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Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

Introduction

1. This report from the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) focuses on STRP activities and progress for the 2013-2015 triennium. For interim reports by the STRP Chair to the Standing Committee (SC), please see [SC46-16](#), [SC47-17](#), and [SC48-12](#).
2. Annex I of this report provides a table that summarizes the progress against the Ramsar [STRP Work Plan 2013-2015](#) as of March 2015. The table includes the entire list of more than 70 tasks and sub-tasks in order under their work areas as they appear in the STRP Work Plan. Only nine tasks were designated as top priority tasks (by the Standing Committee) and were partially funded by the COP. In many cases, however, lower priority tasks were also progressed through partnerships or through pro bono contributions from STRP members.

Update on high priority tasks

3. In light of the limited STRP budget, SC46 [Decision 14](#) called on the STRP to focus on nine high-priority tasks. Below is a summary of progress as of March 2015 on these tasks.
4. *State of the World's Wetlands and their Services* (Task No. 18): A **Briefing Note**, which highlights recent scientific literature on the status and trends of wetlands, has been prepared and is being translated. It discusses recent assessments of global and regional wetland trends, as well as more limited assessments of Ramsar Sites. The Briefing Note's key messages include:
 - The global extent of wetlands is now estimated to have declined between 64% and 71% in the 20th century, and wetland losses and degradation continue worldwide.
 - Despite some positive news about Ramsar Sites, even these are under threat. For example, although populations of wetland species appear to be increasing in Ramsar Sites overall, populations of wetland species in Ramsar Sites in the tropics are decreasing.
 - Policymakers have sufficient scientific information to understand the urgent need to take appropriate actions to conserve wetlands and their services to people.
5. In addition, the Secretariat has published its first tranche of factsheets, for which the STRP provided comments, and which encompass information on the Wetland Extent Index, produced by UNEP-WCMC. Additional factsheets on peatlands, coral reefs, and wetland-related indicators are also contemplated as part of the Secretariat's communications strategy.
6. *Implementation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS)—2012 revision* (Task No. 25): This task

was completed with the STRP advice provided to SC46.

7. *Strategy for engaging Ramsar in the global water debate* (Task No. 44): A paper, commissioned by the Secretariat and reviewed by STRP, on *Recommendations and opportunities for the Ramsar Convention to increase its impact within the global water debate* has been provided to the Secretariat.
8. *Ecological character and change in ecological character—further guidance* (Task No. 20): A report, commissioned by the Secretariat and reviewed by the STRP, on aspects of Article 3.2, Article 2.5 and 4.2, the Montreux Record and the Ramsar Advisory Missions process was drafted for internal use of the Secretariat. A summary report was also produced. Annexed to the report is a consolidated re-packaging of key aspects of existing guidance and interpretations provided for internal reference.
9. *Wetlands and climate change: Advice on the implication of REDD+ decisions by other MEAs to the Ramsar Convention* (Task No. 41(iv) (c)): A **writing workshop**, hosted and sponsored by the Institute for Wetlands Research—Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing, China, was held in May 2014 to progress a **Briefing Note** and review the potential to produce a Ramsar Technical Report. The Briefing Note is currently being prepared.
10. *Wetlands and ecosystem services—economics of wetland ecosystem services* (Task No. 59): An assessment of needs has been drafted to inform the development of guidance and is being finalized for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. The needs assessment has also benefited from interactive sessions and feedback from the 8th European Ramsar meeting and the **Asia Regional Workshop** on Scientific and Technical Support for Implementation of the Convention (2013, Changwon, Republic of Korea). A **Briefing Note** is currently being prepared.
11. *Wetlands and invasive species—guide to available guidance* (Task No. 10): A **Briefing Note**, based on work by an external consultant commissioned by the Secretariat, is currently being prepared.
12. *Wetlands and poverty eradication—guidance and case studies* (Task No. 51): A **writing workshop** was held at Lake Chilika, India in June 2014. Three discussion papers, a draft Briefing Note and a report completed through an IWMI-sponsored internship on *a structured guide to available guidelines and tools for addressing poverty eradication in relation to wetlands*, have been prepared. However, due to time constraints and the fact that the task does not appear to align with the proposed thematic work areas for the next STRP, the Secretariat has decided that the outputs should be consolidated into a report for internal reference and possible future use.
13. *CEPA—assessing and supporting the capacity-building needs of Contracting Parties and wetland managers in applying Ramsar guidance* (Task No. 1): This task was discontinued at the request of the Secretariat due to overlaps with the Resolution XI.16 review.

Update on selected other tasks, including ad hoc advisory functions

14. *CEPA—capacity-building support for STRP National Focal Points* (Task No. 2): This task was delivered by the week-long **Asia Regional Workshop** on Scientific and Technical Support for Implementation of the Convention in Changwon, Republic of Korea. Approximately 60 wetland experts from over 20 countries in the region attended, including STRP members, STRP NFPs, Ramsar NFPs, and other wetland experts. The workshop's objectives included improving awareness of STRP and Ramsar Convention processes. The Republic of Korea's Ministry of

Environment and Gyeongnam Province generously funded the workshop, and the Ramsar Regional Center-East Asia hosted the event.

15. *Build a collection of practical learning materials for horizontal knowledge sharing using more dynamic and accessible delivery modes* (Task No. 2.2): As part of an effort to reach out to broader audiences, STRP produced seven **webinars** in Spanish, English and French about different activities undertaken by Contracting Parties, partners and Ramsar-related bodies. The webinars can be accessed through the STRP Portal (<http://strp.ramsar.org/strp-publications/strp-webinars>).
16. *STRP communication and dissemination support* (Task No. 3): The new web-based **STRP Platform** (<http://strp.ramsar.org>) was launched in July 2013. Designed to facilitate the Panel's intersessional work, it includes a 'closed' password-protected workspace for STRP members and NFPs, as well as an 'open' portal to provide more information about STRP activities and products to a wider audience. The Secretariat is considering how to integrate the Platform within its website.
17. *Strategic Plan Working Group* (Task No. 6): The STRP Chair served as a member of the working group, participating in its meetings (remotely) and providing consolidated comments from the STRP.
18. *Strategic scientific and technical advice* (Task No. 6): STRP invited expert Max Finlayson, STRP member Ritesh Kumar and others have co-authored a draft **Ramsar Technical Report** on management of freshwater protected areas, an abridged version of which was published as part of an IUCN book for the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia, in November 2014. More broadly, to facilitate research and provide timely updates on scientific articles, the STRP (in conjunction with Stetson University) is posting on the Ramsar Forum and STRP workspace recent publications that focus on Ramsar Sites or the Ramsar Convention. In addition, STRP participants offer advice through their individual publications, a list of which is available at <http://strp.ramsar.org/strp-publications/list-of-scientific-and-policy-related-publications-by-strp-members-and-invited-experts-2013-2015-triennium>.
19. *Montreux Record* (Task No. 7): The STRP provided comments to the Secretariat concerning the removal of Bañados del Este (Uruguay) from the Montreux Record.
20. *Ongoing ad hoc advisory functions* (Task No. 7): In October 2013, the STRP Chair, the Scientific and Technical Support Officer and the former Assistant Advisor for Asia-Oceania visited the Sultanate of Oman to provide technical support on national implementation of the Convention. The visit contributed to the establishment of a National Wetland Committee. In December 2014, the STRP Chair arranged for a team of scientific experts with experience from the Deepwater Horizon spill to provide advice to the Government of Bangladesh regarding an oil spill in the Sundarbans.
21. *Review of Draft Resolutions* (Task No. 8): As one of its core responsibilities, the STRP provided comments and advice on draft resolutions related to management effectiveness, disaster risk reduction, conservation of small Mediterranean islands, ecological flows, peatlands, and Ramsar communities accreditation.
22. *Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza* (Task No. 12): During 2014, STRP experts contributed to the UN co-convened CMS/FAO Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds statements on H5N8 in response to irresponsible use of disinfectants in wetland habitats in outbreak areas.

It is likely that the increasingly complex interactions of domestic animal production systems, wetlands and relatively novel practices such as wild bird farming will result in further negative developments affecting the health of people, places, domestic and wild animals as well as public perceptions of waterbirds and wetlands. The STRP should be prepared to respond to these developments.

23. *Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)* (Task No. 13): The STRP remains engaged in IPBES. The STRP Chair is an observer to the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), and participated in IPBES-2 and IPBES-3. The Chair, or an STRP representative, has also participated in MEP meetings, emphasizing the need for assessments to include wetland and wetland restoration experts. The Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment and Regional Assessments, which are expected in early 2018, prior to Ramsar COP13, will be of particular interest to the Ramsar community.
24. *Planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands* (Task No. 52): In December 2013, **Briefing Note No. 6, *Towards the wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands***, was issued. Prepared by STRP Observer Rob McInnes, the Briefing Note expands on the principles for the planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands as articulated in Resolution XI.11. The Briefing Note is intended to help managers and planners of towns and cities ensure the wise use of wetlands.

STRP meetings and workshops

25. The STRP held two meetings at the Secretariat's headquarters during the triennium. STRP17, which took place from 25 February to 1 March 2013, refined the STRP Work Plan. It also adopted Terms of Reference (TORs) to clarify the roles of different categories of persons participating in the work of the Panel, as well as on the different types of STRP products. SC46 [Decision 14](#) welcomed the TORs. STRP18, held from 8 to 10 September 2014, focused primarily on advancing high-priority tasks.
26. Due to budget constraints, there was limited STRP participation in regional pre-COP meetings. Nevertheless, two STRP members attended the Asia meeting, an STRP member and observer attended the European meeting, and the Chair, an IOP member, and an invited expert attended the Pan-American meeting.
27. As noted above, small STRP writing workshops tied to high-priority tasks were held in China in May 2014 and in India in June 2014.
28. A list of other meetings and conferences where STRP members, experts, and observers played notable roles is available at <http://strp.ramsar.org/strp-publications/list-of-meetings-workshops-attended-by-strp-members-invited-experts-and-observer-representatives-2013-2015-triennium>.

Resolution XI.16 review process

29. The STRP Chair served on the Resolution XI.16 review committee. Throughout the process, the STRP Chair suggested that the overall objective should be the production of *scientifically rigorous guidance and advice that is responsive to the targeted audience and effective in promoting the wise use of wetlands*.

30. The review process found that STRP products are generally viewed as high quality and valuable, but that they are not reaching all intended audiences. The review highlighted the need for the STRP to work in the Convention's official languages so that its products can reach a wider audience and so the STRP may benefit from the expertise of non-English language speakers. SC48 [Decision 12](#), which allocated CHF 20,000 for translation of existing STRP products, is a welcome development in this regard.
31. The review process also found that there was not sufficient financial support to deliver the ambitious set of tasks requested by the COP. Accordingly, one of the recommendations from the review process was to ensure all approved activities had commensurate funding and human resources.
32. The STRP looks forward to working with the Secretariat and STRP National Focal Points to develop the work plan for the next triennium, in accordance with the high-priority thematic areas identified by the Contracting Parties and consistent with the Strategic Plan.

33. In closing, I would like to thank the Secretariat for its continuous support of the STRP and express my deep gratitude for the many hours of service dedicated by STRP members, experts, and observers to promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Annex I

Progress on 2013-2015 STRP Tasks, pursuant to the 2013-2015 STRP Work Plan

Task No.	Short task title	Summary description	Status	Comments
	CEPA			
1	Assessing and supporting the capacity-building needs of Contracting Parties and wetland managers in applying Ramsar guidance	Develop effective ways of providing training and capacity-building, including through a 'training for trainers' programme, for relevant stakeholders in Contracting Parties (including Administrative Authorities & wetland managers) to assist with the interpretation and implementation of scientific and technical guidance and other materials adopted by the Convention, with the assessment and definition of future needs.	No activities undertaken	Identified as a top priority by SC46. Reported to SC47 that the task is discontinued at request of Secretariat due to overlap with the XI.16 review.
2	Capacity-building support for STRP National Focal Points	Hold regional workshops for STRP National Focal Points (at least 1 per triennium).	Completed	Completed in conjunction with the Ramsar Regional Center—East Asia workshop in October 2013.
2.2	Build a collection of practical learning materials for horizontal knowledge sharing using more dynamic and accessible delivery modes	Repackage existing guidance/other materials into smaller, more accessible, products using more dynamic mediums that can serve as a <i>second level</i> of Ramsar Guidance. It is also the intention to identify existing products that are already in use that are relevant to Ramsar end users and build links to these either informally or through partnerships.	Ongoing	Initiated in conjunction with the Secretariat. Secretariat's Communications Team leading. Products include PowerPoint presentations, video, factsheets. Seven webinars in Spanish, English and French have been produced, with the support of the IT department of Stetson University College of Law, about different activities undertaken by Contracting Parties, partners and Ramsar-related bodies. Webinars can be accessed through the STRP Portal (http://strp.ramsar.org/strp-publications/strp-webinars). The STRP Chair developed a week-long course on the Ramsar Convention for law students held at Stetson University in January 2015. The PowerPoint

				presentations developed for the course will be refined and shared with the Ramsar community.
3a & 3b	STRP communication & dissemination support: a) web platform; and b) newsletters	Develop and maintain, and as necessary further develop, a new STRP web platform for input to and dissemination of STRP work by STRP NFPs and others. Produce regular STRP newsletters and seek to provide newsletters and key STRP documents in all Convention languages.	a) Completed b) Completed	Web portal developed and workspace developed and in use by STRP members and NFPs. The Secretariat is considering how to integrate the portal and workspace within its website. Three newsletters produced in 2013. The Secretariat is considering now how to integrate within its overall communications strategy.
3c	Plan for evaluating and reporting on the delivery of STRP-Participation at the COP	Use the COP as an opportunity to engage directly with Contracting Parties as STRP's primary audience	Completed	Completed at STRP18; discussed with Secretariat in advance of implementation at COP12.
3.3d	STRP communication & dissemination support		Ongoing	
4	CEPA advice on guidance preparation		Ongoing	Substantial CEPA advice on guidance preparation to the different working groups, in particular to the Poverty Eradication Working Group, has been provided.
5	Waterbird flyway initiatives - knowledge sharing		No activities undertaken	
	Strategic, emerging & ongoing issues			
6	Strategic scientific & technical advice	Provide proactive and reactive advice to the Convention on relevant strategic scientific and technical matters, including overall progress with scientific and technical aspects of the implementation of COP Resolutions, trends, emerging issues, and other priority matters requiring expert review.	Ongoing	Ongoing on an ad-hoc basis. Activities have included: Participation of the STRP Chair as a member of the Strategic Plan Working Group, participating in its meetings (remotely) and providing consolidated comments from the STRP. Conducting a horizon scanning exercise on global wetland issues to further identify important topics/issues of importance for wetlands, as defined

				<p>by the Convention, for the next 30-50 years. Compiling a list of recent scientific publications discussing Ramsar Sites or the Ramsar Convention (with support of the Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy of Stetson University College of Law) and posting it on the Ramsar Forum to facilitate research and provide timely, relevant article updates to the Convention's constituencies.</p> <p>STRP invited expert Max Finlayson and STRP member Ritesh Kumar has co-authored with others a proposed Ramsar Technical Report, an abridged version of which was published as part of an IUCN book for the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia, in November 2014.</p>
7	Ongoing ad hoc advisory functions	Provide advice to the Secretariat and Parties, including on Ramsar Site designation, article 3.2 issues, Montreux Record, Ramsar Advisory Missions, RSIS, wetland projects, participation in CSAB, and other issues.	Ongoing	<p>Most recently activities included:</p> <p>Providing advice, through a team of scientific experts with experience from the Deepwater Horizon spill, to the Government of Bangladesh on the December 2014 oil spill in the Sundarbans</p> <p>Providing comments to the Secretariat concerning the removal of Bañados del Este (Uruguay) from the Montreux Record</p> <p>Providing advice to Oman on development of a national wetland committee.</p> <p>Additional ad hoc advice included:</p> <p>Comments to New Zealand's National guidelines for assessing potential Ramsar sites</p> <p>Comments to wetland inventories in the Pacific</p> <p>Comments to GBO-4</p> <p>Comments to Aichi Passport: Wetland Extent Index indicator</p> <p>Comments to GMO consultation</p> <p>Comments to KBA report</p> <p>Expert feedback on a policy analysis (Ramsar and</p>

				<p>Essential Biodiversity Variables) (WCMC)</p> <p>Review of Guidance for Carbon Projects in Coastal Wetlands (UNEP)</p> <p>Review of Guidelines on the Design and Management of Large-Scale MPAs (NOAA)</p> <p>Comments to draft Description and Mapping Specifications for Australian Ramsar sites</p> <p>Comments to United Arab Emirates water strategy</p> <p>Comments to National Wetlands Policy Stakeholder Questionnaire and Forum (on a replacement national wetlands policy for Australia)</p> <p>Comments to 2013 Wetlands Supplement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories</p>
8	Review of COP Draft Resolutions from Parties	Advise the Standing Committee on proposals from Contracting Parties for COP Resolutions with scientific or technical content.	Ongoing	The STRP provided comments and advice on draft resolutions related to management effectiveness, disaster risk reduction, conservation of small Mediterranean islands, ecological flows, peatlands, and Ramsar communities accreditation.
9	Sectoral and/or emerging issues for possible future priority work	<p>Maintain rolling list of global and regional sectoral and/or emerging issues that have potential implications for the wise use of wetlands.</p> <p>Provide recommendations to Standing Committee and COP when any of these issues might need to be addressed by the STRP or other Convention bodies.</p>	No activities undertaken	
10	Invasive species and wetlands	Develop a guide to guidance and available information related to alien invasive species in wetlands, for wetland managers and policy-makers.	Ongoing	<p>Identified as a top priority by SC46.</p> <p>Briefing Note in preparation</p>
13	Engagement with IPBES	On behalf of the Ramsar Convention, maintain active participation in the development and execution of the scientific work programmes of the IPBES, in order to: support an effective science/policy interface for wetland	Ongoing	STRP Chair attended IPBES 2 (2013), MEP meeting (2014), and IPBES 3 (2015). STRP representative attended MEP meetings (2013 and 2015).

		biodiversity, and ensure that high-quality scientific information and understanding of wetlands is incorporated into policy-making.		The STRP and the Secretariat have nominated some expert candidates for appointment to IPBES processes.
11	Reviewing topicality of adopted guidances		No activities undertaken	
12	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza		Ongoing	<p>Expert members maintaining watching brief on this area, which has seen in 2014 and 2015 the emergence of two new HPAI viruses (H5N8 and H5N2) that affect wild birds both as victims and vectors.</p> <p>During 2014, STRP contributed to the UN co-convened CMS/FAO Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds statements on H5N8 in response to irresponsible use of disinfectants in wetland habitats in outbreak areas in Asia. In addition, an STRP expert wrote to the editors of a high profile scientific journal (CDC's Emerging Infectious Diseases) with respect to a paper promoting the culling of wild birds in response to HPAI, highlighting obligations under Ramsar and existing contrary guidance. The paper was changed in response.</p> <p>See also progress under related tasks 33 & 39.</p>
14 & 23	Harmonised MEA information systems and on-line Convention reporting mechanisms		No activities undertaken	No direct engagement by the STRP; role is handled by the Secretariat.
15	Input of Regional Initiatives experience to STRP work		Ongoing	<p>Identified as high priority initiative under Secretariat's Strategy and Partnerships Programme.</p> <p>Note also that the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (as a tool under the MedWet regional</p>

				<p>initiative) is a key partner in the just-launched project "Evaluation économique des services écologiques rendus par les zones humides dans le cadre du changement climatique en Méditerranée", led by the Plan Bleu and due to last two years, and funded among others by the MAVA and Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundations.</p> <p>The aim is to assess and promote the role that wetlands can play in mitigating the impacts of climate change, in a sample of Mediterranean wetlands, and the MWO will report its results to the STRP.</p> <p>Note as well the development of a DR on Peatlands, climate change and wise use: Implications for the Ramsar Convention by the Nordic Baltic Ramsar Initiative (NorBalWet). An assessment report "Peatlands and climate change in a Ramsar context: a Nordic Baltic perspective" has been proposed to be presented at COP12.</p>
16	Exchange of information with other MEAs' subsidiary bodies, including through CSAB		Ongoing	<p>STRP Chair participated in SBSTTA 18 and CMS Scientific Council 18. Deputy Secretary General participated in CSAB 6. CSAB 7, scheduled for June 2014, was not held. STRP18 received a briefing on CSAB from David Morgan of CITES.</p> <p>STRP Chair has also initiated a discussion within CSAB concerning wildlife-related diseases such as Ebola.</p>
17	Review of available guidance on sustainable investment in relation to wetlands		No activities undertaken	

	Wetland inventory, assessment, monitoring and reporting			
18	Reporting on the state of the world's wetlands and their services to people, and the Convention's effectiveness	<p>a) Preparation and publication of 1st edition of a periodic State of the World's Wetlands and their services (SoWWS)/Global Wetland Outlook (GWO) reporting.</p> <p>b) further implementation of Resolution VIII.26 (2002) on developing indicators on the results of the Convention's activities, in collaboration with other biodiversity MEAs so as to achieve a coherent approach to indicator development, such that the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Convention may occur at least once in each reporting cycle; and advice on how reporting on these indicators may be incorporated into the National Reports of the Parties.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Identified as a top priority by SC46.</p> <p>A Briefing Note, which highlights recent scientific literature on the status and trends of wetlands, has been drafted and will be translated and published for COP12.</p> <p>At the request of the Secretariat, factsheets will now be developed as Secretariat products and be delivered through the Secretariat's Communications Program. The STRP is providing advice and recommendations on the scientific content of the factsheets, including a factsheet on the Wetland Extent Index which has been published.</p> <p>Three factsheets on corals, peatlands and wetland-related indicators are under preparation.</p> <p>The Wetland Extent Index indicator will be submitted for publication by WCMC to a peer-reviewed journal.</p>
19	Development and coordination of a Global Wetland Observing System (GWOS) partnership	Establishment of a Global Wetland Observing System (GWOS) partnership mechanism (and portal), designed to access data and information for and facilitate SoWWS/GWO reporting.	Ongoing	No new initiatives, however partnership is well-established and regularly renewed at STRP meetings, e.g. Global Mangrove Watch offers significant opportunities for collaboration and investment in new projects. STRP18 briefings by JAXA and ESA highlighted such opportunities, and STRP recommends that the Parties consider including this task in the future work programme as a high priority.
22	Maintaining an overview of the status of wetland inventory		No activities undertaken	STRP18 recommended that Parties consider moving this to be a high priority task.
24	Enhanced support for the		No activities	No progress on delivering searchable web portal, but

	implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan		undertaken	STRP Chair is a member of the Strategic Plan Working Group.
	Wetlands of International Importance			
25a	Implementation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) – 2012 revision	<p>Develop streamlined tools and mechanisms for enhanced and streamlined Ramsar Site designation and data and information management, including redevelopment of the Ramsar Sites Database and on-line submission tools for RIS. [STRP advise]</p> <p>Urgently consider scope for minor modifications to the RIS – 2012 revision to support monitoring at Ramsar Sites through possible inclusion of sub-fields related to: change at the site, for example in fields 12a, 12c, and 16 relating to species composition and wetland type; identification of thresholds of change in ecological character; and monitoring indicators.</p>	Completed	<p>Identified as a top priority by SC46.</p> <p>Provided advice to SC46.</p>
25b	RIS and guidance – further development		No activities undertaken	Not required because Secretariat has taken the lead on this.
26	Ramsar Sites and ecosystem benefits/services		Ongoing	<p>A proposal for collecting case studies was launched at a Nordic Baltic regional meeting. A proposal for assessment of ecosystem services including economic valuations was drafted but did not receive funding.</p> <p>Next steps are to: encourage the identification by Parties of case studies undertaking more thoroughly ecosystem services assessments including, whenever feasible, economic valuation of those services and start compiling such case studies.</p>
27	Understanding national site designation processes and impediments to national Ramsar		No activities undertaken	SRA recommended at STRP18 that Parties consider moving this to be a high priority task.

	Site networks			
28	Target development to support the objectives for the Ramsar List		No activities undertaken	
29 & 30	Ramsar Site Criteria and identification of globally significant areas for biodiversity		No activities undertaken	
	Ramsar, wetlands and other sectors			
	A. Wetlands and human health			STRP18 recommends that the CPs consider including wetland poisons in the future work programme of the STRP. Specific guidance for managing poisons in wetlands, and preventing them from entering wetlands, could be useful to ensure humans, livestock and wildlife are not adversely exposed. This is an issue being considered by other MEAs (e.g., CMS Resolution 11.15 contains guidelines regarding migratory bird poisoning and references Ramsar Resolution XI.12).
31	Guidance on “Wetlands and Human Health” for the health sector	Prepare guidance on “Wetlands and human health” for the health sector	No activities undertaken	An important partnership was created through this work area, which can be further developed under the Secretariat’s Strategy and Partnerships Program. Although no progress on the specific task, a book on <i>Wetlands and Human Health</i> has been published in 2015 (see tasks No. 36 and 40 below).
32	Wetlands and human health case studies	Presentation of case studies selected to demonstrate: i) an evidentiary basis for the causal links between wetland management and improved health outcomes; ii) wetland management is directed towards minimizing the trade-offs between regulating ecosystem services and	No activities undertaken	Although no progress on specific task, collaboration with partners has contributed a video, which can be used by Contracting Parties.

		<p>provisioning ecosystem services;</p> <p>iii) health outcomes are improved for one or each of the following categories: a) water borne diseases; b) vector borne diseases; c) exposure to toxic materials; d) improving access and utilisation for recreation and physical exercise; e) natural disaster event.</p>		
33 & 39	Ramsar Wetland Diseases Manual tasks	<p>A. Further development of <i>Wildlife Diseases Manual</i>:</p> <p>a) promotion and dissemination of the existing Ramsar Wetland Disease Manual – essentially some targeted publicity and awareness raising of its availability as a resource;</p> <p>b) examine the feasibility of, and conduct if appropriate, a conversion of parts or all of the manual to a web-based product;</p> <p>c) further enhance its accessibility as a text for training purposes;</p> <p>d) translate existing materials into French and Spanish to enhance outreach.</p> <p>B. Using the views of wetland managers and other relevant stakeholders, expand the content of the <i>Ramsar wetland disease manual: Guidelines for assessment, monitoring and management of animal disease in wetlands</i> in its coverage, to include plant diseases and human diseases associated with wetlands. This will take two forms: a revision to the manual to ensure it deals with both human health and wildlife health; and factsheets on particular human diseases.</p>	Ongoing	<p>This work provides an excellent opportunity for further development through the Secretariat's Communication Strategy.</p> <p>Although the Ramsar Wetland Disease Manual is currently available as web-based PDFs, a dedicated website is under construction which will incorporate a hyperlinked and more searchable Manual plus training resource videos etc. to demonstrate and illustrate the Manual's utility.</p> <p>The Manual has been promoted and disseminated at a variety of conferences and meetings.</p>
34	Development of wetland &		No activities	

	health indicators		undertaken	
35 & 37	Combined Task under Ecosystem Services TWG: Guidance on health implications of ecosystem services disruptions; with a view to being able to include health cost and benefit assessment in economic models and wetland valuation		No activities undertaken	
36 & 40	Conversion of previous triennium products into Ramsar materials: Review of Ramsar guidance in relation to human health and Encouraging ecosystem approaches to health issues		Ongoing	Publication of a book on <i>Wetlands and Human Health</i> . Chapter 11 provides a review of human health issues and Ramsar's wetland guidance and handbooks.
38	Guidance for wetland managers on human and animal health impact, burden of disease and community health assessments, in wetlands		No activities undertaken	
B. Wetlands and climate change				
41	Advice on implications of climate change for Convention processes	i) Continue to prepare advice on the implications of climate change for maintaining the ecological character of wetlands, including <i>inter alia</i> strategies for dealing with the emergence of novel or hybrid ecosystems as a consequence of climate change, the determination of appropriate reference conditions for assessing change in ecological character, determining specified limits of change, and the reporting of change in ecological character at Ramsar Sites, and how this can be reflected in Ramsar Information Sheets, and to collate information from such	Ongoing/no activities undertaken	Subtask 41(iv) (c) Identified as a top priority by SC46. A writing workshop was held in Beijing in May 2014. A Briefing Note on advice provided by other MEAs, in particular the outcomes of CBD COP11, is in preparation. No progress on ecological character aspects and other tasks.

		<p>assessments for future meetings of the Conference of the Parties;</p> <p>ii) Collate and assess case studies and other information generated in response to Resolution XI.14 paragraph 32;</p> <p>iii) Working with interested Contracting Parties and international organizations, to prepare advice on sustainable management of carbon stocks which enhances wetland biodiversity and the delivery of ecosystem services, thereby contributing to human well-being, with special attention to indigenous peoples and local communities;</p> <p>iv) In conjunction with the Secretariat and Ramsar Regional Initiative Networks and Centres, collaborate with relevant international organizations and conventions, within their respective mandates, to further investigate the potential contribution of wetland ecosystems to climate change mitigation and adaptation through:</p> <p>a) preparing advice on assessing social resilience and vulnerability of wetlands to climate change, to complement the existing advice on assessing the biophysical vulnerability of a wetlands to climate change (Ramsar Technical Report No. 5/CBD Technical Series No. 57);</p> <p>b) preparing advice on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change for coastal and inland wetlands; and</p> <p>c) reviewing any relevant advice provided by other MEAs, in particular the outcomes of CBD COP-11.</p>		
41	CC1-Implications of, and advice on, climate change for Convention implementation		No activities undertaken	

	Sub Task CC1.1): Implications of climate change for maintaining the ecological character of wetland			
41	Subtask CC1.2): Case studies and other information generated in response to Resolution XI.14 paragraph 32		No activities undertaken	
41	Subtask CC1.3): Advice on sustainable management of carbon stocks		No activities undertaken	
41	Subtask CC1.4): Potential contribution of wetland ecosystems to climate change mitigation and adaptation		No activities undertaken	As noted in task 15, the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (as a tool under the MedWet regional initiative) has launched a project to assess and promote the role that wetlands can play in mitigating the impacts of climate change.
42	Ramsar Sites boundary migration in response to sea level rise and other climate change effects		No activities undertaken	Briefing Note completed last triennium.
	C. Wetlands & water resource management			
43	The role of biodiversity and wetlands in the global water cycle	Establish an expert group on maintaining the ability of biodiversity to continue to support the water cycle (as requested by CBD COP10 Decision X/28 and approved by SC42), and communicate with Parties so that they can provide scientific inputs through their own experts.	Ongoing	A manuscript has been drafted and is being finalized.
44	Ramsar, water and wetlands: review and development of a strategy for engaging in the global water debate	Develop a strategy for Ramsar to engage fully in the global water debate, focusing on the role of wetlands as natural water infrastructure. This includes specifying aims, mechanisms for engagement, and products needed	Ongoing	Identified as a top priority by SC46. Paper commissioned by the Secretariat, reviewed by STRP and provided to the Secretariat.

		to support the engagement. [Note. The Secretariat's 2011 development of a "Vision 40+" for the Convention contributes to this strategy.]		
45	Environmental water allocation for wetlands - guidance	Work with Mexico and WWF to share approaches and experiences and to develop further guidance or tools for management and allocation of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands.	Ongoing	STRP member has been working with the Government of Mexico on a DR for COP12. The DR was accepted by SC48 to be transmitted to COP12.
Wetlands & agriculture				
46	Wise use of wetlands in relation to coastal and inland aquaculture guidance	Develop guidance for the wise use of wetlands in relation to coastal and inland aquaculture. (Building on lessons learnt from best practices on sustainable aquaculture, and recognizing that global dependence on aquaculture is growing, that wild stocks continue to be depleted, and that meeting the need for seafood is resulting in significant direct (habitat loss, wild harvest of species) and indirect impacts (pollution, contamination) on wetlands.)	Ongoing	RTR drafted on Inland wetlands, capture fisheries and aquaculture, which can be finalized early in next triennium if aligned with new work plan.
47	Impacts of agricultural practices on rice paddies as wetland systems		No activities undertaken	
48	Re-engineering agricultural landscapes		No activities undertaken	
49	Wetlands and biofuels		No activities undertaken	
Wetlands & poverty eradication				
50	Wetlands & poverty eradication – tools and case studies	Further tools and guidance to support the implementation of Resolutions IX.14, X.28 & XI.13, on: i) advice on mainstreaming the "Integrated Framework for linking wetland conservation and wise use with	i) Ongoing ii) Ongoing iii) Ongoing	Identified as a top priority by SC46. Three discussion papers, a draft <i>Guide to available guidelines and tools for addressing poverty eradication in relation to wetlands</i> and a draft

		poverty eradication” into national policies and programmes for poverty eradication; ii) development of structured ‘guide to available guidelines and tools’ for addressing poverty eradication in relation to wetlands; and iii) case studies and best practices on the application of the Framework for assessing poverty in wetlands.		Briefing Note were produced. However, due to time constraints and the task not aligning with the proposed thematic work areas for the next STRP, the Secretariat has decided that the outputs should be consolidated into a report for internal use/reference.
51	Supplementary guidance to support the Resolution XI.13 poverty eradication framework		No activities undertaken	
	Wetlands and urbanization			
52	Planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands		Ongoing	Briefing Note published
53	Urban wetland management demonstration sites		Ongoing	Four workshops were held over the triennium in collaboration with the Ramsar Secretariat (supported by the SRA for Africa), local Contracting Parties, IOPs and UN Habitat in Senegal (x2), Togo and Ghana. These explored how the principles adopted through Resolution XI.11 could be embedded into urban planning and management practices at a town or city level.
	Wetlands and Tourism			
54	Wetlands and tourism – development of guiding principles for tourism in and around wetlands		No activities undertaken	An important partnership was created through work done for COP11, which can be further developed under the Secretariat’s Strategy and Partnerships Program
	Wetlands and energy			
55	Managing energy sector activities in relation to wetlands: guide to guidance and case studies		No activities undertaken	

56	Monitoring energy trends reported in global assessments		No activities undertaken	
57	Applying ecological impact criteria in the selection of energy generation sites		No activities undertaken	
58	Capacity building for energy sector regulatory oversight		No activities undertaken	
Wetlands & ecosystem services				
59 60	Economics of wetland ecosystem services/benefits AND Wetlands and disaster risk reduction	<p>Building on the work of TEEB and others (& the TEEB water and wetland synthesis report):</p> <p>3. Conduct a user needs analysis for Ramsar Parties & wetland (site) managers) on tools, knowledge, methodology and data required to support integration of ecosystem service values in planning and decision making;</p> <p>4. Conduct a scoping review of the advancements in ecosystem services (description / recognition, valuation, capture) to support wise use of wetlands, in particular cross sectoral integration;</p> <p>5. Develop a guide to guidance on best practices for integrating ecosystem services values within the response options for wetland management;</p> <p>6. Conduct a scoping review of technical aspects of relevance to the Ramsar Convention in the finance, banking, investment, insurance and other economic sectors;</p> <p>Develop an assessment mechanism for the contribution of wetland services/benefits to national GDPs.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Identified as a top priority by SC46.</p> <p>A Briefing Note is being prepared.</p> <p>The user needs analysis task has been partially addressed through surveys of Asia and South East Asia site managers, and an analysis of COP11 National Reports. A set of tools which help analyse ecosystem services has also been collated.</p> <p>A paper on Wetland ecosystem services and the Ramsar Convention: An assessment of needs has been drafted and was discussed at the European pre-COP regional meeting.</p>
	Ecosystem Services User Needs Analysis and Guide to Guidance		Ongoing	See above

	Ecosystem services, wetland wise use and cross sectoral integration		No activities undertaken	
59	TEEB – Water and Wetlands Follow Up		No activities undertaken	
	Ecological Character and Change in Ecological Character			
20, 25 & 41	Ecological Character and Change in Ecological Character - further guidance	Advice and guidance on four aspects of wetland ecological character issues: A. Describing ecological character; B. Monitoring for change in ecological character; C. Reporting change in ecological character; and D. Responding to change in ecological character.	Ongoing	Identified as a top priority by SC46. At request of Secretariat, the document commissioned is now intended primarily for use by the Secretariat. The STRP provided comments.