

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

48th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 26-30 January 2015

SC48-22

Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention and an Application for IOP Status

Actions requested:

Standing Committee 48 is invited to:

- Review, revise if necessary, and approve the proposed 'Resource Mobilisation and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention', for submission to COP12; and
- Review, revise if necessary, and approve the application for IOP status of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, following its consideration at SC47, for submission to COP12.

Background note by the Ramsar Secretariat

A. Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention

1. The purpose of the 'Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework' is to bring the human and financial resources necessary to support and enhance implementation of the Ramsar Convention, and the fourth Strategic Plan for 2016-2021, taking into consideration the needs and opportunities that exist at global, regional and national levels.
2. In order to increase Mobilization of financial resources in support of the Strategic Plan, the framework describes a role for the Ramsar Secretariat to play in developing projects and investment opportunities, and brokering opportunities to finance or co-finance high quality projects.
3. In order to develop compelling products and scalable solutions, six global priorities are proposed, for which there is great potential to rally support.
4. Collaborating with a range of partners is essential if we are to achieve the goals set out in the Strategic Plan. The framework therefore describes ways to work with partners in different categories, prerequisites for collaboration, and channels through which to promote the Ramsar Convention, in close collaboration with the Communications Plan.
5. The annual work-plan for the Partnership Unit, to the end of 2015, is included as Annex B.

B. Proposal to add Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) as an International Organization Partner

6. The Chair of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat received a request in October 2013 from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT), which is seeking formal recognition under the Convention as an International Organization Partner (IOP).
7. Contracting Parties decided through Resolution VII.3 *Partnerships with international organizations* that "international organizations interested in formal recognition as Partners to

the Convention should present an application to the Convention's Bureau for its inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting of the Standing Committee, which in turn shall make a recommendation to the Conference of the Contracting Parties for final decision".

8. The Annex to Resolution VII.3 established *Rules for conferring the status of International Organization Partner of the Convention on Wetlands*. The qualifications for Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust to become an IOP, based on meeting characteristics required for IOPs according to these *Rules*, were spelled out in the application submitted to the 47th Meeting of the Standing Committee (Document SC47-10).
9. In considering this request, the Standing Committee may wish to note that WWT has already collaborated closely with the Convention through two Memoranda of Cooperation with the Secretariat: the first, signed in 2005, focused on CEPA activities; the second, signed in 2011, covered a wider range of cooperative activities. WWT contributed very significantly to the preparation of the draft resolution on highly pathogenic avian influenza, through its substantive annex of guidance to Contracting Parties. It also co-organized side events on Wetland Link International (WLI) and avian influenza and helped to develop the World Wetland Network (WWN).
10. It is also useful to remember that the conception and early development of the Ramsar Convention closely involved WWT staff and the International Wildfowl Research Bureau (IWRB), which WWT hosted at the time at Slimbridge in the United Kingdom. IWRB eventually became Wetlands International, which has been a Ramsar IOP since 1999.
11. After reviewing the information provided, the Secretariat considers that WWT fulfils the requirements, the role and expectations of an IOP as set out in Resolution VII.3.

Draft Resolution XII.xx

Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention, and Proposal to add Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) as an International Organization Partner

1. WELCOMING the 4th strategic plan 2016 - 2021 and the *Strategic Framework for Ramsar Partnerships* presented at COP11 in 2012 (COP11 DOC.18); and NOTING the needs and interests expressed by Contracting Parties;
2. RECALLING that Contracting Parties sought through Resolution XI.3 on *Adjustments to the Strategic Plan 2009-2015 for the 2013-2015 triennium* and Resolution XI.6 on *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions* to support effective collaboration with related conventions and organizations;
3. ALSO RECALLING that Resolution XI.20 on *Promoting sustainable investment by the public and private sectors to ensure the maintenance of the benefits people and nature gain from wetlands* calls for Contracting Parties to promote investment and policy decisions which encourage the wise use of wetlands;
4. ALSO RECALLING that Resolution X.12 on *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector* establishes principles and criteria for due diligence;
5. NOTING historic difficulties and limited capacity to deliver against the Strategic Framework for Ramsar Partnerships due to staff turnover since 2012 and the time taken for the Secretariat to recruit appropriately;
6. UNDERSTANDING the importance of focusing on priorities around which to build products and rally support, and also on responding to the interests of partners and funders;
7. TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the feedback, suggestions and support of Contracting Parties during the Ramsar Regional Meetings held in October and November 2014;
8. ALSO TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the feedback, suggestions and support which the International Organization Partners and other key partners provided during the preparation of the Framework and Plan in 2014;
9. RECOGNIZING the importance of actively supporting efforts to mobilize financial resources in support of the successful implementation of the Convention's objectives;
10. REAFFIRMING the commitment of Parties to meet their obligations to pay their annual contributions;
11. NOTING that the Conference of the Contracting Parties has not provided guidance on the mobilization of resources to implement the objectives of the Convention and its strategic plans;
12. RECALLING that a number of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) played a significant role in the inception of the Convention, and AWARE that these and an increasing number of other INGOs and intergovernmental organizations are contributing to, or have the potential to contribute to, the development and implementation of the Convention's mission at local, national and global scales;

13. ALSO RECALLING Resolution VII.3 *Partnerships with international organizations*, in which the Contracting Parties established rules for conferring the status of International Organization Partner of the Convention, and conferred this status on BirdLife International, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Wetlands International, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF);
14. FURTHER RECALLING that in Resolution VII.3 the Parties decided that further international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations meeting the criteria established by those rules and interested in formal recognition as International Organization Partners of the Convention should present an application to the Ramsar Secretariat, to be submitted to the Standing Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Conference of the Contracting Parties for its final decision;
15. FURTHER RECALLING that, through Resolution IX.16, the Parties recognized the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) as the fifth International Organization Partner; and
16. NOTING that the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) has applied for International Organization Partner status, and that the Standing Committee asked the Secretariat in Decision SC47-21 to prepare a draft resolution on WWT's application, to present to Contracting Parties at COP12;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

17. APPROVES the Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework annexed to this Resolution for the period 2016-2021;
18. WELCOMES the development of a platform to promote Mobilization of financial resources;
19. CONFIRMS a broad interest of Parties to engage, support and participate in the proposed six Global Priorities proposed in Annex A to this Resolution, in support of the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan, including with the possibility of planning to provide voluntary funding support for products and services associated with the Global Priorities;
20. PLEDGES to investigate the possibility of making commitment in the context of a Global Partnership for Wetlands Restoration;
21. ENCOURAGES developed country Parties, and request other governments, donor agents and financial institutions to contribute financially towards achieving the target of \$1 billion to support wetland restoration and wise use as per target 7 of the 4th strategic plan for the Ramsar Convention;
22. URGES Parties to allocate from national budgets, financial resources for the implementation of the 4th strategic plan for wetlands and provide a report on how much has been allocated for the triennium in the COP 13 report and in subsequent reports;
23. REQUESTS the Secretary General to ensure the inclusion of reporting sections on voluntary contributions, allocation from national budgets and status of annual contribution payments in the questionnaires in the country reports;
24. REQUESTS the Secretariat to compile a database of voluntary contributors to the implementation of the Convention in each triennium so that they are acknowledged in each COP and those who have done so are encouraged to do so by this action;

25. REQUESTS the Secretariat to strengthen partnerships with other MEAs such as inter alia, with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on restoring wetlands and drylands in order to enhance synergies, sharing of resources, avoid duplication and enhance implementation;
26. REQUEST Parties, other governments, Non-governmental organizations, and other financial institutions in a position to do so, to provide voluntary contributions to support the implementation of the 4th strategic plan and other Convention activities;
27. URGES Parties to explore innovative and creative funding opportunities to enhance the national implementation of the Convention;
28. APPROVES the status of International Organization Partner for the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT).

Annex A: Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention

Background

Partnerships are fundamental to the successful implementation and financing of our shared ambitions, within the Ramsar Convention.

This document aims to provide a constructive and achievable proposal, building on a number of earlier documents and efforts which established the basis for the role of Partnerships within the Convention. In particular, it builds on the *Strategic Framework for Ramsar Partnerships: partnerships and fundraising* of 2012 (COP11.18).

The new Strategic Plan for 2016-21 includes the greater involvement of partners to achieve our targets and states that ‘the wise use of all wetlands via partnerships’, as one of the top goals where the Convention should concentrate its efforts. Partnerships truly offer the means to achieve goals that a single Convention or a Party cannot achieve and allow us to bring together the best of different partners and convene their power and energies to our aims. Choice of partnerships is therefore critical as well as the area of intervention, understanding that the priorities for proposed financing must respond to the directions and goals of the new Strategic Plan. Parties are keen to see that the partnerships that they consider most important and their prioritized actions should be financed and their views need to be fully reflected in the plans of the Secretariat for Partnerships and Fundraising. This is a proposal on the best way to develop partnerships and achieve funding of activities, and we welcome the inputs of Parties in the debate on the optimal solutions to how to focus our efforts with limited time and unlimited ambitions.

This document therefore seeks to provide a *Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention*. Steps to be taken in developing the framework and plan, as well as an analysis of some key considerations regarding opportunities and challenges, are provided in Annex A. The paper is presented in three sections:

Section 1: Mobilizing financial resources

Section 2: Developing Global Priorities

Section 3: Managing relationships with partners

Section 1. Mobilizing financial resources

1.1. Increase funding via Ramsar Grants Funds (including Small Grants Fund)

The Ramsar Secretariat will be pleased to administer grants for any high impact wetlands projects, including the three existing grants programmes (the Small Grants Fund, Wetlands for the Future Fund, and the the Swiss Grant Fund for Africa). These would be developed and managed together with eventual larger grants as separate portfolios within a broader ‘Financing Platform’ proposed, and described below at section 1.2.

According to the interest of Contracting Parties and funding available, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships will engage with interested partners to support specific wetlands activities to benefit the Ramsar Convention. With donor interest in small grants reduced in a time of financial austerity, funding sought must still cover management costs and contribute to the implementation of the

Convention in complementary ways to other existing funds such as the KfW, the World Bank, Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other multilateral or regional development banks.

We seek to mobilize finance in accordance with donors' geographical and activity interests, with a minimum initial investment of 1 million CHF for establishing any new 'portfolios' or grant programs, in order to justify the transaction costs associated with their administration.

1.2. Work with a financing platform(s), to help promote regional, country-specific (as well as global) interests

Given the large number of projects that need to be developed and financed at a regional and country, as well as global, level in order to achieve the goals set out in the Ramsar Strategic Plan, the Secretariat proposes to establish a 'financing platform'. The platform will be an online system, with up to date information about 'possible offers' (e.g. products, services, projects, etc.) that require funding and that are aligned with the Ramsar Strategic Plan, and the Global and Regional Priorities.

Following initial discussions, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has already expressed an interest to formally link this proposed platform with their own 'LifeWeb', which follows a very similar model. There is enormous opportunity to create synergies between these two proposed and existing platforms, which the Ramsar Secretariat would like to actively pursue.

In addition to administering the platform, the Secretariat proposes to bring value by guiding the development of projects so that they are both strategically relevant, and appealing to funders. These might include the following expected characteristics:

- short summary explaining relevance in context of Ramsar Convention
- explain intended outcomes, activities, timeline (up to three years),
- describe partners
- explain what funding is required for which activities

Requests for any non-core budget to provide support for COP delegates and a reserve for COP, or other requests from the STRP, Regional Initiatives, Ramsar Advisory Missions, relevant IOP funding requests and other regional needs, will be included in the platform, in order to help secure funding to the extent possible.

In actively managing the platform, the Secretariat will equally seek to identify funders that are willing to engage with them and review the 'offers', and consider providing funding to individual projects, or making investments at the 'portfolio level' (i.e. in a number of places at the same time). A useful list of possible funding prospects and approaches has already been provided in the *Strategic Framework for Ramsar Partnerships* (COP11 DOC. 18), and so is not repeated again here.

Contracting Parties and other Partners are invited to recommend and inform the Secretariat of specific individuals to contact at prospective funding organizations, ministries or departments.

Opportunities, Roles and Responsibilities

- National governments, Regional Initiatives and Partners are encouraged to register to participate in the Financing Platform (online or via perceval@ramsar.org) and can do so by
 - submitting short summaries of high impact projects that could qualify
 - identifying themselves as a potential supporter of the platform
- National governments, Regional Initiatives and Partners are encouraged to register to participate in activities to 'Build Financing Capacity' (online or via perceval@ramsar.org)

including training on how to seek co-financing for projects via the Global Environment Facility, AF, etc.

- The role of the Ramsar Secretariat is to provide support and advice, including by making connections, and helping move proposals towards funding success. The Partnership team will work to develop and maintain the systems and relationships that are required in order to make progress.

1.3. Building capacity within regions, to secure financial resources

Within the Ramsar Regional Initiatives and Ramsar Regional Teams, there is a need and opportunity to build up the capacity and skills for fundraising. This process has started with an analysis of the extent of funding made available for wise use. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has provided at least 400 million USD for wetlands projects in GEF5, and GEF6 offers equally strong opportunities for leverage. The next stage is for the Ramsar Regional Teams to be fully integrated with the GEF Focal Points and GEF process by attendance at the series of Extended Constituency Workshops in 2015 where countries meet with GEF Agencies and Conventions to plan the planning for GEF 6. This will give direct access to key players and allow for capacity to be built and even more support achieved for wetland projects. Matched with training courses in GEF methodology, this will equip the Regional Teams to better support Parties.

Further steps can be taken via the development of skills within the Secretariat, in proposal development, financing and co-financing opportunities with global financing opportunities (e.g. Global Environment Facility, Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund) and regional financing opportunities (e.g. the Asian Development Bank, Economic Community Of West African States, Economic Community of Central African States, etc.).

An opportunity also exists to increase best practice sharing between the Ramsar Regional Initiatives, in order to increase their impact and funding. This will be helped by the proposed activities in document SC48-24 'Regional initiatives operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention' to virtually link Ramsar Regional Initiatives.

1.4. Influencing capital and financial flows in support of wetlands conservation and wise use

In terms of building specific business relationships, the Ramsar Secretariat will seek to build on its existing partnership agreements with Danone Group and Star Alliance, and will respond to opportunities to work with relevant industry and financial associations (e.g. IPEICA, SAI, etc), and always operate in accordance with the Resolution X.12 on *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector*. When there is a clear product in hand to offer, such as participation in a Global Partnership for Wetlands Restoration, interested private sector companies, with whom we have not already entered into formal partnership with, are the best prospects to approach, after carrying out due diligence.

To influence business and finance, Ramsar Secretariat could strengthen and build its offer along some of the following lines:

- **Strengthening economic knowledge and understanding.** The [TEEB Study on Water and Wetlands](#), supported by the Ramsar Convention, is an important contribution to better understanding of the economic value and importance of all types of wetlands. Academics and policy-makers are finding and publishing more and more evidence of the economic benefits of both natural and [artificial](#) wetlands. There are a number of possible ways to build on this previous work, such as by deepening the Ecosystem Services analysis to a site level analysis, or

applying 'conventional' economics associated with the current value of wetlands in order to anticipate when short term costs of destruction will exceed short term benefits.

- **Advising investors and private companies.** The Ramsar Convention Secretariat could increase its work seeking to share knowledge and make recommendations via platforms like the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, as well as work with individual companies on their water and wetland policies, such as the Danone Group's water policy.
- **Stimulating and supporting public-private partnerships.** In France, for example, the water catchment area in the Alps above the city of Evian has been designated as a Ramsar Site. A deep collaboration between the Evian division of Danone Group Plc, the City of Evian and surrounding communities has helped ensure purity of the bottled water product, and contributed to the economic vibrancy of the region and the protection of the source of Evian's water. The proposed Global Partnership for Wetlands Restoration may offer potential for co-investment by business and government in comparable areas.

In order to monitor progress with implementation of Ramsar Resolution XI.20 "Promoting sustainable investment by the public and private sectors to ensure the maintenance of the benefits people and nature gain from wetlands", the Secretariat will carry out and share results of a survey each triennium to gather information about progress with implementation.

Section 2: Developing Global Priorities

This section identifies six global priorities – compelling product lines that may align with the interests of funders and partners. The areas proposed have the potential to drive significant progress towards achievement of Strategic Plan goals, and also build on previous work such as Strategic Framework for Ramsar Partnerships (COP11 DOC. 18), and Resolution XI.6 'Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions'. Establishing and building opportunity around shared priorities was identified within the original Terms of Reference for a Partnership Co-ordinator and clearly an important way to bring value.

Opportunities, Roles and Responsibilities for engagement

- National governments, Regional Initiatives, NGOs and other Partners would have the opportunity to register their interest to receive updates, engage in and/or support specific projects or initiatives. National governments, Regional Initiatives, NGOs and other Partners would be invited and encouraged to inform the Secretariat about funding prospects as funding will be necessary to support the work.
- The role of the Ramsar Secretariat would be to support shared efforts to build products in these areas, and secure initial investments of at least CHF250,000 per year, and help build momentum¹.

Six Global Priorities for partnership and fundraising:

¹ It may be strategic for the Secretariat to narrow and deepen its focus on two or three of the possible 'Global Initiatives', which would be consistent with advice on Partnership given by a number of Contracting Parties at COP11.

- 1. Improving knowledge, leveraging earth observation and citizen engagement**
- 2. Launching and continuing to build the Global Wetlands Restoration Partnership**
- 3. Meeting needs of Parties for advice and capacity building**
- 4. Increasing appreciation of the connection between wetlands, culture and livelihoods**
- 5. Developing Sustainable Development Goals Indicators**
- 6. Building capacity across a network of wetlands practitioners**

And now, to provide more detail on each Global Priority:

1. Improving knowledge, leveraging earth observation and citizen engagement

This initiative will combine Earth Observation, Citizen Engagement, and Reporting, to improve the availability of up-to-date knowledge on extent and status of wetlands. It seeks to combine the disciplines of remote observation, ecology, hydrology and engineering and increase knowledge of trends and their implications. The opportunity exists to harness technology and crowd-sourcing, to develop a better picture of changing landscapes and drivers. Our own RSIS could receive additional information from citizen science if adjustments are made to the system and provided the Parties agree. Such systems are already in India, China, Norway and Sweden. They are proving useful for monitoring change and other data and now provide more information than most governments can provide.

Required first steps in gaining more knowledge are to improve analysis and categorization of Ramsar Sites under Protected Areas categories, and to move towards integrated management of sites with multiple international protected area designations (e.g. UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Man and Biosphere, GeoParks and Ramsar Sites). The work to be done builds on existing work including the Global Wetland Observing Systems (GWOS) and Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) and will allow us to map the State of the Worlds' Wetlands and Wetland Services as is needed as a baseline and to set aspirational targets for the worlds wetlands.

Next is the combination of data from different sources such as NASA, JAXA, ESA, and the Chinese Geomatics Centre in order to gain a clearer view of the status of wetlands and wetland types around the world. Our close collaboration will help us achieve part of the picture but gaps exist before we can be said to have as clear an overview of our wetlands as we have of say, forests.

2. Launching and continuing to build the Global Partnership for Wetlands Restoration

A new level of urgency to restore wetlands is emerging. On top of the Bonn Targets for land restoration, the Sustainable Development Goals currently includes 'Land Degradation Neutrality' as a target, while the 2014 WWF Living Planet Report points to the critical role of wetlands, as habitats for biodiversity, and their dramatic reduction by 76% in the last 40 years.

The benefits of restoration are very clear in terms of climate sequestration and storage, disaster risk reduction, food security, water security, biodiversity conservation, reducing poverty and improving livelihoods, etc. Building on initial steps already being taken, the current needs include developing a plan, consulting with Parties to incorporate all recommendations, building a coalition of partners and allies, securing pledges and commitments from national governments, and then launching and implementing it as an inclusive global initiative.

An alliance between UNCCD and Ramsar Convention has started to help activate the dryland and wetland restoration that has to be carried out hand-in-hand if we are to achieve the Bonn Challenge of 150 M ha restored by 2020. The collaboration between two ecosystems focused Conventions can

have a good pay-off in terms of multiple benefits and the goal of UNCCD of Land Degradation Neutrality, together with Ramsar's wetland restoration could help Parties achieve Sustainable Development Goals within their own countries.

3. Meeting the needs of Parties for advice and capacity building

In order to meet needs at all levels, we will seek to increase staffing, competencies and skills that allow the Secretariat and Regional Teams to support better Parties in their needs for technical support in using and updating the new RSIS, analysis, investigation and resolution of Art 3.2 files, helping in making regional initiatives happen and secure finance for regional and national initiatives. It is also hoped that increased staffing would be able to engage on some of the core Sustainable Development related topics, including²: Climate Change; Water Security (including for cities); Food Security; Disaster Risk Reduction; dryland and wetland restoration; Poverty reduction; sustainable livelihoods; Improving standards for business and finance connected to wetlands (Resolution XI.20); Developing Public Private Partnerships ; Fundraising; and Integrated Water Resource Management in a River Basin context;

As a result, we aim to position the Ramsar Convention as a highly relevant global treaty with the potential to contribute to multiple aspects of the global Sustainable Development agenda and help resolve central issues of water security *inter alia* by ensuring the positive status and condition of wetlands.

4. Increasing appreciation of the connection between Wetlands, Culture and Livelihoods

Building on over a decade of experience in inclusion of cultural considerations within the Ramsar Convention, the opportunity now exists to build new opportunities for deeper appreciation of the connections between people and wetlands.

Following on from earlier work with the Ramsar Culture Network, and with the support of the MAVA Foundation, we will focus in five areas: Natural Heritage, Agriculture & Food, Leisure Recreation & Tourism, Art & Architecture, and Children's Story-telling.

Future work builds on Resolution IX.21, 'Taking into account the cultural values of wetlands', Resolution X.28, 'Wetlands and poverty eradication', and others.

5. Supporting the global 'Sustainable Development Goals'

It is already possible to draw useful connections between the relevance of the Ramsar Convention to the (currently drafted) Sustainable Development Goals. For example, by:

- Using existing or new information from the Ramsar Convention to support SDG indicators development and monitoring (e.g. Wetlands Extent Index).
- Analysing and communicating how Ramsar Sites contribute to the SDGs (e.g. essential needs, livelihoods, resilience, disaster risk reduction, etc.)
- Analysing and explaining the relevance of the Ramsar Strategic Plan towards SDGs, using a generic power-point presentation (translated into a number of languages).

6. Building capacity across a network of wetlands practitioners

² This list is based on relevant topics that frequently recur within Ramsar Convention; many of them are associated with resolutions and/or resonate with the current draft of the Strategic Plan for 2016-21.

There is a need to reach out to the thousands of wetland practitioners that are involved in some way in wetland sites and other interested stakeholders in order to respond to their needs and use the opportunities that exist to link them up across sites and countries. By building such a network, we will find more about the conditions that exist and the challenges faced by practitioners. Simple questionnaires such as Survey Monkey will allow us insights into issues that can be tackled by training course, webinars, targeted materials, on line course etc. There are already many training courses provided and much written material but it may not be accessible or visible or usable in that format.

Building a network of wetland practitioners will help access the most relevant ones and a high volume of similar requests will make it possible to design and deliver what is needed from Universities, institutions, colleges, UNESCO, NGOS, etc. The Secretariat and STRP can support the work in making linkages across countries and between people and in securing funding to address the most common needs and ensure materials are in the appropriate languages.

The Secretariat can also act as the hub for existing networks and organizations which have the required expertise or access to the wetland practitioners. Some of the networks to which Ramsar Secretariat is already formally connected (e.g. WetlandsForum, Wetland Link International, WWF, Birdlife International, Wetlands International, Living Lakes etc.) can benefit from the expertise in organizations that we can engage and partner with (e.g. The Nature Conservancy expertise on Water Funds, Wetlands International expertise on carbon storage in peatlands, etc.).

Section 3: Managing relationships with partners

The aim is to maximize the progress towards achieving targets and goals established in the Ramsar Strategic Plan, building on earlier Partnership related documents, such as SC43.09. Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan 2016-21 refers to “Wise Use of All Wetlands through Partnerships” and lists a number of targets. Guidance set out in Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 5 (4th ed., 2010) on Partnerships contains useful data to refer to when identifying with whom to work. In developing relationships with business, it is also necessary to adhere to the *Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector* (as set out in Resolution X.12 (2008)).

The following basic requirements are recommended in the context of any partnership:

- A formalized two way commitment between the Partner organization and the Ramsar Convention on activities to implement must be agreed and written down.
- Outcome(s) to pursue, which are relevant to the Convention’s priorities and/or strategic plan must be agreed upon and written down.
- The capacity and funding required to deliver high quality output is discussed and well understood.

A full list of Partners will be maintained and updated on the Ramsar website, according to the following categories:

International Organization Partners

This group of organizations is recognized for their long term commitment to the mission of the Ramsar Convention, and play a critical role in both influencing the strategy of the convention and also taking actions within their own organizations to support and implement the convention’s goals.

The 2011-17 Memorandum of Co-operation agreed and signed with WWF, IUCN, Birdlife International, IWMI and Wetlands International is available to view at this link: http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/moc/MoC_5IOPs_19-5-11_SIGNED.pdf. The MOU provides a formal definition of the characteristics, commitments and benefits of IOP status and will be due for review and possible modification in 2017. Addition of a sixth IOP, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, is proposed to COP 12.

Private Sector Partners

The private sector (Business and Investment, at all scales from Multinational to Small Medium Enterprises) is both part of the problem and part of the solution. Given the size of their impact and influence, the following industry sectors are most relevant to work with: Finance, Lending & Investment; Media & Entertainment; Leisure & Tourism; Agriculture, Food & Beverage; Infrastructure & Extractives; and Large Hydro-Electric Power. The greatest opportunities that national governments have to influence changed practices are via fiscal policy and regulations. The greatest opportunity that other partners have is to influence business norms such as lending & investment policies and practices, or societal norms such as consumer choice. Public Private Partnerships and co-financing opportunities, in particular, are also possible in order to leverage wetlands as solution providers for better economic growth. It may be especially useful to work with industry associations (e.g. WBCSD, IPEICA, ICMM, SAI), as conveyor belts for accelerating work in areas of Ramsar's Strategic Plan and priorities.

Other Sustainable Development Partners

Instead of sub-dividing the list of partners further, the Secretariat will list other partners (e.g. UN system, NGOs, River Basin Organizations, etc.) into a third category which includes other Sustainable Development Partners. There exists a strong commitment to collaborate with other MEAs and the UN-system as a whole, when the opportunity exists to create synergies or greater combined impact. To the extent possible, and when it makes sense, Regional Initiatives are encouraged to strengthen affiliation with other relevant regional organizations (e.g. ASEAN). Partnerships that meet basic requirements can also be listed on the Ramsar website.

Annex B: Identifying priorities and steps to take

The Ramsar strategic plan articulates goals and opportunities for impact, and is the main reference point in developing the proposed framework and plan.

Steps taken in developing the current proposal included:

- Internal discussion about a number of key questions about activities required from the ‘Partnership Unit’
- A detailed consideration of the range of issues that emerge on a regular basis through the Convention and its resolutions, which have the potential to be packaged in ways that appeal to funders
- Analysis of the Secretary General’s vision, the Strategic Plan, and the strengths to build on in existing partnerships
- Review of consultant reports and recommendations (e.g. engaging with the global water agenda).
- Input and advice from a Key Partners meeting
- Input and advice from Pre-COP regional meetings
- An analysis of the current trends in wetlands finance

Activities supported by Partnership Unit for turning ideas into action

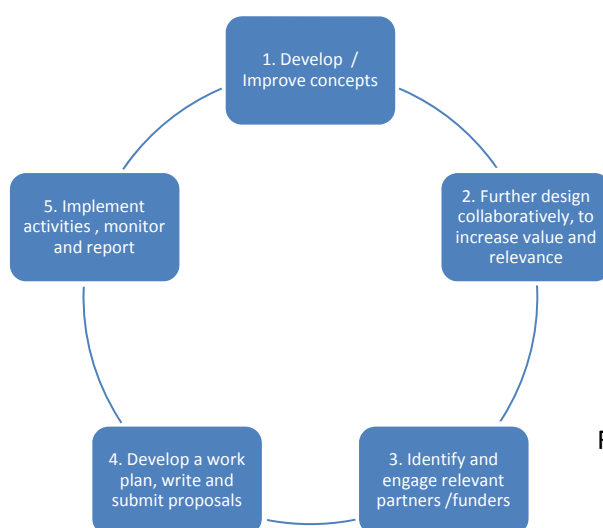


Fig. 1: The lifecycle of a project

Review of Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
The Ramsar Convention is a global treaty	Financial resources are more difficult to secure now, than at most times in the past
With modern media and many examples, the world has the capacity and resources to shift current trends	The behaviour of the global economy rarely supports ‘wise use’ without external advice that leads to changing the status quo
The Ramsar Convention benefits from strong leadership	A lack of commitment across all sectors slows down progress
New Strategic Plan (2016-21) creates new opportunity	There is a need to develop the value and number of Ramsar Convention ‘products’

Annex C: Annual work plan and goals for Partnership Unit/Head of Strategy & Partnerships

1: Mobilizing financial resources [40% time allocation]

Our vision and plan is that by 2021, the Ramsar Secretariat is widely recognized as a key agent of change in scaling investments that support wise use of all wetlands, including Ramsar sites, Priority Initiatives and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. By 2021, a number of investments have been mobilized that allow the convention to play an active role in capacity building and monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

In order to pursue our aspirations for 2021 in this area, by the end of 2015, we will have:

- i) Developed the 'Investing in Wetlands' (or similarly named) Platform, and the necessary knowledge and contacts (via research, networking and training), to support and enhance the flow of investments that support implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan.
- ii) Sought investments and funding from at least fifteen potential investors/donors.
- iii) Mobilized, overseen and managed initial six figure investments via the creation of a Global Partnership for Wetlands Restoration.
- iv) Worked with at least twenty governments or partners in order to improve knowledge of how to work with the Secretariat to seek financial support.
- v) Brokered opportunities, and helped to improve chances for several proposals initially drafted by Contacting Parties or IOPs.
- vi) Written down, and invited feedback, on a plan for voluntarily linking investments with capacity building and monitoring efforts, with a view to formalizing it in 2016.
- vii) Worked with colleagues to develop a better understanding, and closer relationship, with major funders (e.g. GEF), in order to offer contracting parties valuable and useful advice.
- viii) Worked with colleagues to ensure significant teamwork exists across the secretariat in order to support the needs for partnership and fundraising, and SRAs responding effectively to needs and opportunities that exist within their specific region.
- ix) Support plans for a successful COP, including in collaboration with Regional Advisors and the Finance Officer to assist with the COP funding situation as needed.
- x) Collaborate with the SG/DSG to increase voluntary funding contributions to the Secretariat.

2: Developing Global Priorities [20 % time allocation]

Our vision and plan is that by 2021, the Partnership Unit will be developing, securing funds for,(and sometimes managing or overseeing) several high impact partnership initiatives that together contribute to wise use of wetlands and positive outcomes for people and nature around the world.

To move towards this vision, by the end of 2015:

- i) Develop and support the products, services and projects necessary to scale the Six Global Priorities through collaboration with dozens of parties, potential funders, and other partners
- ii) Develop materials to promote and explain the value and offer of the listed Global Priorities, in order to help attract partners and funders
- iii) Play a central role in securing and mobilizing at least \$250k in new funding

3: Managing relationships with partners [30 % time allocation]

The vision is that, by 2021, the Ramsar Convention will have a thriving network of partners committed to our Sustainable Development mission, including at least six IOPs, four significant private sector partnerships, and a globally diverse community of other partners that are creating synergy and meeting requirements for impactful and effective partnerships.

In order to pursue our aspirations for 2021 in this area, by the end of 2015, we will have:

- i) Worked closely with the SG to steward and advance all of the IOP relationships, including the development of up to date 'summaries' that reflect the shared benefits, activities and focus of the respective relationships.
- ii) Developed at least one new and significant private sector partnership opportunity.
- iii) Increased by at least one the number of water agenda partners that we partner with in significant ways (e.g. The World Bank, UN Water, OECD, etc.).
- iv) Considered the Ramsar Conventions listed partners as a 'go-to' resource in further developing priority initiatives.
- v) Put in place a new MOU with UNEP, an institution that has shown particular interest to support the Ramsar Convention's success over the coming years.
- vi) Ensured that as close to 100% as possible of the Ramsar Convention's listed partners meet the suggested pre-requisites above.

4: Increasing the visibility of Ramsar Convention [10 % time allocation]

Our vision is that by 2020, the Partnership Unit has deepened engagement with key target audiences and successfully promoted the interests of the Ramsar Convention.

In order to pursue our aspirations for 2020 in this area, by the end of 2015, we will have:

- i) Provided thought leadership to strengthen the agendas of meetings and events organized by the convention (e.g. COP, etc.)
- ii) Increased engagement with development agencies and ministries of foreign affairs, where this can create two-way value for the Convention and the Contracting Party.
- iii) Participated in and/or a listed speaker at several external events in order to amplify the opportunities that exist with the Convention, make connections, and gather intelligence that can be useful to the work of individuals across the Convention. Co-ordinated Theme 3.2 of World Water Week 2015 "Managing and Restoring Ecosystems for Water Services and Biodiversity"