

Agenda item 14

**Progress report on regional initiatives
and approval of their financial arrangements for 2007**

Addendum

Action requested: Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider whether to approve an additional regional initiative (BackSeaWet) as operating within the framework of the Convention; and
- b) consider the financing requests submitted by regional initiatives for 2007 detailed in the Annexes to DOC. SC35-11 and to this Addendum and determine the allocation of funds available for 2007 under core budget line “3. Support to regional initiatives”.

1. This Addendum paper provides an update to and supplements DOC. SC35-11 which outlines progress with regional initiatives in relation to the decisions agreed by COP9 and the 34th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Annexes to DOC. SC35-11 provide financial budgets for five of the regional initiatives which are requesting a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget for 2007.

2. The annexes to this Addendum paper provide further information as follows:

Annex 1: Proposal for an additional regional initiative (BlackSeaWet)

Annex 2: 2006 expenditure report from the Western Hemisphere Wetland Center

Annex 3: 2006 expenditure report from the High Andean Wetlands Strategy

Annex 4: 2007 funding requests for three projects of the Pacific Islands Wetlands Initiative

Annex 5: Overview table of core budget funds requested for 2007

3. This Addendum paper should be read in conjunction with DOC. SC-11 and its Annexes.

Financial expenditure by regional initiatives during 2006

4. In Decision SC34-21, the Standing Committee specified that final approval of 2007 allocations for regional initiatives will be subject to the receipt by the Ramsar Secretariat, by 15 January 2007, of satisfactory financial reports on the use of the 2006 funds allocated.
5. This Addendum provides in Annexes 2 and 3 such expenditure reports for two of the four regional initiatives which received Ramsar core budget funds in 2006: the High Andean Wetlands Strategy (HAWS) and the Western Hemisphere Wetland Center in Panama (CREHO).

6. It is anticipated that a financial report will be provided to the Ramsar Secretariat shortly after SC35 by the Central and Western Asia Wetland Centre in Iran (RRC-CWA), which also benefited from Ramsar core budget funding in 2006. It was not yet possible to incorporate a final expenditure report into this Addendum paper, because the regional workshop of this initiative, originally planned for late 2006, was postponed to 4-7 February 2007.
7. Also missing from this Addendum paper is the financial expenditure report of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), which received Ramsar core budget funds in 2006. The Ramsar Secretariat understands that the MedWet secretariat coordinator will be in a position to submit such a report in the near future.

Request for approval and funding of an additional regional initiative in 2007

8. The Secretariat has recently received from Wetlands International the full proposal for a Black Sea Wetlands Initiative (BlackSeaWet), as foreshadowed in DOC. SC35-11. A description of this initiative against each of the criteria and guidelines for regional initiatives established by COP8 Resolution VIII.30 is provided in Annex 1 to this paper.
9. Under the terms of Resolution IX.7 paragraph 13, Standing Committee is authorized “to approve, between meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, qualifying initiatives which have zero financial implications for the Convention’s core budget” and “to reallocate funding, if considered appropriate, depending on shifts in priorities and needs in response to requests from initiatives”.
10. The submission from Wetlands International is also requesting an allocation from the 2007 core budget, in order to extend the initiative to cover three additional countries not covered by other funding already secured for the development of this initiative.

Issues concerning financial requests from regional initiatives for 2007

11. Annex 5 to this Addendum paper provides an updated overview of the Ramsar core budget allocations requested by regional initiatives for 2007. The total requested by regional initiatives approved by COP9 is CHF 307,176. This is substantially more than the allocation available in the Convention core budget for 2007, namely CHF 202,382 (CHF 102,382 for regional networks plus CHF 100,000 for wetland centers). In addition, an additional request for 2007 funding is being made by the BlackSeaWet initiative. Including this request, the total request for 2007 is CHF 410,276.
12. In considering allocation approvals to regional initiatives for 2007, Standing Committee should recall the terms of its Decision SC34-21 which approved “in principle, an allocation of 2007 core funds to each of those regional initiatives receiving such funds in 2006, with amounts to be allocated based on requests from each initiative, and otherwise similar to those in the 2006 allocations”, and should note that some initiatives are now requesting considerably larger sums for 2007 than those allocated for 2006 (see Annex 5).
13. Under the terms of Resolution IX.7 paragraph 13, the Standing Committee, if it considers it appropriate, can make adjustments between the core budget allocations for the two categories of regional initiatives (regional networks and regional centres).

14. In considering its allocations for 2007, the Standing Committee should note that for some funding requests the timing of the proposed activities and their related costs appear to be planned to take place only in 2008, and also may wish to consider the operational preparedness of the regional networks to fully spend the funds requested during the year 2007.
15. Although they are not requesting a funding allocation for 2007, two regional initiatives recognized as having potential for operating within the framework of the Convention (Resolution IX.7, Annex I B) have indicated that they may wish to make such a funding request for 2008. These are the Himalayan Initiative and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative.
16. During 2006 it has become clear that some of the regional initiatives with funding allocations approved for 2006 have been significantly delayed in becoming operational, such that it has been possible to transfer the allocated funds only very recently or not at all. In particular, the West African Coastal Zone Wetlands Network (WacoWet) did not become operational during 2006 and it was not therefore possible to transfer the allocated CHF 60,000. The sum requested for 2007 by WacoWet is essentially that which could not be disbursed to this initiative during 2006. Pending decisions on these matters by the Standing Committee, this 2006 allocated sum of CHF 60,000 may be accrued to the 2007 budget. Including this accrual the total sum thus available for disbursement to regional initiatives for 2007 would be CHF 262,382.
17. Annex II of Resolution IX.7 stipulates that CHF 15,499 of this amount is allocated to the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet). The three other COP9-approved regional networks requesting 2007 funding (the West African Coastal Zone Wetlands Network, the High Andean Wetlands Strategy, and three projects submitted by the Pacific Islands Wetlands initiative), are requesting a total of CHF 142,677. This is slightly below the total 2007 core funds available for regional network initiatives: CHF 146,883, including the accrued CHF 60,000 from 2006.
18. In addition, as noted in paragraphs 8-10 above, the BlackSeaWet initiative submitted to this meeting of the Standing Committee for approval is also requesting an allocation of CHF 103,100 for 2007. Once the Standing Committee has determined its approval of this initiative, it then needs to consider whether, taking into account the terms of Resolution IX.7 paragraph 13, it can consider approval of 2007 funding to this initiative and if so, at what level. Including the BlackSeaWet funding request, the total requested for 2007 by regional networks is CHF 245,777 (excluding MedWet) – a considerably larger sum than that allocated in the current 2007 core budget line for such initiatives.
19. Concerning COP9-approved regional centers (training & capacity-building), the 2007 core budget allocation for 2007 is CHF 100,000 for 2007. The two regional centres which received this funding in 2006 are requesting a total of CHF 149,000 for 2007.

Annex 1

Black Sea Regional Initiative for the Wise Use of Wetlands (BlackSeaWet)

Countries involved

Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine

Summary

Because of its long history of involvement in the Black Sea region, Wetlands International has been requested by Contracting Parties for a number of years to lead the development of a Ramsar regional initiative in the Black Sea basin. Wetlands International will undertake a consultative process with all stakeholders in the region including Contracting Parties, civil society and scientific institutions. This will define the set-up and operational nature of the regional initiative (provisionally named BlackSeaWet), develop a portfolio of actions to be initiated under a regional initiative, and engage donors to support their implementation.

Currently Wetlands International has secured funding for a project to partially support this process. Due to donor restrictions on country eligibility, the project is able to engage only five of the eight Black Sea basin countries that expressed their support for the initiative at Ramsar COP9. Wetlands International is asking the Standing Committee to endorse the development of the BlackSeaWet initiative and to provide financial support to underpin the consultative process in the three countries (Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova) not covered by the Dutch-funded BBI Matra project.

The Table below summarizes the regional initiative and its conformity with the Ramsar approach outlined in Resolution VIII.30

AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>The overall aim of new regional initiative – BlackSeaWet - is to catalyse the conservation and sustainable development of Black Sea coastal wetlands.</p> <p>It will include all the countries in the Black Sea Basin, focusing in particular on coastal wetlands. The Initiative will work through the cooperation of stakeholders (including Contracting Parties, civil society and scientific institutions) in the Black Sea Basin addressing wetland issues of common concern.</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of environment related issues in the Black Sea Region is not new. Over the last 15-20 years there has been considerable investment of resources in addressing the problems facing in particular the marine ecosystem and specifically related to water pollution. In the Black Sea Basin overall there are a number of formal arrangements already in place between the Black Sea countries, many intergovernmental organisations and international financial institutions (IFIs) with some civil society involvement, and a range of existing initiatives to protect the natural resources of the Black Sea. Most of these exist within the framework of the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (the Bucharest Convention) which was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994.</p>

	<p>However, in practice wetlands have not been high enough on the agenda and have been by and large ignored. There is an overwhelming concentration on pollution related aspects, especially eutrophication. When coastal ecosystems are considered it is often in the context of their role as nutrient sinks. As a consequence the importance of coastal wetland ecosystems for biodiversity and their wider services for people have been weakly addressed in existing initiatives. Furthermore, whilst often alluded to, the role of civil society has not been strong enough meaning that local concerns have not been adequately integrated into planning and implementation.</p>
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>The need for the Initiative is well supported by Contracting Parties in the region. The BlackSeaWet concept was originally a recommendation of the workshop on Black Sea coastal wetlands held in Odessa in September 2000 attended by representatives of all the major Basin countries. At this meeting Wetlands International was asked to take the lead in the Initiative's development. The Initiative was again supported by the Ramsar European Regional meeting in Bled, Slovenia 2001. Most recently Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine, represented by the Ukrainian government (the host country for Wetlands International Black Sea Programme) supported the Initiative during Ramsar COP9, Uganda (see Resolution IX.7). A Dutch funded project starting the Initiative has received letters of support from Bulgaria, Romania, Russian Federation (Krasnodvar Oblast), Turkey and Ukraine.</p>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>BlackSeaWet is a bottom up regional initiative, initiated by different stakeholders – ministries, scientific institutions, protected areas, civil society, which have participated in projects on coastal wetlands conservation, lead by Wetlands International. Other key organisations will be identified during start-up of the Initiative. A strong emphasis will be placed on identifying those that are also involved in sustainable development issues in the region as well as environment. This will in particular include civil society whose role is considered to be in addressing sustainable wetland management in the region.</p> <p>This will ensure that not only is BlackSeaWet built on the needs of a range of different stakeholder types but that it addresses concerns from many different sectors and interests.</p>

<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>Wetlands International will seek to stimulate the development of collaborative networks as an integral part of the Initiative. The consultative phase in the development of the Initiative will establish the foundations for such networks in the region. National level coordination of the consultation will be overseen by Wetlands International Black Sea Office but coordinated by a national focal point / focal organisation in each country that will establish a national working group which will include key national organisations working on wetlands conservation. These working groups will form the basis for developing a stakeholder consensus on the key strategic activities necessary, including the establishment of collaborative networks and the final vision and portfolio.</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>From the early stages of developing BlackSeaWet, this regional Initiative will seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in the region. This will include consultation on the vision and actions to be undertaken and invitation to participate in an international conference. Those with whom collaboration is most likely include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission (a letter of support has already been received) • Black Sea Commission Advisory Groups • Project Implementation Unit of the Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project (BSERP) • Groups undertaking specific projects under BSERP or other programmes in the region • UNDP/GEF • Black Sea Regional Activity Centres for Biodiversity and for Integrated Coastal Zone Management • Secretariat of the DABLAS Task Force in European Commission DG Environment
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>It is planned that the following institutions will be consulted in the development of the Initiative:</p> <p>Bulgarian-Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Programme, Bulgarian Academy of Science, Black Sea Regional Activity Centre for Conservation of Biological Diversity, Georgian Academy of Science, Black Sea Fisheries and Ecology Institute, Institute of Zoology of Academy of Sciences of Moldova, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, Danube Delta Design and Research Institute, Institute of Marine Research, Southern Branch of Research Institute of Hunting and Animal Production of Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Kuban State University, Rostov State University, Black Sea Regional Activity Centre on Development of Common Methodologies for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Black Sea Regional Activity Centre on Control of Pollution from Land Based Sources, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Institute of Zoology, Institute of Botany, Institute of Hydrobiology, Odessa Branch of the Institute of Biology of Southern Seas, Institute of Market, Economic and Ecological Research), Azov-Black Sea Ornithological Station, Ukrainian Scientific Centre for Marine Ecology, Odessa National University, Melitopol Pedagogical University</p>

<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>The aims of BlackSeaWet are entirely in line with the mission of the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan 2003-2008.</p> <p>General Objective 1. The wise use of wetlands: Wise use is needed in the context of territorial spatial planning, water resource, river basin and coastal zone management, agricultural management, and sustainable management of economic activities and other decisions affecting wetlands.</p> <p>General Objective 2. Wetlands of International Importance: Many Black Sea coastal wetlands are in the list. Maintenance of the ecological character of Ramsar sites is currently one of the most important and difficult tasks. Facilitation of information exchange and stimulation of monitoring of ecological characteristic of coastal wetlands will be important parts of BlackSeaWet.</p> <p>General Objective 3. International cooperation: It is planned to establish a new level of cooperation between all the main stakeholders in region related to coastal wetlands management, conservation and research.</p> <p>General Objective 4. Implementation capacity: Once BlackSeaWet's portfolio of actions is agreed this will form the basis of fund-raising activities that will generate additional resources and capacity for implementation.</p> <p>Operational Objectives that in the long-term the Initiative is expected to contribute to will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory and assessment; 2. Policies and legislation, including impact assessment and valuation; 3. Integration of wetland wise use into sustainable development; 4. Restoration and rehabilitation; 9. Communication, education, and public awareness; 10. Designation of Ramsar sites; 11. Management planning and monitoring of Ramsar sites; 12. Management of shared water resources, wetlands and wetland species; 13. Collaboration with other institutions; 14. Sharing of expertise and information; 15. Financing the conservation and wise use of wetlands; 19. International Organization Partners and others; 20. Training.
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>The BlackSeaWet initiative has political support from the majority of Black sea countries, which are Contracting Parties of the Ramsar Convention. Financial support of initial stage of this initiative is partly provided through a Dutch funded project "Establishing the foundations for the launch of a Black Sea Regional Initiative for the wise use of coastal wetlands (BlackSeaWet)", lead by Wetlands International Black Sea Office, located in Ukraine. During the process being undertaken towards the more formal establishment of the BlackSeaWet initiative, financial support and hosting arrangements will be sought from Contracting Parties.</p>

<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>A Dutch funded project has been secured by Wetlands International to initiate the development of the BlackSeaWet Initiative. Total funding provided by the existing project is 109.961 Euro. The Initiative will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a network of government, civil society and scientific stakeholders in all basin countries • Consult all stakeholders on the necessary focus of BlackSeaWet • Establish a draft vision for Black Sea Wetlands and accompanying portfolio of Actions • Secure endorsement of the Vision and Portfolio through an international conference • Engage donors to support implementation of BlackSeaWet
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>Wetlands International has secured funding to initiate BlackSeaWet, sufficient to engage 5 countries in the basin (Euro 110.000). It is requesting co-funding from Ramsar Convention to a total of 61.700 to extend the geographical coverage to include the three countries that are ineligible in the under the project so far secured (Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova). A more detail breakdown is provided below.</p>
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>The Initiative will include the development of an agreed structure and implementation mode. This will undoubtedly include stakeholder driven advisory mechanisms engaging representatives from Contracting Parties, civil society and scientific institutions.</p>
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>During the development of the Initiative in the coming period, Wetlands International will actively engage with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to ensure they are kept informed of progress and to assist them in establishing the best arrangements for coordination. Towards the end of the consultative phase an international conference will be held with all the main stakeholders and it is anticipated that this will be the best time formally present and discuss plans for coordination with the Convention.</p>

Budget for additional funding of the BlackSeaWet initiative

Project duration is 20 months in 2007 and 2008	Provided by BBI Matra EUR	Requested from Ramsar budget EUR
Type of costs / activities:		
Web-directory of key government, civil society and scientific organisations in the Black Sea Region concerned with conservation and sustainable use		
Local experts in Black Sea countries (35 days *50)		1.750
Project leader (3*100)		300
Project assistant (15*75)		1.125
Subtotal	4.625	3.175
Preparation of a BlackSeaWet's vision		
Local experts in Black Sea countries (92 days *50)		4.600
Project leader (21 days *100)		2.100
Project assistant (15 days *75)		1.125
English editing by native speaker		500
Editing, layout, printing (400 copies)		2.500
Subtotal	15.825	10.825
Conducting of international conference		
Tickets (15 persons * 400)		6.000
Accommodation (15 persons *3 nights *70)		3.150
Meals (lunches – 660 euro, dinners – 350, coffer-breaks – 175)		1.185
Rent of hall, equipment, stationary		3.100
Local organisers and facilitators		1.080
Project leader (15 days *100)		1.500
Project assistant (10days *75)		750
Subtotal	33.565	16.765
Establishment of the portfolio of projects		
Local experts in Black Sea countries (45 days *50)		2.250
Project leader (15 days *100)		1.500
Project assistant (10 days *75)		750
English editing by native speaker		500
Editing, layout, printing (300 copies)		1.000
Subtotal	8.875	6.000
Preparation information on the project results for web-site		
Collecting information, writing report		850
Communication manager (3 days *285)		855
Subtotal	2.825	1.705
Preparation of final project report		700
Subtotal	1.200	700
Project coordination, management & administration (supporting all activities)		
Office equipment and materials		1.260
Office costs		3.540
Photocopying, dispatch, communication local (24 months * 45)		1.080
Technical officer WI-HQ (9 days * 280)		2.520
Resource development officer WI-HQ (3 days *180)		540
Project leader (15 days *100)		1.500
Project assistant (30 days *75)		2.250
Project administration		2.320
Travelling Project coordinator to project area (2 tickets *500 +2*5 days DSA*200 (hotel & per diem))		2.600
International travel of project leader to Georgia, Armenia, Moldova		3.900
Local travel (incl car rent per diems (10 euro/day and accommodation)		1.000
Subtotal	43.046	22.510
TOTAL	109.961	61.700
Total in CHF (1.617 CHF/EUR)	177 807 CHF	103 100 CHF

Annex 2

Western Hemisphere Center in Panama (CREHO)			
Expenditures 2006 - Ramsar Funds			
Detail	Ramsar funds allocated CHF	Ramsar funds received USD	Spent USD
1) Operation	50 000	38 939	
1.1. Personnel	(30 000)	(23 364)	(23 364)
1.1.1. <i>Executive director</i>	4 962	3 864	11 989
1.1.2. <i>Technical officer</i>	25 038	19 500	11 375
1.2. Subcontracts	5 000	3 893	3 896
1.3. Travel	5 000	3 893	3 876
1.4. Capital goods	5 000	3 893	3 896
1.5. Perishable goods			
1.6. Other expenses and income in kind			
1.7. Board of directors - follow up	5 000	3 893	3 893
2) Training courses	30 000	23 364	
2.1. Regional courses (2 -E & S- per year for 30 participants 2 weeks)	30 000	23 364	23 364
2.2. Courses per country (4 one week event per year for 30 participants)			
3) Information and monitoring system for wetlands			
4) Regional and subregional initiatives CREHO participation			
TOTAL	80 000	62 300	62 289

Annex 3

High Andean Wetlands Strategy (HAWS)

Expenditures 2006

Financial Strategy Workshop

Iquique, Chile, May 2006

all in CHF	Ramsar contribution	Spent	Counterpart contribution
Tickets	11 000	13 284	5 000
Lodging	4 680		10 000
Per diem	1 560	1 636	2 000
Consultancy	780	4 960	
Sundry		120	3 000
Publication	2 000		
TOTAL	20 000	20 000	20 000

Annex 4

Pacific Islands Wetlands Initiative

Project Proposal A: Oceania Ramsar Site Managers Workshop

Funding requested from Ramsar Core budget is **CHF 19 557** to cover costs of return airfares, per diems & accommodation.

Items (USD)	SPREP contribution in-kind	Cost (USD)
Airfares Economy return airfare for 4 Oceania Contracting Party participants, round trip Majuro – Apia - Majuro	Staff time for travel arrangements equal to 40 hours/month over two months: 1,240 USD	8,711
Per Diems (based on UN rates) 119 USD/day x 4 people x 7 days; host country participants are not eligible to receive per diems.	Staff time for processing Per Diems equal to 24 hours over 1 month: 744 USD	3,332
Accommodation 80 USD/day x 4 people x 7 days	Staff time for accommodation arrangements equal to 12 hours over 1 month: 372 USD	2,240
SPREP support charge (10%)		1,428
Requested from the Ramsar core budget		15,711
Total in CHF		19,557

The proposed workshop falls under the auspices of the following Oceania Regional Initiative components (COP9 endorsed):

- Management Plans for Ramsar Sites (Priority: high),
- Capacity development workshop on wetlands and wise use (Priority: high),
- Regional capacity development (Priority: low).

The workshop will cover the issues: new RIS requirements (for 2006-2008), Ramsar site mapping, Ramsar site management plans, ecological character description and change in ecological character, site monitoring and reporting, and CEPA (particularly awareness raising and education at the site level).

The workshop for Ramsar site managers:

- 5-day workshop within the Oceania region (during the second half of 2007),
- somewhere cheap and easy to get to in the Pacific region (Samoa is highly likely),
- could be run back-to-back with another meeting of some kind (there is great potential for this as a number of regional meetings/workshops will occur during 2007),
- Ramsar National Focal Points (AA, STRP, CEPA) and IOPs invited to participate.

Other partners from which support will be sought are:

- Donor Contracting Parties with regional jurisdiction (Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, France, USA, European Union),
- IOPs,
- the private sector.

Project Proposal B: Update of the Oceania Wetlands Directory (1993) – Phase 1

Funding requested from Ramsar Core budget is **20,881 CHF** to cover consultancy for arranging and conducting of a review of current national wetland information.

Items (USD)	SPREP contribution (in-kind)	Costs (USD)
1. Information gathering & review		
1.1 Consultancies to carry out in-country information gathering & review. Information to be gathered from relevant agencies with additional consultations with other national agencies and stakeholders if necessary; 250 USD/day x 5 days per country x 5 countries	Staff time to assist with preparation of consultancy ToR and contract agreements equal to 4 hours/week over 3 weeks: 372 USD	6,250
1.2 National workshops to discuss results of reviews; consultants to arrange and facilitate 5 one-day national workshops (one for each of the 5 countries)	Staff time to assist with a workshop arrangements, 5 hours/week over 3 weeks: 465 USD	9,000
1.3 Finalize country contributions to directory Feedback from stakeholders during workshop And from other sources (if needed) used to finalise country reports for inclusion in the wetlands directory	Staff time to assist with reviewing draft country reports equal to 8 hours/week over 4 weeks: 992 USD	0
Total	1,829 USD	15,250
SPREP support charge (10%)		1,525
Total requested from the Ramsar core budget (USD)		16,775
Total in CHF		20,881

Purpose

The current *Directory of Wetland in Oceania* is a useful information tool containing data on the types and status of wetlands in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) of the Pacific region. Government agencies, academic institutions, researchers and students alike have utilized the information contained in the directory which is also widely used as a resource and guide for completing Ramsar Information Sheets. The information in the current directory is outdated and in urgent need of review. This activity directly addresses one of the key challenges identified by Pacific Island participants during the joint Wetlands International-SPREP regional capacity building workshop o in September 2005: insufficient knowledge on which to base wetland conservation and management decisions, and limited access to existing knowledge.

Objectives

Gather and review relevant national information to update the *Directory of Wetlands in Oceania* (1993). Phase 1 will focus on the current Pacific Island Ramsar parties.

Project Description

The project aims to update the *Directory of Wetlands in Oceania* published in 1993. In order to develop effective wetland conservation strategies in the region, one of the initial steps required is to compile an inventory of the most important wetland sites for the region. The directory provides such information, as a basis for action for the completion of detailed national wetland inventories which should include not only more information on the sites which meet

international criteria, but also details of sites of only national or even local importance. The information in the current directory is in dire need of review.

Other Background Information

The *Directory of wetlands in Oceania* was initiated at the fourth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in September 1989. The Action Strategy for Nature Conservation revised at this meeting emphasized the urgency of developing detailed inventories of the region's natural ecosystems. The apparent lack of attention given to wetlands in Oceania was noted and the compilation of an inventory of important wetland ecosystems was seen as an urgent undertaking. The production of this directory was heralded as an important step towards addressing the conservation and wise use of the region's wetlands. In updating this directory, national and regional authorities in Oceania will have access to a valuable and user-friendly information tool designed to assist research and inform decision making in relation to wetland conservation.

Activities and time table

The main activity is to gather current national level information on significant wetlands and their status in the 5 Ramsar Pacific Island Country Parties. It will take approximately 2 months to implement, tentatively commencing July to August 2007.

Project Proposal C: Enhancing coastal and marine ecosystems resilience to climate change impacts through strengthened coastal governance and conservation measures

Total value of overall project is 165,000 USD, the bulk of the funding is being sought from the Macarthur Foundation and with co-financing from other partners. The amount requested from Ramsar's core budget is 20,539 CHF, as a contribution towards activities of Component Two of the overall project.

Component 2: Demonstration activities	Other Contributions (in-kind)	Estimated Cost (USD)
Community meetings, community specialist, training, implementation of activities, hospitality, monitoring	Vanuatu Government in-kind (equivalent 5,000 USD) SPREP in-kind contribution towards arrangements and implementation	15,000
SPREP Programme support charge (10%)		1,500
Total requested from the Ramsar core budget (USD) for two years		16,500
Total in CHF for two years		20,539

Duration: **2 years: March 2007- February 2009**

Location: Vanuatu, Pacific Islands Region

Purpose

The purpose of the overall project is to strengthen the capacity of national government and communities in Vanuatu, to respond to climate change impacts in coastal areas through the application of integrated coastal management and conservation based adaptation measures to improve natural resilience of marine and coastal wetland ecosystems and the livelihoods depending on them.

Rationale

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are highly vulnerable to climate change and sea level rise owing partly to their small land masses surrounded by ocean, and their location in regions prone to natural disasters. SIDS are often characterized by having relatively large populations for the area they occupy with high growth rates and densities; poorly developed infrastructure and limited natural, human and economic resources, and their high dependence on marine resources for their livelihood needs

Past studies of adaptation options for small islands have been largely focused on adjustments to sea-level rise and storm surges associated with tropical cyclones. There was an early emphasis on protecting land through 'hard' shore-protection measures rather than on other measures such as accommodating sea-level rise or retreating from it, although the latter has become increasingly important on continental coasts. Vulnerability studies conducted for selected small islands show that the costs of overall infrastructure and settlement protection is a significant proportion of GDP, and well beyond the financial means of most small island states. Many islands are already experiencing some negative effects of global warming, sea-level rise and increased sea surface temperature, which are affecting both natural ecosystems and socio-economic conditions.

Strengthening conservation practices and coastal governance can increase resilience to negative impacts brought about by climate change. In the first instance this will require assessment of threats and vulnerabilities to climate changes, and assessment of the options for developing

adequate responses. Experience from the Asian Tsunami has clearly demonstrated the role of coastal wetland ecosystems such as mangroves and coral reefs in reducing exposure to extreme events, and provides evidence of the value of rehabilitating natural coastal defences.

Integrated approaches to natural resource management and biodiversity conservation provide institutional mechanisms for the development of adaptation strategies to climate change. Integrated Coastal Zone Management as a continuous and dynamic process that brings government and the community, science and management, sectoral and public interests in preparing and implementing an integrated plan for the protection and development of coastal ecosystems and resources provide a useful tool for adaptive decision making. ICZM differ from coastal management in that it the ability to create a governance system capable of managing multiple uses in an integrated way through the cooperation and coordination of government agencies at different levels of authority, non government actors and different economic sectors.

Goal

To enhance resilience to climate change of coastal and marine wetland ecosystems and dependent livelihoods through the application of integrated coastal management approaches and site specific adaptation measures based on maintaining functioning coastal and inshore marine ecosystems.

Objective 1- To develop an integrated coastal management (ICM) framework and establish appropriate institutional mechanisms for implementation for long term adaptation to climate change

Objective 2- To provide technical support and training opportunities for government officials and local communities in integrated coastal management approaches and site based adaptation measures based on maintaining functioning coastal and marine wetland ecosystems

Objective 3- To facilitate the implementation of measures in demonstration sites in areas experiencing high vulnerability to coastal degradation and erosion and climate change impacts

Objective 4 - To raise awareness and understanding of the linkages between climate change and biodiversity, the application of integrated coastal management and targeted adaptation measures as long term adaptation strategies to climate change impacts and disseminate lessons learnt through national, regional and international fora.

Proposed activities

Component One: Development of an integrated coastal management framework and establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms for implementation

This component will focus on facilitating the development of an integrated coastal management framework to set common objectives, identify key issues and priorities for implementation, clarify roles and responsibilities at national provincial and local levels, establish appropriate institutional mechanisms, guide sectoral implementing activities and identify pilot sites or activities to be implemented as part of the project. The ICM framework will contribute to the Vanuatu National Adaptation Plan.

This activity will build on existing institutional arrangements and mechanisms (eg the National Advisory Committee on Climate Change) and will be informed by and build on the outcomes of

capacity assessments undertaken under related SPREP projects including SPREP GEF funded International Waters Project (IWP), the SPREP-UNDP GEF funding Pacific Islands Adaptation to Climate Change project (PACC) and the proposed SPREP/Bishop Museum vulnerability assessment project, previously mentioned.

Activity 1: National ICM stakeholder workshops

Activity 2: Targeted consultancies to support implementation of institutional mechanisms

Activity 3: Technical support for implementation of ICM framework

Component Two: implementation of demonstration activities to increase resilience of coastal and marine wetland ecosystems and dependent communities to climate change impacts

This component is aimed at implementing demonstration activities to protect or restore functional coastal and marine wetland habitats such as mangroves, sea grasses or coral reefs in identified vulnerable areas to enhance resilience of local communities from a point of view of coastal erosion, storm protection and food security.

This component will be carried out with local officials and communities and as much as possible will build on existing community based projects facilitated by local NGOs (eg FSVI) and complement other adaptation projects in Vanuatu. Partnerships between government, NGOs and local communities are a critical factor to the success of these activities.

Activity 1: Community workshops and meetings at priority sites

The purpose of the workshops is to agree on package of adaptive measures for enhancing resilience of coastal and marine habitats (eg replanting of mangroves, protection measures for coral reefs) in priority areas identified as vulnerable, identify training needs for establishment and monitoring effectiveness of agreed measures being implemented and establishing local coordination of activities and accountabilities.

Activity 2: Training workshop in adaptation measures and monitoring

Undertake training in at least one local community on implementation and monitoring of conservation based adaptations measures to climate change (based on existing tools) to enhance resilience of coastal and inshore wetland habitats in vulnerable areas

Activity 3: Support implementation and monitoring of agreed adaptive measures and community meetings (basic equipment, hospitality etc...)

These activities are to be implemented and monitored by the project coordinator in consultation with local authorities and community leaders and support from a community specialist as needed. Demonstration sites may be existing sites where community based management is already under way.

Component Three: Communication, lessons learnt and sustainability

This component will focus on raising awareness of climate change impacts on coastal and marine environments, draw the lessons learnt from the project and identify strategies to ensure project outcomes are incorporated into on going processes. This activity will draw from SPREP and

other CROP agencies in climate change communication and activities as well as from projects on mainstreaming climate change and biodiversity in national processes.

Activity 1: Production and dissemination of material (eg posters pamphlets, TV ads, newsletters) on climate change, biodiversity and the project for a range of audiences

Activity 2: Run awareness training workshops on climate change and biodiversity and ICM methodologies and applicability for government officials and key stakeholders

Activity 3: Organise and publicise national and community events at project milestones (eg launch of ICM framework, site based demonstrations etc...participating in other related national activities and fora).

Activity 4: Prepare a lessons learnt document including recommendations for incorporating outcomes of the project in government activities and replication.

Activity 5: Dissemination of lessons learnt in regional and international fora on climate change adaptation and biodiversity to be coordinated by SPREP

Project implementation

A MoU between SPREP and the Vanuatu government will be developed for implementation of the project. It is proposed to appoint a national integrated coastal management (ICM) coordinator, to be located in the most relevant department. The coordinator will implement the 3 components of the project and be responsible for reporting to SPREP/Vanuatu government. It is proposed that the coordinator consults with and informs the National Climate Change Advisory Committee regarding the project implementation. SPREP will provide technical backstopping to the project coordinator, as needed and facilitate information exchanges with other countries, provide training as needed. A separate moU with a relevant NGO may be considered for the site-based component of the project.

Workplan and timeline

The project will start on signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Macarthur Foundation (the main funding agency for the overall project) and is expected to last 2 years (anticipated on March 2007 to March 2009).

Financial overview of Ramsar core budget allocations for Regional Initiatives

all in CHF	2006 allocation	2006 expenditure	2007 requested	2007 allocated	2008 forecast	comments
► Networks (Res.IX.7 A i)	106 000			102 382		amounts allocated by Res.IX.12
West African Coastal Zone Wetlands (WacoWet)	60 000	0	59 700		?	no disbursement made in 2006
ChadWet - Africa	0	0	0	0	?	no funding requested for 2007
NigerWet - Africa	0	0	0	0	?	no funding requested for 2007
Asian-Australasian Migratory Waterbirds	0	0	0	0	?	no funding requested for 2007
High Andean Wetlands Strategy (HAWS)	20 000	20 000	22 000		?	for project development workshop in May 2007
Pacific Islands Wetlands Initiative	0	0	60 977		95 847	for three projects 2007 (-2008)
MedWet Initiative (Res.IX.7 Annex II)	26 000	26 000	15 499	15 499	10 849	yearly allocations approved by COP9
► Centres (Res.IX.7 A ii)	100 000			100 000		amounts allocated by Res.IX.12
Central and Western Asia Centre in Iran (RRC-CWA)	20 000	20 000	69 000		70 000	allocation for 2006 to be disbursed in early 2007
Western Hemisphere Center in Panama (CREHO)	80 000	80 000	80 000		80 000	activities 2007 outlined in DOC.SC35-11 Annex IV
► Potential initiatives (Resolution IX.7 B)						
Ramsar Centre for Eastern Africa (RAMCEA)	0	0	0	0	?	no activities reported to the Secretariat
Himalayan Initiative - Asia	0	0	0	0	?	Ramsar funding request possible for 2008
Carpathian Wetland Initiative - Europe	0	0	0	0	?	Ramsar funding request possible for 2008
Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet)	0	0	0	0	0	no Ramsar funding request is foreseen
► Under development (Resolution IX.7 paragraph 6)						
La Playa/Paraguay-Parana Wetlands System	0	0	0	0	?	Ramsar funding request possible for 2008
Black Sea Wetlands Initiative (BlackSeaWet)	0	0	103 100		?	activities 2007 outlined in this document
Lake Victoria Environmental Management - Africa	0	0	0	0	?	no activities reported to the Secretariat
Nile River Basin Conservation and Development	0	0	0	0	?	no activities reported to the Secretariat
Kenya Wildlife Service International Wetland Training	0	0	0	0	?	no activities reported to the Secretariat
Total requested, allocated, spent or forecast	206 000	146 000*	410 276		256 696	
Budget	206 000	206 000	202 382 (262 382)*		279 190	*proposal to accrue CHF 60 000 not spent in 2006 to the 2007 allocation

