

THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
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**Draft Resolution on the Establishment of the International Mangrove Center
in the Framework of the Ramsar Convention**

Submitted by China, cosponsored by Australia, Cambodia (support from NFP but waiting for clearance from minister), and Madagascar

Secretariat cover note:

The DR is related to Resolutions VIII.32 *Conservation, Integrated management, and sustainable use of mangrove ecosystems and their resources* and XIII.14 *Promoting conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue-carbon ecosystems*. The DR does not address matters of a scientific or technical nature requiring review by the STRP.

Actions requested:

Standing Committee is invited to review and approve the draft resolution for consideration by the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Introduction*Information for the Standing Committee*

Global mangrove wetlands have vital ecological functions and provide important ecosystem services for human beings. Mangroves are also the most important blue carbon ecosystems. The destruction of mangrove wetlands will threaten the well-being of coastal residents and lead to massive carbon emissions. This draft resolution calls for the establishment of an international mangrove center in the framework of the Ramsar Convention, which will help build an international cooperation mechanism and a technical support platform for countries of interest. Through technical exchanges, collaborative research, education and training, and pilot projects for conservation and restoration of mangroves, the center aims to promote the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Wetlands, as well as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and contribute to the achievement of SDG6.6.1 on Water Ecosystems, SDG13 on Climate Action and SDG14 on Life below Water, the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the carbon neutrality goal of the UNFCCC.

Financial implications of implementation

Paragraph (Number and key part of text)	Action	Cost (CHF)
Not Applicable	-	No financial implications

**Establishment of the International Mangrove Center
in the Framework of the Ramsar Convention**

1. **Recognizing** that mangroves are rich in biodiversity, and provide habitats for 371 endangered species around the world. Mangroves also offer important fishery resources. More than 4.1 million mangrove fishers and associated communities globally depend on mangrove ecosystems for livelihood. It is estimated that mangroves reduce flooding risks to more than 15 million people and prevent more than \$65 billion in property damages every year. (The State of the Worlds Mangrove, GMA, 2021).
2. **Acknowledging** mangroves are the most important coastal blue carbon ecosystems, stocking 1,023 tons of carbon per hectare, which is 3 to 4 times that of tropical forests (IUCN and Ramsar, 2020). Mangroves store approximately 5.73 gigatons of carbon (conversion of 21 gigatons of CO₂, GMA, 2021), with 1.61 gigatons in Ramsar sites of mangrove (GWO 2021).
3. **Noting** that the total area of mangroves is 13.8-15.2 million hectares, distributing in 118-124 countries (UN WOA, 2016). However, 35% of the mangrove area was lost in the two decades before 2000 (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). The loss rate slowed down in recent years and declined to 2% during 2000-2016 (Goldberg et al. 2020¹). There are also a few countries with an increasing area of mangroves, including China where the area of mangroves has raised by 7,000 hectares in the two decades since 2001.
4. **Further noting** that over 660,000 hectares of mangrove areas lost since 1996 are highly restorable. According to pilot projects, the full return of 'highly restorable' areas could restore or stabilize about 0.35 gigatons of carbon (1.3 gigatons of CO₂, GMA, 2021).
5. **Recalling** Resolution VIII.32 emphasizing the importance of mangrove ecosystems and international cooperation on its conservation, and Resolution XIII.14 calling on highlighting and promoting conservation of coastal blue carbon ecosystems, including mangroves.
6. **Further recalling** that the SC40 approved the Regional Initiative for the Integral Management and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs in May 2009, which has *via* annual meetings and working groups. The Community of Ocean Actions for Mangroves was set up in the UN Ocean Conference in 2017, involving In 2018, Conservation International (CI), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Wetlands International and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) formed the Global Mangrove Alliance to promote NGOs and other stakeholders for conservation and restoration of mangrove ecosystems.
7. **Recognizing** that governments, academic communities, the private sector, NGOs and the public are all stakeholders in mangroves conservation and wise use. However, governments play a fundamental role in national policy-making, fund raising, technology development, and international cooperation. Governments of Contracting Parties are the main body to implement the Ramsar Convention, the CBD and the UNFCCC etc. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an intergovernmental mechanism for mangrove conservation and restoration in the framework of the Ramsar Convention, to strengthen the role of governments to address challenges on mangroves in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders.

¹ Goldberg et al. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.15275>

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

8. **Welcomes** China to host an International Mangrove Center, which will serve as the Secretariat and technical service platform for international mangrove cooperation in the framework of the Ramsar Convention.
9. **Invites** Parties and relevant stakeholders to join this international mangrove cooperation mechanism for technical exchanges, collaborative research, education and training, and pilot projects on conservation and restoration, to protect mangrove biodiversity and coastal blue carbon ecosystems, enhance mangrove ecosystem services and resilience to climate change.
10. **Requests** the STRP to provide scientific and technical support to the International Mangrove Center, and requests the CEPA Oversight Panel to facilitate CEPA actions on mangroves.
11. **Requests** the Secretariat to provide support in coordination and communication with regard to the establishment and operation of the International Mangrove Center.