

## **Draft resolution on Ramsar Advisory Missions**

*Submitted by Burkina Faso*

### **Action requested:**

- The Standing Committee is invited to review the attached draft resolution for consideration at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

### **Draft Resolution XIII.xx**

#### **Ramsar Advisory Missions**

1. RECALLING Recommendation 4.7 which established that, when the Secretariat becomes aware that a Ramsar Site is facing change in ecological character, where appropriate it shall propose a Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM) to assist Contracting Parties to address such changes;
2. NOTING that, to December 2016, across all Ramsar Regions, there have been 82 applications of this procedure, with positive results; and COMMENDING those Parties who have so far used RAMs in order to seek constructive solutions to challenges they face and as a contribution to their efforts towards effective implementation of the Convention;
3. RECOGNIZING the need to underpin and promote the greater application of the RAM as an important and useful tools for assisting Parties to implement the Convention;
4. FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the important contribution that STRP, the International Organization Partners (IOPs) and other stakeholders have made to implementation of the RAM process over its 30-year history;
5. WELCOMING the STRP's work in the past triennium to comprehensively review and analyse the body of reports from 82 RAM missions (to December 2016), and FURTHER WELCOMING the STRP's derived *Briefing Note* and *Policy Brief on Ramsar Advisory Missions* published in 2018;
6. NOTING that there has been no allocation from the core budget to support implementation of the RAM since COP7 in 1999, but non-core funding has been expended since this time.
7. RECOGNIZING the value of RAMs also in terms of raising the Convention's visibility, highlighting the commitment of Contracting Parties, and contributing to public awareness concerning wetland conservation and wise use.

## THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

8. REAFFIRMS that the Ramsar Advisory Mission mechanism is one of the key tools available to Parties to assist with implementation of the Convention, constituting a means for providing independent advice relevant to addressing actual and potential change in ecological character at Ramsar Sites;
9. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to consider more frequent application of RAMs in appropriate cases;
10. ENCOURAGES the operation of RAMs in synergy with missions from other convention when applicable;
11. URGES diligent follow-up by Parties hosting RAMs to foster implementation of the recommendations made in RAM reports and to evaluating and reporting on the outcomes;
12. REAFFIRMS that RAM reports are public documents once the Party concerned has had an opportunity to approve them;
13. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat, in consultation with the STRP and having regard to its findings in derived *Briefing Note* and *Policy Brief* on Ramsar Advisory Missions (published in 2018), to prepare operational guidance for RAMs, covering *inter alia* the issues listed in Annex 1, to be submitted for adoption by Standing Committee at its (xx)th meeting;
14. ENCOURAGES to consider making an allocation for the RAM mechanism from the core budget; and CALLS ON Parties, the private sectors and others to consider making additional voluntary contributions in support of RAMs; and also INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to consider the funding needs of RAM mechanism in its Resource Mobilisation Work Plan;
15. THANKS STRP for their significant work during the 2015-2018 triennium to review past RAM experiences; and
16. REQUESTS the Secretariat to develop an informational, downloadable brochure, in all official languages explaining the opportunities presented by RAMs to assist Parties with implementing the Convention.

## **Annex 1**

### **Development of practical and technical operational guidance for Parties, Secretariat and other stakeholders in the form of a simple 'how to' step-by-step manual covering inter alia the following topics**

- Circumstances that trigger the proposed use of a RAM
- Links with Article 3.2
- Links with the Montreux Record
- Pre-RAM investigations and advice
- Prerogative of the Contracting Party to invite RAM/approve Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Developing ToRs – standard good practice
- Scope of the RAM
- Coordination and team composition of mission team
- Timeframe considerations
- Role of the Secretariat
- Role of the STRP
- Role of IOPs and other stakeholders
- Resourcing the RAM
- Application to candidate Ramsar sites and other undesignated wetlands
- Application in transboundary contexts
- Operation on a joint basis with mechanisms of other MEAs
- Structure and contents of RAM reports
- The process for following up a RAM report
- Reporting on the activities of the RAM, including a review of outcomes an appropriate time after completion of the mission (typically about six years)