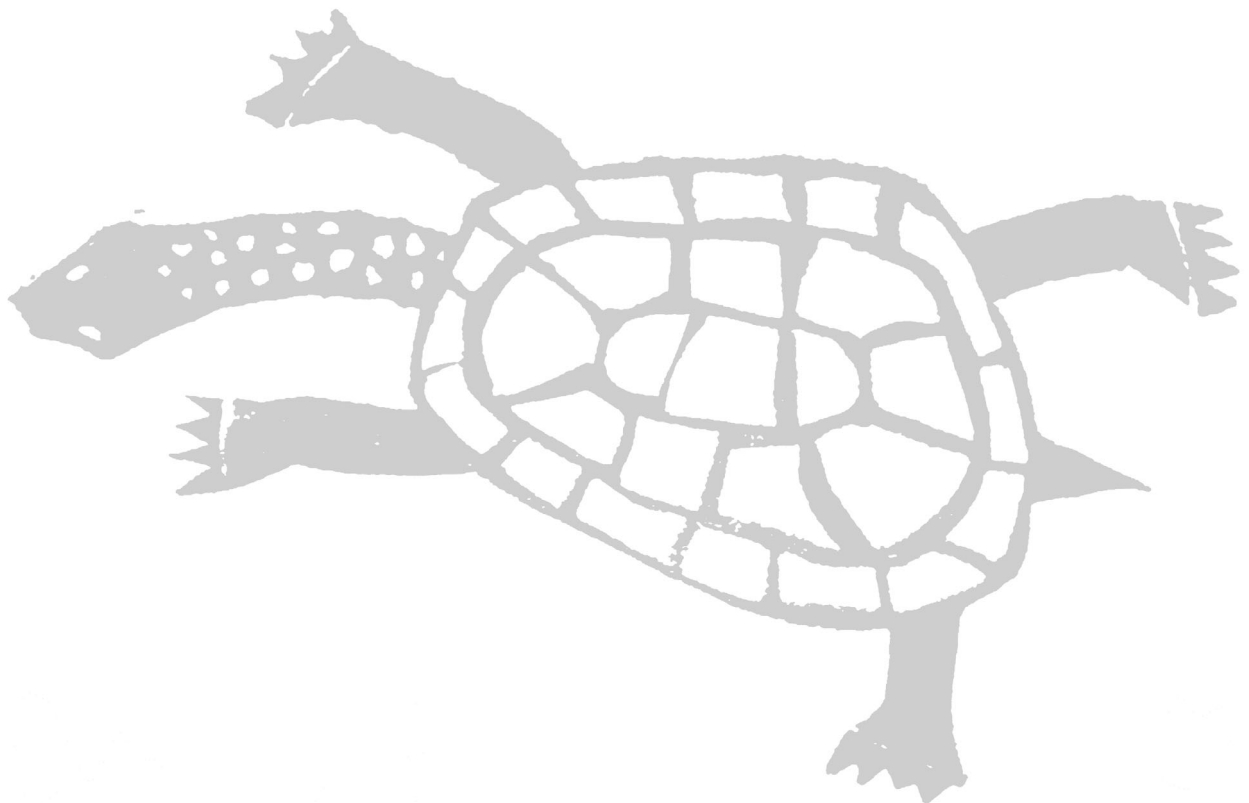


COMMUNICATION,
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC
AWARENESS TO PROMOTE
WISE USE OF AUSTRALIA'S
WETLANDS

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2001-2005
THE NEXT STEP (NOVEMBER 2002)



The significant role played by the following organisations in developing this next step towards a national coordinated approach to wetland communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) in Australia is acknowledged:

Environment Australia

Murray-Darling Basin Commission

WorldWide Fund for Nature Australia

Wetland Care Australia

Wetlands International-Oceania

The Wetlands Centre Australia

Australian Wetlands Alliance

State and Territory Government Agencies

For further information about wetland CEPA activities in Australia go to www.ea.gov.au/water/wetlands or contact the National Focal Point for Wetland CEPA (Government), Wetlands Section, Environment Australia
PO Box 787 CANBERRA ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA
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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	5
Why do we need an action plan?.....	6
Who developed the Plan? Who is it for?	8
Where are we now?.....	9
Guiding principles.....	10
What do we need to achieve? What actions are needed?	11
The CEPA Workplan	12
Appendix 1 Common Terminology.....	21
Appendix 2 The Wetlands Policy of the Commonwealth Government of Australia (1997) 23	
Appendix 3.1 The Convention’s Outreach Programme – 1999-2002.....	25
Appendix 3.2 Resolution VII.9	42
Appendix 4 MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN WETLANDS INFORMATION NETWORK AS AT NOVEMBER 2002	45
Appendix 5 Australian Wetlands Information Network Terms of Reference	47
Appendix 6 Evaluation tool for CEPA.....	48
Appendix 7 The Ramsar Convention’s Wise Use Guidelines.....	50

FOREWORD

The Outreach Programme 1999-2002, of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) calls upon nations to raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world. This National Plan outlines Australia's actions to bring together all levels of government, statutory authorities, community groups, industry and conservation groups to develop and implement wetland communication, education and public awareness (CEPA).

Wetlands are vital to Australia. They are rich in biodiversity and provide habitat for animals and plants. They store, regulate and improve water quality (through water purification, nutrient retention and groundwater recharge). They protect shorelines, mitigate against flooding and control erosion. They also support tourism, recreation and transport activities.

Some wetlands also have high cultural values. In particular, many wetland areas throughout Australia are important to Aboriginal people. Consideration of the cultural values is an important part of wetland management.

We need to make sure that wetlands values are understood by everyone to ensure their continued protection. Effective CEPA activities are essential if we are to leave future generations with a legacy of viable, functioning wetland systems.

We need to capitalise on the growing appreciation of the value and functions of wetlands. We need to encourage greater partnerships between the community, industry, conservation groups and governments in the conservation and protection of wetlands and their resources. We need to make the Ramsar Convention's principle of 'wise use' the way we naturally view and utilise our wetlands.

Australia has a good track record in wetland education through the work that has been done by active and innovative non-government organisations and through programs such as the Waterwatch and National Wetlands Program of the Natural Heritage Trust. These efforts will now be strengthened and enhanced through this Wetland CEPA National Action Plan.

The Australian Wetlands Information Network (AWIN) has devoted its efforts to assembling Australia's National Action Plan, which will provide a quality blueprint for wetland education and awareness raising in this country.

WHY DO WE NEED AN ACTION PLAN?

This is the first update of The Wetland CEPA National Action Plan 2001-2005, the First Step. The aim of the Plan is to promote wetland CEPA by forging strong partnerships and links, facilitating information exchange, between and among groups involved.

CEPA activities are already being undertaken throughout the nation and this should continue. This CEPA Plan acknowledges previous efforts and will create a framework to enhance successes, cultivate synergies, forge links and build upon current activities, developments and research.

The role of this Plan is to provide a framework for the effective and collaborative delivery of wetland CEPA activities across Australia. The Plan will enable mechanisms for sharing knowledge, suggest methods for building capacity, present goals, provide links between and among people doing similar work and build links between national and international networks.

Its principal aim is to coordinate a collaborative approach to wetland CEPA across Australia. All people who are involved in wetland management and research have a role to play in communication and education for the conservation of wetlands in Australia. To this end, the Plan outlines actions to promote coordinated communication and education between all levels of government, statutory authorities, community groups, non-government and business organisations involved in wetland and wetland-related management throughout Australia.

The Plan will advance aspects of the *Wetlands Policy of the Commonwealth Government of Australia* (1997), which has as its goal: 'to conserve, repair and manage wetlands wisely' (see Appendix 2). A number of States and Territories have also adopted wetland policies consistent with this goal.

The Wetlands Policy recognises that its successful implementation reliant upon the development of a cooperative partnership between all spheres of government, community groups, landholders, the business sector and other Australian people. Effective communication networks and community education are fundamental to achieve this goal.

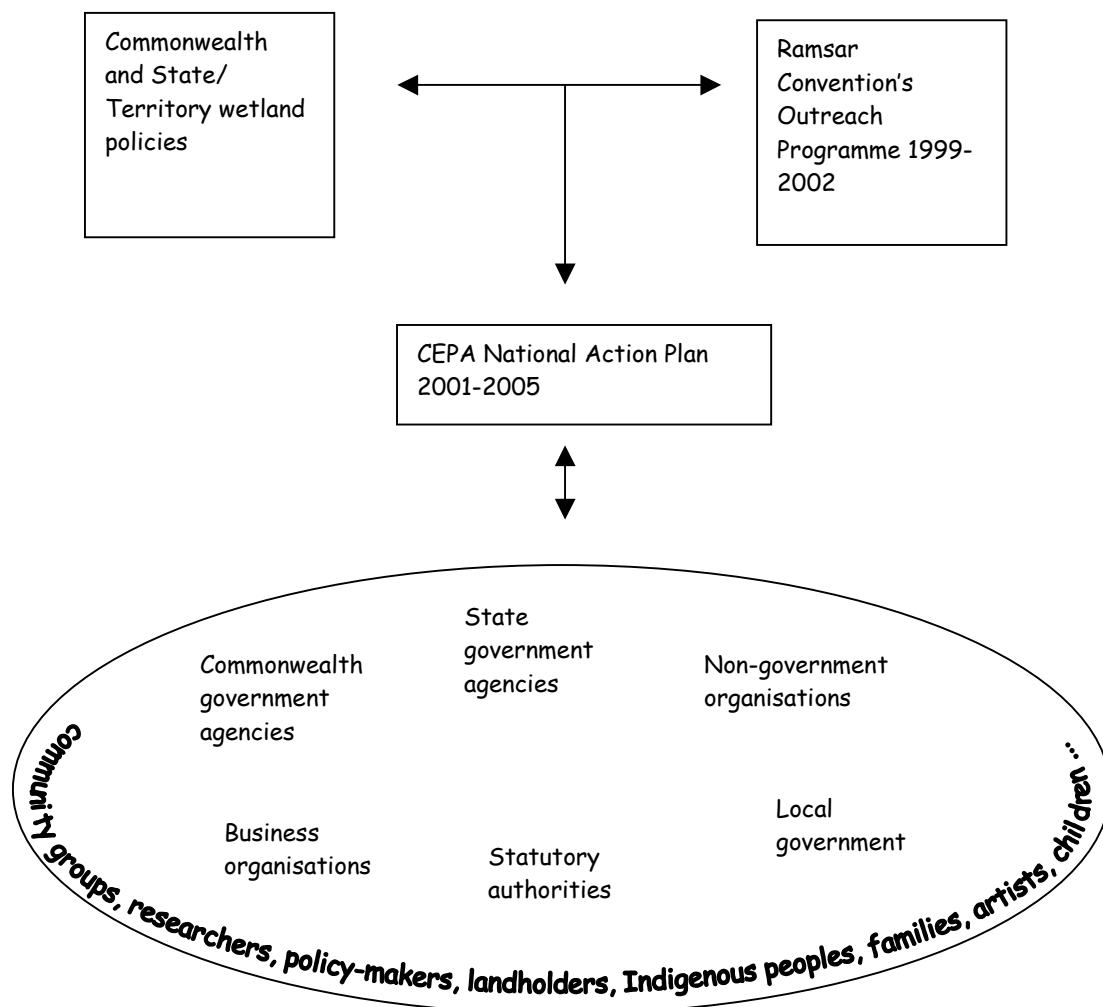
Communication and education will provide the basis for continued responsiveness to major wetland and wetland-related issues, monitoring and evaluation of actions, and coordination and efficiency of effort. In this regard, the CEPA Plan is a starting point.

The Plan will ensure that the actions of all groups (government and non-government) involved in wetland CEPA are consistent with Australia's commitment to the Ramsar Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002 which aims 'to increase the knowledge and understanding of wetland values and benefits and so develop action towards the conservation and sustainable management of wetland resources' (see Appendix 3.1 and 3.2 for details of the Convention's Outreach Programme).

It is intended that this framework of action will facilitate the implementation of the Ramsar Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002 at national, state and local levels in Australia over the next five years. It will encourage coordinated actions, generate strength in unity, avoid duplication of effort and maximise benefits of actions.

By providing direction for Wetland CEPA activities, the Plan contributes to the efforts made by government and non-government organisations to support the broad aims of the Ramsar Convention to halt worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve, through wise use and management, those that remain.

The CEPA Plan's policy and implementation context



WHO DEVELOPED THE PLAN? WHO IS IT FOR?

The updated CEPA Plan has been developed by the *Australian Wetland Information Network* (AWIN), comprising government and non-government agencies and organisations with an interest in wetlands (see Appendix 4). AWIN members include representatives from: government (Environment Australia), a statutory authority (Murray-Darling Basin Commission) and a representative from The Wetlands Centre, Wetland Care Australia, Wetlands International - Oceania, World Wildlife Fund for Nature and the Australian Wetlands Alliance (AWA). The network also has representation from State and Territory government agencies.

It is recognised that AWIN does not purport to represent all stakeholders and further developments of the CEPA Plan will ensure representative membership.

This Plan does not intend to be prescriptive or comprehensive. It is to be accessible and useful to organisations and agencies who are involved, or who may become involved in CEPA activities. The implementation of this plan provides a framework to assist agencies, organisations and community groups as they develop and implement action plans to suit their community needs and situations.

AWIN has focused on providing a platform for users of this Plan, to develop communication and education processes in a variety of formats for networks of agencies and organisations involved in wetland management. This includes supporting CEPA activities for the public, providing frameworks and guidelines, and linking organisations and individuals in ways that foster sharing of information, exchange of ideas, collaboration and capacity building.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

This CEPA Plan includes: a workplan that will guide the implementation of this Plan; the terms of reference for AWIN (Appendix 5); and an evaluation tool for CEPA deliverers (Appendix 6).

The CEPA Plan recognises the enormous effort that Commonwealth, State and Territory government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups have already invested in wetland CEPA activities in Australia. The Plan acknowledges historic and existing administrative arrangements, programs, initiatives and efforts that support wetland CEPA. The Plan is building on these experiences, without impeding their continued development, to create a national focus for wetland CEPA and management.

All Australian State and Territory governments have been involved in and have made a commitment to the conservation, repair and preservation of wetlands through policy directions and wise use management principles of wetlands. State and Territory governments have supported innovative wetland CEPA initiatives such as Frogwatch and Saltwatch, and provide ongoing wetland CEPA services through publications, teaching materials and on-site interpretation.

The Commonwealth Government's Natural Heritage Trust, coordinated in partnership with State and Territory governments, plays an important role in providing a national response to wetland issues and encouragement for on-ground wetland activities. The Waterwatch program of the Natural Heritage Trust is a national education initiative that specifically focuses the community on catchment issues and the important role of wetlands in aquatic ecosystems.

Non-government organisations have also contributed significantly to the education of the broader community about wetlands through publications, web sites and teaching resources. The Australian Gould League has a long history of developing excellent teaching materials about wetlands for primary and lower secondary. The Wetlands Centre at Shortlands, provides an important wetland education service regionally, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, hundreds of local community groups including field naturalist and landcare groups, have supported wetland CEPA and conservation through on-ground activities and management.

The Plan will harness this wealth of experience and expertise, facilitate an exchange of information and ideas and provide a framework for all Australians to communicate about wetlands conservation and wise use.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In pursuing the objectives of this CEPA Plan the following principles have been adopted.

- The CEPA Plan will recognise education in its broadest sense. This includes: involving people in wetland research; conducting debates on topical wetland issues; experiential activities; theatre productions and other artistic activities.
- Motivating and empowering people is implicit in all CEPA initiatives.
- All people (managers, policy-makers, researchers etc.) have a responsibility to educate.
- It is acknowledged that wetland CEPA is a shared responsibility, and decision-making and actions are to be undertaken in an atmosphere of inclusiveness and through partnerships.
- Wetland CEPA must involve major participation from the group, sector or organisation, where the impact of the CEPA activity or process is most felt.
- Actions will be appropriate to community needs and situations.
- The dissemination of research and the involvement of wetland managers in wetland research are important to the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of wetlands.
- CEPA is a tool to improve wetland management as guided by the Ramsar Convention.
- Indigenous people's knowledge and practices in relation to wetlands is supported and respected.
- The existing structures of agencies, organisations, educational institutions and community groups and their expertise will form the basis for building an effective network.
- Systems of communication, negotiation and coordinated decision-making, which can be sustained for the long-term, are crucial to the promotion of practical, efficient and effective actions.
- Social justice, equity and democratic processes and principles are fundamental to the development of, and the process of developing, actions.
- The Plan will evolve in response to monitoring, evaluation and emerging issues.
- The basis of all actions must be in terms of environmental benefits.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO ACHIEVE? WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

The development and implementation of the CEPA Plan aims to support cooperative networks, systems and actions that help CEPA deliverers. The CEPA Plan will achieve this through the following objectives:

To provide a national focus

Developing a coordinated national focus will establish a mandate for wetland CEPA in Australia and build a framework for delivery that supports all people involved in wetland CEPA activities.

To develop networks

Through sharing knowledge and experience and developing relationships, which foster effective communication, education and public awareness, the network will build the capacity of the Australian community to conserve, repair and use wetlands wisely

To develop guidelines and tools

Through the provision of appropriate guidelines and tools, CEPA deliverers across Australia will deliver activities and develop initiatives that motivate and empower the community to engage in wetland conservation and wise use

THE CEPA WORKPLAN

IDENTIFIED PRIORITY ACTIONS: A National Focus...

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
A Wetland CEPA National Action Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare and publish a Wetland CEPA National Action Plan as a starting point for the further development and implementation of wetland CEPA across Australia 2. Prepare and publish a short, user-friendly version of the wetland CEPA Plan to promote further involvement in CEPA activities 3. Identify and engage key organisations and interest groups to be involved in the further development of wetland education across Australia and facilitate their involvement 4. Implement actions in the CEPA Plan as a priority 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Wetland Link International – Australia is ongoing</p> <p>Database of Wetland Education Centres is ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p>
National government and non-government focal points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify national government and non-government focal points 2. Notify the Ramsar Bureau of the names and contact details of the focal points 	<p>Completed (Ramsar Bureau notified)</p>
An effective, representative wetland Network (AWIN) implementing the Wetland CEPA National Action Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment Australia to seek support for AWIN for 5 years 2. Develop terms of reference for AWIN, a review process to evaluate and criteria to ensure representative membership 	<p>Completed</p>

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
Comprehensive understanding of current wetland CEPA activities across Australia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore means of reviewing current wetland CEPA activities including: the action plan; education centres; programs; and resources 2. Analyse the initial survey results and subsequent survey results and evaluate the initial survey form 3. Build on the results of the 'Survey of Capabilities, Opportunities and Needs for CEPA Relating to Wetlands in Australia' 4. Provide feedback to survey participants 5. Ensure that information collected contributes to the further development of the CEPA Plan 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p>
An inventory of wetland CEPA resources and institutional arrangements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publish a list of Wetland Centres and the programs they offer 2. Publish a list contact details of agencies and organisations who currently deliver wetland CEPA programs 3. Publish a list of CEPA kits, videos, books, pamphlets, CD-ROMS, excursion venues that are relevant to wetland CEPA for primary and secondary schools and the public. (This could be modelled on the "Catalogue of Education Resources for Waterwatch" - see National Waterwatch website: http://www.ea.gov.au) 	<p>Ongoing/ Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Ongoing/ Yet to be undertaken</p> <p>Yet to be undertaken</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ensure that the inventory is accessible to all CEPA deliverers 	<p>Yet to be undertaken</p>

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
<p>An Understanding of attitudes and perceptions to wetlands that may impact on acceptance of the CEPA products</p>	<p>1. Identify actions to influence change</p>	<p>Yet to be undertaken</p>
<p>A review process in place that allows for the Plan to evolve in response to the CEPA wetland needs of Australia</p>	<p>1. Explore mechanisms and processes for reviewing the Plan and the Plan's initiatives 2. Encourage monitoring processes of the focus areas of the CEPA Plan against the Guiding Principles.</p>	<p>Ongoing Evaluation tool for CEPA deliverers Completed (Appendix 5)</p>

IDENTIFIED PRIORITY ACTIONS: A Network...		
What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
A network of agencies, organisations, and groups who are communicating about their wetlands-related activities to all relevant people	1. Identify and consult with existing and potential Wetland CEPA deliverers to further develop Wetland CEPA in Australia	Ongoing
	2. Explore most appropriate means to engage potential partners to join the network on a sustainable basis	Ongoing
	3. Identify existing and potential communication linkages	Ongoing
	4. Investigate mechanisms for supporting ongoing communication between the Wetland CEPA deliverers	Ongoing
	5. Coordinate a wetland centre network	Ongoing
What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
Key delivery partners engaged in collaborative CEPA activities and initiative	1. Support ongoing collaborative initiatives through organisational and administrative arrangements	Ongoing through AWIN and Wetland Link International

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
Effective two-way communication between the information-gatherers and wetland decision-makers to ensure that research and information is directed and relevant	1. Investigate mechanisms for establishing two-way communication	Ongoing
Ensure that the interests of landholders are represented in wetland CEPA	2. Facilitate wetland research community to engage in CEPA activities	Yet to be undertaken
Ensure that Australia's Indigenous peoples can represent their interests in wetland CEPA	1. Investigate appropriate processes for involving land holders in the communication network in a meaningful way	Ongoing
Ensure that Indigenous peoples can represent their interests in wetland CEPA	1. Investigate appropriate processes for involving Indigenous peoples in all CEPA activities	Yet to be undertaken
	2. Assist in making the broader community aware of the key role Australia's Indigenous peoples can play in wetland management and the role they can play in wetland CEPA	Yet to be undertaken
	3. Investigate means of supporting CEPA deliverers to Indigenous peoples in the development of their initiatives and activities (e.g. a series of discussion papers)	Yet to be undertaken

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
Ensure 'traditional ecological knowledge' is afforded the same status as other forms of knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate about the importance and significance of 'traditional ecological knowledge' 2. Support Traditional Owner initiative to maintain culture, including their training and education processes in their own communities 	Yet to be undertaken
		Yet to be undertaken

IDENTIFIED PRIORITY ACTIONS: Guidelines and tools...

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
<p>Effective communication mechanisms to ensure information flow about wetlands and CEPA that are inclusive and for the benefit of all key CEPA deliverers</p>	<p>Web sites 1. Explore and evaluate the options for best possible delivery of information through the internet 2. Identify the best arrangement for the management of electronic communication that can operate as a clearing-house, promotional tool and communication centre on behalf of the wetland community across Australia</p>	<p>Ongoing, AWIN web site to be launched on World Wetlands Day 2003</p>
	<p>Publications 1. Explore and evaluate the options for best possible delivery of information through publications 2. Identify the best arrangement for the publishing of a national publication on behalf of the wetland community across Australia. This should involve reviewing existing arrangements i.e. <i>Wetlands Australia</i>, <i>WetlandLink Bulletin</i> etc</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Workshops, meetings and conferences 1. Explore and evaluate the options for best possible delivery of information through hosting workshops, meetings and conferences 2. Facilitate a national wetlands conference on a regular basis</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
<p>A profile for wetland education in Australia that provides strong messages, is imbued with meaning, stimulates an 'image', is embraced by the network and engages the community.</p>	1. Develop an effective slogan and image	Yet to be undertaken
	2. Develop and promote a set of national messages about wetlands	
	3. Produce materials to promote the slogan and other national messages	
	4. Facilitate CEPA involvement in World Wetlands Day (2 February)	
<p>CEPA deliverers are using 'best' practice models and techniques</p>	1. Develop a criteria for determining effective and appropriate CEPA activities and initiatives at national, regional and local levels	Yet to be undertaken
	2. Wherever possible build on and support existing 'good' CEPA practice	Ongoing
	3. Identify examples or models of effective and appropriate CEPA activities and initiatives in Australia and internationally	Ongoing
	4. Prepare guidelines for the development of CEPA activities at national, regional and local levels	Yet to be undertaken
	5. Prepare guidelines for local community groups to develop their own action plans	Yet to be undertaken
	6. Provide access to professional development relevant to the planning and delivery of CEPA activities	Yet to be undertaken
	7. Provide tools to enable people to evaluate their CEPA activities (How can deliverers of wetland CEPA activities assess the effectiveness of their programs)	Completed (Appendix 6)

What do we need to achieve?	What are the actions needed?	Status
<p>Relevant, current research findings, management practices and other information, in a form accessible to other people, within the network</p>	1. Investigate means of providing links to current and relevant research and information findings	Yet to be undertaken
	2. Investigate means of transferring wetlands knowledge between sectors of the community	
	3. Develop and make accessible case studies of 'best' practice in wetlands management	Ongoing
	4. Provide access to professional development relevant to the values, importance and management of wetlands	Ongoing
<p>Ensure wetlands education is delivered in the primary, secondary and tertiary education systems where appropriate</p>	1. Establish effective linkages with the formal education sector	Underway
	2. Promote and provide greater access to appropriate curriculum material and opportunities to support classroom teachers and lecturers	Yet to be undertaken

APPENDIX 1

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

CEPA	Communication, Education and Public Awareness. CEPA describes education and communication in its broadest sense. This could include involving people in wetland research and management, conducting debates on topical wetland issues, experiential activities, theatre productions and other artistic activities.
Environmental Education for a Sustainable Future – National Action Plan	The Environmental Education for a Sustainable Future – National Action Plan was released by the Commonwealth Minister for Environment in July 2000 to address the current needs of environmental education in Australia. The Plan is available from Environment Australia (www.ea.gov.au/education/publication/nap/pubs/nap.pdf).
Ramsar	Ramsar refers to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) or commonly known as the Ramsar Convention. The Convention was established in the town of Ramsar in Iran in 1971, when eighteen countries became signatories. Further information is available from the Ramsar Bureau (www.ramsar.org).
Ramsar Convention Outreach Programme 1999-2002	The Programme was adopted by the 7th Conference of Parties to the Ramsar Convention in May 1999. The Ramsar Convention Outreach Programme determines actions to promote communication, education and public awareness (www.ramsar.org/outreach_index.htm). The Outreach Programme is at Appendix 2.1 and 2.2.
AWIN	<p>Australian Wetlands Information Network (AWIN) aims to increase and improve communication about wetlands and support information exchange among wetland educators. It was formed to implement obligations under the Ramsar Outreach Programme 1999-2002, at national, state and local levels in Australia; and to develop this Action Plan. The Network is assisting with direction setting and implementation of the activities outlined in the Action Plan.</p> <p>AWIN includes representatives from government agencies, non-government organisations and key education centres across Australia with an interest in wetlands education, communication, policy and planning. For contact details of the members, see Appendix 3.</p>

Wetland CEPA National Action Plan	Referred to as the CEPA Plan, the National Action Plan and the Plan within this document.
Wetlands Policy of the Commonwealth Government of Australia	Through this policy, the Commonwealth aims to provide leadership in the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Australia. The Policy is available from Environment Australia (www.ea.gov.au/water/wetlands). For further details see Appendix 1.
Wise use of wetlands	The wise use of wetlands is a key concept of the Convention on Wetlands and is defined as the 'sustainable utilisation for the benefit of humankind in a way compatible with the maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem' (see Appendix 7).

APPENDIX 2 THE WETLANDS POLICY OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA (1997)

STRATEGY 3

INVOLVING THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE IN WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

Promote public awareness and understanding of the wetland resource in Australia and actively encourage participation of the community, including Indigenous Australians, other private landholders, the business sector and non-government organisations in achieving the goal of this Policy.

3.1 Working towards greater community awareness and understanding of wetland values

- Develop and implement a targeted national community awareness and education program about wetlands, their values and management models.
- Encourage the establishment of educational and interpretive facilities at wetlands around Australia.
- Support and develop initiatives that educate wetland managers about the principles of integrated environmental and natural resource management and thereby promote the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development.
- In cooperation with Indigenous people, develop educational materials, which will assist their management of impacts on wetlands that have been introduced by other cultures.
- Support activities, such as those of the Waterwatch Australia Program, which promote the concepts of integrated catchment management and creation of empathy between rural and urban dwelling Australians in water and land management.

3.2 Empowering the community to take responsibility for using wetlands wisely

- Ensure the relevant Commonwealth programs offer opportunities, through appropriate mechanisms, for the participation of the community and local and indigenous groups in wetland conservation, rehabilitation and management projects.

- Facilitate the exchange of management-related information and data between on-ground wetland managers in the private sector and government agencies and departments. Encourage the use of this information and data in the development and implementation of integrated regional plans.
- Encourage the adoption of management practices that use and demonstrate the traditional wetland management knowledge of Indigenous Australians and consider measures to encourage the equitable sharing of benefits arising from utilisation of such knowledge.
- Assist and support, as resources allow, private landholders and other community members to gain access to training in wetlands conservation and management within a broader context of environmental and natural resource management.
- Invite the active participation of appropriate stakeholder representatives on the advisory, assessment and other committees of relevant Commonwealth programs.

3.3 Supporting mechanisms to encourage wetland conservation and wise use

- Document and promote a range of economic, voluntary, educational and other measures to encourage wetland conservation activities by the private sector.
- Undertake a broader review of economic policy instruments for biodiversity conservation outside protected areas to ensure that, where feasible and where consistent with national taxation and fiscal policy, there are incentives and, conversely, no disincentives for wetland conservation activities by private landowners.
- Document the economic importance of the Australian commercial and recreational fishing industries and their reliance on wetland habitats and establish a range of measures for the protection, rehabilitation and restoration of these areas.

APPENDIX 3.1 THE CONVENTION'S OUTREACH PROGRAMME – 1999-2002

Actions to promote communication, education and public awareness to support implementation of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

I. Goals and rationale of the Outreach Programme

- 1 The Outreach Programme is a direct response to General Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 of the Convention, as adopted at the 6th Conference of the Contracting Parties in 1996. Through its three Operational Objectives, General Objective 3, describes a range of actions designed to allow the Convention:
'To raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels'.
- 2 The three Operational Objectives under Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan refer to international and national programmes of education and public awareness and the communication activities of the Convention and the Ramsar Bureau. In the Outreach Programme describes herein, the same three areas of activity are considered in an integrated way and a model is presented to assist Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Bureau, the Convention's International Organization Partners, local people and others to undertake appropriate actions to reach their respective priority target groups.

Defining the Challenge

- 3 The challenge for the Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Bureau, the Convention's International Organization Partners, local people and others is to develop effective communication in order to change those practices that act against wetland conservation and the wise use of wetland resources. To be effective, the Contracting Parties need to engage stakeholders in defining the issues and possible solutions and to use communication and education as tools appropriately linked to legal and economic instruments to bring about change. This means that communication should form a central part of implementing the Ramsar Convention by each Contracting Party, supported by the Ramsar Bureau and the International Organization Partners of the Convention.

Goals

- 4 The goals of the Outreach Programme are the same as those given with the respective Operational Objectives contained in General Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 of the Convention as follows:

- (I) Operational Objective 3.1: 'To support and assist in implementing, in cooperation with partners and other institutions, an international programme of Education and Public Awareness (EPA) on wetlands, their functions and values, designed to promote national EPA programmes.'
 - (II) Operational Objective 3.2: '*To develop and encourage national programmes of EPA on wetlands, targeted at a wide range of people, including key decision-makers, people living in and around wetlands, other wetland users, and the public at large.*'
 - (III) Operational Objective 3.3: 'To improve Ramsar Bureau's communications activities and to develop a Convention Communications Strategy, capable of further promoting the Convention and its wider application, and of raising awareness of wetland values and functions.'
- (II) motivate people to care about wetlands so that they become involved in policy formulation and hands-on planning and management of wetlands. This is the key to encouraging those behaviours that impact positively on wetlands and lead to the sustainable use of resources;
 - (III) build support for wetland conservation and wise use amongst policy makers, the private sector and all sectors of society – the Ramsar Convention's constituency.
- 6 Without communication, the Contracting Parties and the Convention risk witnessing continuing conflicts over wetland management and ongoing degradation and loss of wetlands, and their functions, services and values.
- 7 Wetlands are vital for sustaining human life and must be managed accordingly. Communication is the link from science and ecology to people's social and economic reality. Communication supplies the oil for the implementation of the Convention's 'tools', providing the information needed by the Contracting Parties and its supporters to see wetland conservation and wise use implemented.

Rationale for the Outreach Programme

5 The Convention on Wetlands needs an Outreach Programme in order to:

- (I) generate a greater awareness among people about the functions, services and values of wetlands so they are perceived as important assets of the natural infrastructure of each country;

About the Outreach Programme

8 The specific actions described in the following sections are not intended to be exclusive. A key to successful communication is being clear about the

issue, the particular circumstances of the people involved, the barriers to changing harmful practices, and developing messages and means to transmit them to suit the circumstances. This Programme should be viewed as providing a framework for actions which can help to guide activities undertaken by interested people and organizations at all levels and all over the world.

- 9 It is not the intention of this Programme to be prescriptive or comprehensive; it aims merely to provide a range of suggestions and options for actions which may or may not suit all situations or contexts. Overall, the Outreach Programme is intended to assist with putting in place an appropriate framework for actions in the communication, education and public awareness domain that will facilitate the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands.

Identifying the target groups

- 10 There are a large number of target groups for this Outreach Programme which fall within the broadest category of the general community or civil society. To assist Contracting Parties and others using this Programme to decide on the actions they will take, Appendix I describes 27 subgroups of civil society which have been identified as being those people who can make a significant and immediate difference in the status and long-term sustainability of wetlands. In developing international, regional, national or local

programmes of action based on this Outreach Programme, Contracting Parties and others are urged to take Appendix I into consideration for their own situations in determining the highest priority target groups

II. The Actors

- 11 A fundamental assumption of the Outreach Programme is that as a consequence of the actions taken in response to it, there will be an increasing number of 'actors' who become agents or ambassadors for the Convention on Wetlands and the principles it seeks to have applied. Support for the Outreach Programme should therefore be seen as an investment which aims to educate decision-makers and mobilise local scale actions directed at achieving the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- 12 This section recognises that at the outset it is essential to identify the primary actors who will lead the processes of communication, education and public awareness – those people and organizations that must take primary responsibility for designing and implementing action programmes suited to the regional, national or local situations and priority groups.
- 13 Contracting Parties. The designated Administrative Authority of the Ramsar Convention in each Contracting Party has a responsibility to show leadership in promoting and undertaking wetland communication, education and public awareness (Wetland CEPA) activities at

the national, and as appropriate, international, regional and local levels. Where the Administrative Authority itself does not have the expertise to take on such a role, the training of personnel in Wetland CEPA is recommended (paragraph 44–46), or alternatively, working in partnership with other Ministries or organizations with personnel who possess these skills is encouraged.

14 Irrespective of the approach taken with respect to reviewing needs, capacities and opportunities as suggested by the Outreach Programme, each Contracting Party is invited to nominate a National Focal Point for Wetland Communication, Education and Public Awareness (Wetland CEPA) in order to have an identified expert leader of the actions to be taken.

15 The Convention secretariat. The Ramsar Bureau will continue to play the role of facilitator in Wetland CEPA. The following section of this document outlines the major ongoing and proposed actions which the Ramsar Bureau will undertake to assist the implementation of the Outreach Programme at all levels. Among these actions is the recognised need for the Ramsar Bureau to work closely with the International Organization Partners of the Convention to promote the availability of their resources and expertise to the Administrative Authorities of the Convention.

16 International Organization Partners of the Convention. The Convention has a number

of official International Organization Partners: BirdLife International, IUCN – the World Conservation Union, Wetlands International, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). These organizations already offer to the Convention considerable resources and expertise to assist Contracting Parties and others with developing more strategic approaches to Wetland CEPA. The following section examines some ways for Contracting Parties to work more with these International Partners in pursuing their aspirations in the CEPA area.

17 The 7th Conference of the Parties has adopted Resolution V11.3 adopting criteria and guidelines for the acceptance of further official Organization Partners. It is hoped that a number of other organizations with expertise in the area of Wetland CEPA will seek official Partner status of the Convention to allow for enhanced cooperation and partnership in the future.

18 Regional and national non-governmental organizations. As with International Organization Partners, key actors in developing and implementing Wetland CEPA Action Plans are the regional and national non-governmental organizations with expertise in these areas. In recognition of this, in the following section Contracting Parties are urged to identify a suitable expert from a non-governmental organization to work in partnership with the governmental Wetland CEPA Focal Point

in undertaking an action plan (see paragraph 14 above).

19 Local stakeholders. Perhaps the key actors are those people at the local level who fall within the category of stakeholders – people whose lives and livelihood are determined, at least in part, by what happens at their local wetland(s). Under any Wetland CEPA Action Plan, assisting these local people to fully appreciate their wetland(s) and to raise the awareness and understanding of the importance of the wetland resource among others from outside the local community is essential. If these wetland ‘managers’ fail to appreciate the functions, services and values provided by their wetland(s), then the efforts of governments and non-government organizations will struggle to have impact/ Local stewardship, based on understanding and appreciation, is vital.

20 Donor agencies and sponsors. For many countries, and especially the developing countries and those in economic transition, an impediment to putting Wetland CEPA Action Plans in place is likely to be the lack of resources and expertise. It is therefore important that from the earliest stages of planning the Wetland CEPA Action Plans (paragraph 25-33) that these Contracting Parties consult potential funding sources and work with them to produce projects likely to gain support. These supporters may be the traditional multilateral and bilateral donor agencies for the developing and transition countries, but consideration

should also be given to inviting private sector sponsors. A good example of that is the current partnership project in which the Ramsar Bureau is engaged with the private sector Danone Group and several government agencies from France. This three-year programme of actions directed at the theme of ‘Caring for water resources and water quality’ is allowing funds to be directed to six themes of action under the Ramsar Convention, ranging from site networks for migratory species to training, water and human health projects, and a range of communication and awareness raising activities. This cooperative project provides an ideal model for national programmes as well.

III. Tools and frameworks for action

21 This section of the Outreach Programme provides a broad framework or model for the development of Wetland CEPA Action Plans. These plans should be developed for application at the international, regional, national and local levels. They may be developed by Contracting Parties working as international or regional partners, through national programmes developed jointly by the Ramsar Administrative Authority and non-government organizations, through to local scale action plans formulated and implemented by local stakeholders for local needs. It is hoped that all types of Wetland CEPA Action Plan will result from the adoption and application of the Outreach Programme. What follows is intended to offer suggestions for how to

go about developing an appropriately targeted action plan for CEPA to promote wetland conservation and wise use.

Reviewing needs, capacities and opportunities

22 The starting point suggested is a review of the current needs, capacities and opportunities in the area of Wetland CEPA. This is itself no small undertaking if it is to be comprehensive and to provide a clear picture of where current strengths and weaknesses lie in this regard. The following offers a framework for undertaking such reviews leading to the development of an Action Plan at each level:

- (a) Appointment of national Government Focal Point – As mentioned in paragraph 14 above, each Contracting Party is invited to nominate a National Focal Point for Wetland Communication, Education and Public Awareness (Wetland CEPA), and to advise the Ramsar Bureau of the person fulfilling this role and his/her contact details. This person should be expert in the area of Wetland CEPA from the Ramsar Administrative Authority, where they are available, or might alternatively be from another appropriate government agency. His or her role is to be the identified leader and contact point for Wetland CEPA activities relating to wetlands nationally, as well as within the region and internationally.
- (b) Appointment of National Non-government Focal Point – Recognising the major role that non-government organizations play or can play in Wetland CEPA activities, each Contracting Party is also encouraged to invite a suitable individual from an international, regional or national NGO to be the Non-government Focal Point for Wetland CEPA activities and to work with the Government-based Focal Point in progressing the review of needs, capacities and opportunities, and subsequent plans of action.
- (c) Build a global network of Focal Points – These Focal Points are expected to form part of a global network of experts to share information, promote the dissemination of resource material and support the development or expansion of programmes which can provide opportunities for individual, group and community participation in wetland and water resource management. These issues are considered in more detail in the following paragraphs.

(d) Integrate Wetland CEPA into business of National Wetland or Biodiversity Committees – In order to promote communication, education and public awareness activities, it is advisable that the National Focal Points are members, or permanent observers, on the national committees charged with the development and implementation of policy instruments such as national wetland policies, biodiversity strategies, and water policies where they exist. Such membership will also assist greatly with the review of capacities and options.

(e) Establish a Wetland CEPA Task Force – Further, if no other mechanisms exist for this purpose, the establishment of a small task force is recommended, to undertake the review of needs and options and to set priorities based on these conclusions. At the very least this task force should include the Government and Non-government Focal Points referred to in paragraphs 22a a and b) above, as well as key representatives of the five groups of ‘actors’ described in paragraph 13-20, wherever possible. From within the Government it should include at least representatives of the Ministries which deal with matters relating to environment and conservation, water resource management and education. Depending on the primary threats to wetlands within the region, country or local setting, it may also be wise to include representatives of those Ministries responsible for primary production/agriculture and tourism.

(f) Multi-level framework for Wetland CEPA review – The scope of the review of capabilities and opportunities should be comprehensive, including at least the areas of activity considered in paragraphs 25 onwards, namely, communication between the actors; campaigns to raise awareness and promote action; sharing of resource materials and knowledge; formal education and training opportunities and the curricula of these; and the roles being played by dedicated centres for environmental education and awareness raising. In addition, it may be advisable to consider the review at the various levels – international, regional, national and local – to establish where activities are under way, or where there exists potential for them to be fostered or built upon. Consideration of these areas give a clearer indication of the possible scope available at each level.

(g) Action Plan formulation – Under the Outreach Programme, each Contracting Party is encouraged to complete its review of Wetland CEPA capacities and options by 30 June 2000 at the latest. The Ramsar Bureau will facilitate these reviews by preparing a questionnaire for use by the Wetland CEPA review task forces and National Focal Points. Based on the findings and conclusions of this review, the Wetland CEPA Focal Points and Task Forces are expected to prepare for consideration by the Ramsar Administrative Authority within their countries a Wetland CEPA Action Plan which provides guidance on the highest priority actions. This advice would be provided to the Administrative Authority before 31 December 2000 and copied to the Ramsar Convention as appropriate.

Action planning process

23 Identify threats at all levels – Paragraph 22 above sets out a framework for undertaking a review of the capacities and opportunities for Wetlands CEPA which is designed to result in an Action Plan. Such a Plan needs to be tailored to the needs of each country, and for each level – international, regional, national and local. One approach to consider in drawing up such an Action Plan is that of threat analysis in order to establish which actions occurring within a country are resulting in the greatest loss or degradation of wetlands. Is it pollution impacts, direct conversion to other uses or water shortages, for example? This

approach can help to identify those target groups (refer to Appendix I) for highest priority attention.

24 Identify most cost-effective actions –

Another approach is to consider the most cost-effective actions that can be taken. For example, one key question may be, is it a better use of scarce resources to target local stakeholders or political representatives and high level decision-makers? The first may offer longer term, local results while the second group usually make decisions which have broader implications. It is the role of the National Focal Points and Wetland CEPA Task Force, or other appropriate mechanism, to advise the Administrative Authority on the priority target groups and how best to communicate with them to ensure their behaviours are acting in support of wetland conservation and wise use.

Communication among the actors

25 Establish the strengths and weaknesses in communication – A priority within the review of capacities and opportunities described in paragraph 22 above should be to establish the level, type and effectiveness of communication between the various actors identified in paragraphs 13-20 above and the target groups identified in Appendix I. This should help to show where communication is not occurring, and alternatively where it is occurring and needs to be retained or enhanced. In this analysis it may be useful first to establish the priority target groups

(refer to paragraph 24 above). As an example, do the persons responsible for managing each Ramsar-listed wetland within the country have direct communication with one another, with the Administrative Authority, with the managers of other Ramsar sites used by the same migratory species, and direct access to the Ramsar Bureau's Wise Use Resource Library? Or do the officials in every relevant government Ministry have copies of the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan and access to the more detailed information about the Convention available on the Convention's Web site?

26 Define the information and training needs –

The review of communications should consider the information requirements of each target group – meaning the information which will allow them to behave as the Convention would encourage (refer to Appendix I) – to establish where that information or advice should or could come from, and how to make the connection between the providers and those who need the information or training. This process will show where communication breakdowns at present are directly inhibiting the implementation of the Convention. It is these that the Wetland CEPA Action Plan should aim to address.

27 Locate sources of expert information and training –

An important element of examining communications is also to establish the sources of information or training which can provide opportunities for

increasing the capacities in this area. In this regard, contact with the Convention's International Organization Partners can the Ramsar Bureau may assist. Alternatively, those countries that have extensive resource materials and a variety of training options available are urged through the Outreach Programme (refer to paragraphs 39-43 below) to advertise the availability of these and make access to them simpler. Facilitating the sharing of expertise and knowledge is the central element of the Wetland CEPA Action Plan. It is expected that the Wetland CEPA National Focal Points will seek advice and assistance from their counterparts in other countries in locating suitable sources of resource materials and training. The Ramsar Bureau's Directory of Wetland Management Training Opportunities will also assist in this area (refer to paragraphs 44-46).

28 Using the full potential of the Internet and e-mail – With the advent of the information superhighway, the ways of communicating are rapidly being transformed, and under the Convention's Outreach Programme this should be anticipated and accommodated within the Wetland CEPA Action Plans. The Bureau of the Convention has a well-developed World Wide Web site and increasingly conducts its day-to-day business through electronic mail. A target under the Outreach Programme is to have e-mail contact with the Administrative Authorities in every Ramsar Contracting Party by the year 2000. This target also

includes e-mail contact with the designated National Focal Points for Wetland CEPA, and these same individuals should also have access to the Convention's Web site. The Ramsar Bureau will continue to develop the Convention Web site and add resource materials to ensure that it remains the centrepiece of this Outreach Programme.

29 Create a global Ramsar e-mail network – The target to follow those described above is to progressively develop Internet access, and to have e-mail links between the Ramsar Administrative Authorities, the National Wetland CEPA Focal Points, the Ramsar site managers and those facilities dedicated to environmental education and awareness raising, including local communities and indigenous people (refer to paragraphs 47-49). This communication network should provide the framework of a global Ramsar electronic network for sharing knowledge and information. Within national Wetland CEPA Action Plans, and also those at other levels of action, there should be a forward plan and vision to equip the key people with Internet access and e-mail capacity.

30 Continue and increase official communications between the Ramsar Bureau and the Ramsar Administrative Authorities – In addition to the Web site, the Bureau maintains the 'Ramsar Exchange' intended for official communication between the Ramsar Bureau and the Administrative Authorities and amongst the

Administrative Authorities themselves. This exchange operates in three (separate) language sections (English, French and Spanish) and includes all Administrative Authorities for which the Ramsar Bureau has e-mail addresses. There are also separate lists, with similar purposes, for the members of the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel. To expand this communication service further, the Ramsar Bureau will establish a separate Ramsar Exchange section for the National Focal Points for Wetland CEPA. Within national Wetland CEPA Action Plans, it should be a priority to have the key people operating within the appropriate Ramsar Exchange.

31 Expand the Ramsar Forum – The Convention Bureau also manages an open e-mail dialogue area for the public, the Ramsar Forum, which in late 1998 had 540 members drawn from organizations, academic institutions, government and intergovernmental institutions and citizens around the world. Approximately 100 substantial messages per month are posted there, comprising (in addition to the Ramsar Bureau's announcement) technical queries and calls for assistance, conservation alerts, and announcements from other groups about meetings, etc. The Forum provides a valuable service and has increased the number of groups connected to the Convention and involved in wetland issues. Within national Wetland CEPA Action Plans a priority should be to have

key national and local people participating as part of the Ramsar Forum.

32 Links to Contracting Party and other Web sites – Consistent with its Memorandum of Cooperation and Joint Work Programme with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Ramsar Convention also supports the long-term vision of the Clearing-house Mechanism under the Convention; namely, that each Contracting Party eventually has its own Web site dedicated to the issues of the Convention. Achieving this is a long-term vision of the Outreach Programme, as is the establishment of the global Ramsar e-mail network. Contracting Parties are urged to include as part of their Wetland CEPA Action Plans the development of such Web sites dedicated to their wetland-related activities. Contracting Parties, with Ramsar's International Organization Partners and others, are also urged to ensure that any existing or newly established Web sites providing appropriate information resources are 'hot linked' to the Ramsar Convention Web site and vice versa.

33 A more accessible database for the Wetlands of International Importance – As the List of Wetlands of International Importance rapidly expands, a priority is to make the information about these flagship sites more freely available by electronic means. The database, managed for the Convention by the Wetlands International office in the Netherlands, will be introduced

on the World Wide Web by the end of 1999. Capacity for answering a range of queries on-line is envisaged. Contracting Parties, in developing their Wetland CEPA Action Plans, should anticipate this development and plan for increased use of the Ramsar site database as a promotional and information tool.

Campaigns

34 Long and short-term campaigns – One element to consider as part of a Wetland CEPA Action Plan is that of using a campaign approach to raising awareness and to promoting long-term changes in attitudes and behaviour. Such campaigns can be relatively low profile, gradual escalations of activities to raise awareness of issues or shorter term, possibly higher profile activities taken at an appropriate time or location.

35 World Wetlands Day and Week – This was established through Action 3.1.5 of the Convention's Strategic Plan and provides one such option for short-term promotions. It has been celebrated since 1996 with increased popularity and interest. The Week could coincide with World Wetlands Day, proclaimed as 2 February to mark the adoption of the Convention in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran.

36 A diversity of approaches – In some countries there has been success with launching or concluding during World Wetlands Week national campaigns designed to promote issues and engage the general community in local actions. The

slogan 'think globally – act locally' is one that applies to wetlands. Under the Outreach Programme such action programmes are encouraged. Depending on the circumstances, local or national actions to restore wetlands, collect litter and clean up pollution, remove invasive species or erect educational signs can provide momentum for year-round actions by communities. They can also have relevance to more regional issues such as cooperation in the management of shared wetlands, river basins or migratory species. Some governments are now using World Wetlands of International Importance, or the adoption of a National Wetlands Policy, so that it becomes recognised at all levels as the time when achievements under the Convention are publicised.

37 Support for the Ramsar Bureau – Under the Outreach Programme, the Convention Bureau will continue to advertise and promote World Wetlands Day and Week well in advance and to offer for each year a new theme designed to raise awareness of different aspects of wetland conservation and wise use. The Ramsar Bureau will also continue to provide some resource materials for use at the global, regional, national and local scales in promoting World Wetlands Day and Week. It will also endeavour to use this opportunity each year to launch global initiatives under the Convention so as to give World Wetlands Day a recognised media profile.

38 Local actions a priority – Contracting Parties, non-government organizations and local and indigenous people are urged also to use the opportunity of World Wetlands Day and Week to raise awareness of their own activities and programmes relating to wetlands.

Sharing resource materials

39 Mobilising the flow of information and expertise – Another element of the Outreach Programme framework is the sharing of resource materials relating to education and training. There exists a very large library of such resource materials, but at present it is spread around the world with few mechanisms in place for it to be shared and exchanged. These resources include curriculum materials for the education of children and adults, less formal teaching tools, awareness-raising materials, and the latest research findings. Some countries have enormous reservoirs of such material, others are desperate to receive it and adapt it for their situations.

40 Production and distribution of printed materials – As part of its responsibilities, the Ramsar Bureau produces a range of hard copy information including a regular newsletter, Information Packs, and more detailed technical publications designed to provide guidance in implementing the Convention. Examples of the publications produced include *The Economic Valuation of Wetlands* (1997), *Wetlands, Biodiversity, and the Ramsar Convention* (1997) and *The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands: Its*

History and Development (1993). As part of the Outreach Programme the Ramsar Bureau will continue to generate a range of educational and information publications about the Ramsar Convention and its work, as well as more technical guidance. This will be done in the three working languages of the Convention and, as resources allow, in other national languages as well. Posting of these publications on the Web site will also continue. Contracting Parties should ensure, as part of their Wetland CEPA Action Plans, the access and availability of these resources generated by the Ramsar Bureau.

41 The Bureau as a clearing-house for educational resources – The development of a Wetland CEPA Action Plan should also review the availability of such educational resource materials from sources other than the Ramsar Bureau. Where they are held by a country it is suggested they be made available to the Ramsar Bureau which can advertise their existence at the global level. By operating a clearing-house or global library of educational resources on the Convention's Web site, the Ramsar Bureau can facilitate the sharing of resource materials. In keeping with the concept of a Clearing-house, the Convention's Web site will function as the node or hub of a network of Web sites housing these resources within national governments, non-government organizations or other interested persons who have Web sites. This will be done through the established

Wise Use Resource Centre launched on World Wetlands Day in 1998.

42 Language and local contexts to be considered – Major impediments to applying the educational resources developed for other countries can be those of language and context. Ramsar Administrative Authorities, the Ramsar Bureau, NGOs and other interested organizations are urged to seek resources and ways to have relevant resource materials translated into local languages and adapted to suit local situations.

43 Using the Wetland Experts Database – In 1998 the Ramsar Bureau established the Convention's Wetlands Experts Database, which by early 1999 is expected to have nearly 450 wetland experts registered. The database is designed to provide a service to wetland managers and practitioners by helping to identify suitable experts to assist with addressing wetland management problems. Under the Outreach Programme the Experts Database will be expanded to facilitate the flow of information and knowledge. Ramsar COP7 has also added to the Convention's capacity in this area of technical expertise by inviting each Contracting Party to nominate a Focal Point for matters being considered by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP). (See Resolution VII.2.) This establishes a global network of such experts that will be advertised by the Convention Bureau to provide another avenue for seeking expert advice. In

addition, the Resolution creates links to the expert scientific and technical bodies of those international conventions with which the Ramsar Convention has Memoranda of Understanding or Cooperation – the Convention to Combat Desertification, and the World Heritage Convention. Further, it establishes links between the Convention's STRP and other expert organizations and networks such as the Society of Wetland Scientists, the International Association of Limnology, the Global Wetlands Economics Network, among others, to allow wetland managers easier access to the information and resources these bodies have available. Within national Wetland CEPA Action Plans, Contracting Parties are urged to not these opportunities for gaining direct access to technical and scientific expertise and to promote this appropriately.

Formal education and training

44 Wetland conservation and wise use as part of formal curricula – Another element of the Wetland CEPA review (paragraph 22 above) is to evaluate the extent to which the curricula of formal education programmes within the country include the Ramsar principles of wetland conservation and wise use. In this regard, the involvement of a representative of the Education Ministry on the Wetland CEPA Task Force, or appropriate mechanism, is strongly recommended. Where the Ramsar principles are not included in such curricula, the Wetland CEPA Task Force, or

appropriate mechanism, needs to consider and recommend to the Administrative Authority how best to redress this situation. Where these principles do form part of the formal curricula, Contracting Parties are urged to provide details to the Ramsar Bureau so that information, and possible models for other countries, can be advertised and made available.

45 Improved access to training programmes –

In 1998 the Ramsar Bureau began to assemble a *Directory of Wetland Management Training Opportunities* to assist those people who are seeking training in wetland management. By January 1999 it contained information regarding nearly 100 training opportunities which is now available in both hard copy and via the Convention's Web site. As part of reviewing Wetland CEPA needs, capacities and opportunities, Contracting Parties are expected to identify those opportunities for wetland management training which exist within their countries, and to factor this into their Action Plans. A part of such reviews should also include the opportunities for training in Wetland CEPA. Such information should also be passed to the Ramsar Bureau to be incorporated into the *Directory of Wetland Management Training Opportunities*.

46 Undertake training needs analysis – While it is important to be aware of the training opportunities that exist, of still greater importance is to establish the priorities for training which apply in the country. A first

step in this process has to be to establish the priorities for training assistance. The Wetland CEPA Task Force, or appropriate mechanism, should make these recommendations based on its conclusions in terms of threats to wetlands within the country and the priority target groups. For example, if the Task Force concluded that the greatest threats to wetlands within a certain area were invasive plant species, then clearly training of the local site managers and stakeholders in the practices needed to control or eradicate these species is the highest priority. Alternatively, if local administrators are undervaluing the services and benefits provided by wetlands in approving development projects, then training in economic valuation techniques for these individuals may be the priority.

Centres for education and awareness raising

47 Working with Environment and Wetland Education Centres – Where they exist, these centres are ideally placed to promote the principles of wetland conservation and wise use and to foster communication among the 'actors'. Through its Wetlands Link International (WLI) programme, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in the United Kingdom has begun to establish a communication network among such centres to foster information sharing. Appendix II of this Programme provides further details about WLI. Under the Ramsar Convention's Outreach

Programme the following actions are recommended to make the WLI initiative a cornerstone of international, regional, national and local actions for Wetland CEPA:

- (a) The Ramsar Convention Bureau and the Convention's International Organization Partners will seek resources for the private sector and others to sponsor WLI as a key educational delivery mechanism.
- (b) The Ramsar Convention Bureau will promote WLI through its Web site and encourage the centres forming a part of WLI to become national centres of excellence for promoting Wetland CEPA.
- (c) The Contracting Parties are urged, as part of their Wetland CEPA activities, to consider twinning arrangements between the environment or wetland education centres within their countries and with those of other countries to assist in promoting the goals of the Outreach Programme. Once these arrangements are in place, personnel exchanges and Internet links should be a priority.
- (d) The Contracting Parties are encouraged to inform staff at environment and wetland centres in their country of the existence of the WLI network so they can contribute to the exchange of information and expertise.

- (e) The National Focal Points for Wetland CEPA should work closely with the centres forming part of WLI and, as appropriate, include a representative of such centres on their Wetland CEPA Task Forces, or appropriate mechanism.
- (f) The WLI network's experiences in establishing education centres will be documented and distributed to help others wishing to do likewise.

48 Seek to establish environment and wetland education centres – Under the Outreach Programme these facilities are considered a vital element of implementing a Wetland Action Plan. Above can be seen a range of functions that such centres can provide, apart for offering hands-on experience at wetland environments. Experience also shows that such centres can provide considerable local economic benefit through eco-tourism. In formulating national Wetland CEPA Action Plans, Contracting Parties are urged to consider including provisions for the future establishment of Environment or Wetland Education Centres which can offer a focus for major awareness raising and education activities. For countries in economic transition, or developing countries, they may also offer substantial financial benefits for promoting sustainable development.

49 Involving centres of learning – Museums, zoos, aquaria, botanic gardens and similar institutions can have much to offer in terms of providing technical advice and education

of the general public. These facilities also enjoy great popularity with the general community and therefore offer excellent venues for including wetlands interests in their work. Contracting Parties are encouraged to establish partnerships and work collaboratively with these centres of expertise to promote the values and importance of wetlands. Under the Outreach Programme, these institutions should be encouraged to join the Wetlands Link International initiative described above.

APPENDIX 3.2 RESOLUTION VII.9

adopted by the 7th Conference of the Contracting Parties, San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999

The Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002

Actions to promote communication, education and public awareness to support implementation of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)

1. RECALLING Resolution VI.19 which calls for a concerted programme of education and public awareness 'to increase the knowledge and understanding of wetland values and benefits and so develop action towards the conservation and sustainable management of wetland resources';
2. NOTING General Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 of the Convention which describes a range of actions designed to allow the Convention 'to raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels';
3. RECOGNISING the importance of communication, education and public awareness as central elements of implementing the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan;
4. EXPRESSING THANKS to all participants in the workshop convened by the Ramsar Bureau in September 1998 as follows: Commission on Communication and Education of IUCN – The World Conservation Union; Ghana Wildlife Society; Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN); Water Planet; Water Watch Asia; Watercourse and Project WET; Waterwatch Australia; Wetlands International Specialist Group on Education and Public Awareness; Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), who contributed significantly the development of the Convention's Outreach Programme;
5. FURTHER NOTING that the Conference, in Technical Session III, has considered and discussed in detail the Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. ADOPTS the Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002 as annexed to this Resolution to provide guidance to Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Bureau, the Convention's International Organization Partners, local stakeholders and others in the development of appropriate communication, education and public awareness actions to support the implementation of the Convention at the international, regional, national and local levels;
7. REQUESTS all Contracting Parties, in accordance with the Outreach Programme, to nominate, by 31 December 1999, suitable Government and Non-government Focal Points for Wetland Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) to undertake the functions therein specified;
8. FURTHER REQUESTS that the names and contact details for these Focal Points be provided to the Ramsar Bureau as soon as possible in order to create a global network of experts in this field to advance the sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources;
9. URGES, as suggested in the Outreach Programme, that each Contracting Party establish appropriately constituted Task Forces; where no mechanism exists for this purpose (e.g. National Ramsar Committees), to undertake a review of national

- needs, capacities and opportunities in the field of wetland CEPA, and based on this to formulate their National Wetland CEPA Action Plans for priority activities which consider the international, regional, national and local needs;
10. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to seek to have their National Wetland CEPA Action Plans in place by 31 December 2000, and to provide copies of these to the Ramsar Bureau to make available to other Contracting Parties and interested organizations and persons;
 11. STRONGLY URGES each Contracting Party to seek to develop and implement their National Wetland CEPA Action Plans as integrated components of their broader environment; biodiversity, wetland and water management policy instruments and programmes, to ensure that communication, education and community awareness are recognised as underpinning the effective delivery of these activities;
 12. WARMLY INVITES relevant global programmes which fill the criteria for official International Organization Partners of the Ramsar Convention as per Resolution VII.3 to facilitate future working partnerships and cooperation in advancing implementation of this Outreach Programme;
 13. DIRECTS the Ramsar Bureau, as funds and human resources allow, using information and materials provided to it by the national Focal Points for Wetland CEPA in each Contracting Party, to establish as part of the Convention's Web site a clearing-house for information relating to wetland CEPA;
 14. NOTES and ENDORSES the targets set by the Outreach Programme in terms of using the full potential of the Internet and e-mail to assist with wetland CEPA activities and general implementation of the Ramsar Convention, namely that by the year 2000 every Administrative Authority of the Convention should have Internet access and e-mail facilities and then to progressively link these Administrative Authorities with Ramsar site managers, the National Wetland CEPA Focal Points and those facilities dedicated to promoting environmental and wetland education and awareness raising;
 15. WELCOMES the growing celebration of World Wetlands Day and Week in a large number of countries, and urges Contracting Parties to continue, or to begin to use this occasion to bring attention to their achievements and continuing challenges in wetland conservation and wise use;
 16. DRAWS ATTENTION to the section of the Outreach Programme which considers formal education and training initiatives, and ENCOURAGES the Administrative Authorities in each Contracting Party to review this in partnership with the relevant Ministry, and to seek participation on their Wetland CEPA Task Forces of a representative from this Ministry and other appropriate expert bodies and organizations;
 17. REITERATES ITS STRONG SUPPORT for the Wetlands Link International initiative, a cornerstone of the Outreach Programme, EXPRESSES CONCERN for the lack of significant support for this Programme in the past, and URGES Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners of the Convention, regional and national NGOs, and potential sponsors to reassess their priorities in an effort to mobilise resources to see this initiative fulfil its potential;
 18. CALLS UPON multilateral and bilateral donors, and private sector sponsors to recognise the value and importance of supporting activities directed at promoting enhanced communication, education and public awareness, and the recovery, preservation and dissemination, where appropriate, of traditional knowledge and

skills relating to wetlands, and to allocate funds specifically for the preparation of National Wetland CEPA Action Plans.*

* In this context, also note paragraph 18 of Resolution VII.28 on Financial and Budgetary Matters, which reads: 'DECIDES to establish a Voluntary Fund for the Convention's Outreach Programme, REQUESTS the Standing Committee to prepare and adopt the Terms of Reference for the Fund at its annual meeting in 1999; and INVITES Contracting Parties, NGOs, foundations, the private sector and other institutions to contribute to the Fund.'

**APPENDIX 4 MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN
WETLANDS INFORMATION NETWORK AS AT
NOVEMBER 2002**

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APPENDIX 5 AUSTRALIAN WETLANDS INFORMATION NETWORK TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The CEPA Action Plan identified specific AWIN roles and responsibilities. Overall, it is a Network role to see that the identified actions within the Plan are undertaken and coordinated
2. AWIN is to monitor wetland CEPA achievements and progress against actions identified in the Plan
3. AWIN is to provide advice and information where appropriate for national and other wetland CEPA reporting requirements
4. AWIN is to identify priorities and resources, including engaging deliverers of wetland CEPA action where appropriate
5. AWIN is to identify strategic directions for wetlands CEPA and to review actions in response to emerging needs and identified priorities
6. AWIN is to act as a clearinghouse for wetland CEPA
7. AWIN is to advise on and make recommendations about appropriate wetland CEPA products required to undertake actions identified in the Action Plan
8. AWIN is to review the CEPA Action Plan
9. AWIN is to provide CEPA information to the appropriate national representative committee on wetlands
10. AWIN is to provide advice, help formulate recommendations and guide wetlands CEPA

APPENDIX 6 EVALUATION TOOL FOR CEPA

The following check list has been developed as an evaluation tool for AWIN and CEPA deliverers. It is based on the CEPA Guiding Principles.

1. Does the process allow for different interpretations of what is considered to be 'educational'?

Education means different things to different people and different contexts. Educational activities, events or material development can include:

- one-off experiences such as excursions;
- the development of art works, books or stories;
- case study development; research and other studies involving individuals or groups of people;
- experiments.

2. Does the process allow for activities and products that motivate and empower people?

To inspire and motivate is an important aspect of learning. This might not necessarily lead people to act in a particular way yet it may encourage people to think differently and build upon concepts that include appreciation of the natural environment. Others may be empowered in such a way that they influence others and develop further actions or concepts supporting wetlands and/or broader environmental commitments.

3. Does the process provide opportunities for people in different roles (such as Managers, Policy-Makers, Researchers) to educate?

4. Does the process allow for shared responsibility, decision-making and actions?

5. Does the process encourage inclusiveness and partnerships?

6. Do the actions or processes take into account the knowledge, expertise and needs of the Group, Sector Or Organisation where the impact of decision-making is most felt?

People's practices are usually strongly linked to their theories, beliefs, background and understandings. If education programs or activities are to influence the practice of particular people, then those people should have a major part in all aspects of development and implementation. Programs must respond to or take into account the needs of the people whose practice it is most likely to impact on.

7. Are the processes appropriate to Community needs and situations?

(See 6 above). Programs and educational processes must be responsive to the setting in which the program or educational process is to occur.

8. How has the process encouraged the dissemination of research and the involvement of Wetland Managers in wetland research?

9. Do the processes support and respect Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and practices in relation to wetlands?

Knowledge is socially and culturally constructed. Indigenous peoples' throughout Australia and the Torres Strait Islands have specific knowledge systems that are based on collective and intergenerational learning and understandings. This should be respected and supported when considering the development of wetland programs and processes.

10. Have existing structures of Agencies, Organisations, Educational Institutions and Community Groups, and their expertise, been considered for building networks?

11. Has long-term viability been considered in relation to the establishment of, and/or support for Systems of, Communication, Negotiation and Coordinated decision-making?

12. Are social justice, equity and democratic processes and principles underpinning educational processes?

13. Do processes respond to monitoring, evaluation outcomes and issues that emerge over time?

14. Do processes lead to, and/or enable actions that improve wetlands management through communication, education and/or public awareness?

15. Do processes clearly lead to actions, products and processes that are environmentally beneficial?

APPENDIX 7 THE RAMSAR CONVENTION'S WISE USE GUIDELINES

Article 3.1 of the Ramsar Convention states that the Contracting Parties 'shall formulate and implement their planning so as to promote the conservation of the wetlands included in the List, and as far as possible the wise use of wetlands in their territory '.

The Third Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in Regina, Canada from 27 May to 5 June 1987, adopted the following definition of wise use of wetlands:

The wise use of wetlands is their sustainable utilisation for the benefit of humankind in a way compatible with the maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem.

From this definition the Conference of Contracting Parties developed guidelines (Recommendation C.4.10) and additional guidance (Resolution C.5.6) to assist member states with the implementation of the wise use concept. These are reproduced as Appendix E of this Policy.

The wise use provisions apply to all wetlands and their support systems within the territory of a Contracting Party, both those wetlands designated for the List of Wetlands of International Importance, and all other wetlands. The concept of wise use seeks both the formulation and implementation of general wetland policies, and wise use of specific wetlands. These activities are integral parts of ecologically sustainable development.