STRP 2002-2005 work plan) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**

***V(b) Action by others***

- [96. Make such editorial amendments to the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List* regarding terminology and time-limited references and contexts, etc., as are consequent on the amendments adopted at COP9. [Secretariat] (DR1 Annex D)
97. Assist Wetlands International and BirdLife International through the continued collection and supply of population data on waterbirds, *inter alia* to assist with Ramsar site designation. [CPs, Wetlands International, BirdLife International] (Resolution VIII.38)
98. Continue to prepare updated editions of *Waterbird Population Estimates* to be available at each COP, having first undertaken international scientific consultation on its contents, so that the populations estimates and 1% thresholds it contains may be used as the basis for the application of Criterion 6 in the succeeding triennia. [Wetlands International]. (Resolution VIII.38)
99. Make available to Parties and others information from the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) programme, including regional analyses of IBAs and potential Ramsar sites, and to consider the preparation of such analyses for regions not covered so far. [BirdLife International] (Resolution VIII.38)
100. Accelerate efforts to designate further Ramsar sites which are internationally important for conserving fish biodiversity and/or supporting sustainable fisheries, and to consider designation of such sites in such a way as to encompass the entire life cycle of fish species,

especially threatened, long distance migrant species moving between freshwater and marine environments. [CPs] (STRP12)

- [101. When assessing potential for Ramsar site designation, in addition to considering potentially qualifying fish interests as above, carefully and systematically to review other “less visible” potentially qualifying aquatic flora and fauna. [CPs] (DR1 Annex D)
- [102. Identify and assess sites potentially qualifying under new Criterion 9 adopted at COP9 and to add suitable sites to the List as a contribution to the long-term target for such sites agreed at COP9. [CPs] (DR1 Annex D)
- [103. Identify and assess wetlands in border zones with a view to designating them as trans-national wetlands where feasible, where appropriate and where doing so will contribute to the development of the comprehensive List of Wetlands of International Importance. [CPs] (DR6)

## **VI. Issues relating to wetland management (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 8)**

### **VI(a) Action by the STRP**

- [104. Provide guidance on efforts needed for restoring and rehabilitating ecosystems and water resources affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004, and to develop for Parties a set of restoration guidelines to be implemented following natural disasters in general. (DR10)]
- 105. Compile and disseminate information on new research and methodologies for the restoration and rehabilitation of lost or degraded wetlands, and to further develop tools and guidance on wetland restoration. (Strategic Plan action 4.1.3; Resolution VIII.16)
- 106. Prepare guidance on compensation for wetland losses, in response to Resolution VII.24. (Resolution VIII.16)

### **VI(b) Action by others**

- 107. Those responsible for the management of wetlands implement management in ways which increase the resilience of the sites to climate change and extreme climatic events and which reduce the risk of flooding and drought in vulnerable countries. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.3)
- 108. Compile and disseminate information on new research and methodologies for the restoration and rehabilitation of lost or degraded wetlands. [CPs, IOPs, others] (Strategic Plan action 4.1.3)
- 109. Establish wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, where feasible, at destroyed or degraded wetlands, especially in those associated with major river systems or areas of high nature conservation value. [CPs, wetland managers] (Resolution VII.17)
- [110. Working with relevant international organizations and agencies, including *inter alia* ISDR, WMO and UNEP, as well as, where appropriate, IOPs develop guidance on a set of responses which can be initiated by governments and others immediately following the

onset of a natural disaster affecting or likely to affect wetlands, especially Ramsar sites. [Secretariat, international organisations, IOPs] (DR10)]

111. Ensure that national policy responses to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, including revegetation and management, afforestation and reforestation do not lead to damage to the ecological character of wetlands. [CPs] (Strategic Plan action 3.4.9)

## VII. Issues relating to wetlands and agriculture

### VII(a) Action by the STRP

- [112. Provide input as appropriate to the “Comprehensive Assessment on water management in agriculture” (CA), and “Water for food and ecosystems” initiatives, in the context of Resolution VIII.34 and [COP9 DR4). (STRP12)
- [113. Once the Comprehensive Assessment and Water for food and ecosystems initiatives referred to above have concluded, including its preparation of a report on agriculture, water and wetlands for the Convention, review which elements of Resolution VIII.34 and COP9 DR4) may, in the light of the conclusions of those initiatives, remain outstanding needs, and address them as appropriate. (STRP 2003-2005 work plan; STRP12)
114. Prepare guidelines on good agricultural practices and policies for different wetland types, drawing on information provided by the CA and other initiatives. (STRP 2003-2005 work plan).

### VII(b) Action by others

- [115. Review and document the significance for fisheries of rice cultivation within Ramsar sites and promote more efficient combination “rice-fish” management practices. [CPs] (DR4)

## VIII. Technical aspects of communication, education and public awareness (CEPA)

### VIII(a) Action by the STRP

116. Ensure that CEPA issues are fully covered in each of the substantive guidance documents prepared by the STRP through input to the Panel’s work from CEPA experts (STRP *modus operandi*) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
117. Seek opportunities to prepare materials for outreach purposes, particularly for decision-makers and those in other sectors, on topics which are the subject of substantive guidance prepared by the STRP. (STRP12) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**

### VIII(b) Action by others

118. Review national needs and capacities in the areas of wetland CEPA and use this review to define capacity-building priorities within their national wetland CEPA action plans. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.31)
119. Parties to review formal educational curricula to ensure that they are incorporating information on the ecosystem services provided by wetlands, promoting the wise use

principle, and recognising the importance of CEPA in pursuing the objective of wise use. [CPs] (Resolution VIII.31)

## IX. Development of further sectoral guidance by STRP

### IX(a) Issues/sectors identified by STRP as a potential focus for attention

120. Review and as necessary develop an **overall strategy and framework for sector-based guidance** under the Convention. (STRP12)
121. Develop further guidance on **fisheries**, including fin fisheries, shell fisheries and aquaculture, in relation to issues raised in [COP9 DR4]. (STRP12)
122. Review and map out the relationships and issues concerning the wise use of wetland ecosystems and **human health**, including from information in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and its synthesis reports, and explore possible links between the Ramsar Convention and the World Health Organisation. (STRP12) **Proposed STRP 2006-2008 priority**
123. Consider development of guidance, including through working with IUCN Environmental Law Centre and others on **legal and rights issues**, including water rights, land tenure, and conflict resolution/recovery in relation to wetlands. (STRP12)
124. Consider opportunities for development of sectoral guidance on the **tourism/eco-tourism** sector. (STRP12)
125. Identify relevant initiatives underway concerning **forest ecosystems and forestry** and to explore adequate representation in these of wetland issues. (STRP12)
126. Develop guidance on wetland mitigation issues. (Resolution VII.24; STRP12)

### IX(b) Issues/sectors for which the need for future work should be further assessed

127. Consider what priority, if any, might need to be given to work/further work in relation to the following additional sectors/topic areas:
  - flood alleviation;
  - mining and other extractive industries;
  - energy generation and distribution;
  - other industrial sectors;
  - transport infrastructure;
  - urban development and housing;
  - spatial planning/regional policy;
  - finance, banking and insurance;
  - trade;
  - wildlife conservation and management;
  - subsistence hunting;
  - recreational hunting;

- other recreation;
- education, including formal education;
- defence and military

## **Annex 2**

### **Estimated costs of the STRP's proposed programme of priority tasks 2006-2008**

[to be tabled under Agenda item 8.11, following provision by STRP of further information on priority task identification]