

**Communication, capacity building, education, participation
and awareness (CEPA)
Establishment of the CEPA Oversight Panel**

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited:

- i. to take the steps required to ensure the membership of the CEPA Oversight Panel for 2019-2021 in accordance with the terms of Resolution XIII.5; and
- ii. to request that the newly-formed Panel present to the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee its proposal to assume the responsibilities assigned in Resolution XII.9.

Background

1. At the 12th Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP12) in 2015, the Parties approved Resolution XII.9 on *The Ramsar Convention's Programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016-2024*. The Programme includes nine CEPA goals and 43 targets.
2. Responsibilities for implementation are shared between Contracting Parties, the Secretariat, the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs), NGOs, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders.
3. Contracting Parties are the key implementers of the CEPA Programme, working through their National Focal Points, CEPA Focal Points, community-based organisations, Ramsar Regional Initiatives and wetland education centres.
4. The CEPA Oversight Panel was established in 2006 (by Standing Committee at its 34th meeting, following Resolution IX.18) to monitor and report on CEPA issues at the national level within the Convention and on the progress of implementation of the CEPA Programme.
5. At COP13, the Contracting Parties mandated the CEPA Oversight Panel, through paragraphs 24, 25, 26 and 27 of Resolution XIII.5 on *Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention*, with the following tasks:
 - a. to present to the Standing Committee, at its 57th meeting (SC57), its proposal to assume the responsibilities assigned to the Panel in Resolution XII.9;

- b. to develop a new approach for supporting CEPA implementation, taking into account the work already carried out by the Panel prior to COP13;
- c. to present the new CEPA approach at SC59 and a draft resolution on this subject to COP14; and
- d. to indicate which Parties have agreed to join the Panel's work for this undertaking, in order to ensure that, for this specific task, all six Ramsar regions are represented by Parties, noting that additional Parties beyond those six may also join efforts while striving to maintain regional balance and manageability.

Establishment of the CEPA Oversight Panel for 2019-2021

6. The existing structure of the CEPA Oversight Panel (established in 2006 by Standing Committee 34, following Resolution IX.18) did not meet the requirements expressed in Resolution XIII.5 or reflect the evolution of structures and groups of the Convention.
7. In April 2019 the Secretariat proposed a revised structure and working mechanism for the CEPA Oversight Panel, which was approved by the Standing Committee intersessionally. The new approved composition of the Panel is as follows:
 - The Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee, acting as Chair of the Oversight Panel;
 - A maximum of six representatives of Contracting Parties, which may include CEPA Government Focal Points, Standing Committee representatives or other representatives of Parties (a maximum of one per region);
 - The Vice-Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel;
 - A maximum of two NGO Focal Points (not from the same region);
 - A maximum of two representatives of the IOPS; and
 - A representative of the Convention Secretariat (*ex officio*).
8. On 29 April 2019, the Secretariat issued the call for nomination of members of the CEPA Oversight Panel for the 2019-2021 triennium. The deadline for nominations was 27 May 2019. On 22 May 2019 a reminder notification was sent to all Contracting Parties.
9. The Secretariat received a total of 11 nominations by the deadline, nine nominations for representatives of Contracting Parties and two for an NGO focal point. There were no representatives of Contracting Parties nominated from two regions, leaving the requirement that all six regions be represented unfulfilled.
10. After consultation with the incoming chair of the CEPA Oversight Panel, the Secretariat contacted Parties in the two regions who did not nominate a representative and requested that Contracting Parties come forward with nominations that could be presented at SC57 such that a proposed list of Panel members can be approved by the Standing Committee.
11. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to take the steps required to ensure the membership of the CEPA Oversight Panel for 2019-2021 in accordance with the terms of Resolution XIII.5 listed at paragraph 5.d above, so that the Panel can take up its duties described at paragraphs 24-27 of Resolution XIII.5, and present to the Standing Committee, at SC58, its proposal to assume the responsibilities assigned in Resolution XII.9.