

Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited:

- to take note of the report on progress in implementing Resolution XI.6, on *Partnership and Synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*, and the related Resolutions XII.3 and XII.7; and
- to review the attached draft resolution on enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other MEAs and other international institutions, for consideration by the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Background

1. Resolution XII.3, on *Enhancing the languages of the Convention and its visibility and stature, and increasing synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions*, instructs the Secretariat to report annually to the Standing Committee on progress in implementing Resolution XI.6, on *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*.
2. Paragraph 41 of Resolution XII.3 requests the Secretary General to report at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP13) "on the opportunities for the Convention to further strengthen its contribution to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they relate to wetlands".
3. Paragraph 43 of the same Resolution instructs the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with IUCN World Heritage Outlook, UN Environment (UNEP), UNEP-GRID, UNDP, UNESCO, Regional Economic Commissions of the UN, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and others, and to report on progress to the Standing Committee and the Contracting Parties on a regular basis.
4. The Secretariat is also requested, in paragraph 44, to continue its work with the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) to enhance coherence and cooperation and to continue efforts to improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication at all relevant levels among the biodiversity-related conventions.

5. In Resolution XII.7, on *Resource mobilization and partnership framework of the Ramsar Convention*, paragraph 21, the Conference of the Contracting Parties requests that the Secretariat strengthen partnerships with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), “in order to enhance synergies and sharing of resources, avoid duplication and enhance implementation, respecting the mandate of each Convention”, and requests that the Secretariat provide to the Standing Committee at its 51st meeting (SC51) a plan on how to increase cooperation with other MEAs, and report regularly on its actions to the Standing Committee.
6. In Decision SC53-17:
The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to continue working actively with the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), as well as with other relevant United Nations agencies, on water-related indicators and in particular indicator 6.6.1 on wetland extent, to contribute to its methodological development, to ensure that Ramsar National Reports, and more specifically on wetlands extent, are included as the main source of information and to avoid duplication of reporting at national level; and requested that the Secretariat explore options for institutional arrangements that include being a leader for indicator 6.6.1 or its sub-indicator on extent.
7. Decisions XII.30 and XIII.21 of the CBD invite the governing bodies of the MEAs to provide elements of advice, as appropriate, concerning guidance on funding that might be referred to the GEF through the Conference of the Parties to the CBD.
8. In Decision SC53-18:
The Standing Committee requested that the Secretariat transmit to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) the elements of the Ramsar Strategic Plan that are aligned to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, SDGs and the four-year framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) for the seventh replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund annexed to CBD Decision XIII/21 [on The financial mechanism].
9. Through Decision SC53-19:
The Standing Committee requested that the Secretariat review the actions in Annexes I and II of CBD Decision XIII/24 [on Cooperation with other conventions and international organizations] that are relevant for the [Ramsar] Convention, and provide input to the synergy process as appropriate.
10. Accordingly, the present report covers the main activities undertaken in accordance with Resolutions XI.6, XII.3 and XII.7, and specifically the activities related to the BLG and IPBES, and the progress made with SDGs, MEAs, UN Environment and other institutions.

Work under the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the scientific bodies of the biodiversity-related Conventions

11. The Ramsar Secretariat has continued to participate in the meetings and joint actions of the BLG according to its *Plan for Joint Activities*. The Secretary General participated with other heads of Conventions in the meeting of the BLG in September 2017, in which the issues discussed included the following:
 - a. Developments under the Conventions, including outcomes of their recent meetings, and preparations for their forthcoming meetings, including meetings of their governing bodies

and intersessional meetings (CMS COP12, and Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES]);

- b. Preparations and inputs to other relevant intergovernmental meetings, such as the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to elevate the global visibility of and political attention to biodiversity;
- c. Follow-up to the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and
- d. Cooperation and synergies among the biodiversity-related Conventions, including implementation of CBD Decision XIII/24.

The Heads of biodiversity-related conventions agreed that a major area for collaboration is the session of the High Level Political Forum in July 2018, which will review SDGs 15 on biodiversity and SDG 6 on water.

CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

12. The Secretariat attended the 21st meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA21). A number of themes of relevance to the Convention were discussed including:
 - a. scenarios for the 2050 vision for biodiversity;
 - b. links between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - c. mainstreaming of biodiversity into the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing and processing industry, and health; and
 - d. scientific and technical considerations and use of the programmes of work of the Convention and the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*.

Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

13. The Secretariat sent the notifications from the Secretariat of IPBES to Ramsar National Focal Points, to invite inputs to the first external review for the first drafts of the global and regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration. The Ramsar Secretariat and the STRP provided comments on this process. The Secretariat also participated in an IPBES progress briefing on the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration, at COP13 of UNCCD, in September 2017.
14. The STRP Chair attended the ninth meeting of the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel from 20 to 22 June 2017 in Bonn, Germany. One of the main issues of relevance to the Ramsar Convention was the IPBES Second Work Programme, to be approved in March 2018. As indicated in the previous report¹, the Secretariat will submit to IPBES a request for a thematic assessment of the current status and trends of wetlands, including their condition, in accordance with Resolution XII.2. Owing to timing constraints, it is likely that the proposals will need to be presented to Standing Committee members intersessionally and that their approval

¹ See SC53-15, paras. 12, 13, at www.ramsar.org/document/sc53-15-progress-on-implementing-resolution-xi6-on-partnership-and-synergies-with.

or comments will be needed within a short period. Therefore, the Secretariat will work with the STRP Chair on a proposal to be submitted for approval by the Management Working Group of the Standing Committee prior to submission to IPBES.

15. The STRP Chair facilitated communication between the Ramsar Secretariat and the IPBES Secretariat for the preparation of a communications strategy on the policy brief on *Integrating multiple wetland values into decision-making*.

Cooperation with other MEAs

16. The Secretariat engages actively with other MEAs, and has strengthened its efforts in accordance with paragraph 44 of Resolution XII.3.

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

17. The Secretariat participated in the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CMS from 23 to 28 October 2017, and in particular in the high-level segment and in the CBD side event “Follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity beyond 2020”. The Secretariat also organized with the CMS Secretariat a side event on synergies between the Conventions.

Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

18. The Secretariat worked with the Secretariat of AEWA to support the participation of three NGOs from Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal at the GlobWetland Project training session on the margins of the Ramsar African pre-COP meeting (February 2018 in Dakar). These three NGOs, which are partnering with BirdLife and MAVA on conservation of migratory birds, are also undertaking wetland projects and supporting the Contracting Parties to implement the Ramsar Convention.
19. At the time of writing, the Secretariat was discussing with the AEWA Secretariat a possible collaboration to organize an AEWA training-of-trainers course on flyway conservation for francophone West and Central Africa by mid-2018, with funding secured by AEWA from the European Commission.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

20. The Secretariat is working to strengthen its engagement in the UNFCCC processes in areas that would contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2016-2024 and relevant resolutions of the Conference of the Parties. A particular focus has been to raise the visibility and relevance of the role of wetlands and the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Specific areas include: the role of peatlands and coastal and marine ecosystems in carbon storage, which is gaining attention; the linkage with water; and the opportunity to include wetlands in national climate change plans and actions, most notably Nationally Determined Contributions and greenhouse gas inventories, on the basis of decisions and guidance from the UNFCCC COP and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The Secretariat participated in the 23rd meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Bonn, from 6 to 17 November 2017. It co-organized events on: “Nature-based Solutions for water and adaptation to climate change”; “Wetlands, peatlands and satellites”; and “Fast-tracking and financing conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems”. The Secretariat also participated as a speaker in an event on “Water for sustainable agriculture and food security”. The Secretary General’s statement was posted on the UNFCCC website.

Convention on Biological Diversity

21. The Secretariat has continued to work to re-establish and strengthen collaboration with the CBD, identifying possible areas of joint work and providing inputs to various processes, including the follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 of the CBD, ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, synergies, capacity building and attendance at SBSTTA21.
22. In accordance with Standing Committee Decision SC53-18, the Secretariat transmitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) the elements of the Ramsar Strategic Plan that are aligned to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, SDGs and the four-year framework of programme priorities (2018-2022) for the seventh replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund annexed to CBD Decision XIII/21.
23. In CBD Decision XIII/21, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD invited the governing bodies of the various biodiversity-related conventions, further to paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Decision XII/30, to repeat the exercise described therein for the development of strategic guidance for the eighth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund annexed to Decision XIII/21, in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD at its 15th meeting. The Secretariat has accordingly included a paragraph in the draft resolution annexed to the present document to ensure that the Secretariat presents the relevant information to the Standing Committee, as CBD COP15 will take place in 2020, before Ramsar COP14 in 2021.
24. In accordance with Standing Committee Decision SC53-19 the Secretariat reviewed the actions in Annexes I and II of CBD Decision XIII/24 that are relevant for the Convention, and will provide inputs to the synergy process as appropriate.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

25. The Secretariat is reviewing how to engage strategically with the UNCCD and will consider the existing MOU in this context. It attended the 13th session of the UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology in Ordos, China, from 6 to 9 September 2017.
26. Areas of collaboration include contributions from the Secretariat to the *Global Land Outlook* of the UNCCD, which features wetlands and the role of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and a contribution from the UNCCD Secretariat to Ramsar's *Global Wetlands Outlook*. The Secretariat is also exploring possible collaboration on land degradation neutrality programmes and national drought plans, with 30 pilot countries and with UNCCD/UNFCCC and CBD in their Project Preparation Facility.

Sustainable Development Goals

27. The Secretariat has continued to engage in the 2030 Sustainable Agenda and SDGs in different areas. Regarding SDG indicators, in accordance with Standing Committee Decision SC53-17, the Secretariat continues its engagement including in the meetings of the IAEG-SDGs and the target team on indicator 6.6.1 led by UN Environment.
28. The Secretariat participated in the 6th meeting of the IAEG-SDGs in Manama, Bahrain, from 11 to 14 November 2017 and presented a report on the decision of the Standing Committee and the Convention's main activities related to indicator 6.6.1. The aim was to clarify the position of the Ramsar Convention and ensure that the Contracting Parties' commitment to reporting on

the extent of wetlands is part of the SDG monitoring process, especially on water-related ecosystems (indicator 6.6.1 and also indicators 14.2 and 15.1.2).

29. The Secretariat also participated in the “Global workshop for integrated monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation” from 21 to 23 November 2017 in the Hague, the Netherlands, organized by UN-Water’s Technical Advisory Unit and the eight UN agencies appointed as custodians of the 11 global indicators under SDG 6.
30. In December 2017, the Sustainable Development Goal Monitoring Unit of the UN Statistics Division informed the Secretariat that the members of the IAEG-SDGs had reviewed the custodianship of indicator 6.6.1 in an online meeting on 28 November, and had agreed to add the Ramsar Convention as a co-custodian for indicator 6.6.1. The IAEG-SDGs asked that UN Environment and the Ramsar Secretariat continue their collaboration on this indicator and that they work together on the methodological development.
31. The Secretariat continues to collaborate with UN Environment and UNEP-WCMC, custodians of indicator 14.5.1 and of indicator 15.1.2, for which the Ramsar Convention is acknowledged by the IAEG-SDGs as a partner. UN Environment would be willing to work with the Ramsar Convention to determine the best way to assess issues related to SDG 14.2 (to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems), as an input into the comprehensive review of the SDG indicators, which is scheduled to take place in 2020.
32. In addition to working on the indicators process, the Secretariat has also engaged in initiatives related to the implementation of the SDGs. The Secretariat participated in the UN’s first Ocean Conference under the auspices of the UN General Assembly (New York, 5-9 June 2017) focused on SDG 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources. The Secretary General moderated one of the seven Partnership Dialogues with a focus on marine and coastal ecosystems. She also participated as panellist at two side events on SDGs 6 and 14 and “Stewarding our oceans between major climate change impacts and nature based solutions to adaptation and mitigation”, and delivered a statement in the plenary session of the General Assembly. The engagement of the Secretariat contributed to positioning the Ramsar Convention as a platform for implementation of SDG 14 and making the critical links with SDG 6 on water. The Secretary General was subsequently invited to become the focal point of the Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves, one of the nine initiatives established by the UN Secretary General Envoy on Oceans, which will monitor, expand and mobilize action around the more than 1,300 commitments made at the Ocean Conference.
33. Under the invitation of the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat submitted information to the 2017 High Level Political Forum on “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”. However, it was not able to participate in the meeting as it did not have observer status in the UN General Assembly.

Actions to strengthen cooperation with UN Environment and other international institutions

34. As noted in previous reports to the Standing Committee, the Secretariat is continuing to work to strengthen collaboration with UN Environment, FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNECE and other UN agencies.

Collaboration with UN Environment

35. The proposed collaboration with UN Environment on SDG indicators is in line with the areas of work identified in the Memorandum of Understanding.
36. The STRP provided input to the Sixth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6), chapter 6 on freshwater, and chapter 8 on water resources.
37. The Secretariat continues to work with UNEP-GRID on the refinement of the new Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS). It is also working with UNEP-WCMC on the use of the Online Reporting System for COP13 National Reports, on publishing of the Wetland Extent Trends (WET) Index as one of the tasks of the work plan of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and on completion of Ramsar Sites boundaries for the RSIS.
38. The Secretariat has continued to contribute to the InforMEA initiative, in order to help make Ramsar information available to new audiences and to those already engaged with MEAs. Since SC53, further content has been exposed on the InforMEA platform, including around 600 documents ranging from reports of meetings and Ramsar Advisory Missions to guidelines, factsheets, briefing notes and other publications. Efforts are ongoing to ensure that the materials are easily accessible to users who may not know of the Ramsar Convention or its role in wider global environmental governance.
39. The Secretariat and the InforMEA team at UN Environment have collaborated fruitfully to their mutual benefit. The Secretariat has carried out an exercise to tag content by themes and to map these themes to terms in the LEO thesaurus which was developed for InforMEA. Further applying the lessons of this pilot will support effective searching on the Ramsar website as well as making Ramsar content available to new audiences (for example, presenting information on peatlands to InforMEA users searching for content on carbon storage).
40. The Secretariat participated in the third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (Nairobi, 4-6 December 2017) under the overarching theme of “pollution”. The Secretary General participated in the High Level Segment. She also delivered a statement in the plenary session and made an intervention in the Dialogue 3 on “Practical solutions towards a pollution-free planet”. She also participated in the Annual Breakfast Meeting of the Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment, and in a breakfast meeting with the Executive Director of UN Environment and heads of MEAs.
41. UNEA adopted a Ministerial Declaration and two Resolutions that make specific reference to the Convention:
 - a. A Resolution on *Pollution mitigation by mainstreaming biodiversity into key sectors*², which recognizes the role of the biodiversity related conventions such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in mainstreaming biodiversity into key sectors; and
 - b. A Resolution on *Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems*³, which emphasizes the need for Member States, in collaboration with UN

² UNEP/EA.3/L.6/Rev.2: accessed at <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/index>

Environment and other UN agencies, to address water pollution in inland, coastal and marine ecosystems, and improve water quality, which should support implementation of the water-related SDGs and their interrelated targets, and as applicable, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the fourth Strategic Plan 2016-2024 of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

United Nations Environment Management Group

42. The Secretariat has continued to engage in the activities of the United Nations Environment Management Group. However, it was not possible for the Secretary General to participate in the meeting of the senior officials of the EMG organized on the margins of the opening of the General Assembly, in September 2017, because the Secretariat does not have observer status in the United Nations General Assembly.

Observer Status at the United Nations General Assembly

43. In fulfilment of its mandate, the Secretariat has engaged in a number of UN-related meetings and processes. For example, it has participated in meetings of other environmental conventions and is an active member of the UN Environment Management Group and of the UN Biodiversity Liaison Group, to achieve synergies with secretariats of other multilateral environmental agreements. However, the Secretariat was denied the right to participate, on behalf of the Convention, in the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2017, which reviews the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as it does not have observer status in the UN General Assembly, nor in the UN Economic and Social Council, which is the UN platform for debate on sustainable development. This means that it is effectively excluded from participating on behalf of the Convention on Wetlands in the HLPF meetings and other relevant UN meetings planned for 2018 and future years. The Secretariat and the legal adviser provided support to the Chair of the Standing Committee for a request to the General Assembly for observer status. A report on this issue is provided in document Doc. SC54-15.

Collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

44. The Secretariat has started discussions with FAO on opportunities for collaboration, including at side meetings at the BLG session, which has held in the FAO offices. This includes possible participation in the Global Framework for Water Scarcity as well as collaboration on FAO's work on agriculture, food security, biodiversity and climate change.

Collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

45. The Secretariat participated in the UNECE International Workshop on Water Scarcity and in the ninth meeting of the Taskforce on Water and Climate to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Geneva, 11-13 December 2017).

³ UNEP/EA.3/L.27: accessed at <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/index>

Draft Resolution XIII.xx (*provisional number*)

Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions

1. RECALLING that Resolution XI.1, in paragraphs 17 and 18, instructs the Standing Committee and Contracting Parties to develop strategies that explore the accommodation of UN languages into the Convention, the elevation of the Convention's visibility and stature, including *inter alia* through enhancing high-level political engagement in its work at national, regional, and global levels, the enhancement of synergies with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other international entities including through regional initiatives, and the increased involvement in the initiatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
2. FURTHER RECALLING that Resolution XII.3 (2015), on *Enhancing the languages of the Convention and its visibility and stature, and increasing synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions*, instructs the Secretariat to report annually on progress in implementing Resolution XI.6 on *Partnership and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions* to the Standing Committee;
3. NOTING that Resolution XII.3 requests the Secretary General to report at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the opportunities for the Convention to further strengthen its contribution to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they relate to wetlands;
4. FURTHER NOTING that Resolution XII.3 instructs the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with IUCN World Heritage Outlook, UNEP, UNEP-GRID, UNDP, UNESCO, Regional Economic Commissions of the UN, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and others, and report on progress to the Standing Committee and the Contracting Parties on a regular basis;
5. RECALLING that the Secretariat is also requested by Resolution XII.3 to continue its work with the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) to enhance coherence and cooperation and to continue efforts to improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication at all relevant levels among the biodiversity-related Conventions;
6. NOTING that Resolution XII.7 (2015), on *Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention*, requests the Secretariat to strengthen partnerships with other MEAs such as, *inter alia*, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in order to enhance synergies and sharing of resources, avoid duplication and enhance implementation, respecting the mandate of each Convention;
7. RECALLING that Resolution XII.3 invites all Parties that are considering hosting a meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to consider including a high-level ministerial segment during the meeting addressing clearly defined topics in support of the agenda of the COP;
8. NOTING the interest of all Parties in enhancing the visibility and stature of the Ramsar Convention and increasing synergies with other MEAs and with UN Environment;

9. NOTING the project undertaken by UN Environment on “Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies” and its results;
10. RECOGNIZING, in the context of the ongoing work on synergies, the importance of the alignment of the Ramsar Strategic Plan to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and any follow-up, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁴ and the Sustainable Development Goals, and related reporting and indicators;
11. RECALLING Decision XII.30 of the CBD on the financial mechanism, which stresses the importance of enhancing programmatic synergies among relevant biodiversity-related conventions;
12. RECALLING the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) contained in *The future we want*⁵;
13. WELCOMING the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the outcome document *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* that recognizes the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the MEAs, such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands;
14. CONVINCED of the significant potential of increasing cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to enhance coherent national level implementation of each of the conventions;
15. NOTING that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, and Target 6.6, “By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes”;
16. ALSO NOTING SDG 14, “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, and Target 14.2, “By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans”;
17. ADDITIONALLY NOTING SDG 15, “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”, and Target 15.1, “By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements”;

⁴ [General Assembly resolution 70/1](#) of 25 September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, annex.

⁵ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E

18. FURTHER NOTING that other SDGs that are relevant to the Convention are: SDG 1. No Poverty; SDG 2. Zero Hunger; SDG 5. Gender Equality; SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; and SDG 13. Climate Action;
19. WELCOMING CBD Decision XIII.21, on *The financial mechanism*, which “Encourages the Global Environment Facility to continue and further strengthen integrated programming as a means to harness opportunities for synergy in implementing related multilateral environmental agreements as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} and its Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15”;
20. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION for the cooperation between the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Ramsar Secretariat through the IUCN/Ramsar Liaison Group to support the operations of the Secretariat;
21. APPRECIATING the results achieved by the Facilitation Working Group of the Standing Committee to facilitate discussions between the Ramsar Secretariat and IUCN, in order to seek ways of improving the current operations of the Secretariat;
22. RECOGNIZING that inconsistencies and contradictions between resolutions and decisions taken over the years can result in confusion and a lack of clarity that creates inefficiencies in the implementation of the Convention, and that implementation of the Convention can be improved by retiring resolutions and decisions and parts thereof that are outdated or contradictory; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}
23. RECALLING Resolution XII.4, which seeks to strengthen transparency within the work of the Convention to facilitate the evolution of decisions, guidance and implementation of the Convention in cooperation with Parties, International Organization Partners, and stakeholders; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}
24. NOTING Parties’ interest in enhancing their efforts to identify and address the challenges to wetlands globally as a means to increase the relevance, timeliness, and impact of the Convention and of Contracting Parties’ resolutions related to wise use of wetlands; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}
25. NOTING the value in reviewing the Rules of Procedure to identify any inconsistencies or other elements that may negatively impact the work of the Convention or which might usefully be amended to optimize resources and/or increase efficiency; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

Concerning visibility and stature, and increasing synergies:

26. INVITES all PARTIES to work to raise the visibility of the Convention at the national, subnational, regional and international levels as appropriate to their national circumstances;
27. FURTHER INVITES Contracting Parties to establish or strengthen, at the national level, mechanisms to enhance the effective coordination among relevant national and subnational authorities, and to support mainstreaming of wetland ecosystem functions and the ecosystem services they provide to people and nature in national development plans, other sectors’

strategies, plans and regulations, and especially in the context of those developed to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the SDGs;

28. ENCOURAGES all Ramsar National Focal Points to continue to increase their efforts to coordinate with their national level counterparts who are focal points of other conventions as well as with institutions and agencies in charge of implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and SDGs;
29. FURTHER ENCOURAGES National Focal Points to strengthen coordination with all wetland practitioners including Ramsar Site managers, to inform them of Ramsar activities and be informed by them about processes and issues of common interest;
30. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to continue to develop and activate networking mechanisms, including Ramsar National Wetlands Committees or similar bodies, to ensure collaboration with national ministries, departments and agencies;
31. FURTHER INVITES Parties to identify opportunities to enhance synergies at the local and regional levels, including with respect to sites with multiple international designations (e.g Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage Sites);
32. FURTHER INVITES Contracting Parties to work with global and regional bodies including UN Environment, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE and other Regional Economic Commissions of the UN, ITTO, and the Global Environment Facility to enhance the wise use of wetlands;
33. INVITES Contracting Parties to continue to take into account the results of the project “Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies” through, *inter alia*, the sourcebook, undertaken by UN Environment; and CALLS UPON the Secretariat and Contracting Parties to implement its recommendations to promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements;
34. REQUESTS Contracting Parties to continue to implement the *Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* (Resolution VII.19), including by establishing cooperative mechanisms for the management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins;
35. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to report regularly to the Standing Committee on progress in implementing the present Resolution and Resolution XI.6 on *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*;
36. WELCOMES the continued collaboration between the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Secretariats of other biodiversity-related conventions through the BLG and through the implementation of joint work plans and activities of common interest and REQUESTS the Secretary General to include, in future reports on cooperation with other conventions, international organizations and partnerships, information on results and achievements of existing cooperation activities;
37. WELCOMES Decision XIII.24 on *Cooperation with other conventions and international organizations* adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and REQUESTS the Secretariat to provide inputs to the synergy process as appropriate and in particular on matters that are relevant for the Convention;

38. FURTHER INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with UN Agencies, in particular UN Environment, UNDP, UNESCO, UNECE and other Regional Economic Commissions of the UN, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), MEAs such as UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD, CMS and others, and to report progress to the Standing Committee on a regular basis;
39. WELCOMES the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of the memorandum of understanding with UN Environment to enhance collaboration on areas of common interest and REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat to report to the Standing Committee on the progress of the activities concerned;
40. REQUESTS the Standing Committee, at its first full meeting following each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to identify, with the support of the Secretariat, a limited set of urgent challenges to the wise use of wetlands, in the framework of the Ramsar Strategic Plan and the broader environmental agenda, to receive enhanced attention during the coming triennium; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group} and
41. FURTHER REQUESTS the Standing Committee to consider these urgent challenges during its meetings throughout the triennium, inviting external expert speakers to participate in and contribute to Contracting Parties' discussions as appropriate and subject to available resources, with a view to identifying potential solutions to these challenges and reflecting them in draft resolutions for consideration by the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties; {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}

Concerning Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals

42. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to continue working actively with the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), as well as with other relevant United Nations agencies, on water-related indicators, and in particular indicator 6.6.1 on wetland extent, to contribute to its methodological development, to ensure that Ramsar National Reports, and more specifically on wetlands extent, are included as the main source of information and to avoid duplication of reporting at national level;
43. FURTHER REQUESTS the Secretariat to participate as appropriate in the discussion of Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15 and Targets 14.2 and 15.1 in international fora;
44. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to participate as appropriate in relevant international efforts to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, including the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
45. FURTHER INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to support Contracting Parties in raising the relevance of and mainstreaming wetlands and the Convention in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including *inter alia* through collaboration with intergovernmental organizations, International Organization Partners (IOPs) and partners in the public and private sectors for the development of guidance and tools, capacity building and identification of opportunities to access resources;
46. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to strengthen their mechanisms to enhance effective coordination among national and subnational statistical authorities responsible to report on Sustainable Development Goals and in particular those related to wetlands;

47. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to elevate the importance of wetlands and the Convention for the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and SDGs and to strengthen mainstreaming efforts at national and subnational levels;
48. INVITES Parties to MEAs to consider further measures to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance cooperation and coordination amongst MEAs; and
49. RECOMMENDS that Parties further strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and other partners at the national level to enhance coherent national-level implementation of the Convention;

Concerning the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund

50. REQUESTS the Secretariat to present to the Standing Committee, further to paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of CBD Decision XII.30, elements of advice for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) concerning the funding of the objectives and priorities of the Convention, consistent with the mandates of the GEF, and to repeat the exercise described therein for the development of strategic guidance for the eighth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties of the CBD at its 15th meeting, consistent with CBD Decision XIII/21.

Concerning the relationship with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the work of the Secretariat

51. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue working with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through the IUCN/Ramsar Liaison Group to support the operations of the Secretariat;

Concerning the Enhancement of the Implementation of the Convention

52. REQUESTS the Secretariat to: {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}
 - a. review all previous resolutions and decisions, identifying those or parts of those, if any, that may no longer be valid or applicable, that contradict each other, or are otherwise inconsistent with current Ramsar practices, and at SC57 report its findings, including information on how it reached these conclusions (e.g. inter alia, that the work has been completed, superseded, is contradictory, or is incorporated elsewhere); and
 - b. develop, based on its findings and Parties' feedback to its SC57 report, recommendations for Parties at SC58 to consider a process for: retiring outdated resolutions and decisions; establishing a practice of retiring outdated or contradictory resolutions and decisions automatically when they are superseded by new ones; and preparing a consolidated list of resolutions and decisions, to be updated after each meeting of the Conference of the Parties and on an as-needed basis following Standing Committees;
53. REQUESTS the Standing Committee, at its 57th session, to review the Secretariat's report on the validity of resolutions and decisions and provide feedback, and to consider the Secretariat's recommendations on this subject at its 58th session, with a view to include in a relevant resolution of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties the retirement of outdated resolutions and decisions and the establishment of a practice for the Convention to

retire outdated resolutions and decisions automatically when they are superseded by new ones;
{Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}

54. REQUESTS the Secretariat to: {Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}
 - a. conduct a review of the Rules of Procedure, identifying text, if any, that may no longer be valid or applicable, is contradictory, is otherwise inconsistent with current Ramsar practices, and the Rules' applicability to subsidiary bodies including the Standing Committee, working groups, and Friends of the Chair groups and, at the 57th session of the Standing Committee (SC57), report its findings, including information on how it reached these conclusions; and
 - b. develop, as appropriate, based on its findings and Parties' feedback to its SC57 report, recommendations for Parties at the 58th session of the Standing Committee (SC58) to consider revisions that might be made to the Rules of Procedure in preparation for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
55. REQUESTS the Standing Committee, at its 57th session, to review the Secretariat's report on the Rules of Procedure and provide feedback, and to consider the Secretariat's recommendations on this subject at its 58th session and, as appropriate, consider revisions that might be made to the Rules of Procedure in preparation for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
{Text provided by the Facilitation Working Group}