

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

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- take note of the progress in implementing Resolution XIII.7 on *Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions*; and
- take note of the plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs and contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework according to Resolution XIII.7, and provide guidance to the Secretariat on these matters.

Background

1. Resolution XIII.7 on *Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions* instructed the Secretariat to report regularly to the Standing Committee on progress in implementing this Resolution and Resolution XI.6 on *Partnership and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*.
2. The Secretariat, Contracting Parties, International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others are urged in paragraph 22 of Resolution XIII.7 to enhance synergies, coherence and effective cooperation among the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to strengthen the contribution of these instruments to a post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the realization of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.
3. Paragraph 23 of Resolution XIII.7 requests the Secretariat to present at the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC58) a plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs and contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
4. Paragraph 33 of the same Resolution requests the Secretary General to include in future reports information on the results of existing cooperation with other Conventions, international organizations and partnerships and on the exploration of new activities with possible partners.
5. The Secretariat is requested in paragraph 34 of the Resolution to provide inputs to the synergy process as appropriate, and in particular on matters that are relevant to the Convention on Wetlands, and report to the Standing Committee.

6. Paragraph 35 of the Resolution instructs the Secretariat to continue working to strengthen collaboration with UN agencies, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and other regional economic commissions of the UN, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), MEAs such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and others, and to report progress to the Standing Committee on a regular basis.
7. The Secretariat is instructed in paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Resolution to continue working actively with the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and Contracting Parties on the completion of national wetland inventories and wetland extent to report on SDG Indicator 6.6.1 “Change in the extent of water related ecosystems over time”.
8. Paragraph 41 of the Resolution instructs the Secretariat to participate as appropriate in relevant international efforts to address the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and SDGs, including the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the discussion of SDGs 14 and 15 and SDG Targets 14.2 and 15.1 in international fora.
9. In Paragraph 47 of the Resolution, the Secretariat is requested to continue the cooperation efforts with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to support the operations of the Secretariat.
10. Accordingly, this report covers the main activities undertaken since SC57 in accordance with Resolutions XIII.7 and XI.6, and specifically the activities related to the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the progress made with SDGs, MEAs, UNEP and other institutions. It also provides in Annex 1 the plan to strength synergies with other MEAs and contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Work under the Biodiversity Liaison Group

11. The Secretariat has continued to participate in the meetings and joint actions of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) according to the Group’s Plan for Joint Activities. The Secretariat participated in the meeting of the BLG in September 2019. It focused on the involvement of the BLG in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the CBD and the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) established for this purpose. Issues covered included: inputs and perspectives of the eight biodiversity-related Conventions on the opportunities and importance of the post-2020 framework, joint outreach and communication, and political engagement for the development of the framework, including joint input to meetings of the Conventions and other processes. The BLG made joint statements at the Bern workshop on MEAs, at the 23rd meeting of the CBD’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 23) and at the second meeting of the OEWG. The BLG also held conference calls with the co-chairs of the OEWG to share views of BLG members regarding the importance and unique role of the biodiversity-related Conventions in relation to the post-2020

framework process, and the need for additional engagement. Each Convention also provided more specific input as instructed by their governing bodies.

Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

12. The Secretariat sent a notification in September 2019 to Contracting Parties, as well as STRP National Focal Points and IOPs, inviting them to participate in various IPBES processes including nominations of experts for the scoping of the “nexus” and “transformative change” thematic assessments on the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health, and participating in the first external reviews of the “values” and “sustainable use of wild species” assessments. The Secretariat participated in online conferences and provided inputs for the scoping of the nexus and transformative change thematic assessments.
13. At the margins of SBSTTA 23 in November 2019, the Secretariat renewed the Memorandum of Cooperation with IPBES, extending it for the duration of the IPBES 2030 rolling work programme.

Cooperation with other multilateral environmental agreements

14. The Secretariat has signed memoranda of cooperation and agreed joint work plans with three of the biodiversity-related Conventions, the CBD (2011), the CMS (2012) and the WHC (1999), as well as with the UNCCD (1998).
15. The Secretariat continues to collaborate actively with other MEAs, and has concentrated its efforts in accordance with paragraph 44 of Resolution XII.3 on cooperation and synergies with the biodiversity-related Conventions. More specific areas of cooperation are being implemented with these MEAs within the existing memoranda.
16. In accordance with Paragraph 23 of Resolution XIII.7, a plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs, and the Convention’s contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, are presented in Annex 1 for the consideration and advice of the Standing Committee at SC58.

Convention on Biological Diversity

17. The Secretariat has continued to work to strengthen collaboration with the CBD, providing inputs to different processes mainly on the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the thematic consultations on marine and coastal biodiversity, resource mobilization, communication strategy and capacity building and technical cooperation. The Secretariat participated at SBSTTA 23 and at the first and second meetings of the OEWG. The Secretariat also worked with the secretariats of the BLG members in the preparation and delivery of joint statements on the post-2020 biodiversity framework.
18. The Secretariat has continued the discussions with the CBD Secretariat on the renewal of the Joint Work Plan.

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

19. The Secretariat participated in the event “Connectivity and Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework” organized by the CMS Secretariat in Bonn, Germany from 11 to 13 November 2019. The Secretariat also participated in CMS COP13 from 15 to 22 February 2020 in Gandhinagar, India. The Secretary General participated in the high-level segment to discuss

priorities for migratory species conservation in the global biodiversity framework, and provided a statement on the opening session at the COP. The Secretariat made interventions in side events related to coastal mudflats for migratory bird conservation, bridging information of wetlands and water birds, and transboundary conservation of threatened marine turtles. The Secretariat contributed to a joint BLG statement emphasizing the cooperation and synergies between the biodiversity-related Conventions, including in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. During the COP, the Secretary General met the Indian Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and participated with IOPs and other national NGOs in a session organized by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to review successes of the Government of India in actions to conserve wetlands.

Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

20. The Secretariat attended the training-of-trainers workshop on the flyway approach for the conservation and sustainable use of waterbirds and wetlands from 6 to 10 May 2019 in Cotonou, Benin. The Government of Benin hosted this workshop, with the support of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative. The workshop targeted technical experts from AEWA Parties in Central and West Africa; 46 participants from 16 countries attended the workshop. It provided guidance and information on the “wings over wetlands” flyway training kit and the Convention on Wetlands’ guidance on wetland planning and management, the List of Wetlands of International Importance and the *Global Wetlands Outlook* report.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

21. In addition to programmatic collaboration, the Secretariat continued to promote exchange of experiences and mutual operational support with the CITES Secretariat. In particular, the Secretariat seconded its IT Officer and Documentation Officer to the CITES Secretariat team for CITES COP18 in August 2019. This contributes to learning and sharing of best practices in the organization of such events.

Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage

22. Regular interactions with the World Heritage Centre continued, mainly through the mutual exchange of updated information on new designations of shared Wetlands of International Importance and World Heritage properties. In January 2020 the Secretariat carried out a joint advisory mission with UNESCO and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) to Venice and its Lagoon, as a follow-up to the joint Reactive Monitoring Mission in 2015.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

23. The Secretariat continues to focus efforts with the UNFCCC on processes to promote the relationship between climate change and wetlands in the context of mitigation and adaptation measures. It also will continue working towards supporting Contracting Parties in integrating wetland ecosystem services (“nature-based solutions”) into climate change policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement by promoting the role of wetlands as carbon sinks, and thereby, their contributions to mitigating the effects of climate change.

24. At UNFCCC COP25 in Madrid, Spain from 3 to 12 December 2019, the Secretariat participated actively in more than 14 events including peatlands-related events such as: “The Global Peatland Initiative: a coalition for climate action”; “Working together to help protect 30% of the planet by 2030 and highlighting peatlands as a priority ecosystem for climate action, biodiversity and resilience”; and “Natural climate solutions: peatland and wetland conservation and restoration, engaging action in Northern and Southern contexts”. The Secretariat also participated in the events: “How can the Communities of Ocean Action help us reach our climate and Oceans Goals”; “Addressing Global Climate Challenges through Nature based Solutions (NBS)” convened by the Secretariat and IUCN; and the UN Water event “Climate-resilient Water Management Approaches”.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

25. The Secretariat participated in UNCCD COP14 in New Delhi, India, from 2 to 13 September 2019. The Secretariat participated in the high-level segment on “Land restoration ecosystems” and provided a statement on the key issues related to the interlinkages between wetlands and land degradation, climate change and biodiversity loss. The Secretariat will continue exploring with the UNCCD Secretariat mechanisms to strengthen collaboration in key priority areas, as mentioned in Annex 1 to the present document.

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

26. The Secretariat presented the Convention guidelines on the water framework and Resolution XI.12 on *Wetlands and health* to a number of meetings of the UNECE Water Convention, notably the fourth meeting of the Global network of river basins working on climate change adaptation, hosted by Switzerland, the Netherlands and the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) from 14 to 15 February 2019, and the tenth meeting of the task force on climate and water focusing on ecosystem-based adaptations in transboundary waters from 29 April to 1 May 2019.

Sustainable Development Goals

27. In accordance with Decision SC53-17 and Resolution XIII.7, the Secretariat continues its engagement in ongoing work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including in the meetings of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs).
28. In this context, the Secretariat participated in the ninth and tenth meetings of the IAEG-SDGs, which took place from 26 to 28 March 2019 in Beirut, Lebanon, and from 21 to 24 November 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At the tenth meeting, the most important outcome was the set of recommendations on the 2020 comprehensive review of proposals for modification of the global SDG indicators framework. As part of the review, no proposals for modification were received for indicator 6.6.1 “Change in the extent of water related ecosystems over time”. Under the UN initiative to undertake voluntary actions to accelerate implementation against the SDGs, the Secretariat registered the Convention Acceleration Action “Wetland inventories to support Contracting Parties to achieve Indicator 6.6.1” under SDG 6 “Water and Sanitation” on the Acceleration Actions page of the SDGs Knowledge Platform¹. A detailed description of the activities undertaken to support Contracting Parties on wetland inventories and reporting on wetland extent is provided in Standing Committee document SC58 Doc.9.

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgactions>

29. Regarding the achievement of SDG 14 “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, the Secretary General is co-focal point of the Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves. The Secretariat participated in the preparatory meeting of the Communities of Ocean Action for the second UN Ocean Conference from 30 to 31 May 2019 in Incheon, Republic of Korea; in the meeting of the SDG 14 Communities of Ocean Action on Marine and coastal ecosystems management, on Coral reefs, and on Mangroves from 11 to 13 November 2019 in Montreal, Canada; and in the preparatory meeting for Member States in New York from 4 to 5 February 2020. The Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs and the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone of West Africa submitted their work as a voluntary commitment under the UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves. During the Stockholm Water Week in August 2019, the Secretary General participated in the high-level panel event “Bringing together oceans and freshwater” organized by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and the UNDP-Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) Water Governance Facility, and in the panel “Freshwater Biodiversity: Linking Biodiversity with Inclusive Development to Achieve the 2030 Agenda”. The Secretariat also participated in the events “Locking Carbon in a Water Vault: Wetlands as Ecosystem-based Mitigation”; “Tools for integrated conservation and development partnership around freshwater wetland”; and “Inland Fisheries, Freshwater governance and the 2030 Agenda”.

Actions to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and other international institutions

30. As noted in previous reports to the Standing Committee, the Secretariat is continuing to work to strengthen collaboration with the United Nations agencies and other international institutions.

Environment Management Group

31. At the margins of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September 2019, the Secretary General participated in the 25th meeting of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) in New York. The focus was on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be agreed in 2020; the Secretary General highlighted the importance of wetlands and the critical contributions of the Convention to the framework. The Secretary General emphasized the importance of leveraging the ongoing work of Member States in the biodiversity-related Conventions into a common post-2020 framework within each Convention’s mandate and to ensure alignment with relevant SDG indicators (e.g. SDG 6.6.1.) to avoid duplication and promote collaboration and synergies.
32. The EMG adopted nine Action Points; some of the most relevant for the Convention are Action Point VII *UN System-Wide Framework of Strategies for the Environment* and, under Action Point IX *Potential New Topics*, topics I. on *UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030*, III. on *Sustainable infrastructure* and IV. on *Sustainable food systems*. The EMG also welcomed the establishment of a Task Team on Marine Plastic Littering and Microplastics. The Secretariat joined this Task Team working on a first assessment on sources, pathways and hazards of litter, including plastic litter and microplastic pollution, as requested by UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) Resolution 4/6 adopted in 2019.
33. Concerning biodiversity in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the EMG agreed to establish an inter-agency consultative process to prepare a system-wide contribution

to the development and implementation of the framework. The Secretariat has participated and provided inputs in the consultative meetings organized at the margins of the OEWG.

Collaboration with UNEP

34. The Secretariat and UNEP have been developing cooperative activities to promote synergies and improve the implementation of the Convention.
35. The Convention on Wetlands is co-custodian with UNEP of SDG Indicator 6.6.1 “Change in the extent of water related ecosystems over time” and efforts are ongoing to promote more collaboration including the preparation of joint reports.
36. The Secretariat continues to participate in the synergies project “Realizing Synergies for Biodiversity” led by UNEP and with the participation of the other biodiversity-related Conventions. The project consists of five outputs, which respond to UNEA Resolution 2/17. It is designed to support countries in implementing environmental treaties and improve international environmental governance in order to achieve the SDGs.
37. In the framework of the project, the Secretariat participated in the workshop on rolling out of the data reporting tool for African countries from 29 to 30 October 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop aimed to support the creation of synergies at the national level, fostering the use of this tool on sharing and maintaining information for reporting to MEAs.
38. The Secretariat has continued to engage in the activities of the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR), a global alliance of UN agencies, NGOs, and specialized institutions. At the margins of CBD SBSTTA 23, the Secretariat contributed to the PEDRR side event organized by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), highlighting the importance of wetlands to disaster risk reduction. The Ramsar Regional Centre for East Asia is planning to organize a training course on environment and disaster risk reduction in collaboration with UNEP.
39. The Secretariat continued to contribute to the InforMEA initiative. It participated in the Steering Committee meeting in June 2019. The Secretariat continues to include relevant content on the InforMEA website, resulting in additional visits to the Convention’s own site.

Green Climate Fund

40. The Secretariat organized, with the support of the Green Climate Fund, a webinar for Contracting Parties on 24 March 2020, on the GCF and its mechanisms to support Parties to access and mobilize financial resources to implement actions for conservation and wise use of wetlands for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Collaboration with International Organizations Partners

41. The Secretariat continues to collaborate with the IOPs and benefit from their support in increasing awareness for wetlands and supporting Parties in implementation of the Convention as guided by the Memorandum of Cooperation (2018-2021). Notably the IOPs have worked collaboratively to support World Wetlands Day through issuing a joint statement and utilizing the World Wetlands Day assets prepared by the Secretariat. The Secretariat and WWF co-hosted with Danone a high-level World Wetlands Day event in Paris held in the French Ministère de la Transition Ecologique et Solidaire and attended by senior representatives of

government, business and civil society. Each IOP undertook activities in support of World Wetlands Day, including hosting events including a parliamentary event in the United Kingdom with Members of Parliament, issuing press releases, providing media interviews, activating social media and creating branded assets. The IOPs have worked collaboratively in other ways, including organizing a roundtable meeting of National Focal Points in South Asia to discuss the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands in South Asia, participating in meetings of the Independent Advisory Committee of the Wetland City Accreditation scheme, and organizing side events at global events and fora such as the UNFCCC and UNCCD COPs and World Water Week that feature wetlands. IOPs have been supporting Parties in designating new Wetlands of International Importance, hosting capacity-building webinars, preparing and disseminating technical guidance and participating in the STRP.

Collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature

42. The Secretariat continues to collaborate closely with IUCN through the annual meetings of the IUCN/Secretariat Liaison Group, to support the operations of the Secretariat under the service agreement between the Convention and IUCN. Regular meetings and alignment of processes and policies continue in the different areas under the service agreement, such as finance and accounting, information technology, facility management and human resources. Discussions were held with the Chairs of the Standing Committee and Subgroup on Finance on IUCN's proposal to change the approach for the management and accounting for non-core projects of the Secretariat, especially when using IUCN's legal personality to sign donor contracts. The proposal was not carried forward and the system in place in the context of the current Letter of Agreement between IUCN and the Chair of the Standing Committee remains unchanged. Programmatic collaboration also takes place with IUCN in the context of the IOP work above.

Annex 1

Plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs and the contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

1. In accordance with Paragraph 23 of Resolution XIII.7, a plan to strengthen synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework are presented in this Annex for the consideration and advice of the Standing Committee at SC58.

Plan to strengthen synergies with other MEAs

2. For the purpose of this document, an MEA is defined as a legally binding agreement between two or more countries containing commitments to meet specific environment-related objectives that can be global or regional (United Nations Environment Programme, 2008).
3. Table 1 below lists the MEAs with which the Secretariat is currently collaborating. It also identifies MEAs that could potentially represent an opportunity for collaboration and therefore require further exploration from the Secretariat. The Secretariat used as a reference to identify opportunities for collaboration the decision tree that the Standing Committee used to evaluate whether it was appropriate to consider entering into a cooperative agreement with an interested entity (see Decision SC54-04 and the tool in document SC54-16 Annex 2).
4. It is important to note that there are other intergovernmental processes, besides MEAs, that are very relevant for the work of the Convention and that Contracting Parties have requested the Secretariat's engagement in such processes, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the climate change and water agendas.
5. There are also important opportunities in regional processes. The Secretariat has been instructed in Resolution XIII.7 to continue working to strengthen collaboration with regional economic commissions of the United Nations. In addition there are processes, such as those of the European Union, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, that offer opportunities to strengthen collaboration and support to Contracting Parties towards the enhanced conservation and wise use of wetlands.
6. The Secretariat notes that Ramsar Regional Initiatives such as MedWet and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative are actively involved in the policy process of the Barcelona and Carpathian Conventions, and that MedWet has recently been granted observer status under the Barcelona Convention. These are included in the table below and the Standing Committee might wish to consider whether such a role is consistent with the purpose of RRIs, in providing guidance on the Convention's engagement with MEAs.

Table 1: MEAs with which the Secretariat is currently collaborating, or which could potentially represent an opportunity for collaboration

Global MEAs	
Convention	Key priority areas of current/proposed collaboration
Convention on Biological Biodiversity (CBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring that relevant work of the Convention is provided into relevant processes of the CBD, with major focus on the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework through thematic consultations, the Open-ended Working group on the post 2020, SBSTTA and SBI.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of the Joint Work Plan 2011-2020. • Joint assessment of the inland water programme and contributions to the marine and coastal biodiversity programme. • Potential collaboration on capacity building, integration of wetlands in NBSAPs and funding mechanism. • Participation in the meetings and joint actions of the Biodiversity Liaison Group.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of data on migratory species populations and wetland ecosystems. • Collaboration, resources permitting, on the production of joint synthesis products focused on water, wetlands and migratory species interests. • Mutual participation in relevant meetings under either Convention, including those organized in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands and its Regional Initiatives and those organized under CMS auspices in relation to individual Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding or other instruments of relevance to the Convention on Wetlands, and workshops on technical topics of mutual interest. • Collaboration in the implementation of Resolution XIII.24 <i>The enhanced conservation of coastal marine turtle habitats and the designation of key areas as Ramsar Sites.</i>
Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, World Heritage Convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonizing the management of multi-internationally designated areas (MIDAs), i.e. Wetlands of International Importance also designated as World Heritage Properties - but also as Biosphere Reserves (UNESCO MaB-Programme) and/or UNESCO Global Geoparks. This includes regular exchange of updated site information and relevant Decisions/Resolutions, joint missions (Ramsar Advisory Missions, World Heritage Reactive Monitoring Missions, and World Heritage Advisory Missions).
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (UNCCD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration on scientific assessments, most notably the <i>Global Land Degradation Outlook</i> and the <i>Global Wetlands Outlook</i>. Possible collaboration on new assessments in both Conventions. • Areas for future collaboration include indicators on land degradation neutrality, capacity building and gender.
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration on mitigation and adaptation measures on peatlands, blue carbon and promoting the role of wetlands as carbon sinks. • Promote the role of wetlands in adaptation and resilience. • Potential to support Contracting Parties in integrating wetland ecosystem services (“nature-based solutions”) into climate change policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (the Helsinki Convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly providing ecosystem-based approaches and developing exchanges on the Convention tools (water framework and Resolution XI.12 on <i>Wetlands and health</i>) to the basin and water managers working in the different programmes of this Convention.

Regional MEAs	
Convention	Key priority areas of current/proposed collaboration
Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of information and data on migratory species, waterbird monitoring and capacity building. • Share information on the cumulative impacts of multiple wetland losses along species flyways, and the implications for environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment and other assessment processes. • Development of joint programmes and projects to support to Contracting Parties to both Conventions.
Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of best practices and guidelines on wise use and management for Sites that are recognized as Wetlands of International Importance and as Protected Areas under the SPAW Protocol of the Cartagena Convention. • Exchange information and collaborate on their respective activities on assessment and monitoring of coral reefs, mangroves and related ecosystems. • Collaborate on development and implementation of capacity building activities, particularly by sharing opportunities for training within the Wider Caribbean Region.
Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly exchange information on relevant activities and materials to enable the listing of wetlands that are important for sea turtles and the early detection of threats to sea turtles in Wetlands of International Importance. • Coordination and collaboration in the development of joint programmes, capacity building and projects in effort to strengthen the conservation of selected sites recognized by both Conventions.
Regional MEAs in which Ramsar Regional Initiatives are involved	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) • The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) 	
Other MEAs with which to explore collaboration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (Abidjan Convention) • Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (2003 Tehran Convention) • Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki 1992) • Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (Bucharest 1992) • The UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (the New York Convention) 	

Contributions to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

7. The Secretariat has been actively engaged in the process to develop a post-2020 biodiversity framework, with the main aim of ensuring that wetlands and the work of the Convention is reflected in an appropriate manner in this collective framework. The Secretariat has therefore participated in relevant meetings of the CBD especially those of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (OEWG), CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, thematic consultation and in specific meetings of biodiversity-related Conventions, in the Biodiversity Liaison Group and in the UN Environment Management Group. It has also supported the participation of Contracting Parties in relevant meetings especially the consultation workshop of biodiversity-related Conventions in Bern, and provided all Contracting Parties with the main messages so that they reflect them in their positions.
8. As instructed in Decision SC57-27, the Secretariat shared with National Focal Points all relevant notices it received from the CBD Secretariat regarding opportunities to make submissions or otherwise contribute to the post-2020 process, and to accompany these notices with a reminder of the encouragement to engage in their national processes contained in Decision SC57-26. This Decision encouraged Contracting Parties, through their Convention National Focal Points, to liaise and engage with their counterparts in the CBD and to participate in the development of their national positions related to the CBD's post-2020 global biodiversity framework process, in order to seek to ensure that relevant elements of the Convention are included within country positions and submissions to the CBD process to develop the post-2020 biodiversity framework. Again, the Secretariat developed and shared with all National Focal Points talking points to help them articulate the importance of wetlands and the relevance of the Convention's work and data to biodiversity, Sustainable Development Goals, gaps in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets where wetlands are currently overlooked (e.g., marine and coastal work in the Aichi Targets largely omits consideration of coastal wetlands) and the opportunities to share knowledge and data available on Wetlands of International Importance.
9. The Secretariat and six Standing Committee representatives participated in the consultation workshop of biodiversity related conventions on the post 2020 framework in Bern from 10 to 12 June 2019. At this meeting the Secretary General delivered a statement on behalf of the eight biodiversity-related Conventions.
10. After consultation with Standing Committee members, the Secretariat shared with all Contracting Parties in February 2020 the revisions to the zero draft of the global biodiversity framework, highlighting the issues identified as being most relevant to the Convention. The document can be viewed at: <https://www.ramsar.org/document/comments-to-the-zero-draft-of-the-post-2020-global-biodiversity-framework>. The most important issues include:
 - a. **Relevance of the inclusion of coastal ecosystems in the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.** It is important to ensure that coastal ecosystems together with marine ecosystems are included in the framework to be consistent with the language of the CBD marine and coastal biodiversity programme.
 - b. **Preliminary draft monitoring framework for the 2030 and 2050 goals.** In order to be consistent with the approach to refer to relevant SDG indicators, as well as the importance of ensuring that the post-2020 framework contributes to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we suggest the inclusion of SDG 6 Indicator 6.6.1. "Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time" for which UNEP and the

Convention on Wetlands are co-custodians. Under the Convention reporting line Contracting Parties provide national data through their National Reports in three categories: marine and coastal wetlands, inland wetlands, and human-made wetlands. This data feeds directly into the SDG database.

- c. **Reducing threats to biodiversity.** In reducing threats to biodiversity it would be important to specifically recognize the role of protected areas under international designation; such is the case under the World Heritage Convention and the Convention on Wetlands. We suggest this is addressed as an explanatory text.
 - d. **Effective implementation, enabling conditions and outreach.** Effective implementation, enabling conditions and outreach of the framework would require ensuring collaboration and synergetic approaches with other relevant multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Wetlands and its role as the lead agency on inland waters for the CBD.
11. The Secretariat informed Contracting Parties on February 2020 that, after regional consultations, the Chair of the Standing Committee and six Standing Committee members (Armenia, Bhutan, Japan, Uganda, Mexico, and Uruguay) had been nominated to attend the follow-up consultation workshop, to be hosted in Bern by the Government of Switzerland from 25 to 27 March 2020. However, at the time of writing this paper, UNEP has postponed the workshop due to the COVID-19 situation. The Secretariat will update the Standing Committee according to further developments.
 12. For the above-mentioned meeting the Secretariat will update and share with all Contracting Parties the document that highlights the issues identified as being most relevant to the Convention on the zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, based on the outcomes of the second meeting of the OEWG that took place in February 2020.
 13. Concerning biodiversity in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the Environment Management Group agreed to establish an inter-agency consultative process to prepare a system-wide contribution to the development and implementation of the framework. The Secretariat has participated and provided inputs according to relevant Standing Committee decisions in the consultative meetings organized at the margins of the meetings of the OEWG.
 14. The Secretariat will continue to participate in the process for the post 2020 biodiversity framework, most notably the third meeting of the OEWG, SBSTTA 24, the third meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3), and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. It will continue to support Contracting Parties with the main messages to ensure that the framework addresses wetlands and that the role of the Convention in the implementation of these elements of the framework is given due recognition.