

SC47 DOC. SC47-18 Report of the CEPA Oversight Panel

Oral presentation by the CEPA Panel Chair, Ms Malta Qwathekana

As Vice Chair of Standing Committee for this triennium, I also fulfil the role of Chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel.

DOC. SC47-18 reports on two CEPA Panel meetings since SC46, the 6th meeting held in Gland immediately after SC46 and the 7th meeting held at the London Wetland Centre in December 2013. Full reports of these meetings are available on the Convention's web site.

Paragraph 3 in DOC. SC47-18 draws your attention to the formal dissolution of the Netherlands-based Advisory Board for Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention due to a lack of funding. The Board reported to the SC through the CEPA Panel. Paragraph 4 of the report notes that the Panel also collaborates with the Secretariat, STRP, and the Ramsar Regional Centres in monitoring broad capacity needs. The Ramsar Regional Centres have one representative on the CEPA Panel each triennium. For this triennium it is the RRC- East Asia.

The most important task for the Panel in this triennium is the development of the new CEPA Programme of Work for 2016-2021. The current programme, Resolution X.8, operates up to COP12. The new CEPA Programme will have to be approved by SC48, and then debated and hopefully adopted at COP12 to ensure continuity of the Programme. I'll come back to the new programme in just a few moments.

Broadly associated with the development of the new programme is the review of the two Ramsar resolutions relevant to participation – participation is the 'P' in CEPA and so an important element of the CEPA Programme.

Paragraphs 5 and 6 in this report to SC note the approach taken and the progress made during the 6th Panel meeting with regard to the participatory guidance and the new CEPA Programme. The panel has noted that while the Convention's participatory guidance requires further work by the Panel, it has agreed that the top priority is the development of the new CEPA Programme and that it should include some *guiding participatory principles* drawn from the existing participatory guidance that identifies the role of participation in wetland management.

The 7th Panel meeting was focussed entirely on the drafting of the new CEPA programme. Running now is an on-going online consultation on this draft with key implementers to assess its relevance and utility. This includes CEPA Focal Points (Government and NGO), National Focal Points, STRP members, Ramsar Regional Centre staff and Ramsar Secretariat Senior Regional Advisors – in fact quite a few people in this room have been asked to take part in the consultation.

The results so far are very supportive of the structure, the strategies and key result areas and it seems likely that only minor changes to the current draft CEPA Programme will be necessary.

Less clear from the consultation is the issue of the 'name' of the new Programme. Is CEPA a term only understood by the Ramsar constituency and should we change it to something more meaningful to a broader constituency? The final results may give a clear direction on this but it is too soon to tell. The consultation should be completed in one more week.

So, an exciting time for the Panel! Given our current progress we are confident as a Panel that the final full draft of the CEPA Programme will be ready for review by SC48.

One last point. This relates to the discussions here on the development of the Strategic Plan for the Convention. The CEPA Panel and the drafters of the Strategic Plan will need to remain in close contact as both documents progress since the new Strategic Plan will need to reflect key elements of the CEPA Programme. As Chair of the CEPA Panel I will be happy to act as the liaison person.

Thank you Chair.