



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

“Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future”  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 21-29 October 2018

Ramsar COP13 Doc.18.7 Rev.1

### Draft resolution on enhancing the Convention’s visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

1. RECALLING that Resolution XI.1, on *Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat*, in paragraphs 17 and 18, instructs the Standing Committee and Contracting Parties to develop strategies that explore the accommodation of UN languages into the Convention, the elevation of the Convention’s visibility and stature, including *inter alia* through enhancing high-level political engagement in its work at national, regional, and global levels, the enhancement of synergies with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other international entities including through regional initiatives, and the increased involvement in the initiatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
2. FURTHER RECALLING that Resolution XII.3, on *Enhancing the languages of the Convention and its visibility and stature, and increasing synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions*, instructs the Secretariat to report to the Standing Committee annually on progress in implementing Resolution XI.6 on *Partnership and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*;
3. NOTING that Resolution XII.3 requests that the Secretary General report at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the opportunities for the Convention to further strengthen its contribution to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they relate to wetlands;
4. FURTHER NOTING that Resolution XII.3 instructs the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Heritage Outlook, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP-GRID, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), regional economic commissions of the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and others, and report on progress to the Standing Committee and the Contracting Parties on a regular basis;
5. RECALLING that the Secretariat is also requested by Resolution XII.3 to continue its work with the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) to enhance coherence and cooperation and to continue

efforts to improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication at all relevant levels among the biodiversity-related Conventions;

- [6 RECALLING Resolution XII.4, on *The responsibilities, roles and composition of the Standing Committee and regional categorization of countries under the Ramsar Convention*, which seeks to strengthen transparency within the work of the Convention to facilitate the evolution of decisions, guidance and implementation of the Convention in cooperation with Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners, and stakeholders;]
7. NOTING that Resolution XII.7, on *Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention*, requests that the Secretariat strengthen partnerships with other MEAs such as, *inter alia*, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in order to enhance synergies and sharing of resources, avoid duplication and enhance implementation, respecting the mandate of each Convention;
  8. RECALLING that Resolution XII.3 invites all Contracting Parties that are considering hosting a meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP) to consider including a high-level ministerial segment during the meeting addressing clearly defined topics in support of the agenda of the COP;
  9. NOTING the interest of all Contracting Parties in enhancing the visibility and stature of the Convention and increasing synergies with other MEAs and with UNEP;
  10. NOTING the project undertaken by UNEP on “Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies” and its tools for enhancing synergies at national level and also the 2020 Biodiversity Strategic Planning Timeline for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework<sup>1</sup>;
  11. RECOGNIZING, in the context of the ongoing work on synergies, the importance of the linkages between the Ramsar Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and any follow-up, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> and the Sustainable Development Goals, and related reporting and indicators;
  12. ALSO NOTING Decisions XII.30 and XIII.21 of the CBD on the financial mechanism and the United Nations General Assembly document *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which stresses the importance of enhancing programmatic synergies among relevant biodiversity-related conventions and recognizes the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the MEAs including the Ramsar Convention;
  13. FURTHER NOTING the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) contained in *The future we want*<sup>3</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/resources-and-data/biodiversitysynergies>; <https://post2020.unep-wcmc.org/>

<sup>2</sup> [General Assembly resolution 70/1](#) of 25 September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, annex.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E)

14. CONVINCED of the significant potential of increasing cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to enhance coherent national-level implementation of each of the conventions;
15. NOTING that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes SDG6, “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, and Target 6.6, “By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes”;
16. ALSO NOTING SDG14, “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, and Target 14.2, “By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans”;
17. ADDITIONALLY NOTING SDG15, “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”, and Target 15.1, “By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements”;
18. FURTHER NOTING that other SDGs that are relevant to the Convention are: SDG1, “End poverty in all its forms everywhere”; SDG2, “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”; SDG5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”; SDG11, “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”; and SDG13, “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”;
19. NOTING the decision of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) at its 7th meeting to reclassify Indicator 6.6.1, “Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time” and to approve two reporting lines to the global SDG database hosted by the UN Statistics Division, such that UNEP will be responsible for the internationally comparable methodology with national data, regional and global aggregations for Indicator 6.6.1, and the Convention will contribute data from the National Reports based on Ramsar definitions and requirements;
20. FURTHER NOTING that the Convention and UNEP, as co-custodians for SDG Indicator 6.6.1, will be responsible for their respective reporting lines and will jointly contribute to the SDG target 6.6 storyline;
- [21. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION for the cooperation between IUCN and the Convention Secretariat through the IUCN/Ramsar Liaison Group to support the operations of the Secretariat];
- [22. APPRECIATING the results achieved by the Facilitation Working Group of the Standing Committee to facilitate discussions between the Secretariat and IUCN, in order to seek ways of improving the current operations of the Secretariat;]
- [23. RECOGNIZING that inconsistencies and contradictions between resolutions and decisions taken over the years can result in confusion and a lack of clarity that creates inefficiencies in the implementation of the Convention, and that implementation of the Convention can be

improved by retiring resolutions and decisions and parts thereof that are outdated or contradictory;]

[24. NOTING Parties' interest in enhancing their efforts to identify and address the challenges to wetlands globally as a means to increase the relevance, timeliness, and impact of the Convention and of Contracting Parties' resolutions related to the wise use of wetlands; ] and

[25. NOTING the value in reviewing the Rules of Procedure to identify any inconsistencies or other elements that may negatively impact the work of the Convention or that might usefully be amended to optimize resources and/or increase efficiency;]

## THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

### Concerning visibility and stature, and increasing synergies

26. INVITES the Secretariat, Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others to work to raise the visibility of the Convention at the national, subnational, regional and international levels as appropriate, including some focus on the 50th anniversary of the Convention, which will be celebrated in 2021;
27. FURTHER INVITES Contracting Parties to establish or strengthen, at the national level, mechanisms to enhance effective coordination between relevant national and subnational authorities, and to support the mainstreaming of wetland ecosystem functions and the ecosystem services they provide to people and nature in national development plans, other sectors' strategies, plans and regulations, and especially in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the SDGs, and of UNFCCC, to increase the synergies in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation, nature and especially wetland based solutions;
28. URGES the Secretariat, Contracting Parties, IOPs and others to take urgent action to enhance synergies, coherence and effective cooperation among the biodiversity-related MEAs to strengthen the contribution of these instruments to a post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the realisation of the 2030 Agenda;
29. REQUESTS the Secretariat to present, at the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee, a plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs and contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
30. ENCOURAGES all Ramsar National Focal Points to continue to increase their efforts to coordinate with their other national MEA counterparts as well as with institutions and agencies working to address the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and SDGs;
31. FURTHER ENCOURAGES National Focal Points to strengthen coordination with all wetland practitioners including Ramsar Site managers, to inform them of Ramsar activities and be informed by them about processes and issues of common interest;
32. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to continue to develop and activate networking mechanisms, including Ramsar National Wetlands Committees or similar bodies, to ensure collaboration with national ministries, departments and agencies;
33. INVITES Contracting Parties to identify opportunities to enhance synergies and cooperation at the local and regional levels, including with respect to wetland city accreditation and sites with

multiple international designations (such as Wetlands of International Importance that are also Biosphere Reserves or World Heritage sites);

34. FURTHER INVITES Contracting Parties to work with global and regional bodies, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and other regional economic commissions of the UN, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to enhance the wise use of wetlands;
35. ALSO INVITES Contracting Parties to continue to take into account the results of the project “Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies” through, *inter alia*, the sourcebook, undertaken by UNEP; and ENCOURAGES the Secretariat and Contracting Parties to implement its recommendations to promote synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs);
36. REQUESTS that Contracting Parties continue to implement the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* (Resolution VII.19), including by establishing cooperative mechanisms for the management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins to enhance transboundary cooperation and establishment of transboundary Ramsar sites<sup>4</sup>;
37. INSTRUCES the Secretariat to report regularly to the Standing Committee on progress in implementing the present Resolution and Resolution XI.6 on *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*;
38. REAFFIRMS the invitation to Parties considering hosting a meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, in Resolution XII.3 to consider including a high-level ministerial segment during the meeting, addressing clearly defined topics in support of the agenda of the meeting;
39. WELCOMES the continued collaboration between the Secretariat and the secretariats of other biodiversity-related conventions through the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) and through the implementation of joint work plans and activities of common interest; and REQUESTS the Secretary General to include in future reports information on the results of existing cooperation with other conventions, international organizations and partnerships and on the exploration of new activities with possible partners;
40. WELCOMES Decision XIII.24, on *Cooperation with other conventions and international organizations*, adopted by the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and REQUESTS that the Secretariat provide inputs to the synergy process as appropriate and in particular on matters that are relevant to the Ramsar Convention and report to the Standing Committee;
41. FURTHER INSTRUCES the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with UN agencies, in particular UNEP, UNDP, FAO, the World Bank, WHO, the World Meteorological

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<sup>4</sup> Turkey has registered a reservation concerning the content of paragraph 36, which refers to *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention (Resolution VII.19)* and which was accepted at COP7 with Turkey's reservation. The declaration by the Turkish Delegation appears in paragraph xxx of the Conference Report.

Organization (WMO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNECE and other regional economic commissions of the UN, GEF, MEAs such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the CBD, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and others, and to report progress to the Standing Committee on a regular basis;

42. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to consider their national circumstances and ecosystem-based approaches when preparing or updating their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) as applicable and where appropriate, and pursuing domestic climate action under the Paris Agreement, taking into account the importance of safeguarding and restoring wetlands;;
43. WELCOMES the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of the memorandum of understanding with UNEP to enhance collaboration on areas of common interest; and REQUESTS that the Secretariat report to the Standing Committee on the progress of the activities concerned;
44. REQUESTS the Secretariat to foster and enhance crosscutting subject matter expertise within the Secretariat team as a means to maximize use of existing resources and avoid duplication of efforts, foster a whole-of-Secretariat approach to providing equitable and consistent support to Parties' efforts to implement the Convention, and advance synergies and contributions across the MEAs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

#### Concerning Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals - indicator for Wetland Extent

45. INSTRUCES the Secretariat to continue working actively with the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), as well as with other relevant United Nations agencies, on water-related indicators, and in particular SDG Indicator 6.6.1 on wetland extent;
46. FURTHER REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue working with Contracting Parties on the completion of national wetland inventories and wetland extent to report on SDG Indicator 6.6.1;
47. INSTRUCES the Secretariat to participate as appropriate in relevant international efforts to address the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, including the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the discussion of Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15 and Targets 14.2 and 15.1 in international fora;
48. FURTHER INSTRUCES the Secretariat to support Contracting Parties as appropriate in raising the relevance of and mainstreaming wetlands and the Convention in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and in the work of MEAs and other international instruments including *inter alia* through collaboration with intergovernmental organizations, IOPs and other partners in the public and private sectors for the development of guidance and tools, capacity building and identification of opportunities to access resources;
49. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to strengthen their mechanisms to enhance effective coordination among national and subnational statistical authorities responsible for reporting on the SDGs and in particular those related to wetlands and wetland extent (indicator 6.6.1);

50. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to elevate the importance of wetlands and the Convention to address the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and SDGs and to strengthen mainstreaming efforts at national and subnational levels;
51. INVITES the Contracting Parties that are also Parties to other MEAs to consider further measures to promote national level synergies so as to foster policy coherence , improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance cooperation, coordination and synergies among MEAs and other partners as a means to enhance coherent national implementation of the Convention;

Concerning the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund

52. REQUESTS the Secretariat, in response to the invitation to the Convention found in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of CBD Decision XII.30, to present to the Standing Committee for its consideration at its 58th meeting, elements of advice for the GEF concerning the funding to support the objectives and priorities of the Convention, consistent with the mandates of the GEF, and to repeat the exercise described therein for the development of strategic guidance for the eighth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD at its 15th meeting, consistent with CBD Decision XIII/21;

Concerning the relationship with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the work of the Secretariat

53. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue the cooperation efforts with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through the IUCN/Ramsar Liaison Group to support the operations of the Secretariat under the Secretariat and the IUCN Service Agreement;

[Concerning the enhancement of the implementation of the Convention]

- [54. REQUESTS that the Standing Committee, at its first full meeting following each meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, identify, with the support of the Secretariat, a limited set of urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands, in the framework of the Ramsar Strategic Plan and the broader environmental agenda, to receive enhanced attention during the coming triennium;]

- [55. FURTHER REQUESTS that the Standing Committee consider these urgent challenges during its meetings throughout the triennium, inviting external expert speakers to participate in and contribute to Contracting Parties' discussions as appropriate and subject to available resources, with a view to identifying potential solutions to these challenges and reflecting them in draft resolutions for consideration at the next meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;]

- [56. REQUESTS the Secretariat to:

- a. review all previous resolutions and decisions, identifying those or parts of those, if any, that may no longer be valid or applicable, that contradict each other, or are otherwise inconsistent with current Ramsar practices, and at the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57) report its findings, including information on how it reached these conclusions (e.g. *inter alia*, that the work has been completed, superseded, is contradictory, or is incorporated elsewhere); and

- b. based on its findings and Parties' feedback to its SC57 report, develop recommendations for Parties at the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC58) to consider a process for: retiring outdated resolutions and decisions; establishing a practice of retiring outdated or contradictory resolutions and decisions automatically when they are superseded by new ones; and preparing a consolidated list of resolutions and decisions, to be updated after each meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and on an as-needed basis following meetings of the Standing Committee;]

[57. REQUESTS that the Standing Committee, at SC57, review the Secretariat's report on the validity of resolutions and decisions and provide feedback, and consider the Secretariat's recommendations on this subject at SC58, with a view to including, in a relevant resolution of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14), the retirement of outdated resolutions and decisions and the establishment of a practice for the Convention to retire outdated resolutions and decisions automatically when they are superseded by new ones;]

[58. REQUESTS the Secretariat to:

- a. conduct a review of the Rules of Procedure, identifying text, if any, that may no longer be valid or applicable, is contradictory, is otherwise inconsistent with current Ramsar practices, and the Rules' applicability to subsidiary bodies including the Standing Committee, working groups, and Friends of the Chair groups and, at SC57, report its findings, including information on how it reached these conclusions;
- b. in conducting the aforementioned review, give due consideration to any proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure that were not considered at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties; and
- c. develop, as appropriate, based on its findings and Contracting Parties' feedback to its SC57 report, recommendations for Parties at SC58, to consider revisions that might be made to the Rules of Procedure, in preparation for COP14;]

[59. REQUESTS the Standing Committee, at SC57, to review the Secretariat's report on the Rules of Procedure and provide feedback, and to consider the Secretariat's recommendations on this subject at SC58 and, as appropriate, consider revisions that might be made to the Rules of Procedure in preparation for COP14;]

[60. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources, to consider using written submissions from their national Administrative Authorities as a means to provide opportunities for fostering increased participation and representation of views of Contracting Parties and stakeholders in the work of the Convention;]

[61. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue its efforts to deploy appropriate cost-effective communication and other technologies as a means to foster the participation and representation of the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat, increase efficiencies, and reduce costs;] and

[62. FURTHER REQUESTS the Secretariat to make Contracting Parties aware of the opportunities provided by these technologies to foster Convention-related capacity building and to support the efforts of the Convention bodies to enhance implementation of the Convention.]