



**The Regional Meeting for Oceania in preparation for the  
13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to  
the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

**Wellington, New Zealand, 13 – 16 March 2018**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

The Regional meeting for Oceania in preparation for the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Oceania pre-COP) was hosted by the Government of New Zealand, in Wellington, from 13 to 16 March 2018. The meeting was opened by the Minister of Conservation of New Zealand, Honorable Ms Eugenie Sage. In attendance were delegates from the eight Contracting Parties in the region: Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea and Samoa. Also present were observers from Vanuatu, which is in the process of accession to the Convention, the IUCN Oceania Regional Office and national non-governmental organizations in New Zealand, as well as the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

The participants reviewed 18 draft resolutions which they selected as being of particular interest to the Oceania region, from the 28 to be discussed at the 54th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee (SC54, April 2018, Gland, Switzerland), before being considered at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, scheduled to take place in October 2018, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. They provided detailed comments reflecting the needs and priorities of their countries. The comments were consolidated as a record of the common views of the Parties of Oceania views, by consensus. Australia, in its capacity as the representative of the Oceania region to the Ramsar Standing Committee, will raise these views as appropriate, during the discussions at SC54. The participants in the Oceania pre-COP meeting also reviewed and prioritized the tasks proposed for the Ramsar Science and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in the draft resolutions.

The participants shared experiences in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in their respective countries, highlighting the key achievements since Ramsar COP12 (June 2015), major challenges and current priorities. The discussion and provision of comments on the draft resolutions facilitated the sharing of information and experience not only among the Parties present at the meeting but also with those of other regions, as the draft resolutions reflect the current issues and major trends faced globally in wetland conservation.

The pre-COP meeting also provided a platform for the Parties to exchange views and seek consensus on issues specific to the Oceania region, including a draft proposal to establish a Ramsar Regional Center for Oceania as a Regional Initiative, and fundraising and capacity building needs of the region.

The participants also had a range of formal and informal opportunities to interact, build relationships and expand networks throughout the meeting and in particular, during the field trip to the Wairarapa - Moana Wetland Area, located north of Wellington.

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat, on behalf of the Ramsar Contracting Parties of Oceania, would like to thank the governments of Australia and New Zealand for their generous financial support for the holding of the Pre-COP13 Oceania Regional Meeting.