



Ramsar Standing Committee 41

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

DOC. SC41-17

Agenda item 4

41st Meeting of the Standing Committee
Kobuleti, Georgia, 26 April – 1 May 2010

Scope



- Since May 2009, following SC40
- The analysis of some global issues is beyond this time frame, taking into account Ramsar Resolutions, overall trends and ongoing global debate and actions that affect wetlands.

Constituency



- The Secretariat is currently serving **159 Contracting Parties**, with **1888 Ramsar sites**, covering **185,272,001 ha** designated for inclusion in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.
- Therefore, the level of activity demanded of the Secretariat continues to increase

Wetlands & human well-being



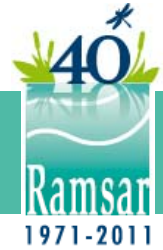
- **Role of Ramsar as one of the biodiversity-related conventions**
 - Contribution to BLG’s work ;
 - Contribution of Secretariat & STRP to an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES);
 - Contribution to “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” (TEEB).

Wetlands & human well-being (2)



- **Role of Ramsar as a MEA that contributes to international environmental governance and sustainable development**
 - Contribution to the Environment Management Group (EMG), chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP:
 - in the areas of biodiversity, land degradation, and green economy.

Wetlands & human well-being (3)



- **Role of Ramsar as a MEA that contributes to international environmental governance and sustainable development**
 - all possible efforts are made to participate in the deliberations of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC): the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), especially on economic, social and environmental policy issues.

Wetlands & human well-being (4)



- **Role of Ramsar as a MEA that contributes to international environmental governance and sustainable development**
 - Ramsar Secretariat seeking consultative status with the ECOSOC hoping that Standing Committee members, which are also ECOSOC members, can assist: Cameroon (2010), China (2010), Mauritius (2011), and the Republic of Korea (2010).

Wetlands & human well-being (5)



- **Role of Ramsar as a MEA that contributes to international environmental governance and sustainable development**
 - Other ECOSOC members that can help include:
Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Namibia, USA, and Uruguay.

Wetlands & human well-being (6)



- **Role of the Convention in promoting people's livelihoods through wetlands conservation and wise use**
 - Secretariat increasingly working with major players affecting wetlands through land use change, including cities, tourism industry, extractive industries and decision makers dealing with agriculture.

Wetlands & human well-being (7)



- **Role of the Convention in adaptation and mitigation of climate change**
 - Wetlands=carbon stores that both store and release carbon;
 - climate change may change this as can our management.

Wetlands & human well-being (8)



- **Role of the Convention in adaptation and mitigation of climate change**
 - For adaptation: link with the ecosystem services issues, especially the value of food from wetlands and fresh water supply.
 - Effective management, could also support basic human needs for food and water; increasing demand for food and water could further undermine wetland management.

Wetlands & human well-being (9)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**

- At global level

- Input of Secretariat & STRP

in the preparation of the 4th edition of the World Water Development Report (WWDR4).

This input is made through participation in the UN-Water process. The contribution of Ramsar will continue over 2010

Wetlands & human well-being (10)

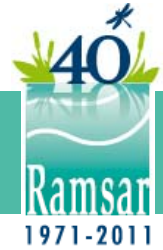


- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**

- At global level

- There is a growing recognition that most of the decisions on how water resources are managed and used are made outside the direct water domain
- Ramsar is keen to interact with decision makers from other disciplines and economic sectors.

Wetlands & human well-being (11)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At global level
 - The SRTP can work with other players to develop solutions to tackle the underlying water challenges of many of our sustainable development problems, but the implementation of these solutions rests with others.

Slide 14

oana1

Is it not STRP?

RAMSAR/oana; 21.04.2010

Wetlands & human well-being (12)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At global level: Secretariat & STRP support key messages from UN-Water members & partners to CSD18
 - Water & wetlands should be considered in any policy response or decision taken in relation to the CSD themes of mining, sustainable production and consumption, chemicals, transport or waste management.

Wetlands & human well-being (13)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At global level: Secretariat & STRP support key messages from UN-Water members & partners to CSD18
 - Linking water related issues to decisions made in other sectors is critical. Sustainable development will not be advanced if water & wetland managers and experts in other fields do not communicate, plan and find joint solutions.

Wetlands & human well-being (14)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At global level: Secretariat & STRP support key messages from UN-Water members & partners to CSD18
 - Decision making in all sectors have significant impact on water & wetland issues.

Wetlands & human well-being (15)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At global level: additional message from Ramsar to CSD18:
 - Inclusion in the “solutions” of restoration and protection of wetlands and water-related ecosystems as options, since these ecosystems are critical for sustaining the quality and reliability of water supplies, particularly in rural areas and developing countries.

Wetlands & human well-being (16)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**

- At global level:

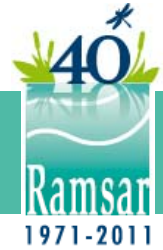
- The contribution of water to areas such as mining or waste management, the impact on water resources from consumption and productions patterns and the linkages to broad development goals, must be articulated and understood at the political, policy and decision-making levels.

Wetlands & human well-being (17)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At regional level
 - Secretariat increasing its partnership with River/Lake Basin Organizations, both with specific river or lake organizations as well as with the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO).

Wetlands & human well-being (18)



- **Role of the Ramsar Convention as an MEA dealing with water**
 - At national level
 - The Secretariat is increasingly working with the water sector in Ramsar Contracting Parties, stimulating joint actions between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ministry of Water as well as the technical agencies within the water sector.

Wetlands & human well-being (19)



- **Role of the Convention as a framework to recognize the connectivity between ecology and socio-economic trends and between land and oceans**
 - Understanding the connectivity between land and sea, especially through the network of riverine wetlands and coastal wetlands, is a key aspect of the work of the Convention.

Wetlands & human well-being (20)



- Legal framework and wetlands
- judiciary workshop on environmental law jointly sponsored by the Ramsar Secretariat, UNEP, IEPF, the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions and Star Alliance through its Biosphere Connection programme, with inputs from the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), CBD, UNCCD, CITES and the Basel Convention Secretariat

Wetlands & human well-being (21)



- Legal framework and wetlands
- MOU between Ramsar Secretariat and the Stetson University, College of Law, to develop a collaborative law and policy programme for sustainable wetland and water resource conservation and management by increasing current consultation and cooperation.

COP10 results & implementing key outcomes



- Changwon Declaration is used by the Secretariat as a key guidance for future work and establishment of priorities;
- the Secretariat is also seeking opportunities to actively promote the **spirit** of the Declaration at national and international levels.

COP10 results & implementing key outcomes



- Making the best use of Changwon Declaration Spirit: Concentrating and giving attention to the intention behind the Declaration, rather than the simple dissemination of the text.

IOP participation

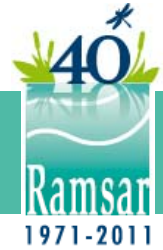
- Excellent participation in STRP's work
- Strategic & Operational actions assisting Ramsar Contracting Parties
- Ramsar site designation
- World Wetlands Day, including Global campaign on role of wetlands for adaptation & mitigation to climate change
- See DOC.SC41-21.

Global Trends



The level of activity demanded of the Secretariat continues to increase, as the number of Contracting Parties increases and new challenges are emerging from global debates.

Implementation of Strategic Plan 2009-2015



See Annex: Annual Report 2009

Goal 1: Wise use of wetlands

- Areas of Attention:
 - Secretariat & STRP combining efforts to identify major players that use or affect wetlands.
 - Taking into account stakeholder interests and providing them with adequate tools to maintain, improve and enjoy the benefits of the wise use principle of wetlands.

Goal 1: Wise use of wetlands

- Ongoing Actions with:
 - UN-HABITAT, UN World Tourism Organization, World Bank, Organization of American States (OAS).
 - Collaborative work with these organizations includes the development and execution of joint actions related to the Ramsar Strategic Plan and the respective mandates of the organizations.



Goal 2: Wetlands of International Importance

- Ramsar site designation and management
 - Since SC40, Additional Ramsar sites:
 - Africa: 23 sites
 - Americas: 4 sites
 - Asia & Oceania: 8 sites. No new sites for Oceania.
 - Europe: 3 sites and two new Transboundary Ramsar Sites (Poland/Czech and Austria/Hungary), all involving previously existing Ramsar sites.



Goal 2: Wetlands of International Importance

- Ramsar site designation and management:
 - Site designation in process: as of 11 March 2010,
 - Africa, 48 RIS
 - Americas, 26 RIS, including 17 in North America, 1 Caribbean, and 8 in the Neotropics;
 - Asia & Oceania: 9 RIS;
 - Europe, 33 RIS



Goal 2: Wetlands of International Importance

- Threats to Ramsar sites and the Montreux Record
 - See Doc SC41-25: Status of Ramsar sites

Goal 3: International cooperation

- Participation in the 5th Biennial GEF International Waters Conference, hosted by the Government of Australia in Cairns, North Queensland; and Ramsar provided input in the review of the situation for transboundary surface water basins, transboundary groundwater systems, and Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs).
- Participation in UNEP Governing Council Session;
- IPBES discussion
- 2010 Biodiversity Targets and Beyond

Goal 3: International cooperation

- Support to Regional Initiatives
- Collaboration with River/Lake Organizations
- Strategic alliance made with UN-Habitat, World Bank, UN World Tourism Organization, Organization of American States;
- Engaging in Operational joint actions through team work, involving the Partnership Coordinator, other senior staff and the STRP guidance.

Goal 4: Institutional capacity & effectiveness

- **At national level:**
 - Contracting Parties to involve all relevant ministries, especially the water sector, as well as groups of civil society, including NGOs and user groups such as farmers, fishermen, tourism operators and city councils.
 - (Changwon Declaration)

Goal 4: Institutional capacity & effectiveness

- **Regional & Global levels:**
 - Contracting Parties to take up specific issues and agree to take the lead on improving their implementation:
 - establishing and leading an ad hoc working group
 - organizing seminars or other working meetings

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Goal 4: Institutional capacity & effectiveness

- **The Convention's financial capacity:**
 - Seeking voluntary contributions or a secondment of suitable experts;
 - Enhancing cross-sectoral recognition of wetland values: biodiversity conservation, water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, climate change, food security, poverty eradication, tourism, cultural heritage, and scientific research.

Goal 4: Institutional capacity & effectiveness

- **CEPA activities:**
 - World Wetlands Day 2010: successful campaign on “*Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change*”,
 - WWW in the Seychelles with special attention to Tourism as a means for wise use,
 - Preparation of Ramsar 40th Anniversary,
 - Capacity building workshops for CEPA NFPs



Goal 4: Institutional capacity & effectiveness

- **Partnership with the private sector**
- **See DOC.SC41-19**

Outstanding challenges

- Integration of wetland issues into the work of the UN General Assembly, CSD Sessions, Climate Change deliberations and other priority areas for decisions and actions;
- Standardized and programmed involvement of the Ramsar Secretariat in major debates and processes;
- Inclusive recognition of the Ramsar Convention as a GEF partner

Key challenges



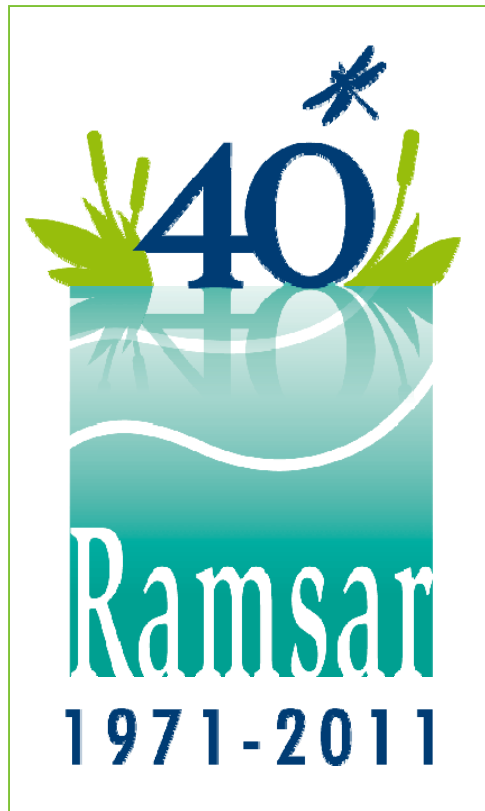
- Continued financial support through the payment of regular contributions to the core budget and significant voluntary funding to enhance the work of the Convention.

Suggestions to address remaining challenges

- Sustained Support from Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Secretariat
- National consultation to raise the profile of wetlands in national planning and decision-making processes
- Integration of wetland issues in the work of Regional organizations on economic and social development.



Join us in celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Ramsar Convention!



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