Component 4:
Best Practices and Lessons Learned on the Provisioning of Scientific and Technical Guidance: Perspectives from International Organizations and NGOs

Veronica Lo

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Graphic word cloud generated by interview results

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Terms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEPA	Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness
CEPA NFP	CEPA National Focal Point
COP	Conference of the Contracting Parties
CP	Contracting Party
DR	Draft Resolution
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GWP	Global Water Partnership
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IHE	UNESCO Institute for Water Education
IHP	UNESCO International Hydrological Programme
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization
IOP	International Organization Partner
IUCN	IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature
MAB	UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NBA	Niger Basin Authority
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SC	Standing Committee
Secretariat	Ramsar Secretariat
STRP	Scientific and Technical Review Panel
STRP NFP	STRP National Focal Point
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP MCEB	UNEP Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WLI	Wetland Link International
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSM	Wetland Site Manager
WWT	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

The term ‘interviewee’ and ‘respondent’ are used interchangeably to denote a person interviewed for this report.

The term `body’ or ‘bodies’ refers to a range of participants involved in a process or activity, including inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

Executive Summary

At Ramsar's 2012 Conference of the Parties (COP), Resolution XI.16 was adopted to undertake "a review of the delivery, uptake and implementation of scientific and technical advice and guidance to the Convention." The review is made up of five components and five reports, of which this is the fourth.

This report specifically focuses on reviewing the scientific guidance and tools of relevant global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to identify useful lessons and best practices that could be emulated by Ramsar.

There are two main objectives to this report:

1) Review means through which global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOs provide scientific and technical advice, and identify common themes, useful products, and distribution channels, through literature reviews and interviews with representatives of relevant global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOs; and
2) Summarize lessons learnt and best practices on the provisioning of scientific and technical advice for the Ramsar Convention.

A summary of lessons learnt (addressing objective 2), based on interview results and the literature review, are presented below.

Key Lessons Learnt

Planning for Guidance

- A needs assessment defines whether guidance is needed and what kind, and the target group analysis ensures that the most efficient way to provide guidance is identified. This enables the guidance to be `marketed' to the appropriate target groups. Strategies for communications and guidance development are already identified, for example, on the `Wetland CEPA Methods' webpage (http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities-cepa-programme-wetland-cepa-methodologies/main/ramsar/1-63-69%5E20257_4000_0__) but implementation of these best practices already identified could be strengthened.

Accessing Target Groups for Guidance

- Interviewees identified several organizations with access to target stakeholders and experience in communicating with them. Ramsar should form or strengthen partnerships with them to enhance delivery and uptake of guidance.
- The majority of representatives of Ramsar bodies and processes, international and regional MEAs, and IGOs, IOPs and NGOs that were interviewed in the analyses for Components 1-4 called for Ramsar guidance to be provided in different languages. This not only serves to improve outreach to target groups, but also ensures inclusivity of expertise around the world. The development of guidance with partner organizations can sometimes facilitate the provisioning of guidance in different languages through cost-sharing.

- The majority of interviewees felt that the language used in guidance materials is too complex and filled with jargon, exacerbating the problem of not having guidance available in different languages. Additionally, the guidance provided should be as concise as possible.

Diversify

- A wide suite of innovative guidance and capacity-building tools are being utilized by IOPs, IGOs, IFIs, NGOs, and other processes. Ramsar should diversify its guidance modalities, and should select them based on the content of the guidance and target audience, with the caveat that the latest innovations may not be applicable to certain groups –e.g. web-based tools are not effective in areas where access to the Internet is limited.

Strategize

- A logical framework approach is a tool that enables the development of indicators and measures of failure or success, and can help monitor and evaluate the efficacy of guidance. Some CEPA initiatives already make use of a logical framework approach, and this can be strengthened across all guidance initiatives

Evaluating Efficacy

- Stakeholder groups should be involved in evaluation of guidance, which will not only enable practical advice on improving the guidance for intended users, but can also encourage feedback on best ways to implement recommended actions in the guidance.

Maintaining Legitimacy and Scientific Integrity

The science produced and the expertise of the STRP members are generally perceived as strengths of the Convention, and that science should underpin technical guidance. However, efforts are needed to ensure that guidance provided can be of practical use to stakeholders.

Introduction and Background

In Resolution XI.16, 'Ensuring efficient delivery of scientific and technical advice and support to the Convention,' the Contracting Parties at Ramsar's 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP11, Bucharest, 2012) approved "a review of the delivery, uptake and implementation of scientific and technical advice and guidance to the Convention", the findings of which would be reported to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP12). The review was commissioned and undertaken in collaboration with the Review Committee set up at the 46th Standing Committee Meeting (Decision SC46-14).

The review requested by the Contracting Parties at COP11 has been divided into five components, as listed below. These components are separate reports drafted by a team of two consultants, Stephanie Mansourian and Veronica Lo, each taking a lead on a specific component.

I. Review of existing Ramsar scientific and technical guidance and processes, its utility, use, application, conversion into practical tools etc.
II. Review of the roles of relevant Ramsar bodies which provide scientific support and delivery to stakeholders.
III. Review of the scientific guidance and tools of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to identify useful lessons and best practices that could be emulated by Ramsar.
IV. Review of the scientific guidance and tools of relevant global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOS to identify useful lessons and best practices that could be emulated by Ramsar.
V. Major findings, lessons and recommendations for the way forward to improve the way scientific guidance is used, applied and converted into tool, and how Ramsar bodies and processes that provide scientific support and delivery function.

This report encompasses Component IV of this process, `Reviewing the scientific guidance and tools of relevant global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOS to identify useful lessons and best practices that could be emulated by Ramsar'. It is complementary to Component III which is a similar analysis, but focused on international and regional MEAs.

There are two main objectives of this report, each of which are covered in separate sections:

1. Review means through which global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOS provide scientific and technical advice, and identify common themes, useful products, and distribution channels, through literature reviews and interviews with representatives of relevant global and regional intergovernmental organizations and NGOs; and
2. Provide recommendations and best practices on the provisioning of scientific and technical advice for the Ramsar Convention.

Methodology

This analysis was performed by conducting a review of relevant Ramsar documents, guidance materials produced by IOPs, IGOs and NGOs, and other literature (see Annex I for a list of materials consulted). Additionally, interviews were conducted with representatives of relevant organizations identified by the Ramsar Secretariat. In total, 11 people were interviewed, out of 18 invited. Table 1 lists representatives of various organizations interviewed. Annex II provides the interview questions, and Annex III a compilation of responses pertaining to specific people for the Ramsar Secretariat to conduct follow-up.

Organizations where representatives were not interviewed include, *inter alia*, the World Bank, World Health Organization, UNEP, Inter-American Development Bank, the Niger Basin Authority, and Lake Chad Basin Commission. Nonetheless, efforts were made to include these organizations in the analysis through reviews of their guidance materials and relevant literature, to ensure representativeness and balance of findings from IOPs, IGOs, local and international NGOs, and other bodies and processes.

Table 1: List of Interviewees

Representative	Organization
Global and Regional Inter-govenmental organizations and processes	
Director, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences	UNESCO – Man and the Biosphere Programme
Senior Aquatic Officer	FAO
Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) and Integrated Drought Management Programme (IDMP) Project Officer, Climate and Water Department, WMO	World Meteorological Organization
Executive Secretary	Global Water Partnership
Executive Secretary	ICPDR-International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
Non-governmental Organizations	
Director of Conservation	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Center for Environment and Peace	Conservation International
Director, Freshwater Climate Change	Conservation International
Anne van Dam Associate Professor of Environmental Systems Analysis	UNESCO – Institute for Hydrological Education (IHE)
Fisheries Strategy Lead, Global Marine Team	The Nature Conservancy
Marine Restoration Scientist	The Nature Conservancy

1. Means of Providing Guidance and Best Practices: Literature Review and Interview Results

A) Key tools and approaches for the provisioning of scientific and technical guidance

Scientific *vs*. technical guidance and target audiences

The majority of interviewees did not make a formal distinction between scientific and technical guidance, and generally thought the two are linked, with science being the basis for guidance. It appeared that the distinction is not relevant or an issue for many organizations, and one respondent noted that assessing the balance between the provisioning of science and technical guidance is "neither possible nor useful" for their organization.

UNESCO-IHE identified science guidance as being the primary guidance output, given their focus on education, training and building knowledge networks for improving water management practices. GWP additionally hosts a guidance toolbox, www.gwptoolbox.org, also featuring teaching tools at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Most other organizations viewed themselves as providing either a combination of both science and technical guidance, or being focused on technical guidance that is based on science.

It follows that in most cases, separate target audiences for scientific and technical guidance were not identified by interviewees. Instead, a wide range of audiences for the provisioning of guidance was mentioned, including contracting parties, managers, high-level decision makers, land owners, the general public, technical staff, and local communities. Table 2 outlines some examples of the types of guidance provided by the organizations researched (sometimes in partnership with Ramsar and other organizations) and their target audiences. The guidance includes traditional printed materials such as brochures and technical reports, advisory services, and web-based capacity-building tools such as help desks, videos and education toolboxes.

Table 2: Examples of Guidance Provided

Guidance Type	Example	Description	Target Audience
E-learning platfoms	E-learning platform on integrated flood management (WMO-World Bank)	Web resource with tutorials, knowledge base library, and virtual trainer http://daad.wb.tu-harburg.de/	Managers, decision-makers, practitioners
Education toolbox	Global Water Partnership Toolbox for Integrated Watershed Management (GWP)	Guidelines, case studies, library of references, materials available in six languages www.gwptoolbox.org	Water experts, decision-makers, practitioners, academic institutions, general public
Curricula	Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for Schools - (WWT)	Provides a range of water and wetland related learning opportunities including hands-on activities http://sudsforschools.wwt.org.uk/the-project/	Primary and secondary school students and teachers, local communities
Education Centre	Wetland Link International (coordinated by WWT)	Global network of wetland education centres http://wli.wwt.org.uk/about-wli/	Open membership, education centre targeted at wetland visitors
Online Help Desk	WMO-GWP Help Desk for integrated flood management	Provides guidance on flood management policy, strategy, and institutional development http://www.apfm.info/?page_id=1253	Government agencies, river basin organizations, development agencies, practitioners, managers, communities, NGOs, academic institutions
Online Forum	National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBSAP) Forum (CBD, UNDP and UNEP)	Online forum that provides support for action and implementation on NBSAPs through 2020 (http://nbsapforum.net/)	Government agencies, managers, practitioners, NGOs
Advisory Services	CI Advisory groups	Provisioning of input to implementation of national targets, global wetlands observing system, and global water adaptation programme http://www.conservation.org/projects/Pages/Center-for-Environment-and-Peace.aspx	Decision-makers, practitioners
Demonstration Project	Wings Over Wetlands Demonstration Project in Senegal and the Gambia, Saloum-Niumi Complex (Multiple partners including IOPs, IGOs, and local implementing partners)	Supporting development of a transboundary management plan and environmental education and awareness among local communities http://wow.wetlands.org/HANDSon/SenegalTheGambia/tabid/132/language/en-US/Default.aspx	Managers, decision-makers, practitioners, NGOs, development agencies, river basin organizations, local communities
Workshop	Regional workshop on the impacts of climate change on fishing communities in Lake Chad (Lake Help Desk for integrated flood	2011 workshop on Lake Chad climate change impacts and vulnerability, and recommendations for action www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3037e/i3037e.pdf	Decision-makers, practitioners, academia, general public

Guidance Type	Example	Description	Target Audience
	management Chad Basin Commission and FAO)		
Action Plan	Le Plan d'Action de Développement Durable du Bassin du Niger (Niger Basin Authority)	Strategic document that defines and guides the process of integrated and shared development in member countries of the NBA http://www.abn.ne/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=72%3Aetude-de-formulation-du-plan-daction-de-developpement-durable-padd-dans-le-bassin-du-niger&catid=14%3Aetudes-majeures&Itemid=10&lang=en	Decision-makers, policymakers, practitioners from member countries of the NBA
Database	Danube River Basin Water Quality Database (ICPDR)	The TransNational Monitoring Network (TNMN) provides data on surface water quality available to the public, and publishes it in annual TNMN yearbooks http://www.icpdr.org/wq-db/	Practioners, managers
Atlas, Yearbook	Kenya Wetlands Atlas (Government of Kenya, Danish International Development Agency, UNEP)	Details Kenya's wetlands and the specific pressures facing them http://na.unep.net/atlas/datlas/sites/default/files/Kenya_Wetlands.pdf	Decision-makers, managers, practitioners, general public
Videos	UNESCO MAB Live webcasts & video interviews	Interviews with UNESCO experts and international personalities http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/multimedia/news-videos/video-interviews/	Decision-makers, managers, practitioners, general public
Magazines	UPDATE: IHE Magazine	Features institutional information on water education, research and capacity development activities undertaken by IHE, alumni and partners. http://www.unesco-ihe.org/sites/default/files/update2014_interactive.pdf	Decision-makers, managers, practitioners, general public
Information Brochures	Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy (HELP) (IHP)	Provides general information about the HELP initiative for integrated catchment management http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002145/214516E.pdf	Decision-makers, managers, practitioners
Manuals	Wetland Disease Manual (Ramsar, WWT)	Comprehensive guidance on wetland diseases http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/lib/rtr7-disease.pdf	Managers, practitioners
Technical Papers	Healthy wetlands, healthy people: A review of wetlands and human health interactions (WHO)	Provides advice on wetland conservation and human health and well-being http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/2012/review_of_wetlands/en/	Wetland managers and decision-makers

B) Organizational Elements and Bodies for Guidance Provisioning

This section outlines the main operational elements, or bodies, by which scientific and technical guidance is provided among the range of IOPs, IGOs and NGOs studied. Interview respondents were also asked to provide a brief outline of operational elements. In some cases, for large IOPs, IGOs and NGOs, information from a relevant programme or process is provided, rather than the organization as a whole.

IGOs and IOPs often have formal scientific or advisory bodies, whereas the NGOs rely more on partnerships for expertise outside of their organizations. An exception is UNDP, which acts on the guidance provided by IGOs or specialized agencies in order to provide policy advice and associated technical assistance. Thus, one representative described UNDP as a client for guidance rather than a purveyor of it.[1]

One representative identified a troubling trend of funding cutbacks to science divisions in NGOs, resulting in "seriously undermining" the ability of an organization to fulfill its mandate with a strong science basis.

Table 3 lists the main operational elements or bodies identified for a range of organizations that play a role in the provisioning of guidance.

Table 3: Main Operational Elements or Bodies through which Guidance is Provided

Organization	Elements or Body	Role or Function
		IGOS, IOPs
UNEP	• Office of the Chief Scientist • Science Focal Points from UNEP`s various divisions	• Office guided by the UNEP Science Strategy, with an aim to strengthen the interface between global environmental science and policy, and strengthen science base of UNEP's activities • Office cooperates with UNEP's Divisions and Science Focal Points • Answers to the Executive and Deputy Executive Directors of UNEP
FAO[2] Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI)	• 2 Divisions and 6 branches • 5 regional offices • Various statutory bodies, including an advisory committee on fisheries research	• FI assists member countries and fishery bodies in gathering information in conformity with international standards • Advisory committee provides advice on the programme of work on fisheries research, including conservation and management, with members selected on the basis of expertise
World Bank Development Economics Unit	• Development Economics Vice Presidency (DEC) • Chief Economist	• DEC provides leadership and analytical services – the research and data arm of the World Bank, which includes development research, development prospects, and development data
WMO	20 partner organizations	Each partner has different fields of expertise, and ranges from national hydro services to semi-private companies
UN-Habitat	• Governing Council	• The CPR reviews work programme and budget, and prepares

[1] E-mail communication with a representative of UNDP, June 2014
[2] FAO is currently preparing a new organizational chart that will be published soon

Organization	Elements or Body	Role or Function
	• Secretariat • Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) • Working Groups	draft decisions and resolutions. It is assisted by working group meetings on various topics.
MAB	• 120 National Committees • Site Management Authorities • Secretariat	• Provide advisory services, including evaluation of biosphere sites, preparations for site nominations • Support provided by site management authorities and the Secretariat
NGOs, Other Processes		
GWP	• Technical Committee • 85 country water partnerships • 13 Regional water partnerships • Global Secretariat	• The Technical committee provides academic knowledge, including peer-reviewed material, and provides advice at regional and country levels including background papers, policy briefs, handbooks, etc. • Regional and country water partnerships implement activities. They are autonomous, each with their own governance structure and secretariat
TNC	• Science Council • Board of Directors	• Board membership includes several prominent scientists • Science Council includes Board scientists and external experts
CI	• Advisory groups • Moore Center for Science and Oceans	• Advisory groups provide advice to stakeholders on science that needs to be done, the kinds of data that need to be pulled together, and the kinds of tools that can help stakeholders. • Centre for Science and Oceans does analyses and develops partnerships
WWT	In-house experts	Roles are defined according to each project. No specific way to provide guidance, the appropriate experts are assigned to projects, and if needed will reach out to get additional expertise needed, and occasionally employ consultants
ICPDR	• 7 permanent expert groups • 1 ad-hoc expert group • Ad-hoc task groups • Secretariat	Expert groups are panels of specialists comprised of ICPDR contracting parties and observers, including governments, NGOs or other agencies. Each has its own TOR and mandates, and meet 2 or 3 times a year. Task groups may be established as needed.
NBA	• Comité Technique des Experts • Secretariat	The technical expert committee is composed of representatives of the member states of the Niger Basin Authority.
Lake Chad Basin Commission	• Technical experts committee • Secretariat	
UNESCO IHE Doctoral programme	External experts	External experts serve as guest lecturers for parts of the PhD programme, and additionally serve as external examiners
UNESCO IHP	National Committees	National committees are run under the authority of national governments, and are encouraged to be multi-stakeholder, including scientists and water managers.

C) Evaluating Success of Guidance

A large range of evaluation techniques are utilised by the organizations included in this analysis.

When asked about whether there was any evaluation of the guidance provided, most IGOs described formal in-depth evaluation processes. Indeed, some IFIs and IGOs have external evaluation offices, such as the World Bank`s Independent Evaluation Group, which performs project-level evaluations, analytical work, project documentation, surveys of staff and stakeholders, and impact evaluations.

NGOs were more prone to using inexpensive, relatively quick metrics such as statistics on document downloads, website visits, and workshop participants. It was noted by several representatives of NGOs that there is low capacity to perform or commission comprehensive evaluations, and thus quick and inexpensive indicators are preferred.

An innovative way to evaluate a particular guidance product is through asking a sub-set of the intended target audience - for example, WWT mentioned that the Ramsar Wetland Disease Manual had been reviewed by stakeholders before publishing, which enabled the manual to have greater impact.

Timelines for performing evaluations ranged from several years, to brief self-reporting every three months.

Methods of evaluation included the following:

- Evaluation by external consultants, such as commissioning questionnaires on effectiveness of guidance or evaluation by external funding agencies;
- Internal oversight service, with regional or global evaluations like the Madrid Action Plan adopted by members for every 5 years (MAB);
- Internal evaluations, such as internal councils to discuss;
- Internal performance reporting, such as via an organization’s intranet
- Evaluation indices;
- Observations, such as a drastic reduction in mortality rates due to flooding after implementation of WMO Nepal pilot projects on flood management;
- Number of policies or programmes created ;
- Number of downloads of publications;
- Number of workshop participants; and
- Number of website visits.

D) Best Practices: Perspectives from Interviewees

i) Development and Delivery of Guidance: Perspectives from Interviewees

What works well:

- Working with local partners, NGOs, community-based organizations, universities or research institutes in other countries, and any potential stakeholders in river basins or in coastal zones;
- Improving layout and presentation on the guidance materials. One interviewee noted that after such improvements were made, one of their guidance pieces was featured on PreventionWeb.net and had wide circulation;
- Advocating for a multidisciplinary approach to flood management, as environmental, legal, socioeconomic aspects of flood management are underestimated; and
- Involving stakeholders early on and all the way through the process, and doing a needs assessment.

What works less well:

- For capacity-building activities, a major limitation identified was following up with workshop participants, because they leave the office, their terms are not renewed, etc.;
- UN processes were described as `heavy'. As such, many valuable points and ideas don`t come across effectively. For example, scientists must submit documents in English or French, which is difficult if neither is their first language;
- We need more human and financial resources, to maintain an updated overall agenda that is appealing and fresh to member states and that addresses the real concerns of the countries; and
- In terms of scientific research, theoretical research doesn`t work unless it can be translated into something practical and can be applied in the real world.

ii) Organizational Structure and Bodies: Perspectives from Interviewees

What works well:

- One representative presented a `wish list' for their organization, which includes a complete pool of experts representing economic, social, technical, and environmental aspects, in addition to a dedicated communications officer;
- Convening the role of boundary organizations that help bridge gaps between disciplines or different types of institutions or different regions, and help coalesce and connect perspectives; and

- Clarifying conservation objectives and tasks for various ecosystems, including islands, mountains, etc.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes, either for developing programs or implementing on the ground
- Commissioning case studies and specific targeted pieces of work
- For GWP, the global technical committee has experts that are paid for their time, and agree to make their time available for 30 days a year. Some of the institutions have some voluntary contributions, and others provide in-kind support.

What works less well:

- The role of science is changing. Even when there is funding for science and scientists, in some organizations the role of science is not viewed as important; and
- Having a standing committee that has to meet once a year. GWP tries to work on a more flexible programmatic arrangement and call on expertise when required.

iii) Targeted Advice for Ramsar from Interviewees

Interviewees were asked to identify specific lessons to share with Ramsar regarding scientific and technical guidance. The following is a compilation of responses. Additional contacts and specific references for the Ramsar Secretariat are included in Annex III of this report.

Marketing and Promoting

- Ramsar should provide practical guidance on ecosystem services and their quantification for conserving wetlands, which would be good way to promote and market the concept of conserving wetlands;
- Ramsar should focus efforts on translating its sound and reputable science into something that can be understand and applied on the ground; and
- Communicating to WSMs is a common challenge. The term `world heritage' is appealing. However, `Ramsar sites', `wetlands' and `biospheres' are harder to understand.

Accessibility and Language

- Science generated in the academic community is very far removed from the local level or policy level. Science requires a significant translation before it can be understood. In the words of one interviewee commenting on a science-policy conference recently attended, `many scientists wouldn`t know a policy maker or wetland site manager if one sat on top of them';
- Guidance needs to be relevant to end users –think carefully about content, language and accessibility and how it`s provided, whether it`s online, or hard copy.;
- Guidance materials should be backed up by Skype workshops and practical training;
- General guidelines and documents should be simple. People need to be convinced by evidence, not abstract concepts; and

- There should be a stronger flow of information from CEPA NFPs.

Partnerships

- Strengthen regional centres in a more effective way. Many organizations are keen to develop training, and there is huge demand in Africa. We should work together more and have more unified efforts (UNESCP-IHE);
- Build a stronger connection with real actors on the ground and enable local bottom-up initiatives. Mobilize public support and partnerships;
- Better coordination between UNESCO and Ramsar: explore on the operational side how to support each other, and better unite expertise and knowledge, develop joint programme projects, demonstration projects, etc;
- More of a bridge is needed between the science and the people on the ground – Ramsar can work with the International Water Management Institute to take products produced and translate them into products that can be used;
- A practical way forward would be for NFPs to become part of the Global Water Partnership. It`s a valuable group of people with good political contacts, who seek to influence water policy; and
- Reach out to the private sector, e.g. the World Business Council on Sustainable Development.

Targeted Training

- Look for more opportunities to provide targeted training to different audiences such as wetland managers. Provide training of trainers in different parts of the world
- UNESCO IHE has a large doctoral research program, with 140 students doing research. It would be interesting to link research activities to wetland projects (UNESCP IHE).

Other Comments

- Evaluate effectiveness and impact of guidance, such as through stakeholder assessments. The Ramsar Wetland Disease Manual was highlighted as an example of successful stakeholder assessment.
- Ramsar runs the risk of being dominated by American and European interests as capacity in Africa, Latin America, and Asia is weak;
- The quality of Ramsar guidance is good, but the impact depends to a large extent on the activities of parties. Many countries do not live up to their commitment to Ramsar, or do not pay contributions. The national reports show that parties do not do what they promise to do when it comes to managing Ramsar sites;
- The Ramsar Convention is relatively conservative, but conservation as a field is rapidly evolving and there is a new generation of organizations that are web-savvy.
- Have a strong voice in the Rio+20 process and sustainable development goals; and

- Make information on Ramsar sites accessible to the public – for example, a database on Ramsar sites and status.

2. Lessons Learned for Delivering Guidance

This section provides some key recommendations for the provisioning of guidance, based on interview results and an analysis of relevant literature (Annex I).

Planning for Guidance

- A needs assessment defines whether guidance is needed and what kind, and the target group analysis ensures that the most efficient way to provide guidance is identified. This enables the guidance to be `marketed' to the appropriate target groups. Strategies for communications and guidance development are already identified, for example, on the `Wetland CEPA Methods' webpage (http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities-cepa-programme-wetland-cepa-methodologies/main/ramsar/1-63-69%5E20257_4000_0__) but implementation of these best practices already identified could be strengthened.

Accessing Target Groups for Guidance

- Interviewees identified several organizations with access to target stakeholders and experience in communicating with them. Ramsar should form or strengthen partnerships with them to enhance delivery and uptake of guidance.
- The majority of representatives of Ramsar bodies and processes, international and regional MEAs, and IGOs, IOPs and NGOs that were interviewed in the analyses for Components I, II, III and IV called for Ramsar guidance to be provided in different languages. This not only serves to improve outreach to target groups, but also ensures inclusivity of expertise around the world. The development of guidance with partner organizations can sometimes facilitate the provisioning of guidance in different languages through cost-sharing.
- The majority of interviewees felt that the language used in guidance materials is too complex and filled with jargon, exacerbating the problem of not having guidance available in different languages. Additionally, the guidance provided should be as concise as possible. This is true not only for guidance, but should also be practiced where possible when producing other documents and products of the Ramsar Secretariat. When asked for views on the STRP Modus Operandi in the report for Component II, for example, several respondents commented that the length of the document was an obstacle to thoroughly reading it.

Diversify

- As demonstrated by Table 2, a wide suite of innovative guidance and capacity-building tools are being utilized by IOPs, IGOs, IFIs, NGOs, and other processes. Ramsar should diversify its guidance modalities, and should select them based on the content of the guidance and target

audience, with the caveat that the latest innovations may not be applicable to certain groups – e.g. web-based tools are not effective in areas where access to the Internet is limited.

Strategize

- A logical framework approach is a tool that enables the development of indicators and measures of failure or success, and can help monitor and evaluate the efficacy of guidance. Some CEPA initiatives already make use of a logical framework approach, and this can be strengthened across all guidance initiatives

Evaluating Efficacy

- Stakeholder groups should be involved in evaluation of guidance, which will not only enable practical advice on improving the guidance for intended users, but can also encourage feedback on best ways to implement recommended actions in the guidance.

Maintaining Legitimacy and Scientific Integrity

- The science produced and the expertise of the STRP members are generally perceived as strengths of the Convention, and that science should underpin technical guidance. However, efforts are needed to ensure that guidance provided can be of practical use to stakeholders.

These lessons have been used in Report 5 under this review to provide Ramsar with specific recommendations.

Annex I: List of Resources Consulted

CEPA Toolkit for NBSAP Coordinators (SCBD and IUCN, 2007) (http://www.cepatoolkit.org/html/resources/40/401D521E-2A0A-47BB-85F6-BBDC158B4B58/Section%203%20final%200904.pdf)

An Evaluation of the Use and Utility of Ramsar Guidance (van Bowen 2008) (http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/strp/Use_utility_Ramsar_guidance_report.pdf)

A Guide to Participatory Action Planning and Techniques for Facilitating Groups (Ramsar Convention, 2008) (http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/outreach_actionplanning_guide.pdf)

National strategy for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) in support of wetland conservation in Hungary (the Authority for Nature Conservation of the Ministry of Environment) (http://www.ramsar.org/doc/outreach_actionplan_hungary.doc)

Ramsar Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands No. 6: Wetland CEPA: the Convention's Programme on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) 2003-2008 (2nd Edition, 2004). (http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/lib/hbk4-06.pdf)

Res. XI. 16: Ensuring efficient delivery of scientific & technical advice and support to the Convention (http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/cop11/res/cop11-res16-e.pdf)

Res IX.18: Establishment of an Oversight Panel for the CEPA activities of the Convention (http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/res/key_res_ix_18_e.pdf)

Review of existing Ramsar scientific and technical guidance and processes, their utility, use, application and conversion into practical tools (Mansourian 2014).

The Role of Communication, Chapter 18 (IUCN publication on NBSAPs in Asia) (http://www.cepatoolkit.org/html/resources/81/812EDCD8-B6D1-4B2D-A45C-EFC8F9B9F89E/The%20role%20of%20communications%20chapter.pdf)

Annex II: Interview Questions

Interview Questions: Review of Best Practices on Provisioning of Science and Technical Guidance

On content:

1. Please briefly outline the key elements (tools, approaches, experts, bodies..) of the scientific and technical guidance in your organisation/convention?
2. Who is the target audience for scientific guidance? And technical guidance?
3. How do you assess how useful this guidance is for practical application? How well does it respond to the needs of the intended audience? How is it linked to actual needs?
4. What works well? What works less well?
5. Has there been any formal evaluation of this? (any that you can share?)
6. How do you make the distinction between scientific and technical guidance? Is this distinction an issue in your organisation/convention? Can you assess roughly the balance of scientific vs. technical guidance?

On operations

1. Could you outline the main operational elements (bodies..) by which scientific and technical guidance is provided in your organisation/convention? Are the roles of these bodies clearly defined in providing guidance?
2. can you please comment on the decision making process for determining themes, topics or issues for inclusion in guidance
3. What works well? What works less well? Any constraints?

Lessons and best practices

1. Do you have any specific lessons to share with Ramsar as concerns scientific and technical guidance? (either related to content or operations or other..?)
2. Can you point us to any specific document or person that could provide useful insight into best practice related to scientific and technical guidance?

Annex III: Additional Resources for Ramsar

The following contacts and resources were identified by interviewees as being helpful for following-up on guidance recommendations:

- WMO: Giacomo Teruggi, or AFPM regarding flood management or outreach
- WWT: Dr. Debbie Pain or Dr. Ruth Cromie
- ICPDR: Joint Danube Survey (JDS), TNMN and the processes that lead to the development of management plans, in particular the Danube River Basin Analysis (DRBMP) and Flood Risk Maps (DRB FRMP). For JDS, see danubesurvey.org, which also identifies all scientists involved at the last JDS in 2013; further reading on DRBMP can be found on www. icpdr.org.
- An interesting case for scientific work could also be the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Danube River Basin, which was based on a thorough meta-study of climate change scenarios and research. Another, although less extensive project activity with external assistance would be the development of a technical guidance paper for the development of fish migration aids (see icpdr.org)
- CI:
    - Mark Smith, who leads work on floodplains and water in the US, would be able to provide a field perspective for TNC: mpsmith@TNC.ORG
    - Lisa Shipley is the deputy director for thefreshwater program and would be able to provide a perspective from a global program: lshipley@TNC.ORG
    - Jeff Opperman leads work on hydropower and may also have a different perspective .jopperman@TNC.ORG
    - Reef Resilience Network: Petra MacGowan pmacgowan@TNC.ORG
    - Marine learning networks: Amanda Wrona <awrona@TNC.ORG>
- GWP would like to formalize partnership with Ramsar in terms of an MOU to further work on water security and ecosystems. GWP contacts:

  On best practices:
  Danka Thalmeinerova , *Senior Knowledge Management Officer*
  e-mail: danka.thalmeinerova@gwp.org

  For Asia Region:
  Angela Klauschen, *Senior Network Officer*
  email: angela.klauschen@gwp.org

  For water and ecosystems:
  Gabriela Grau, *Senior Network Officer*
  e-mail: gabriela.grau@gwp.org

  For African region:

Alex Simalabwi
Global WACDEP Coordinator
e-mail: alex simalabwi@gwp.org

For Mediterrannean, central and eastern Europe (Aral sea)
Natalia Alexeeva
Senior Network Officer
e-mail: natalia.alexeeva@gwp.org