THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

59th Meeting of the Standing Committee

Gland, Switzerland, 21 - 25 June 2021

**SC59 Doc.21.1**

**Report of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group
on Addressing Resolution XIII.9**

**Actions requested:**

The Standing Committee is invited to:

1. take note of this progress report on the work of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group (I); and
2. endorses the Ramsar Regional Initiatives as operating in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands until COP15 (II) andreview and approve the attached draft resolution for COP14 consideration on Regional Initiatives and the new “Operational Guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives to support the implementation of the Convention” provided in ANNEX 1 of this document, to replace the Guidelines adopted through Decision SC52-16; and
3. review, approve the attached draft resolution for COP14 consideration on Regional Initiatives - addressing old decisions provided in ANNEX 2 of this document.

**I - Report on the work of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group**

**Background**

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), and requested that the Standing Committee, at its 56th meeting (SC56), facilitate the functioning of the Working Group and allocate surplus funds from the core budget for this purpose. At that meeting, the Standing Committee agreed to defer further consideration of the Working Group, and the allocation of funds until SC57 (Decision SC56-07).
2. In Decision SC57-28, the Standing Committee recognized the Working Group on Ramsar Regional Initiatives comprising the coordinators of each of the Initiatives and the regional representatives on the Standing Committee. It asked the Group to develop its terms of reference and work programme options for addressing Resolution XIII.9, and present these at SC58.

**Report on progress and future tasks**

1. During SC57, the present members of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group met and discussed the preparation of the operational guidelines and other issues, including identification of specific characteristics of each RRI, allocation of funds, resource mobilization, administration and implementation of individual projects carried by each RRI, and successful experiences of the RRIs.
2. The Working Group provided a further update on its progress to SC57 in document SC57 Doc.25, notably describing:
3. The Group’s meeting regarding the implementation of Resolution XIII.9 on *Ramsar Regional Initiatives*, along with nine other Contracting Parties;
4. The composition of the Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group, to be made up of the coordinators of each of the RRIs and the regional representatives on the Standing Committee;
5. The aim of achieving proactive and non-restrictive operational guidelines for Regional Initiatives, whose supreme objective is the protection of wetlands at a regional scale, which considers, promotes and facilitates the strategic partnership between Initiatives, the Convention Secretariat, International Organization Partners and other actors, both in the search for financial resources and in their administration.

**Development of the Working Group’s terms of reference**

1. On July 29 2020, the Group met virtually to finalize its TORs as requested by Decision SC57-28. During the meeting, the Group’s members made many editorial suggestions to improve the content of the document. The Group discussed the preparation of Standing Committee papers, including the legal adviser’s advice (legal analysis of existing Resolutions). The TORs were subsequently endorsed and translated into the Convention’s three official languages.
2. The Group worked through email exchanges, and on September 3 2020, finalized its work plan, which is included in the present document in Annex 2.

**Preparation of draft new operational guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives and a draft resolution for consideration by the Standing Committee**

1. Between September and October 2020, the Working Group members worked interactively via emails with the Secretariat to prepare the TORs for the Working Group’s consultancy on the draft operational guidelines requested by Resolution XIII.9.

1. The Secretariat announced a call for proposals to recruit a suitable consultant to develop the draft operational guidelines. Nine submissions in total were received. The Secretariat reviewed the submissions and analyzed the proposals, focusing on nine selection criteria. The result of this analysis was that Margarita Astralaga of Colombia was selected as the most suitable candidate for the assignment.
2. On January 29 2020, the consultant was introduced to the Group by the Secretariat, at the request of the Working Group’s Chair, to assist with the development of the new draft of the guidelines.
3. On February 1, the consultant started work on the assessment of the RRIs and the new draft guidelines. On February 11, the Secretariat sent out survey questionnaires (on behalf of the consultant) in three languages to 19 RRIs. The Secretariat sent out one reminder to all RRIs to respond to the survey and then followed up bilaterally with RRIs in each region. The Chair of the Working Group encouraged the RRI coordinators to respond to the questionnaire. By the end of February 28, 15 responses had been received.
4. On March 8 and 24 2021, respectively, the Consultant submitted the first drafts of the RRI assessment and new operational guidelines to the Secretariat. The Working Group’s Chair shared the document with the Group’s members for comments. Several RRIs and contracting parties commented on the documents, which were included in a table of comments to facilitate the follow-up by the working group. The consultant also incorporated the comments in an updated version of the operational guidelines (comments from: Australia, BlackSea Wet, CWI, MedWet, Panama, RRCEA, RRI-CA, RR CWA, Uruguay, Sweden, Peru, Honduras and Dominican Republic) .
5. Given the response from the members of the RRI Working Group and that comments received were related to the operational guidelines, but not to the assessment conducted by the consultant, the deadline for the review of the assessment was extended. It is emphasized that the proposal of the new operational guidelines is based on the information gathered by the consultant through the surveys that is reflected in the assessment of the RRIs. After receiving input from the members of the Operational Guidelines Working Group, the consultant compiled the comments and prepared a revised version on April 12.
6. In accordance with the TORs of the Working Group, a teleconference was held on April 15, with the following objectives to discuss: a. clarification by the consultant to questions from IRR-WG members, on specific points of the Guidelines or the assessment prepared by the consultant. b. discussion by Working Group members of changes to the operational guidelines or the assessment report and identification of issues not agreed by all parties and c. definition by the Working Group of how the evaluation results should be integrated into the operational guidelines document. The consultant´s assessment can be consulted here:

<https://www.ramsar.org/document/consultants-ramsar-regional-initiatives-rris-assessment-2016-2019>. Also, as a result of the meeting it was agreed that a small working group would be established (Panama, Colombia, Uruguay, and Costa Rica) to prepare the draft Resolution to be presented to SC59 and to finalize the progress report of the Working Group.

1. With the final input received from the RRI Working Group, the consultant incorporated the changes and agreed comments indicated during the teleconference into a revised version of the operational guidelines that was sent for consideration of the Working Group. The Secretariat prepared a final version of the guidelines with the inputs received which was sent to the Working Group. It is important to mention that the operational guidelines includes the agreed paragraphs where there was no objection, so they are not open for discussion. The paragraphs where there was no consensus are in brackets and will be discussed when the draft Resolution is discussed at the Standing Committee at which all draft Resolutions are addressed.
2. The small working group held a teleconference supported by the Secretariat, with the objective of agreeing the way forward for the preparation of the draft Resolution on Regional Initiatives. The main inputs used were the report of the legal adviser on the legal status of Ramsar Regional Initiatives as per document SC58 Doc.22.3 in line with Decision SC57-29, the Secretariat's legal adviser review (document SC58-22.4) of existing relevant Resolutions and decisions, identifying the ones that are inconsistent with Resolution XIII.9, and the inputs of the Working Group on paragraphs that could be included in the draft Resolution.
3. Annex 1 contains the proposed draft Resolution and operational guidelines for consideration by the Standing Committee and submission to the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

**II –List of the endorses as operating**

1. DECIDES the endorsement of this list; and
2. DECIDES that this list is to be valid until replaced by a new one for the COP15-COP16 period at COP15.

*The RRIs for the COP14-COP15 period:*

**Annex 1 to document SC59 Doc.21.1: Draft Resolution XIV. Xx on Ramsar Regional Initiatives Operational Guidelines**

NOTE: This annex to the document SC59 Doc.21.1 contains 4 annexes

***Annex 1: Operational Guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives to support the implementation of the Convention***

***Annex 2: Template for proposed new regional initiatives***

***Annex 3: The form for the RRIs annual report on the past and new year and the explanatory notes***

***Annex 4: Template for “model contract” to disburse allocated Ramsar core budget funds to RRIs***

1. RECALLING that Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs) under the Ramsar Convention, which include regional centres for training and capacity building and regional networks to facilitate cooperation, are intended as an operational means to provide effective support for improved implementation of the Convention and its strategic plan in specific geographic regions, through voluntary international cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern;
2. RECALLING that the Conference of the Contracting Parties has recognized the importance of RRIs in promoting the objectives of the Convention.
3. ALSO RECALLING that at its 13th meeting (COP13), the Conference of the Parties instructed the Secretariat’s legal advisor to conduct a review of relevant Resolutions, Recommendations and Decisions, identifying those that were inconsistent with Resolution XIII.9 and relevant Decisions, and propose which should be repealed;
4. FURTHER RECALLING that at COP13, the Conference of the Parties through Resolution XIII.9 re-established the Ramsar Regional Initiative Working Group and instructed it to draft new Operational guidelines for RRIs, as well as a draft resolution on RRIs which *inter alia* incorporated the aforementioned list of Resolutions, Recommendations and Decisions to be repealed, and that both were endorsed by SC59;
5. RECOGNIZING the need for keep long-lived decision on RRIs in a separate resolution that is updated only when needed ~~(either by being re-placed by a new one, being updated or being part of a consolidation process)~~, and that short-lived decisions related to RRIs will be better off in separate resolutions, that can be retired quickly. This to minimize the need for updating and consolidation processes;
6. STATES that this resolution on RRIs is containing long-lived decisions on the ~~basics~~ operational guidelines for RRIs only. The resolution is valid until it is retired. Decisions that are specific for the time between two COPS (most often a triennium) are found in a separate short-lived resolution and are to be applied as well;

INFORMS that the retirement of older resolutions and SC-decision about RRIs is addressed in resolution XIV:¤¤ and that all old resolutions and SC-decision with RRIs as the main focus have been retired;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. EXPRESSES its gratitude to the RRI Working Group for their work on drafting new Operational Guidelines for RRIs;
2. ADOPTS the *Operational Guidance* *for Ramsar Regional Initiatives* contained in Annex 1 of this Resolution to support the implementation of the Convention. ~~for the period 2022- 2024~~ ~~which shall serve as a reference to assess the operation of regional initiatives and their success.~~ This Operational Guidelines supersede the Operational Guidelines adopted in 2016 through Decision SC52-16 Doc SC52-22.
3. REAFFIRMS the effectiveness of regional cooperation through networks and centers, grouped under the term RRIs, in supporting improved implementation of the Convention on Wetlands and its Strategic Plan and Resolutions;
4. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to establish RRIs in parts of the world where no such exist yet and would be an opportunity to increase implementation of the Convention;
5. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, as appropriate, to invite regional intergovernmental, international and non-governmental organizations, organizations of indigenous peoples and local communities, and transboundary river and groundwater basin organizations, to participate in or collaborate with RRIs;
6. RECOGNIZES the potential cooperation within the framework of RRI in wetlands ecosystems or watershed shared by Contracting Parties that allows a comprehensive vision of the territory, favoring dialogue, coordination and cooperation between the parties involved;

~~NOTES that dialogue and coordination between Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay regarding the development of an integrated vision for the Pantanal region is underway; and ENCOURAGES the integration of this vision into the RRI for the Conservation and Wise Use of the Plata River Basin in coordination with Argentina and Uruguay.~~

1. DECIDES that the all RRIs should comply with the following criteria based on Resolution XIII.9 to be formally recognized as an RRI under the Convention.
2. RRIs shall develop written terms of reference which are consistent with relevant Resolutions and Recommendations of the Conference of the Parties and Decisions of the Standing Committee. These terms of reference cover their own rules of procedure, structure, governance and membership, including the status of the Convention Secretariat’s participation as advisory in the RRI;
3. The governance and financial structures and activities of RRIs shall be transparent, accountable, compliant with relevant laws of host country and consistent with relevant Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties and Decisions of the Standing Committee;
4. RRIs shall undertake tasks related to the implementation of the Convention and its strategic plan in their region and can speak in their own name only, using their own logo, to avoid any confusion between RRIs, Ramsar Administrative Authorities at the national level and the Secretariat at the international level;
5. new RRI shall submit to the Standing Committee through the Secretariat, according to the format in Annex 2 of this resolution, *Template for proposed new regional initiatives*, to be endorsed either by the Standing Committee, or the Convention of Parties;

d. RRIs shall submit an annual report to the Standing Committee through the Secretariat, according to the format in Annex 3 of this resolution approved by the Standing Committee

1. The RRIs that satisfy the Operational Guidelines are approved by the COP or the Standing Committee as operating within the framework of the Convention for the period between two meetings of the COP, and receive the status of a Ramsar Regional Initiative or, if existing, will have their status confirmed.
2. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to provide the Conference of the Parties and Standing Committee a summary of the information obtained from the annual reports so as to assist these bodies for their reviews on RRIs and decisions regarding funding;
3. REQUEST the Secretariat to warn RRIs that do not submit annual reports for one year and request to submit the relevant reports and FURTHER REQUEST the Standing Committee to consider the withdrawal of endorsement of RRIs that have not submitted annual reports for two consecutive years as operating within the framework of the Convention.
4. REQUESTS that the Standing Committee review the Secretariat’s annual report on assessment of the RRIs and take proper actions for the ones not in line with above mentioned criteria. Proper actions are to ask for change and if the RRI gets financial support from the Convention make proper decisions on that and future support. Finally the Standing Committee may ask the next COP not to endorse failing RRIs as RRIs.
5. DECIDES that financial support for Ramsar Regional Initiatives that meet the Operational Guidelines eligible for start-up financial support can be obtained for a period of up to six years in total corresponding to the interval between two meetings of the COP.
6. ;
7. DECIDES that the levels of financial support from the Convention core budget to eligible RRIs will be determined annually by the Standing Committee, based on the information submitted by RRIs to the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 14(d), and informed by the specific recommendations made by the Subgroup on Finance to the Standing Committee;
8. ;

DECIDES that the RRI requesting for core funds by Ramsar Regional Initiatives shall include a rationale about how the RRI supports Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention and its resolutions and guidance, according to the format in the Annex 2 of this resolution, ~~FURTHER DECIDES that the requests must be provided in English or with an English translation (with informal “google translate” translations, screened by the country’s National Focal Point, acceptable), to enable the Subgroup of Finance to make informed decisions in a timely manner~~, and ALSO DECIDES that the model contract in Annex 4 of this resolution, have to be signed by the RRI when receiving funds from the Convention.

1. URGES RRIs that receive financial support from the core budget to consider using part of this support to achieve financial sustainability funding through financial support from other sources, including donors that are willing to support RRIs through specific projects and cooperation programs particularly during the last years in which they qualify for such support;
2. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to consider giving financial support to RRIs or their specific activities, either as member of an RRI or as a donor country, as appropriate;;
3. INVITES, the Convention’s International Organization Partners and other stakeholders to partner with and support RRIs in their undertakings, including in particular through capacity building and fundraising efforts;
4. ENCOURAGES RRIs to contact the Secretariat when in need of advice the Secretariat may provide, or in other situations where contact with the Secretariat may be appropriate;;

INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to limit their support to future and existing RRIs, to be advisory only. The advice should be focused on how to reinforce the RRIs capacity and effectiveness as well as fund-raising ~~and pros and cons of choice in legal status for the RRI.~~ The Secretariat is not to be involved in the administration of the RRI, the RRIs’ projects or any day-to-day tasks that are to be run by the RRIs.

1. INSTRUCTS that the Secretariat continue publishing on the Convention’s website information provided by the RRIs, including on-going projects and reports on their successes, work plans, and other relevant information on RRIs as appropriate;
2. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to inform RRIs at the global level as a mechanism to promote international cooperation and support for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention, to complement the efforts of the Ramsar Administrative Authorities and the National Focal Points at the national level;
3. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to open the call for proposals for new RRIs to be endorsed by the Conference of the Parties or intersessionally by the Standing Committee. The request for consideration by the Standing Committee will follow the template attached as Annex 2 of this resolution.
4. The Standing Committee with help of the Secretariat is also to monitor the impact of the new Operational Guidance and suggest possible amendments of major nature to COP15.

***Annex 1 : Operational Guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives to support the implementation of the Convention***

1. Regional Initiatives (RRIs) under the Convention on Wetlands are intended as operational means to provide effective support for an improved implementation of the objectives and decisions of the Convention, especially tasks mentioned in plans or program of the Convention, in line with its Strategic plan.
2. The Operational Guidelines (OG) are an effort to ensure that the RRIs are actively supporting Contracting Parties with a common interest in a particular area, region or ecosystem, to protect wetlands into the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands framework**.**
3. The RRIs have various types of governance and coordination approaches, as well as operational and financial management practices. RRIs can be a regional centre or a network, or a mixtures of both, can be cooperation networks not having a legal status or be established organisations of their own with their own legal status, and can have different kinds of governance and coordination approaches.
4. The Operational Guidelines aim at ensuring that the Contracting Parties at COP provide greater recognition and a stronger formal endorsement to those well performing RRIs. This type of recognition will facilitate their efforts in resource mobilization and obtaining more support from third parties, including donors willing to fund regional projects for improved implementation of the Convention in the various regions. Additionally, it is as important that the COP is made aware of challenges faced by some RRIs.
5. The Operational Guidelines should be considered as a guide for the sustainability of RRIs and allowing them to ensure their long-term effectiveness.
6. Those proposing new regional initiatives are to apply to the Standing Committee or the COP through the Secretariat to become an RRI. The application will include the information following template in Annex 2 of this resolution.
7. In order to help make the RRIs fully complying with all requirement be visible as a part of the Ramsar Convention, a certificate shall be given for the approved period by the Convention. The certificate will be provided by the Secretariat signed by the Secretary General.

**Chapter 1: The aim and scope of Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs)**

1. Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs) shall support the operational implementation of the Convention and be in line with its Strategic Plan in the geographical area they are covering. RRIs improve implementation of the Convention through international cooperation within the regionon wetland-related issues of common concern, involving relevant stakeholders.
2. RRIs could either be physically established centres that have a regional training or capacity building programme, regional cooperation networks with no physical centre, or a combination of both.
3. Geographical regions to be covered by RRIs are defined according to the wetland-related needs of the relevant actors in their region. RRIs are intended to provide lasting structural and operational support to facilitate and improve the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the region concerned.

**Chapter 2: Governance and functioning of the RRIs**

1. Contracting Parties, have the main responsibility to create, manage, develop, supervise and coordinate the functioning of the RRI and establish their coordinating unit**.** Much of this responsibility be delegated to a centre or similar.
2. All Contracting Parties that are members of a given RRI, are encouraged to participate in the activities carried out during the year, according to the established workplan**.** When this is not the case, the coordination body of the RRI will lead a process to promote the active participation of the Contracting Parties.
3. RRIs establish their own governance and advisory mechanisms in order to provide leadership, coordination, guidance and accountability in a transparent and equitable manner. This requires the establishment of a governing body made up of the participating Contracting Parties and other relevant stakeholders, and a coordination body. The coordination body and governance mechanisms of each RRI are defined in its operative rules and all Contracting Parties involved to the RRIsare encouraged to actively participate into the activities.
4. The governing body meets regularly, guides, defines mandates, rules and principles of procedure, decides on how different work task for the activities of the RRI are to be distributed,monitors its activities, work programme and its resources, and provides all its members with relevant information. The operational procedures are made available to the public for example at the individual RRI website or RRI webpage on the Convention´s website.
5. All Contracting Parties who are members of an RRI are encouraged to contribute to the RRI, either by financial and/or in kind resources for each triennium as appropriate.
6. RRIs may request assistance from the Secretariat in order to advise, strengthen their capacity and effectiveness, including the mobilization of additional resources. The COP shall be informed about the support activities of the Secretariat to the RRIs during the triennium.
7. RRIs are encouraged to use the best work tools available for them, this include the existing Convention tools in particular the technical annexes of the resolutions, manuals, guidelines, methods, etc when appropriate. They are to be in contact, where considered fruitful, with Ramsar national focal points for the Convention, including those for CEPA and STRP, of the relevant Parties and when appropriate have these focal points included actively in the work of the RRI.
8. The Secretariat of the Convention and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) may be invited to assist in the review of training modules developed by RRIs to ensure quality and that contents are aligned with approved global tools and are well adapted to regional contexts. The RRIs can also seek assistance from wetland experts, as well as wetland practitioners, for the review of training modules and related publications. On other capacity building activities, details about the number of individuals or organisations that benefitted from the undertaken activities, and results of any evaluations undertaken will be included in the annual reports, to be able to assess impact.
9. RRIs are encouraged to work in synergy with other initiatives, projects, and programmes of other international agreements such as CBD, CCD, CMS, UNFCCC, CITES, among others. and to ensure compliance with the activities set out in the annual plans in order to strengthen regional ties and optimize institutional resources.

**Chapter 3: Status of the RRIs**

1. On-going RRIs are endorsed by the COP. New RRIs are endorsed at the COP or intersessionally by the Standing Committee, provided that their establishment is justified as a response to the needs of the regions and that they comply with existing resolutions decisions on RRIs according to the format of the Annex 2.
2. RRIs are a part of the Ramsar Convention, but not a part of the Secretariat of the Convention or of any national authority or organization that may provide them with support or hosting arrangements. The RRIs are encouraged to establish their own identity, which specifies their independence, their status and role. They apply relevant provisions of national legislation and seek to obtain a formal recognition in their host country.
3. RRIs include Contracting Parties and can act on their behalf only by express mandate of their constituents, and in no instance will they be considered as a regional office of the Convention or as spokespersons or representatives of the Secretariat of the Convention
4. RRIs are requested to adopt their own logo and to use it in combination with the Convention logo in accordance with current guidelines
5. An active RRI website could be useful to provide visibility to the RRI and including evidence of the communication efforts during the previous year in the annual reports would be beneficial.

**Chapter 4: Participation in RRIs**

1. The Coordination body is encouraged to organize periodic meetings, ensuring timely planning and full involvement of Contracting Party members and the Secretariat of the Convention.

The Coordination body is encouraged to organize meetings for the purpose of exchanging experiences ,which involve relevant stakeholders such as Ministries, Governmental Organizations, International Organization Partners (IOPs) to the Convention on Wetlands, other non-governmental organizations and civil society, universities, local communities and the private sector, as well as CEPA and STRP national focal points of the Convention.

1. Effective partnerships with Convention IOPs and other relevant regional or global organisations should be promoted. The coordination body shall develop annual workplan and its strategic plan in consultation with relevant partners.

**Chapter 5: Relation between the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands and the RRIs**

1. Effective and frequent communication and coordination between the RRI and the Secretariat is important~~.~~RRIs shall be encouraged to invite the Secretariat at least once a year.
2. For RRIs with a mandate to support World Wetlands Day, it is recommended to include the relevant activities organized to the Standing Committee in its annual report through the Secretariat.

**Chapter 6: The role of the RRIs to implement the Convention on Wetlands Strategic Plan and CEPA**

1. The work programme of each RRI is aligned with the approved Strategic Plan of the Convention.

RRIs that implement their workplan ineffectively in given triennium will be reminded by the Standing Committee of the possibility of not being endorsed as RRIs in the succeeding triennium.

RRIs are encouraged to include specific activities related to CEPA in the annual work programme and/or projects. RRIs are invited to ask different kinds of CEPA experts for advice and investigate if there are lessons learnt by other RRIs or Contracting Parties having similar wetland conditions.

**Chapter 7: Financing of the RRIs**

33. RRIs have their own systems for accounting and presenting reports, overseen by their governing bodies, unless they are part of one or several of the Contracting Parties accounting and reporting systems.

34. All participating Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide assistance to RRIs, and donors are encouraged to provide funds for their activities, for example through financing provided by specific projects or programmes.

35. The financial section of the annual report includes information on number of Contracting Parties contributing in kind or financial resources to the implementation of the initiative; number of other partners contributing to the initiative; expenditures against individual activities and results, as well as the amounts of the financial contributions*.*

36. RRIs take the necessary measures to establish financial sustainability with resources allowing for the development of their activities over the long term.

37. If lacking reliable resources RRIs are encouraged to prepare a resource mobilization strategy to facilitate the implementation of their annual workplans*.* RRI can request support to the Ramsar Secretary to help their effort to find external financial resources.

38. The RRIs, receiving core budget from the Convention on Wetlands, are requested to submit the financial reports to the Standing Committee as part of the annual report.

39. Each COP establishes a core budget line to support new RRIs over the coming triennium. The Standing Committee allocates these funds annually, in response to specific requests, to new RRIs that fulfil the Operational Guidelines.

40. The RRI is expected to be self-sufficient after have received financial assistance provided from the core budget of the Convention.

41. RRIs support the Contracting Parties in the development of project proposals in the framework of the work plan of the RRI in line with the Strategic Plan, aiming at obtaining financial support from donors.

**Chapter 8: Reporting and evaluation of the RRIs**

42. RRIs are requested to submit to the Standing Committee through Secretariat annual reports on progress regarding the workplan implementation and financial status of the past year according to the format of the Annex 3.

43. The RRIs that are receiving financial support from the Convention are requested to submit the workplan implementation and costs incurred in the past year, together with estimated costs, potential sources of funding and work plans for the coming year, according to the format of the Annex 4. A summary of Convention and other funding sources is reported. Annual reports shall reach the Secretariat 60 days before the Standing Committee for the preparation by the Secretariat of the documents for the annual meeting of Standing Committee.

44. The draft on the annual report and the work program for the coming year has to be endorsed by the governing body of the RRI, in order to be sent to the Secretariat.

45. The annual report format is attached as Annex 3.

***Annex 2:Template for proposed new regional initiatives***

* 1. Name of RRI
	2. Contracting Parties who are members of the initiative shall provide a letter of commitment before every COP, indicating their financial contribution to the initiative, as well as designating the official in the Government that will be the focal point for it during the following triennium.
	3. Description of expected coordination body and potential host
	4. Type of RRI: Regional Centre or Regional network, or a combination – thereof, with a brief description
	5. Objectives of the RRI and rationale about how the RRI supports Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention and its resolutions and guidance
	6. Describe the main objective to be reached with this RRI indicating the geographical area, region and/or ecosystems to be covered
	7. Please clearly identify the Goals and Targets of the Convention’s Strategic Plan that will be supported through the RRI
	8. Please include names of relevant IOPs and other NGOs that would like to participate in the initiative
	9. Please name other potentially relevant partners and describe how they have participated in the preparation of the workplan and what role you expect them to assume if the RRI is endorsed
	10. Potential sources of funding for the RRI
	11. A Workplan and budget for the following three years (CHF/year) – as an attachment
	12. Confirm whether you plan to open an independent Bank account for the initiative.

***Annex 3: The form for the RRIs annual report on the past and new year and the explanatory notes***

**Annual report for the past year XXXX and plan for new year YYYY**

Submission deadline: 31 January YYYY (maximum 4 pages)

**1. General information**

a. Name of the Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI):

b. Have the terms of reference (TORs) or equivalent documents been updated? Yes / No

(If yes, provide the web link to the PDF version for the updated document(s).)

c. Is the RRI eligible for core funding from the Convention on Wetlands? Yes / No

**2. Work and activities undertaken during the past year (XXXX)**

Provide a simple summary of the work undertaken by listing in the table below the RRI’s activities, the results achieved and a verification:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Results** | **Verifiable indicators** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

If felt useful, you may add narrative text to specify further your achievements, lessons learned, improvement of Ramsar implementation in the region, etc:

**3. Financial report for the past year XXXX**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sources of income or support** | **Income or other kinds of support received** |
| Kinds of support of financial importance that don’t become part of the official RRI budget (donor’s)1.2.3. | Kind of support (paid salaries, offices, travels etc). |
| Income (donor’s and/projects)1.2.3. | AmountXXX Name of used currencyXXX Name of used currencyXXX Name of used currency | Amount according to current exchange rateXXX CHFXXX CHFXXX CHF |
| Ramsar Convention core budget (if applicable) | XXX Name of used currency | XXX CHF |
| **Total amount received (in CHF only)** |  | **XXX CHF** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Budget Items** | **Planned expenditure**  | **Actual expenditure**  |
| 1. activity | XXX Name of currency | XXX Name of currency |
| 2. activity | XXX Name of currency | XXX Name of currency |
| Administration | XXX Name of currency | XXX Name of currency |
| **Total in CHF** |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Total unspent and uncommitted balance left to the next year,**  | **Deficit that must be addressed the coming year/-s** |
| 31 Dec 20WW | XXX Name of currency | XXX Name of currency |
| 31 Dec 20XX | XXX Name of currency | XXX Name of currency |
| **Result in CHF** |  |  |

Add narrative text to specify further how a surplus may be used or how a deficit will be addressed:

If having received support from Convention core budget and if felt useful, narrative text may be added on how the funding has been spent or committed and compare this to the plan on which the funding request was based. Explain any significant changes in scope or timetable:

**5. Work and activities planned for the current year (20YY)**

Provide a summary of the work planned by listing the RRI’s activities, the results expected and verifiable indicators:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Expected results** | **Verifiable indicators** |
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If felt useful, you may add narrative text to specify the plans and activities further:

**6. Budget for year 20YY**

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| **Expected sources of income or support** | **Expected income or kinds of support received** |
| Kinds of support of financial importance that don’t become part of the official RRI budget (donor’s)1.2.3. | Kind of support (paid salaries, offices, travels etc). |
| Other sources (donor’s and/or project name)1.2.3. | AmountXXX Name of currencyXXX Name of currencyXXX Name of currency | Amount according to roughly average exchange rateXXX CHFXXX CHFXXX CHF |
| Ramsar core budget (if such have been received) | XXX Name of currency | XXX CHF |
| **Total amount (in CHF only)** |  | **XXX CHF** |

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| --- | --- |
| **Budget Items** | **Planned expenditure**  |
| 1.1 activity | XXX Name of currency |
| 1.2 activity | XXX Name of currency |
| Administration | XXX Name of currency |
| **Total in CHF** |  |

***Annex 4: Template for “model contract” to disburse allocated Ramsar core budget funds to RRIs***

Beneficiary address

Regional Initiative coordinating body

Date:

Re: **Ramsar Regional Initiatives YEAR-YEAR**

**Ramsar Contract No. XXX**

With reference to the Resolution XIV.¤¤ which includes this model contract and the RRI resolution for the present COP-COP period or in accordance with Decision SC¤¤-¤¤ of the ¤¤th Meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee in MONTH YEAR, the **¤¤ Ramsar Regional Initiative** has been evaluated as fully meeting the conditions for a Ramsar Regional Initiative and is approved as operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention during the COP¤¤-COP¤¤ period.

In order to retain the status of Ramsar Regional Initiative you are required to report to the

Secretariat, annually, in the latest format approved and using the present timetable for reporting as decided by the COP or the SC.

This status makes your initiative eligible for funding in any year during the YEAR-YEAR period.

Funding decisions are made annually, based on funding requests made by all approved Regional

Initiatives, by the Standing Committee. For YEAR your initiative has been allocated funding

from the Ramsar core budget of CHF ¤¤¤.

We are pleased to offer the ¤¤ Ramsar Regional Initiative the following contract for YEAR and CHF ¤¤ to perform the specific tasks itemized in the funding request received from you by the Secretariat.

The contract will cover a period of ¤¤ months, starting on **DATE** and terminating upon

satisfactory and timely completion of all tasks to be undertaken, but not later than **DATE** unless

the contract is otherwise extended or terminated in accordance with normal Swiss contract law.

The following terms will apply to the use of the funds allocated under this contract:

1. The sum of **CHF XXX,** representing 60% per cent of the approved sum, will be

transferred after receipt by the Ramsar Secretariat of the countersigned copy of this letter, including bank details and an invoice for this amount.

1. A final sum of **CHF XXX,** representing 40% of the approved sum, will be transferred upon acceptance by the Secretariat of an interim progress report. This must be sent to the Secretariat, in the format shown in Annex II, no later than DATE, together with an invoice.
2. Under Swiss Law an **invoice** is required to support each payment in 1 and 2 above. The invoice should state the name of your organization, date, amount, bank name an address, account name/beneficiary, IBAN or account number and SWIFT code.
3. Under the Secretariat’s contractual terms, contract funds and income earned thereon may be expended only for the **purposes** stated in the present letter, and it is understood that these funds will be used for such purposes in accordance with the funding request.
4. Any **funds unused** by the end of the contractual period must be declared in the YEAR final reporting, due to the Secretariat by DATE, and shall be returned to the Secretariat.
5. All the conditions described in the Resolution XIV.¤¤ and the resolution on RRIs for the present the COP-COP period apply to this contract.
6. The Ramsar Secretariat may include **information** on this contract in its periodic reports and may also refer to it in a press release.
7. This agreement is governed by Swiss law.

All correspondence in connection with this contract should be addressed to SURNAME

(XXX@ramsar.org) at the above address.

If you agree to the above, kindly confirm your agreement with the contents of this letter by

countersigning and initialling each page of the enclosed duplicate copy and returning the

complete document to the Ramsar Secretariat.

We wish you continued success in your endeavours over the coming months and look forward

to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

NAME

Secretary General

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:

I have understood and agree with the terms and conditions set out in the preceding pages.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:**

Full name of bank and/or branch: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address of bank and/or branch: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Account name / beneficiary: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Account number - IBAN: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SWIFTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Annex 2 to document SC59 Doc.21.1: Proposed draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives – addressing old decisions**

NOTE: This annex to the document SC59 Doc.21.1 contains 2 annexes:

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

*Annex II:* 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

*Secretariat cover note:*

The DR refers to earlier recommendations and resolutions related to RRIs notably, Recommendations V.14, VI.11 and Resolutions VII.22, VII26, VIII30, 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.

**Introduction**

*Information for the Standing Committee*

1. This SC-document contains the draft resolution on older decisions that can be retired.

**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

1. DECIDES that all previous resolutions having the RRIs as their main topic, as listed in annex 1, are retired, and no longer valid;

2. DECIDES that all text about RRIs in resolutions that haven’t got RRIs as their main topic are retired if they are contradictionary to the text in this resolution or are otherwise made redundant by it;

3. 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 contradictionary to the text in this resolution or otherwise are made redundant by it;

6. 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 contradictionary 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;

7. 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;

8. 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;

9. 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 RRI 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.¤¤ *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:* 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**

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| **Resolution** | **Content on RRI** | **Will be addressed in the following way** |
| **XIII.2**Financial and budgetary matters | 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 *Financial and budgetary matters*), and also the contributions made by non-governmental organizations and private companies for activities undertaken by the Secretariat; 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 *Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021*; 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. | 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 *Ramsar Regional Initiatives – the basics.* |
| **XIII.5** Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention | 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 | 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 *Ramsar Regional Initiatives – the basics* paragraph 7. |
| **XIII.7** Enhancing the Convention’s visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions  | 1 RECALLING that Resolution XI.1, on *Institutional hosting of the Ramsar Secretariat*, 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 and stature, including *inter alia* 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);  | The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted 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 aspectsof 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* 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; 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.  | The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process. |
| **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 RRIs.  |
| **XII.5** New framework for delivery of scientific and technical advice and guidance on the Convention | Role and responsibilities of the STRP members12 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, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016‐2024 | 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 Secretariat to provide relevant information to the Regional Initiatives on priorities and activities, to support delivery of the CEPA Programme; 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; Annex 1: The Ramsar Convention’s Programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016‐2024 | 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.  |
| **XII.11** Peatlands, climate change and wise use: Implications for the Ramsar Convention | 20 NOTING the Policy Brief on *Peatlands, climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation* and the report *Peatlands and Climate Change in a Ramsar context – a Nordic Baltic Perspective* developed under the Ramsar regional initiative NorBalWet **as inspiration for other Ramsar regional initiatives and Parties, as appropriate**; | The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process. |
| **XII.12**Call to action to ensure and protect the water requirements of wetlands for the present and the future | 21 WELCOMES the process carried out in Mexico for the creation of water reserves for wetlands, described in the Annex to this Resolution; 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; | 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. |
| **XI.6** Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions | 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; | The text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process. |
| **XI.10** Wetlands and energy issues | 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**; 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; | 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. |
| **XI.11** Principles for the planning and management of urban and peri- urban wetlands | 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; | 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. |
| **XI.14** Climate change and wetlands: implications for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands | 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; 35 REQUESTS the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP): 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: 1. 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);
2. preparing advice on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change for coastal and inland wetlands; and
3. reviewing any relevant advice provide by other MEAs, in particular the outcomes of CBD COP-11;

without pre-empting any future decisions of the UNFCCC; | The first text marked with bold in the para can be deleted when the resolution in the consolidation process.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. |
| **X.3**The Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands | 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; | 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. |
| **X.15** Describing the ecological character of wetlands, and data needs and formats for core inventory: harmonized scientific and technical guidance | 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; | 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. |
| **X.17** Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: updated scientific and technical guidance | 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; | 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. |
| **X.19** Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance | 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; | 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. |
| **IX.1** Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept | 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 *regional initiatives and commitments* and in the context of sustainable development;  | 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. |
| **IX.19** The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention | 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**, *inter alia*, any regional initiatives established under the Convention**. | 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. |

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***~~Annex III to the Draft Resolution~~***

***~~The following Resolution and Recommendations related to Ramsar Regional Initiative are repealed:~~***

~~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~~

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