

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

47<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 23-28 March 2014

DOC. SC47-02

**Progress report: Subgroups to progress Resolution XI.1 (Convention languages, visibility and ministerial COP segment, enhancing synergies with multilateral environmental agreements and other international entities)**

**Actions requested:**

Standing Committee is invited to take note of the progress of the three subgroups established through Decision SC47- 15 under the Management Working Group and, considering the actions requested of each of the subgroups, urge them to complete their work and submit reports to SC48, in view of the need to submit draft resolutions to COP12.

**Subgroup 1: Accommodation of UN languages into the Convention**

- The Subgroup is invited to consider the options presented and recommend a course of action to the Management Working Group on the following issues:
  - i. Ensuring that the plenary meetings of Conference of the Parties and Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention are delivered in the three official languages, as agreed in the Rules of Procedure; and
  - ii. Means for delivering the Ramsar Convention in additional UN Languages.

**Subgroup 2: Elevating the visibility and stature of the Ramsar Convention**

- The Subgroup is invited to review ongoing actions and consider ways to elevate the visibility and the stature of the Convention, in order to recommend a course of action to the Management Working Group.

**Subgroup 3: Enhancing synergies with multilateral environmental agreements and other international entities**

- The Subgroup is invited to review ongoing actions and consider ways to enhance synergies with multilateral agreements and other international entities, in order to recommend a course of action to the Management Working Group.

**Background**

1. Resolution XI.1 on *Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat*, in paragraphs 17 and 18, asks the Standing Committee and all Contracting Parties to take the following actions:

- “17. INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee through an appropriate Working Group representative of Parties to develop strategies that explore:
- a) accommodation of UN languages into the Convention;

- b) elevation of Ramsar visibility and stature, including *inter alia* enhancing high-level political engagement in the work of the Convention at national, regional and global level; the working group will among other possibilities look into establishing a ministerial segment at the COP including the topics to be addressed at this level;
- c) enhancement of synergies with MEAs and other international entities including through Regional Initiatives;
- d) increased involvement in UNEP's initiatives and programs regarding biodiversity-related MEAs to enhance cooperation and synergies between Ramsar and UNEP;

and INVITES all Parties to participate in this group and its discussions including through electronic means where feasible; and

18. REQUESTS the Working Group to provide each Standing Committee meeting with a progress report including any implications such as financial ones and recommendations, and ALSO REQUESTS the Standing Committee to submit a report, including its recommendations, to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.”

2. During SC46, the Standing Committee adopted Decision SC46-15 which states:

“ The Standing Committee, having considered the feedback from regional groups on the composition of subgroups that will follow up Resolution XI.1 paragraph 17 on administrative reform, decided on the following Subgroups, and their membership and chairs:

- i. Subgroup 1, on accommodation of United Nations languages into the Ramsar Convention: Africa - Tunisia; Asia - United Arab Emirates (Chair), with China and Japan as observers; Europe - Denmark; Neotropics - Guatemala and Ecuador; North America - United States of America; and Oceania – Australia, with Fiji after the 46th meeting of the Standing Committee;
- ii. Subgroup 2, on elevating the visibility and stature of the Ramsar Convention: Africa - South Africa; Asia - Thailand; Europe - Denmark and Switzerland; Neotropics - Cuba and Guatemala; North America - Mexico; and Oceania – Australia, with Fiji after the 46th meeting of the Standing Committee;
- iii. Subgroup 3, on enhancing synergies with multilateral environmental agreements and other international entities: Africa-Burundi; Asia-Islamic Republic of Iran, with China and Japan as observers; Europe-Denmark and Finland; Neotropics-Cuba and Guatemala; North America-United States of America; and Oceania- Australia, with Fiji after the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee”.

3. Through Decision SC46-24, the Standing Committee decided that “the Management Working Group would act as the umbrella group responsible for coordinating the operational processes for work on the issues raised in Resolutions XI.1 and XI.16, and for ensuring reporting on progress on these issues to the Standing Committee at its 47th meeting and to COP12.”
4. This document presents the progress related to the three Subgroups established in Decision SC-15, including related actions by the Secretariat, and proposes ways forward for each.

## Progress made by the three Subgroups

### Subgroup 1: Accommodation of United Nations languages into the Ramsar Convention

#### Background on Convention languages

5. The Ramsar Convention currently has English, French and Spanish as official languages, with Spanish added in 1990 (Resolution 4.2 on *Working languages of the Conference of the Contracting Parties*). However, despite the understanding of many Parties (Rules of Procedure Rule 54.1 and Rule 26.7) that all documents should be translated into the three working languages in preparation for the Standing Committee meetings, documents are not made available in French and Spanish to delegates to the Standing Committee.
6. During Ramsar COP5 in 1993, discussions were held on adopting Arabic as an additional language of the Convention, with Recommendation 5.15:
  - calling on "...the Convention Bureau to investigate the possibility of adopting Arabic as a working language of the Conference and to advise the Standing Committee on the financial and other implications of so doing;" and;
  - requesting "... Arabic-speaking Contracting Parties and potential Contracting Parties to assist the Bureau in seeking the necessary funding support for the adoption of Arabic as a working language of the Conference..." .
7. In 2012, the Parties noted in Resolution XI.1 on Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat "...the interest of all Parties in [...] seeking to improve the development of the Convention by introducing other UN official languages in the operation of the Convention" and acknowledged "the strong desire of Arab States to inscribe the Arab language as an official language of the Ramsar Convention".

#### Current provision

8. Some documents, such as the Convention text itself and the Strategic Plan, are provided in languages in addition to the three official languages, including the three other UN languages (Arabic, Chinese and Russian). However, Parties see these as unofficial translations by UNESCO, acting in its role as the depository of the Convention. Since 2010, the Ramsar Secretariat has also been able to find funding to translate some key Convention documents into Arabic and Russian, such as the Ramsar Manual and a number of the Ramsar Handbooks. The funding came from sources such as the core budget for CEPA activities, and donations from UNEP and the Ramsar Regional Centre for Central and West Asia. A number of Contracting Parties including Austria, China, Germany, Republic of Korea and Viet Nam, have also found internal funding to translate selected documents into their own languages
9. The current Rules of Procedure are not clear that the official documents should be translated into the three working languages in preparation for the Standing Committee meetings although Rules of Procedure Rule 54 (1) and Rule 26 (7) indicate that all official documents for COPs should be made available in the working languages. However, there are no Rules of Procedure for Standing Committees or other meetings. This leads to the inescapable conclusion that the current Rules of Procedure urgently need reform and revision.
10. The majority of new publications and documents are currently translated into French and Spanish but many are still only available in English. In addition, most Ramsar Convention bodies and processes are held only in English, and interpreting into French and Spanish is only offered

at plenary sessions of the COP and Standing Committee. This provision is summarized below in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of current Ramsar provision in English, French and Spanish

<i>Body</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Spanish</i>
COP	Documents	✓	✓	✓
	Interpretation in plenary	✓	✓	✓
	Interpretation in regional meetings	✓	✓	✓
Standing Committee	Documents: English only	✓	X	X
	Interpretation in plenary	✓	✓	✓
	No interpretation in breakout and other sessions	✓	X	X
STRP	Documents: English only	✓	X	X
	No interpretation	✓	X	X
Website	Text	✓	✓	✓
	Most Publications / guidance	✓	✓	✓

11. Other biodiversity-related conventions, such as CMS and CITES, provide a similar balance of translation into English, French and Spanish to Ramsar (see Table 2 below). Ramsar is perhaps more consistent in making its publications available in French and Spanish. On the other hand, CMS provides Standing Committee and Scientific Council documents in French, while CITES also provides translation and interpreting in French and Spanish at its two main committees, the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee.

Table 2: Comparison of current provision by Ramsar, CMS and CITES

<i>Body</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Ramsar</i>	<i>CMS</i>	<i>CITES</i>
COP	Documents	EFS	EFS	EFS
	Interpretation, plenary	EFS	EFS	EFS
	Interpretation in regional meetings	EFS	E	E
Standing Committee	Documents	E	EFS*	EFS*
	Interpretation, plenary	EFS	EFS	EFS
	No interpretation in breakout and other sessions	E	E	E
STRP	Documents	E	EFS*	EFS*
	Interpretation, plenary	E	EFS*	EFS*
	No interpretation, breakout and other sessions	E	E	E
Website	Text	EFS	E*	EFS
	Publications / guidance	EFS	EFS	EFS

\*different to Ramsar

12. The practice among other related conventions is as varied as their subject matter. CBD provides web content in all six UN languages, and summary reports of SBSTTA. The International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources provides documents for all their meetings in the six UN languages and web content in English, French and Spanish. The World Heritage Centre operates in English and French only with UNESCO support (except, for example, for summary World Heritage Site notes which are typically published in the six UN languages, Dutch and Japanese). Decisions on languages used, in all cases, depend on the specific Rules of Procedure for those Conventions.

## **Subgroup 2: Elevating the visibility and stature of the Ramsar Convention**

13. Mechanisms which have been used to raise the visibility of the Convention across the world include Ramsar Advisory missions and in-country support, World Wetlands Day materials and events, and Ramsar Regional Initiatives.
14. The Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Senior Regional Advisors continue to attend important global and regional events in order to help position the Convention at the heart of debates regarding the wise use of wetlands and the benefits and services they provide including their globally crucial role in storing, purifying and conveying water. Participation in the following events has enabled them to raise the visibility of the Convention since SC46.
15. Birdlife International World Congress, Ottawa 19-22 June:  
This was an opportunity to meet up with the management team and over 120 national organizations, and to set up links with many colleagues working on wetland issues. Further discussion with the Birdlife team in Cambridge is planned for early 2014.
16. World Water Week Stockholm, Sweden 3-6 September:  
Meetings with colleagues from a range of conservation and water sectors including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), engineering, hydrology and hydropower, and discussions on future collaboration with UNESCO, WWF, the World Bank and others. Agreement on key issues for attention. Discussions with IWMI on their programmes and opportunities for close collaboration.
17. UNESCO Strategic and High-Level Meeting on Water Security and Cooperation, Nairobi 10-12 September:  
Discussions with UNESCO colleagues on groundwater and planning for collaboration on aquifer management.
18. Meetings with United Nations Environment Programme:  
Discussions with colleagues in UNEP (Director General, Deputy Executive Director, Officer-in-Charge, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, Senior Advisor MEAs, Head of IPBES Secretariat) leading to agreements on future strategy and cooperation.
19. Meetings with French Administrative Authority, UNESCO, Danone CEO and Livelihoods Venture President, Paris 7 October:  
Meetings with UNESCO covered wetlands and water issues and interaction with the World Heritage Centre, Man and the Biosphere (MAB) and Geoparks programmes.  
Established relations with Danone have moved into new area of collaboration with their second Livelihoods Initiative. The meeting with the national focal point helped cement relations with the administrative authority, but there remains a need to promote wetland and water issues more widely and engage the French Development Agency (AFD) on the Convention's role in promoting sustainable development.
20. Budapest Water Summit, Budapest 8-11 October:  
The high-level summit on the water-related SDGs provided an opportunity to promote wise use of wetlands as key to ensuring water quality and sufficiency, and also to realization of WASH-related rights.
21. Wetlands International Senior Management Team, Wageningen, Netherlands 16-17 October:

Attending part of the annual meeting of the WI global team enabled better understanding of a Ramsar IOP delivering practical actions for the wise use of wetlands. Discussed opportunities and means of collaboration. WI's Africa and Asia teams described excellent initiatives on involvement of local governments which can be replicated and have high impact.

22. 3rd China Wetlands Cultural Festival Shanghai and Dongying International Wetland Conservation Conference, Shanghai and region 20-26 October:  
Built relationships with key partners including Vice President and Minister of State Forestry Administration (SFA). China plans to increase number of Ramsar Sites from 46 to 70 by 2020, and has increased budgets for wetland restoration, ecological compensation, and wetland parks by about 2.5 million CHF. It has constructed 448 wetland parks and plan to complete over 1,000, to increase the awareness and appreciation of wetlands and water among an increasingly urban population. There is a potential role for Ramsar with its IOPs and other partners to help China maximize the impact of these parks.
23. 5th Ramsar France Seminar, St. Omer, France 13-16 November:  
Attendance at the third annual meeting of the French "Ramsar Association" enabled interaction with 200 local organizations concerned with wetlands and an understanding of how the Ramsar Association model might be replicated in other countries.
24. National Workshop on the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands and Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the UAE, United Arab Emirates 23-27 November:  
The Secretary General participated in opening of seminar, and met the Minister of Environment of UAE, and heads of environment of some of the individual emirates (Fujairah, Abu Dhabi). This was the first opportunity to open discussions and reflected the UAE's desire to engage further in Ramsar issues. Five of the seven Emirates were formally represented; there were clear signs of collaboration between Emirates, a willingness for new interventions and the designation of new Ramsar sites, and interest in hosting a regional wetlands officer for the Gulf and possibly the wider Arab region.
25. Meetings with British Administrative Authority and other relevant ministries and institutions London 2-5 December:  
The Secretary General discussed with the UK Administrative Authority (Department for Environment, Forestry and Rural Affairs) their large portfolio of Ramsar sites and possible collaboration between Ramsar, DEFRA and the Department for International Development (DFID) on wetlands-related and water-related development issues. He also met staff of the Environment Agency, the Head of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, and the former Secretary General of Ramsar.
26. IPBES-2, Antalya, Turkey 8-12 December:  
The Secretary General and the Chair of the STRP promoted the more substantial representation of MEAs in IPBES decisions at the meeting; the matter is now being considered in other fora. The inclusion of water and wetland issues in the IPBES strategies has already been fully accepted and clear methodology is being laid out for the first time. The current need is for the wetlands community to be involved in nominating experts and prioritizing interventions.
27. UN-Water: Finalization of text for the Open Working Group on SDGs, Geneva 16-17 December:  
Ramsar was involved in the elaboration of draft SDGs for the water sector, promoting the inclusion of ecosystem service considerations and the restoration and wise use of wetlands.

### **Subgroup 3: Enhancing synergies with multilateral environmental agreements and other international entities**

28. This section of the report covers the main activities undertaken under Resolution XI.6 on *Partnership and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*, and specifically under paragraphs 23, 24 and 43, and also the progress made with UNEP.

“ [The Conference of the Contracting Parties] 23. ALSO REQUESTS the Secretariat to remain closely involved in the work of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) established under the aegis of the CBD and to report regularly to the Standing Committee on progress achieved by this group, and FURTHER REQUESTS the Secretariat to facilitate the continuing participation of the Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in the work of the scientific bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions (CSAB);

24. REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat to liaise with the AEWA Secretariat to strengthen the implementation of joint activities;

43. REQUESTS the STRP, subject to the availability of resources, to exchange information and expertise with the equivalent subsidiary bodies of other MEAs and relevant regional fora, to continue to participate in meetings of the chairs of scientific and technical subsidiary bodies (CSAB), and to report through the Standing Committee to the Conference of the Parties on these activities;”

29. The Ramsar Secretariat has continued to participate in the meetings and joint actions of the BLG according to its Plan for Joint Activities for the Biennium 2013-2014, such as the statement agreed and published by all six biodiversity conventions supporting GEF6 replenishment and their strategies on natural resources.
30. The Secretariat participated in the sixth meeting of the Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-Related Conventions (CSAB) in Formia, Italy, in October 2013. The participants discussed the scientific and technical support needed to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, changes in the operations and structures of scientific advisory bodies, and opportunities for CSAB to provide input to the IPBES process.
31. The Secretariat has been in contact with several MEAs to understand the tools they use to handle national reports, including the CMS family which currently uses the Online Reporting System (ORS) developed by UNEP-WCMC. None of these tools fully meet the Ramsar Convention’s needs. However some of them are due to be improved and the Secretariat will continue to follow these developments and the resulting functionality.

#### **Actions to strengthen cooperation with UNEP**

32. Following SC46, the new Secretary General visited the UNEP Nairobi HQ and met the Executive Director and his Deputy and various members of relevant departments. Through these contacts and continued work with UNEP offices in Geneva, Washington and elsewhere, the Secretariat has identified specific areas for further collaboration, such as formalization of the cooperation, information exchange, and the wetland TEEB report; this is related in the Secretary General’s report to Standing Committee, Document SC47-14. The Secretariat will report on progress in the activities concerned.

33. As also noted in the Secretary General's report, the Secretariat is continuing to work to strengthen collaboration with UNDP, UNESCO, UNECE, the World Bank, WHO, WMO and others.
34. With UNDP, the priority has been to increase the awareness of Ramsar staff of which UNDP staff are working around the world on wetlands issues, and vice versa, to establish the Secretariat as an appropriate partner for joint projects and interventions.
35. With UNESCO, Secretariat staff have continued to collaborate with counterparts in the World Heritage Convention, Geoparks and MAB programmes based at IUCN and in Paris. They have considered how to achieve substantial equivalence between the different criteria for designation of protected areas, how to achieve joint missions to appropriate sites, and how to manage sites with multiple designations. This latter investigation is ongoing and may lead to a funded study with IUCN's involvement.
36. Collaboration is continuing with the UNESCO-IHE (Institute for Water Education) and other centres around the world; the Secretary General attended the UNESCO-IHE Global Planning Event in Nairobi and events during World Water Week and the Budapest Water Summit. In addition, UNESCO-IHE and Sturt University are collaborating to establish the first Chair for Wise Use of Wetlands in 2014, who will provide targeted training material for wetland managers under the control of the three bodies.
37. The Secretariat has collaborated with UNECE in the Pan-European region as their mutual interests coincide on better management of water basins in UNECE-related countries, on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and on transboundary issues related to the UNECE Water Convention (Helsinki, 1991). This Convention is set to come into force as a global convention on transboundary watercourses in 2014, and to be implemented by Parties outside Europe. Joint efforts with the UNECE staff to achieve an SDG for water that covers wetland ecosystems and other issues has proved successful.
38. A further convention on transboundary waters, the 1997 New York Convention on International Watercourses, is also likely to come into force soon and complement the other two water conventions. The Secretariat has asked IUCN lawyers to study the scope, differences and gaps, and common ground and overlaps between the three. This study will be presented for discussion at SC48.

### **Proposals by the Secretariat**

39. In order to take these matters forward, the Ramsar Secretariat proposes that the issues related to the three subgroups are first addressed by the Management Working Group on Monday, 24 March 2014, immediately prior to the 47th meeting of the Standing Committee.
40. Based on the reports of the three subgroups, the Secretariat suggests that the members of each subgroup consider the specific proposals below in three parallel 60-minute discussions as indicated, to report back to the Management Working Group for final discussions and agreement later the same day.



## Proposals for Subgroup 1 on UN Languages

### Full provision of French and Spanish in Ramsar Convention meetings

41. At the meeting of Subgroup 1 on the use of UN languages during SC46, the French- speaking and Spanish-speaking Parties present expressed support for a more complete use of their languages in Convention processes. However, there is also doubt among some Parties that the translation needs to be carried out, according to the Rules of Procedure. This important issue of translation and the attribution of its costs could also be resolved by revision of the current Rules of Procedure.
42. Although funding has not been available in the past, the Rules of Procedure (Rules 26.7 and 54.1) appear to suggest that the Secretariat should provide full translation of all documents into French and Spanish for all Convention processes. The Subgroup has therefore identified the priority to extend language support to Standing Committee meetings and ideally to STRP meetings. The funding support required is summarised in Table 3 (costs are based on three full SC meetings and three STRP meetings per triennium).
43. Although Rule 27.6c specifies that : “c) There shall be no requirement to provide interpretation in committee or working group sessions, including the Conference Committee”, it has been agreed, since Resolution VIII.27 in 2002, to include in the budget full interpretation of Plenary meetings of the Standing Committee and Conference Committee. However, the interpretation for working group sessions has not been included. The costs of extending such support are tabled at the bottom of Table 3.

Table 3: Cost of full French and Spanish support to Standing Committee and STRP meetings

<i>Task</i>	<i>Cost / language / event CHF</i>	<i>Cost / event (French and Spanish) CHF</i>	<i>Cost / triennium CHF</i>
Extending translation from agenda and summary report to cover all Standing Committee documents published prior to and after meetings.	36,000	72,000	216,000
Interpreting for five plenary days of STRP meeting	22,500	45,000	135,000
Translation of all STRP meeting documents	36,000	72,000	216,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>567,000</b>
Extension of interpreting into French and Spanish to cover sub-group meetings as well as plenary meetings at Standing Committee.	9,000	18,000	54,000

44. A key issue in the cost of translation is the current length of papers submitted to the Standing Committee. The length of each paper submitted to the Parties dictates the cost of translations. Currently, each set of Standing Committee documents **exceeds 350 pages on average**. It would be possible to significantly reduce the costs of printing and translation by restricting the number of pages allowed in any paper to ten pages, if the costs of their translation were to be attributed to the core budget. However, if the paper exceeded ten pages, then the proposer would have to cover the costs of translation to French and Spanish. Such a rule imposed by

CITES has led to translation costs being controlled, while all necessary language versions of papers are always made available to their Parties.

### New official languages

45. Concerning the adoption of new official languages under the Convention, the Secretariat, based on the discussion of that subgroup and a review of the standard practices among other related conventions, invites the Parties to take note of some of the mechanisms that could be implemented and the cost implications.
46. Elements of the Convention could be delivered in a new language in different ways, and with different cost implications. For example, some Contracting Parties have translated materials at their own cost, and shared with other interested parties. Groups of Contracting Parties could also share the costs and work of translating for their shared benefit; in this case, the Secretariat could help to identify a third party to coordinate the work at the cost of those Contracting Parties.
47. For the Secretariat to provide more significant support to any new official languages, the Contracting Parties would have to commit funding for a new Secretariat staff member, as well as for outsourced translation, interpreting and publishing. The new staff member would be responsible for:
- Selecting and managing translators;
  - Developing a Ramsar glossary in that language;
  - Editing, laying out and publishing translated texts;
  - Doing small-scale translations;
  - Liaising between Contracting Parties, other Ramsar partners, secretariat colleagues and translators.
48. These duties would call for a minimum 50% role for an Arabic / Russian / Chinese speaking Communications Officer with mother-tongue editing skills in that language and fluency in English, with some knowledge of wetland / biodiversity / water issues. It could be a P1-level (junior professional) position.
49. With the new staff member on a short term contract, the Secretariat could commit to translate limited existing written materials, as a fixed-term project, but not support the language in other ways. The funding support required would be as in Table 4.

Table 4: Cost of specific translation projects in a new language

<i>Task</i>	<i>Outsourced cost CHF</i>	<i>Internal staff time required</i>	<i>Internal staff cost CHF</i>	<i>Total cost CHF</i>
Sourcing and selecting suppliers, developing Ramsar glossary		3 months @ 50%	15,000	<b>15,000</b>
Translating and publishing priority web content	30,000	3 months @ 50%	15,000	<b>45,000</b>
Translating and producing new edition of Ramsar Handbooks and Manual	130,000	9 months @ 50%	45,000	<b>175,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>15 months @50%</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>235,000</b>

50. A further objective in a new language, with the new staff member in place, would be to deliver everything which is currently available in French or Spanish. This would require a longer term commitment, and would include ongoing work to translate and publish new materials and cover new events as they arise, and also some initial work on pre-existing materials (such as web content, leaflets). For ongoing work, costs would be the same as for French and Spanish. Most costs would be repeated annually, but there are also significant costs every third year associated with the COP.
51. For such an ongoing commitment, the new staff member would be employed long-term, and the 50% Communications Officer role could be effectively combined with a new 50% Regional Officer role to make one full time position. The postholder would then take more direct responsibility for regional affairs in the new language. This extended role would call for greater wetland experience, but it would be a P1-level (junior professional) position.
52. The funding support need for this longer-term commitment is summarized in Table 5. The final line of the table shows the additional cost of delivering Convention processes in the new language, as proposed above for French and Spanish.

Table 5: Cost of ongoing commitment to a new language

<i>Task</i>	<i>Annual costs CHF</i>	<i>One-off costs CHF</i>	<i>Total cost per triennium CHF</i>
Combined Communications / Regional Affairs Officer for one year	120,000		360,000
External translation of ongoing work for one year	45,000		135,000
Translation of new Ramsar Handbooks and Manual		115,000	115,000
Translation and interpreting for COP Conference every three years		190,000	190,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>800,000</b>
<i>Additional cost of delivering Standing Committee and STRP meetings in the language, per triennium (for breakdown of cost, see Table 3 which provides costs for delivering each meeting in French and Spanish)</i>			<b>310,500</b>

### Proposals for Subgroup 2 on Visibility and Stature

53. Among the operational issues addressed in DOC. SC46-8, the following are still relevant and should be clarified by the Subgroup:
- Identification of a chair to lead the work of the Subgroup;
  - Advice on what assistance is required from the Secretariat to facilitate the work of the Subgroup;

- c. Costs expected to be incurred in the work of the Subgroup. Since there is no provision in the core budget to support the work of the Subgroups, how would any anticipated costs be funded?
- d. Actions to be undertaken by the members of the Subgroup, and how they might communicate between sessions.

### **Issues that elevate the visibility and the stature of the Convention**

54. The Secretariat suggests that Subgroup 2 consider the following activities to elevate the visibility and the stature of the Convention:
1. Work with professional companies to help change people's perceptions of wetlands, and to encourage people who live with and love wetlands to learn about the issues facing wetlands across the world and the solutions found to shared problems.
  2. Reach out to groups of people already enthusiastic about wetlands for their leisure (fishing, snorkelling, surfing, shooting, trapping, swimming, sunbathing, water polo, beach volleyball, beachcombing, sailing, scuba diving) but are currently under-involved in the global issue surrounding wetlands and the Ramsar Convention.
  3. Increase the strength of the regional teams so that they can give more focus on strategic issues such as promotion of wise use across all sectors related to wetlands and all the above issues, including water, agriculture, disaster risk reduction, food security, recreation and tourism.
  4. Using the forthcoming STRP water positioning paper to show the links between water and wetlands and the need to position the Ramsar Convention and its Parties as key to both issues.
  5. Using the proposed IUCN/Ramsar water initiative to bring wetland ecosystem services to the fore in national and international water policy-making. This may be achieved by joint ventures with IUCN and more simply through highlighting the crucial role wetlands play in water management and supply, biodiversity and the protection against natural disasters, climate change mitigation and adaptation and food security, and their support to transport, recreation and tourism.
  6. Using the forthcoming legal analysis and comparison between the three global water-related conventions (Ramsar 1971, UNECE 1992, New York 1997) to demonstrate the specific and unique role of Ramsar, and ensure that the concerns and interests of Ramsar Parties are reflected by the other conventions and shared with their stakeholders.
  7. Developing and disseminating peer-reviewed guidance materials highlighting the role of wetland ecosystems in delivering all our water, and storing and cleaning our freshwater.
  8. Provide support and guidance to the work of Ramsar's new Partnership Coordinator in the planning and development of new partnerships and the prioritization of current partnerships.

### **Proposals for Subgroup 3 on Synergies**

55. The Secretariat suggests that Subgroup 3 consider the following issues:
- a. Designation of a chair to lead the work of the Subgroup;
  - b. Preparation of an action plan by the Subgroup with a clear time frame and outputs;
  - c. Best means to coordinate the overall Subgroup process;
  - d. How the members of the Subgroup might communicate between sessions;
  - e. Costs expected to be incurred in the work of the Subgroup. Since there is no provision in the core budget to support the work of the subgroups, how would any anticipated costs be funded?

- f. Advice on what assistance is required from the Secretariat to facilitate the work of the Subgroup.

**Proposed actions to enhance synergies with MEAs and other international entities.**

56. The Secretariat suggests that Subgroup 3 consider the following activities and propose additional ones, where feasible, considering the limited human resources available:
1. Close cooperation with the Joint Liaison Group of the three Rio Conventions – the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) – and through its work as a member of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG). Invite members of the JLG to contribute to the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG), which represents a more inclusive and open alliance of shared interests, rather than a group of historically linked conventions.
  2. Strengthening and extension of joint work with the BLG to include new partners such as IPBES, ensuring an appropriate voice for the Convention in the debate on the SDGs,
  3. Involvement in the post-2015 debate and in achievement of inclusion of wetlands and water related targets, indicators and impact indicators, as already achieved for the water SDG with the UN-Water team.
  4. A close alliance with CBD on addressing Aichi Targets, as well as alliances for STRP work on mutually agreed goals, with CBD funding as for our joint ongoing review of the role of ecosystems in supporting the water cycle.
  5. Signing of a framework MOU with UNEP that includes identified areas of collaboration (including TEEB, SDG, Aichi Targets, exchange of information, and IPBES).
  6. Closer relations with IUCN as a partner with shared interests in business issues, biodiversity, fresh water, marine and.
  7. Strengthening of collaboration with UNECE on water management, river basin governance and principles of IWRM and communication, especially on transboundary issues. Combined workshops and alliances are possible in a number of areas.
  8. Collaboration with UNESCO on common issues across their scope (including World Heritage Sites, MAB Sites, International Hydrological Programme, Ramsar chair on Wise Use of Wetlands, World Water Development Report).
  9. Collaboration with UNDP (on small grants, access to funding available for water and wetlands).
  10. Collaboration with other GEF Agencies to better assist countries in understanding the potential and the rules, and getting access to GEF funding (WB, IADB, AFDB, ADB, EBRD, UNEP, IFAD, FAO, WWF, IUCN, CI, UNIDO).
  11. Closer relations and collaboration with key donors on water and wetlands such as the Adaptation Fund, the Green Climate Fund, World Bank, and global and regional development banks.
  12. Attendance and involvement in the major meetings that are involved with safeguarding, delivery, treatment, use, re-use, and productivity of water within the water cycle. This involves engagement with all users of wetlands and water and includes our role within World Water Forum, Global Water Partnership, World Water Week and other events.
57. The above tasks imply an increase in activity to collaborate effectively with new and old partners and achieve clear results through partnerships and alliances. This is seen as absolutely key by the Secretariat, but achieving what we all agree as priorities for the Convention requires increased capacity in the regional teams.



