

**14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

**“Wetlands Actions for People and Nature”
Wuhan, China and Geneva, Switzerland, 5-13 November 2022**

Ramsar COP14 Doc.18.10

Note from the Secretariat:

At the resumed session of its 59th meeting, the Standing Committee in Decision SC59/2022-23 approved document SC59/2022 Doc.17 Rev.1 and agreed to forward the draft resolution in Annex 2 of the document to COP14 for its consideration.

Draft resolution on the new CEPA approach

1. RECALLING Resolution XIII.5 *Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention*;
2. RECALLING Resolution XII.9, including the communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) programme for 2016-24;
3. RECOGNIZING that there are limitations and lost opportunities associated with a separate CEPA programme and that the closer alignment of communication, education, participation and awareness activities with the core work of the Convention will better deliver on the goals and mission;
4. NOTING that the new CEPA approach has been developed so that it may be integrated into the current strategic plan (SP4) [using a thematic annex; see Annex 2] and [be considered in the development of the] new strategic plan (SP5);
5. RECOGNIZING that Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners (IOPs) and other partners will have different capacities, and priorities and that the new CEPA approach [provides] flexibility [in implementation]; and
6. COMMENDING the excellent work already undertaken with very scarce resources by all actors in the Convention’s CEPA activities;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

The new CEPA approach

7. AGREES the new CEPA approach as described in Annex 1, and encourages its implementation by Parties, IOPs and other partners, noting that it is designed to be complementary to existing CEPA activities;

8. [ENCOURAGES Parties to cooperate within regions using their CEPA Focal Points to increase each of CEPA activities;]
9. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to make efforts to integrate the Strategic Plan and the new approach described in the Annexes as appropriate;
10. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat [to appoint an additional Communication officer to underpin implementation of the new approach]; and
11. [AGREES that the priority tasks for the CEPA Oversight Panel in the next triennium to COP15 is to work closely with the Strategic Plan Working Group on SP5 to integrate the CEPA new approach drawing on Annex 2].

Annex 1

The new approach to CEPA has the following characteristics

1. A reduced set of activities clearly linked to the Strategic Plan

- The effort should be focused on a smaller number of high-priority activities.
- CEPA activities should be incorporated into the Strategic Plan, but with a separate CEPA document providing supporting guidance, as needed.

2. Make CEPA more strategic, integrated and effective

- The CEPA Programme would better support and strengthen the Strategic Plan if integrated into it. The next Strategic Plan should include both stand-alone CEPA activities, and CEPA elements.
- In general, CEPA activities and CEPA elements should be integrated in planning and activities of the Convention (locally, nationally, internationally) where appropriate.

3. Work to support focal points, and build more networks and partnerships

- National Focal Points and CEPA National Focal Points are considered important to ensure a coordinated and strategic national approach to Ramsar implementation. Contracting Parties should ensure that the Focal Points are informed about their responsibilities. The CEPA Focal Points should be recognized as the key implementers of CEPA and should be provided with adequate tools and training opportunities when necessary.
- Encourage Contracting Parties with similar CEPA needs to co-operate on CEPA activities. Such co-operation can include exchange of experiences of CEPA campaigns as well as working cooperatively to produce communication material and translating them into languages as needed by the Contracting Parties involved. Contracting Parties should also be encouraged to coordinate with their focal points for other MEAs.
- The Secretariat should seek opportunities to build networks and partnerships at the international level, including with other MEAs, in order to identify opportunities for common or complementary CEPA activities and to bring relevant tools, resources, and practices to Contracting Parties.
- The Contracting Parties should increase engagement with other sectors, consistent with priorities identified in the strategic plan at the national level. Messaging should be tailored to emphasize themes that matter to the target audience.

4. Strategic support by the Secretariat

- The Secretariat to provide advice and information to Contracting Parties, for example introduction materials about Ramsar CEPA work for new CEPA NFPs and CEPA NGO FPs and sharing good examples from other countries.
- The Secretariat to revise the handbook on Wetland CEPA from 2010. The revised version probably needs to reflect the new CEPA approach, include other changes in the Convention since 2010, and include new content on social media, how to enhance networking etc.
- The Secretariat to provide opportunities for the CEPA NFPs to learn more about CEPA tools. This can take place in conjunction with other relevant meeting, such as COPs or regional meetings as appropriate, or via on-line resources.

5. More efficient governance of the Ramsar global CEPA work

- Better described work task (separating what may be mandatory and what may be voluntary) for the Ramsar CEPA working group/-s
- Better way of composing and establishing the Ramsar CEPA working group/-s
- Modus operandi for Ramsar CEPA working group/-s
- Better sharing of workload, also engaging more Contracting Parties

Annex 2

The new CEPA approach and how it may be integrated into the future Strategic Plan 5

1. This table contains the full content of the existing Strategic Plan (4) and how CEPA activities based upon the new approach can be integrated into it, both on an over-all level but also in specific activities. Sometimes the CEPA activities are described together with other activities, not included in the Strategic Plan today but necessary for reaching the target. This table will be for the use of the Strategic Plan Working Group that is to draft a DR on the Strategic Plan 5 for the consideration at COP15.
2. Unless otherwise indicated 'Partners' below refers to Contracting Parties, IOPs, different kinds of regional co-operation, and the Secretariat. IOPs are welcome to join in any of the activities, suitable for their scope.

LEGEND

Text in *italic* in the parts of the new approach are those activities that Contracting Parties can start to implement before the COP 15. Those activities are also included in the annex to the DR on the review of the Strategic Plan. Targets 20-22, both in parentheses and in italic are not existing targets, but given as examples, just to show what kind of possible future targets the new approach may be integrated with.

| Table A. CEPA priorities to be included in new Strategic Plan 5 (set out against current Goals in Strategic Plan 4) | |
|---|--|
| Targets | CEPA activities |
| Goal 1: Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation | |
| 1. Wetland benefits are featured in national/local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1 Secretariat to prioritise global CEPA activities that promote the Convention and its objectives, including wide promotion of COPs and their outcomes as well as to continue to contribute wetland input to the debate on global policy issues, and working for a greater sectoral input to wetlands and CEPA planning. • 1.2 <i>Contracting Parties to continue to contribute wetland input to the debate on global policy issues.</i> • 1.3 <i>Contracting Parties to identify mechanisms for greater sectoral input to wetlands and CEPA planning, including recognising the value, experience and resources of IOPs, NGOs, Contracting Parties, business partners, the education sector and youth organisations with interest in wetlands in planning, resourcing, developing and implementing wetland CEPA messages and products.</i> • 1.4 <i>Contracting Parties, in communication activities and materials that, specifically highlight the role of wetlands as green infrastructure or [nature-based solutions] and</i> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p><i>[ecosystem-based approaches,] and the values of wetlands for water supply, water quality, transport, food production and livelihoods, flood regulation, coastal protection, climate mitigation and adaptation, pollution control, fishing and hunting, recreation and tourism.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 The Secretariat to support with info materials including pictures in formats that are easily transformed for national and sub-national use. • 1.6 STRP to continue to develop targeted products (Policy Briefs, Fact Sheets, The Global Wetland Outlook etc) for sectors. • <i>1.7 Contracting Parties should increase engagement with sectors that have impact on wetlands, consistent with priorities identified in the strategic plan at the national level. In particular, messaging should be tailored to emphasize themes that matter to the target audience.</i> |
| 2. Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1 Secretariat to support Contracting Parties with CEPA materials, including case studies and good examples from the Wetland City Accreditation, that can be used when addressing stakeholders • <i>2.2 Contracting Parties to promote case studies of sustainable wetland management including examples from Wetland City Accreditation, and do CEPA activities that engage stakeholders and promote wise use and management of their wetlands and their surroundings in a way that both water quality and water quantity are well considered.</i> |
| 3. The public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>3.1 Contracting Parties, to promote existing Convention guidance and share between CPs practical local guidance, best practises and case studies which may be more broadly relevant.</i> |
| 4. Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>4.1 Contracting Parties, to raise awareness of invasive alien species in wetland ecosystems through the development and dissemination of training and communication materials among the public and private sectors.</i> |
| Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network | |
| 5. The ecological character of Ramsar sites is maintained or restored, through effective planning and integrated management. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>5.1 Contracting Parties to integrate CEPA activities in all Ramsar site management plans and/or activity plans.</i> |
| 6. There is a significant increase in area, numbers and ecological connectivity in the Ramsar Site network, | |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>in particular under-represented types of wetlands including in under-represented ecoregions and Transboundary Sites.</p> | |
| <p>7. Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>7.1 Contracting Parties to identify current and emerging threats, including the umbrella threat of climate change, and develop, and share between Parties, practical CEPA tools and guidance for addressing such threats at Ramsar sites and other wetlands in the long-term.</i> |
| <p>Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands</p> | |
| <p>8. National wetland inventories have been initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>8.1 Contracting Parties communicate the results of national wetland inventories for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.</i> |
| <p>9. The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone.</p> | <p><i>See Target 1 and Target 13.</i></p> |
| <p>10. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention, with a full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>10.1 Contracting Parties to better engage indigenous people in wetland research, planning, management, restoration and CEPA activities (including case studies) as well as promoting the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands at national and local levels.</i> • <i>10.2 Secretariat to promote the exchange of lessons learned from the activities mentioned above.</i> |
| <p>11. Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>11.1 Secretariat to support Contracting Parties to develop stories about the values of wetlands and how to manage them to optimise their benefits (to be customised with local facts/figures).</i> • <i>11.2 Contracting Parties to support Ramsar site managers to develop signage and other CEPA activities to communicate site values, including the ecosystem services.</i> • <i>11.3 STRP to update information on the valuation of wetland ecosystem services for use in decision-making and engagement with key stakeholders.</i> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>12. Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation</p> | |
| <p>13. Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>13.1 Contracting Parties to give priority to engaging sectoral decision-makers in integrating wetland values in their planning and decision-making.</i> • 13.2 Secretariat to focus on messages and tools that support the concept of wise use, to assist decision-making to involve communities and negotiate trade-offs between wetland users. |
| <p>Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation</p> | |
| <p>14. Scientific guidance and technical methodologies at global and regional levels are developed on relevant topics and are available to policy makers and practitioners in an appropriate format and language.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.1 STRP to better align outputs to support CEPA activities for different stakeholders, to enable outcomes of the STRP's work to be effectively communicated with CPs, other wetland stakeholders and the broader community. • 14.2 Ensure adequate communications expertise within the membership of the STRP and creating a close relationship with them and the Secretariat's communications staff. |
| <p>15. Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.1 Use regional co-operations to build CEPA capacity at the national level to enable more effective planning and implementation by Contracting Parties. |
| <p>16. Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>16.1 Contracting Parties to build on the effective CEPA activity and engagement achieved through for example World Wetlands Day, Ramsar Regional Initiatives and Wetland Education Centres.</i> • 16.2 The Secretariat to continue communication with and support for Contracting Parties' NFPs and CEPA NFPs (both government and NGO) in promoting conservation of Ramsar sites and wise use of wetlands. • 16.3 The Secretariat to use the results of the CEPA OP NFP survey and ongoing consultation with NFPs to identify useful tools and approaches to support them in pragmatic ways to implement outcomes for the Convention through better engagement of people. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.4 All partners to use networks and structures (Wetland Link International network, Ramsar Regional Initiatives, Wetland Education Centres, Youth Engaged in Wetlands) to improve support of implementing the convention, such as raising awareness, engagement in activities, and capacity-building. • 16.5 All partners to use various media channels which are appropriate for the purpose, such as social media to raise public awareness (and potentially lead to public concern and pressure on decision-makers) along with other approaches to engage sectoral decision-makers. • 16.6 All partners to identify new communication avenues and opportunities to promote Ramsar goals. |
| <p>17. Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available.</p> | |
| <p>18. International cooperation is strengthened at all levels, (locally, nationally, sub-regionally (for example RRIs and river basin Commissions), regionally and globally).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>18.1 Contracting Parties with similar CEPA needs to co-operate on CEPA activities. Such co-operation can include exchange of experiences of CEPA campaigns as well as working cooperatively to produce communications materials and translating them into languages as needed by the Contracting Parties involved.</i> • <i>18.2 Contracting Parties should encourage their Ramsar NFPs to facilitate CEPA activities with their focal points for other MEAs.</i> • 18.3 The Secretariat should seek opportunities to build networks and partnerships at the international level, including with other MEAs, in order to identify opportunities for common or complementary CEPA activities and to bring relevant tools, resources, and practices to Contracting Parties. • 18.4 All partners to ensure that CEPA aspects are considered when planning and developing all Resolutions, guidance materials, STRP products and other outcomes from the Ramsar Convention. • 18.5 All partners to investigate opportunities to improve wetland conservation by applying techniques drawn from behavioural economics and psychology and undertaking joint projects with behavioural insights teams or “nudge” units. |
| <p>19. Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19.1 All partners to build an emphasis on capacity-building, to support people with a range of roles in wetland conservation and wise use. This would involve using the expertise of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), communications and networking by the Secretariat, and sharing of experiences between Contracting Parties. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19.2 Secretariat and Contracting Parties to refine understanding of gaps in implementation, and priority needs of Contracting Parties for practical engagement, communications and training/capacity building, in order to target activities that can be done by the Secretariat and different regional co-operations. • 19.3 Secretariat to provide effective web-based access to their materials, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ searchable access to or portals with information on wetland issues, research and management techniques (both Secretariat and Contracting Party materials). ○ access to a user-friendly RSIS to enable Ramsar site managers to update/upload/download site information and use it for management. |
| <i>(20. Improve the Ramsar National Reports in a way that they become more useful for identifying gaps and measures needed.)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.1 All partners to improve the usefulness of National Reports from Contracting Parties as a tool for the Convention to obtain feedback on effectiveness of implementation, to identify gaps in implementation, support needed and emerging issues. It is important that the National Report format is not so extensive that it is a burden to Contracting Parties, but that it can focus on gathering the key information needed to assist the Secretariat and Contracting Parties to identify priorities for future activities including CEPA. |
| <i>(21. Improve evaluations and assessments of work done by the Convention.)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21.1 All partners to evaluate the reach and effectiveness of activities including CEPA, so that effective approaches are identified, shared and implemented. |
| <i>(22. Make sure that focal points get the support they need to do good work.)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22.1 Contracting Parties should ensure that the Focal Points are informed about their responsibilities. The CEPA Focal Points should be recognized as the main facilitators of implementing CEPA and should be provided with adequate tools and training opportunities when necessary. • 22.2 The Secretariat to provide advice and information to Contracting Parties, for example introduction materials about Ramsar CEPA work for new CEPA NFPs and CEPA NGO FPs and sharing good examples from other countries. • 22.3 The Secretariat and CEPA CG to revise the 2010 handbook on Wetland CEPA. The revised version needs to reflect the new CEPA approach, include other changes in the Ramsar Convention since 2010, and include new content on social media, how to enhance networking etc including having a more practical implementation approach for CEPA activities instead of a more Ramsar Convention resolution informative one. • 22.4 The Secretariat to provide opportunities for the CEPA NFPs to learn more about CEPA tools. This can take place in conjunction with other relevant meeting, such as COPs or, regional meetings as appropriate, or via on-line resources. |