

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
59th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Resumed session
Gland, Switzerland, 23-27 May 2022

SC59/2022 Doc.24.11

**Proposed draft resolution on
Ramsar Regional Initiatives – addressing old decisions**

Submitted by Sweden

Secretariat cover note:

The DR refers to earlier recommendations and resolutions related to RRIs notably, Recommendations V.14, VI.11 and Resolutions VII.22, VII.26, VIII.30, VIII.41, VIII.43, IX.7, X.6, XI.5, XII.8, XIII.9. It also refers to Resolutions IX.1, IX.19, X.3, X.15, X.17, X.19, XI.6, XI.10, XI.11, XI.14, XII.2, XII.5, XII.9, XII.11, XII.12, XIII.2, XIII.5, XIII.7, XIII.15, XIII.8, XIII.22, XIII.24. There are two additional DRs on the topic of Ramsar Regional Initiatives submitted by Sweden as documents SC59/2022 Doc.24.9 and SC59/2022 Doc.24.10. The topic is also addressed in the Draft Resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2022-2024 annexed to document SC59 Doc.21.1 *Report of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group on Addressing Resolution XIII.9*. The DR does not address matters of a scientific or technical nature requiring review by the STRP.

Actions requested:

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- i. Review, approve and then submit the attached draft resolution “Ramsar Regional Initiatives –addressing old decisions”.

Introduction*Information for the Standing Committee*

1. Resolution XIII.9 re-established the (open-ended) Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group under Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure to draft new operational guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs). The results from the working group is presented in document SC59-21.1 and contains a new draft resolution.
2. Parts of the SC59-21.1 was written in haste by a few countries and input from other countries was not included.
3. During the SC59 Sweden encouraged the working group to continue their work and try to solve the remaining differences and submit an updated document to the resumed SC59 in May 2022. Unfortunately, there was no development in the working group and Sweden have instead written alternative draft resolutions that cover the topic.
4. Three draft resolutions with the content divided between them according to a foreseeable lifespan, would be a better then having one resolution covering all RRI matters in need to be addressed at COP14. One resolution will address the long-lived basics for RRIs, the second will address what might be of interest until the coming COP, and the third will address older decision that can be retired.
5. Resolutions adapted after lifespan will probably be more efficient and decreasing the need for consolidation processes. It will decrease the workload and the costs for the Ramsar Secretariat, translators and all kinds of delegates at Convention meetings.
6. This SC-document contains the draft resolution on older decisions that can be retired. It will be extremely short-lived, as soon as the content has been implemented it will be retired.

Financial implications of implementation

Para graph (number/-s, key part of text)	Action or lack of action	Cost (CHF) and potential benefits
5. Instruction for the Secretariat	Updating consolidated list of retired decisions and tagging resolutions as retired at the website as well as mark SC decisions as outdated and retired.	Less than 100 CHF

Annex 1. Draft Resolution XIV.XX

Ramsar Regional Initiatives - Retiring old decisions

1. RECOGNIZING the need for retiring older decisions on RRIs, (resolutions, recommendations and SC-decisions and SC documents);
2. RECOGNIZING the need to keep the decisions on retirement of older decisions etc separate from other decisions on RRIs. This to make it possible for this resolution to be retired quickly after having been implemented. The content will not bog down resolutions that will be used for a longer time or create a need for a consolidation process.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

Basic decisions

2. DECIDES that all previous resolutions having the RRIs as their main topic, as listed in annex 1, are retired, and no longer valid;
3. DECIDES that all text about RRIs in resolutions that haven't got RRIs as their main topic are retired if they are contradictory to the text in this resolution or are otherwise made redundant by it;
4. DECIDES that all SC-decisions (or relevant parts thereof) on RRIs, (as listed in annex 1, for the period 2010-2022) are retired; ALSO DECIDES that all other SC decisions on RRIs also are retired and no longer valid if they are contradictory to the text in this resolution or otherwise are made redundant by it;
5. DECIDES that all SC-documents with RRIs as their main topic are addressed in the way described in the Resolution IIX.XX (on retirement, consolidation of resolutions, recommendation and SC-decisions etc) if they are contradictory to the text in this resolution or otherwise are made redundant by it. This is of particular importance for all existing version of the Operational Guidelines on RRIs;
6. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to if list all kinds of decisions affected by the para 2-5 above in the consolidated list of retired decisions, starting with the ones in Annex 1 to this resolution;
7. DECIDES that paragraphs in resolutions that do not have RRIs as their main focus and listed in annex 2 can have their wording changes when new ones that are to replace them are written or when being part of a consolidation process, suggested possible solutions are listed in the annex 2 as well;
8. DECIDES that this resolution can be retired after the content has been implemented, in other words when its content is reflected in the consolidated list of retired decisions, or in consolidated resolutions not having RRRRI as a main focus.

Annex I

Earlier decisions (full/parts), on Ramsar Regional Initiative that are repealed by this resolution

1. The list of Resolution and Recommendations decisions that can be repealed is based upon the work done by the consultant for the RRI working Group;
2. The list of SC-decisions that can be fully or partly repealed have been found by checking SC reports from all SC meeting from 2010 until March 2022, searching for “regional” and by such search probably having found all SC-decision that have RRI as their main focus or will affect RRI process during this period. Decisions addressing the CEPA OP work about RRIs are not included.

Resolution and Recommendations that are repealed:

Resolution XIII.9
Resolution XII.8
Resolution XI.5
Resolution X.6
Resolution IX.7
Resolution VIII.43
Resolution VIII.41
Resolution VIII.30
Resolution VII.26
Resolution VII.22
Recommendation VI.11
Recommendation V.14

SC-decisions that are history and repealed in full by this resolution:

SC41-19 (budgetary issue)
SC41-20 (budgetary issue)
SC41-21 (annual report format)
SC41-22 (model contract, integrated into XIV.ªª Ramsar Regional Initiatives - the basics)
SC41-23 (endorsing new RRIs, and repeating SC41-22 and SC41-23)
SC42-20 (endorsing list of RRI, budgetary issues)
SC44-09 (noting the asked for meeting had been held)
SC46-28 (endorsing operational guidelines)
SC47-10 (budgetary issue)
SC48-25 (forwarding DR to COP)
SC49-03 (budgetary issue)
SC51-11 (establishment of Working Group)
SC51-12 (about assessment of the RRIs and communication strategy)
SC51-13 (have workshop on operational guidelines before SC52)
SC51-14 (about having a checklist for new RRIs)
SC51-23 (day for workshop in Gland)
SC52-16 (decision on operational guidelines)
SC52-17 (list of RRIs)
SC52-18 (assessment of applicability of operational guidelines)
SC52-19 (request about summary report from the WG)
SC52-20 (budgetary issue)

SC53-37 (budgetary issue)
SC53-38 (budgetary issue)
SC53-12 (on future DR for the COP)
SC53-09 (budgetary issue)
SC54-30 (ordered study of legal status and forwarded DR to COP)
SC55-11 (took note of document SC55 Doc.9)
SC56-07 (about the Working Group and budget for it)
SC57-11 (reporting format)
SC57-28 (establishment of Working Group and budget for it)
SC57-29 (about seeking advice on legal status for RRIs)
SC58-48 (budgetary issue)
SC58-48 (budgetary issue)
SC58-23 (open call for new RRIs)
SC58-28 (budgetary issue)
SC59-21 (postponing addressing the report to next meeting)
SC59-33 (budgetary issue)
SC59-34 (how to request fund, integrated into the resolution XIV.¶¶ RRI - *the basics*)
SC59-35 (budgetary issue)
SC59/2002-XX (not addressed by the draft resolution, but might be added at the COP14)

SC-decisions whose parts on RRI are history and repealed by this resolution:

SC42-15 (budgetary issue for RRIs)
SC43-16 (budgetary issue for RRIs)
SC43-17 (budgetary issue for RRIs)
SC43-21 (budgetary issue, potential cost savings about RRIs)
SC46-13 (i, endorsing list of RRIs)
SC46-23 (v, budgetary issues for RRI)
SC47-26 (acceptance of annual reports and list of RRIs)
SC58-16 (budgetary issue for RRIs)
SC59/2002-XX (not addressed by the draft resolution, but might be added at the COP14)

SC-decisions where implementation is uncertain, but can be retired:

SC43-11 (assessment of regional centres in Africa and Asia)
SC46-13 (ii, asking RRIs to report on steps taken necessary to address shortcomings)
SC47-26 (a, linking RRI virtually, b, Secretariat to strengthen RRIs regional co-operation)
SC59-28 (budgetary issue and study for better understanding RRI)

Annex II to the Draft Resolution

Resolutions that include paragraphs concerning RRIs, that are still in force at the time for COP14, and where text can be re-phrased when consolidated

Resolution	Content on RRI	Will be addressed in the following way
<p>XIII.2 Financial and budgetary matters</p>	<p>4 NOTING WITH GRATITUDE the additional voluntary financial contributions made by many Contracting Parties, including those from Contracting Parties of Africa specifically earmarked for African Regional Initiatives (in accordance with paragraph 23 of Resolution X.2 on <i>Financial and budgetary matters</i>), and also the contributions made by non-governmental organizations and private companies for activities undertaken by the Secretariat;</p> <p>24 REQUESTS the Secretariat to provide to the Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs) in Africa, on an annual basis, the available balance of the African voluntary contribution fund; and INVITES those RRIs to submit requests to the Secretariat as part of the reports to access available funds in accordance with the provisions of Resolution XIII.9 on <i>Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021</i>;</p> <p>26 REQUESTS the Secretariat within its existing legal framework and mandate, to assist, as appropriate, Contracting Parties in the administration of non-core funded projects, including, but not limited to successful fund-raising for Regional Initiatives; and FURTHER INSTRUCTS Secretariat staff, identified in Annex 4, supported with core funds, not to be involved in the day- to-day administration of non-core funded projects as this role would be the responsibility of any Secretariat staff supported with non-core funds for that specific purpose.</p>	<p>The resolution will be replaced at COP14, the new resolution may include content like the one in para 4 and 24, but content in para 26 need to be re-phrased to be in line with resolution XIV.XX <i>Ramsar Regional Initiatives – the basics</i>.</p>
<p>XIII.5 Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention</p>	<p>11 EXPRESSING APPRECIATION for the support provided to Contracting Parties to implement the Strategic Plan by the Ramsar Regional Initiatives, intergovernmental organizations, International Organization Partners and non-governmental organizations; and</p>	<p>The resolution will be replaced at COP14, the new resolution may include similar content, but it has to be re-phrased to be in line with resolution XIV.XX <i>Ramsar Regional Initiatives – the basics</i> paragraph 7.</p>
<p>XIII.7 Enhancing the Convention’s</p>	<p>1 RECALLING that Resolution XI.1, on <i>Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat</i>, 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</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted</p>

visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions	and stature, including <i>inter alia</i> 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);	when the resolution in the consolidation process.
XIII.15 Cultural values and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities and their contribution to climate-change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands	16 ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and Ramsar Regional Initiatives , and INVITES interested organizations and networks, to protect, support and promote the use of cultural values, traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities in adapting to the increasing negative impacts of climate change, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems; 22 REQUESTS the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, and INVITES Contracting Parties, Ramsar Regional Initiatives , interested organizations and networks, to continue to undertake enabling activities for the effective consideration of the cultural values of wetlands within wetland protection and management;	The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.
XIII.8 Future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention for 2019-2021	Annex 3: Bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings and processes of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel for the 2019-2021 triennium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific and Technical Network of the Mediterranean Wetlands Ramsar Regional Initiative (MedWet) Annex 4: Guidelines for developing requests to the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) for its future work programmes 2 Any Contracting Party, Ramsar Regional Initiative , the STRP, and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) that are proposing a joint submission may develop a proposal for consideration.	The text marked with bold in the annexes and para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process or being replaced by new resolution on the STRP.
XIII.22 Wetlands in West Asia	11 ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties in the West Asia region to consider leveraging existing collaboration and regional initiatives within the context of sustainable development;	The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.

	14 REQUESTS the Ramsar Regional Centre – Central and West Asia to follow up the provisions of the present Resolution, within the framework of its mandate, and report to the Conference of the Contracting Parties.	
XIII.24 The enhanced conservation of coastal marine turtle habitats and the designation of key areas as Ramsar Sites	22 ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to review their Ramsar Site management plans to seek to ensure they include marine turtle conservation actions, as appropriate; and RECOMMENDS enhancement of synergies and better coordination with Ramsar Regional Initiatives and existing networks rather than establishment of new arrangements;	The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.
XII.2 The Ramsar Strategic Plan	Multiple references throughout	When the plan is updated it would be better to refer to different kinds of regional co-operations or similar instead of mentioning the Ramsar Regional Initiatives explicit, depending on context it can be OK with RRI's.
XII.5 New framework for delivery of scientific and technical advice and guidance on the Convention	Role and responsibilities of the STRP members 12 The main collective responsibilities of the Panel members are to: i, establish the scope, deliverables and approach to delivery for each assigned task, including through scoping workshops as appropriate, and in so doing ensure input from the network of STRP National Focal Points, Ramsar Regional Initiatives , and any other relevant organizations;	The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.
XII.9 The Ramsar Convention's Programme on communication, capacity building,	13 INVITES all Contracting Parties, as suggested in Resolutions VII.9, VIII.31, X.8 and in the CEPA Programme 2016-2024, to formulate their Wetland CEPA Action Plans (at national, subnational, catchment, or local levels) for priority activities that address international, regional, national, and local needs, and as appropriate to provide copies of these to the Ramsar Secretariat as a part of their national reporting, in order for these to be shared as examples of good practice, and INSTRUCTS the	The resolution will be retired at COP 14 and replaced by the new CEPA approach, the CPEA annex on the overview for the Strategic Plan.

<p>education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016-2024</p>	<p>Secretariat to provide relevant information to the Regional Initiatives on priorities and activities, to support delivery of the CEPA Programme;</p> <p>23 INVITES the IOPs, Ramsar Regional Initiatives and other organizations with which the Ramsar Secretariat has collaborative agreements to support the implementation of the CEPA Programme at the global, regional, national or local levels, as appropriate, with the expertise, networks, skills and resources they have at their disposal;</p> <p>Annex 1: The Ramsar Convention’s Programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016-2024</p>	
<p>XII.11 Peatlands, climate change and wise use: Implications for the Ramsar Convention</p>	<p>20 NOTING the Policy Brief on <i>Peatlands, climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation</i> and the report <i>Peatlands and Climate Change in a Ramsar context – a Nordic Baltic Perspective</i> developed under the Ramsar regional initiative NorBalWet as inspiration for other Ramsar regional initiatives and Parties, as appropriate;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>XII.12 Call to action to ensure and protect the water requirements of wetlands for the present and the future</p>	<p>21 WELCOMES the process carried out in Mexico for the creation of water reserves for wetlands, described in the Annex to this Resolution;</p> <p>22 ENCOURAGES the Contracting Parties to consider the possibility of using Mexico’s approach, as appropriate, to identify the opportunities to act preventatively, and adapting it as necessary in order to address national and regional conditions and circumstances, within the framework of existing regional initiatives and commitments and within the context of sustainable development;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>XI.6 Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions</p>	<p>35 REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue to review its memoranda of cooperation with other global and regional environment agreements and other organizations with a view to reinvigorating those most likely to be beneficial to the work of the Convention and its international profile within the time and resources available, taking into account the approach and priorities established in the “Strategic Framework for Partnerships for the Ramsar Convention”, and FURTHER ENCOURAGES the Secretariat to continue to establish and strengthen partnerships and closer working relations with intergovernmental regional and subregional groups, notably with regional and subregional organizations and especially with Regional Initiatives, with a view to enhancing the role and visibility of the Convention in those regions;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>

<p>XI.10 Wetlands and energy issues</p>	<p>14 WELCOMES the Guidance for addressing the implications for wetlands of policies, plans and activities in the energy sector annexed to this Resolution, and INVITES Contracting Parties to make use of this guidance, adapting it as necessary to suit national conditions and circumstances, within the frameworks of existing regional initiatives and commitments;</p> <p>15..... and REQUESTS the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), the CEPA Oversight Panel, the Regional Initiatives and Contracting Parties to support, resources permitting, Contracting Parties training and capacity building efforts;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>XI.11 Principles for the planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands</p>	<p>27 REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to strengthen collaborative initiatives with UN-Habitat and continue to develop collaboration with Ramsar Regional Initiatives, the CBD, Ramsar’s IOPs, ICLEI and other appropriate urban stakeholders, including individual cities, in order to foster projects that develop demonstration sites which both benefit urban local communities and promote the wise use of wetlands;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>XI.14 Climate change and wetlands: implications for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands</p>	<p>32 ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and relevant organizations to undertake studies of the role of the conservation and/or restoration of both forested and non-forested wetlands in relation to: i) climate change mitigation, including the role of wetlands in carbon storage and sequestration, greenhouse gas emissions from degrading wetlands, avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions through removals of wetland carbon sinks, and ii) adaptation to climate change, including water regulation at local and regional scales, such as flood risk reduction, water supply and storage, and reducing the impacts of sea level rise and extreme weather events, including extreme rainfall situations; and to cooperate, within Regional Initiatives or other regional cooperation fora, in developing and disseminating knowledge about the results, and INVITES Contracting Parties and other organizations to make their findings available to the Ramsar Secretariat, the Secretariat of the UNFCCC, and other relevant bodies through existing reporting processes;</p> <p>35 REQUESTS the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP):</p> <p>v) in conjunction with the Secretariat and Ramsar Regional Initiative Networks and Centres, to collaborate with relevant international organizations and conventions, within their respective mandates, to further investigate the potential contribution of wetland ecosystems to climate change mitigation and adaptation through:</p>	<p>The first text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p> <p>The second text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>

	<p>a) preparing advice on assessing social resilience and vulnerability of wetlands to climate change, to complement the existing advice on assessing the biophysical vulnerability of a wetlands to climate change (Ramsar Technical Report No. 5/CBD Technical Series No. 57);</p> <p>b) preparing advice on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change for coastal and inland wetlands; and</p> <p>c) reviewing any relevant advice provide by other MEAs, in particular the outcomes of CBD COP-11;</p> <p>without pre-empting any future decisions of the UNFCCC;</p>	
<p>X.3 The Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands</p>	<p>14 FURTHER STRONGLY URGES the Standing Committee, the STRP, the Ramsar Secretariat, CEPA National Focal Points, regional initiatives operating under the framework of the Convention, the International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others to utilize the “Changwon Declaration” in their future work and establishment of priorities, and also to use their own means and all other relevant opportunities actively to promote the Declaration;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>X.15 Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and data needs and formats for core inventory: harmonized scientific and technical guidance</p>	<p>4 WELCOMES the guidance on “Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and harmonized data formats for core inventory” provided in the annex to this Resolution, and URGES Contracting Parties to make good use of it as appropriate, adapting it as necessary to suit national conditions and circumstances, within the frameworks of existing regional initiatives and commitments and in the context of sustainable development;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>X.17 Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: updated scientific and technical guidance</p>	<p>8 WELCOMES the guidelines on Biodiversity-Inclusive Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Impact Assessment provided in the annex to this Resolution, and INVITES Contracting Parties to make good use of them as appropriate, including within the frameworks of existing regional initiatives and commitments and in the context of sustainable development, without prejudice to the practices already established by the Parties;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>

<p>X.19 Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance</p>	<p>5 NOTES the “Consolidated Guidance for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management” provided in the annex to this Resolution, and INVITES Contracting Parties to make good use of it as appropriate, adapting it as necessary to suit national conditions and circumstances, within the frameworks of existing regional initiatives and commitments, in the context of sustainable development and in accordance with national institutions and legal frameworks;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>IX.1 Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept</p>	<p>7 WELCOMES the frameworks, guidelines and other advice provided as annexes C, D, and E to this Resolution and URGES Contracting Parties to make good use of them as appropriate, adapting them as necessary to suit national conditions and circumstances and within the frameworks of existing <i>regional initiatives and commitments</i> and in the context of sustainable development;</p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>
<p>IX.19 The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention</p>	<p>15 RECOMMENDS that Contracting Parties, international NGOs, and other relevant scientific and technical organizations consider the usefulness of establishing similar periodic regional scientific and technical fora where they do not already exist, drawing on the experiences of the Asian Wetland Symposia, as a means of increasing scientific and technical support for the implementation of the Convention including, <i>inter alia, any regional initiatives established under the Convention.</i></p>	<p>The text marked with bold in the para can be exchanged to something more general on regional co-operations when the resolution in the consolidation process.</p>