



10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the  
Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

*“Healthy wetlands, healthy people”*

Changwon, Republic of Korea,  
28 October-4 November 2008

Agenda item XV

Ramsar COP10 DR 26

**Draft Resolution X.26**

**Wetlands and extractive industries**

**Submitted by the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)**

1. CONSCIOUS of the need, in implementing policies for the wise use of all wetlands, including those in the Ramsar List, and in a context of objectives for sustainable development, to avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts of economic development on the ecological character of wetlands;
2. RECOGNIZING the increasing global demand for resources, including oil and gas, precious and base minerals, coal, sand and gravel, industrial minerals and peat, and the resulting industrial activities related to exploration for, and extraction of, these resources including through artisanal, small-scale and large-scale projects;
3. AWARE of the potential for certain activities related to extractive industries, if not appropriately managed and regulated, to impact directly and indirectly negatively on the ecological character of wetlands, including Ramsar sites, and RECOGNIZING the particular vulnerability of wetlands to the impacts of extractive industries, given not only the role of wetlands as sources of water, but also the potential for impacts to be transferred both upstream and downstream within a river basin;
4. RECALLING Resolution VII.16 *The Ramsar Convention and Impact Assessment: strategic, environmental and social* (2002), which calls upon Parties “to reinforce and strengthen their efforts to ensure that any project, plans, programmes and policies with the potential to alter the ecological character of wetlands in the Ramsar List, or impact negatively on other wetlands in their territories, are subjected to rigorous impact assessment procedures and to formalize such procedures under policy, legal, institutional and organizational arrangements”;
5. ALSO AWARE that recent global and regional initiatives, including those by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and IUCN, to improve corporate social responsibility and governance in the extractive industries sector offer opportunities to strengthen the conservation and wise use of wetlands, while still realizing economic benefits from the development of extractive industries;

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6. RECOGNIZING the value of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) approaches in supporting decision-making processes that reflect the wise use of wetlands[, in line with Resolution [DR 17] on *Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: updated scientific and technical guidance*], and NOTING that SEA approaches can be particularly helpful for planning and prioritization of wetland inventory and baseline information collection efforts;
7. ALSO RECOGNIZING the importance of adequate wetland inventory and baseline information in supporting decision-making and permitting processes related to extractive industries, and EMPHASIZING the importance of early notification of proposed exploration and extraction activities in providing sufficient time for collection of wetland inventory and baseline information in areas potentially affected by these proposed activities;
8. CONCERNED that private sector organizations are not always aware of the extent of their own dependence and impact on ecosystems, including wetlands, and that both ecosystem-related risks and opportunities are not well recognized in private sector planning and execution of projects; and AWARE of the work of the World Resources Institute (WRI), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), and the Meridian Institute, which have prepared a Corporate Ecosystem Services Review (ESR) framework for use by the private sector to help address such matters;
9. FURTHER RECOGNIZING the importance in decision-making of valuation of the full range of ecosystem services provided by wetlands, and RECALLING that guidance on valuation of wetland ecosystem services is provided in Ramsar Technical Report Number 3 (2006); and
10. NOTING with appreciation the briefing paper on *Economic trends in the mining sector and the implications for protection and wise use of wetlands*, prepared through the STRP and considered by the Africa regional meeting of Ramsar Contracting Parties in Yaounde, Cameroon, in November 2007;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF CONTRACTING PARTIES

11. URGES Contracting Parties to emphasize the importance of Strategic Environmental Assessment, particularly in relation to the extractive industries sector, and to apply the SEA guidance [adopted in COP10 draft Resolution 17 on *Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: updated scientific and technical guidance*], adapting that guidance as appropriate in order to address specific issues associated with direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands;
12. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties also to apply the guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment adopted by the same Resolution, adapting the EIA guidance where appropriate in order to ensure that it adequately addresses direct and indirect impacts on wetlands of the exploration, development, operation, closure and post-closure phases of extractive industrial activities;
13. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to ensure that valuation of wetland ecosystem services is undertaken at a sufficiently early stage in environmental impact assessments, in

order to ensure that the full range of those services is considered in cost-benefit analyses related to all phases of extractive industrial activities, with particular attention to the potential costs associated with the post-closure phase of extractive industrial activities, and ALSO ENCOURAGES private sector organizations involved with extractive industries to utilize the 2008 Corporate Ecosystem Services Review (ESR) framework prepared by the World Resources Institute (WRI), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), and the Meridian Institute, and other tools as appropriate, in order to better assess and understand both the risks and the opportunities for their businesses associated with wetland ecosystems;

14. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to ensure that, in SEA and EIA studies related to extractive industries, potential upstream and downstream impacts in river basins are fully considered, and in doing so to apply the guidance on River Basin Management as [adopted in Resolution [COP10 DR 19] on *Wetlands and river basin management: consolidated scientific and technical guidance*];
15. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to undertake appropriate CEPA activities in order to ensure that all relevant public and private sector bodies associated with extractive industries are aware of obligations under the Ramsar Convention regarding the wise use of wetlands and the maintenance of their ecological character;
16. URGES Contracting Parties to review, and where necessary revise, regulatory and permitting procedures related to all phases of extractive industrial activities in order to ensure that wetland ecosystems and their ecosystem services are addressed in such procedures, in ways that allow sufficient time for collection of wetland inventory and baseline information to support effective Environmental Impact Assessment, permitting and oversight of extractive industries, especially with respect to enforcement of compliance with the conditions of authorizations and licences, and particularly to ensure that local and indigenous communities have appropriate opportunities to participate in decision-making, applying as needed the guidance adopted in Resolution VII.7 *Guidelines for reviewing laws and institutions to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands* and Resolution VII.8 *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous peoples' participation in the management of wetlands* (1999);
17. URGES Contracting Parties to ensure that existing or new extractive industrial development projects address the need to compensate for the loss of livelihoods that may result, directly or indirectly, from the impacts of these projects on wetland biodiversity and ecosystem services, for example by supporting, in consultation with local communities, the adoption of alternative sustainable livelihood activities;
18. ALSO URGES Contracting Parties to complete national wetland inventories in order to strengthen and support SEA and EIA processes, especially in those areas which are potentially the focus of exploration and development of new extractive industrial projects, and to seek sufficient funding and other resources as needed for this purpose;
19. FURTHER URGES Contracting Parties to ensure urgently that the boundaries of all designated Ramsar sites within their territories are accurately delineated and mapped and that this information is made freely available and easily accessible to all relevant regulatory agencies and ministries, private sector bodies with interests in existing or new extractive industrial development projects, civil society and stakeholders, including through provision

of these boundaries in digital format to the Ramsar Secretariat and the Ramsar Sites Information Service;

20. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to engage with relevant private sector interests at international, national and local levels to establish and/or strengthen corporate social responsibility programmes related to extractive industries, paying particular attention to actions that avoid or minimize the direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands;
21. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to identify capacity and expertise needed for addressing the specific issues and potential impacts of extractive industries on wetlands, particularly in relevant public sector institutions, and to implement, where necessary through partnerships with appropriate public, private and NGO sector groups or organizations, appropriate training and capacity building programmes to strengthen SEA, EIA, and regulatory oversight of extractive industrial activities;
22. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Ramsar Administrative Authorities and Focal Points to establish or strengthen regular cooperation with Focal Points of the Global Environment Facility, considering that many GEF projects are addressing issues associated with extractive industrial activities, and to develop efficient and lasting synergies at national and regional levels; and
23. REQUESTS the STRP, working with UNEP, IUCN, and other relevant organizations, to review available technical guidance on assessing, avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands in the exploration, development, operation, closure and post-closure phases, taking into account the potential for adoption of new or emerging extraction technologies and paying particular attention to restoration options, and on the basis of this review, to make recommendations regarding the suitability of available technical guidance and the need, if any, for development of new technical guidance.