



13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

“Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future”
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Draft resolution on cultural values, indigenous peoples and local communities, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands

Submitted by Burkina Faso, Senegal and Tunisia

Note from the Secretariat

Through Decision SC54-22, the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting instructed the Secretariat to edit, finalize and publish the draft resolution contained in document SC54-Com.6 for consideration at COP13, subject to inclusion of the further amendments tabled. These have been implemented in the present text.

1. RECALLING Resolution X.24 on *Climate change and wetlands*, Resolution XII.2 on *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024*, and Resolution X.28 on *Wetlands and poverty eradication*;
2. RECOGNIZING the vital importance of wetlands and the freshwater that they provide for human well-being, livelihoods, and food security; and REAFFIRMING that water is a human right in accordance with Resolution 64/292 of the United National General Assembly on *The human right to water and sanitation*;
3. CONCERNED that wetlands are among the ecosystems most vulnerable to climate change¹; and ALSO CONCERNED that wetlands, which store significant amounts of carbon, are currently degrading rapidly;
4. NOTING that Article 7 of the Paris Agreement concluded at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP21) emphasizes the need for adaptation that is country driven, gender responsive and based on traditional knowledge, local knowledge systems and indigenous peoples and local communities perspectives, as appropriate;
5. FURTHER NOTING that efforts under the Ramsar Convention can contribute significantly in addressing climate change goals or actions set out in the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals;

¹Third Assessment Report, IPCC

6. AWARE that 80% of the world's biodiversity is located in traditional lands and waters; and ACKNOWLEDGING the significant contributions made by indigenous peoples and local communities to wetland conservation and wise use through their knowledge, innovations and practices – including contributions to mitigating and adapting to climate change, which also contribute to implementation of Target 10 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan;
7. RECALLING Resolution VIII.19 on *Guiding principles for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands for the effective management of sites* and Resolution IX.21 on *Taking into account the cultural values of wetlands*, which recognize and highlight the cultural connections between communities and wetlands and encourage the Convention's Parties to take cultural values into consideration in managing their wetlands and in designating them as internationally important sites;
8. ACKNOWLEDGING the pioneering work that the Convention has accomplished in the application of Resolutions on culture for the integration of cultural values in the conservation and wise use of wetlands, through initiatives such as the Ramsar Culture Network;
9. ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the key role played by women in wetland management and wise use, including in the management, provisioning and safeguarding of water; and EMPHASIZING that gender equality and the full empowerment of women are critical to sustainable development, including with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation and effective wetland and water management;
10. NOTING WITH CONCERN that, owing to climate change and wetland degradation, food security is at risk;
11. ALSO RECOGNIZING that some areas of the world are more prone to the impacts of climate change on wetlands and water, and that these areas tend to be in regions already experiencing harsh climates and adverse environmental conditions, where people are further affected by high levels of poverty, inequality and a rapidly changing socio-economic governance and development context;
12. TAKING NOTE of the *Best Practice Guidelines* produced by the IUCN-World Commission on Protected Areas' Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas on the role of the cultural and spiritual significance of nature in the governance and management of protected and conserved areas, and the relevance of these guidelines in supporting wetland conservation and wise use under the Convention;
13. CONSIDERING that while climate change is a global issue, adaptation is achieved locally, that wetland adaptation benefits from, and can be driven by innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, and that this often provides locally-appropriate and effective resilience to climate impacts; and
14. ACKNOWLEDGING that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions;

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15. EMPHASIZES that environmental, economic and social solutions will all be needed to achieve climate change targets, including through emission reductions, ecosystem conservation and restoration to enhance carbon storage, as well as infrastructure and land-use planning approaches; and RECOGNIZES that the Ramsar Convention can play a key role in making the links between the sustainability of human societies, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the integrity of water environments;
16. INVITES Contracting Parties and others to provide to the Secretariat examples, particularly documented case studies, that demonstrate how cultural diversity and the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities can contribute to significantly increasing resilience to climate change in wetlands, in advance of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14);
17. REQUESTS that the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) consider reviewing and revising the *Guidelines for Rapid Cultural Inventories in Wetlands* with a view to ensuring that these guidelines are effective in evaluating the cultural ecosystem services of wetlands, including in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, in advance of COP14;
18. REQUESTS that the Secretariat continue to undertake enabling activities for the effective integration of the cultural values of wetlands into wetland protection and management, working together with the Contracting Parties and interested organizations and networks, and establish appropriate mechanisms to that end, taking into account the work undertaken by the Ramsar Culture Network and Ramsar Regional Initiatives;
19. REQUESTS the Secretariat to regularly report to Standing Committee on the integration of the cultural values of wetlands into wetland protection and management undertaken by the Contracting Parties and interested organizations and networks;
20. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to continue to mobilize cultural diversity and knowledge systems within wetlands as part of holistic approaches to relevant national and regional policies, as appropriate, including poverty reduction strategies, Nationally Determined Contributions and implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account the need to base such approaches on an understanding of specific wetlands' current and projected future productivity, particularly where wetland services may change over time and may be affected by climate change;
21. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to collaborate with relevant institutions in clearly defining and developing activities for the prevention of deforestation by communities, suitable sustainable tourism and recreation activities, sustainable businesses based on ecosystem services of wetlands, as well as other livelihood activities in wetlands in general, as well as highlighting their limits, and especially in designated Ramsar Sites, in order to facilitate skills development and economic opportunities for vulnerable communities and groups, with the aim of reducing poverty while contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as supporting wetland integrity and local cultures;
22. ENCOURAGES the Secretariat with interested Parties to review and update the Ramsar Guidance on Culture and Wetlands to reflect the provisions of the present Resolution on culture and to enrich the guidance with further recent examples of good practice; and

23. INVITES development banks, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund and other funding instruments to support the implementation of the present Resolution by Contracting Parties, including through supporting capacity building.