



11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands: home and destination”

Bucharest, Romania, 6-13 July 2012

Resolution XI.18

Adjustments to the *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) for the 2013-2015 triennium

1. RECALLING Resolutions 5.5, VI.7, VII.2, VIII.28, IX.11, and X.9 on the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and its *modus operandi*;
2. THANKING members of the STRP and its observer organizations and invited experts for their contributions since the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) and for their expert advice on numerous scientific and technical issues important for implementation of the Convention, including those submitted for adoption at this meeting of the COP;
3. ALSO THANKING the governments of Finland, Norway, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), UN HABITAT, and the Danone Group for their financial contributions in support of the work of the STRP during 2009-2012, and BirdLife International, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), the Society of Ecological Restoration (SER), the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT, UK), and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC–UK) for their in-kind support to the work of the Panel;
4. THANKING as well the government of the Republic of South Africa and the Water Research Commission of South Africa for hosting a workshop for African STRP National Focal Points and other wetland experts, and WELCOMING the offers made at the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee from the Asian regional Ramsar centres (RRC-EA and RRC-WCA) to host a meeting of Asian STRP National Focal Points (NFPs);
5. WELCOMING the STRP’s confirmation that its revised *modus operandi* for the 2009-2012 triennium, with the budget provided for its work by Resolution X.2 (2008) and through additional voluntary contributions, has continued to enable the Panel to develop and deliver its work plan and required priority tasks;
6. CONSCIOUS of the need to strengthen the STRP’s understanding of local and regional wetland management needs and concerns and of the importance of establishing closer links between the STRP and networks of scientists and experts in each Contracting Party, so that the Convention may benefit from the array of existing knowledge and experience,

and CONCERNED that the STRP continues to report difficulties in establishing effective contact and working relationships with many STRP National Focal Points, and therefore URGING STRP National Focal Points to strive to engage actively in support of the work of the STRP;

7. RECOGNIZING the need for continuing cooperation between the STRP and a number of expert networks, specialist groups and societies that exist, some in association with the official International Organization Partners of the Convention;
8. ALSO RECOGNIZING the importance of the STRP working in partnership with the scientific and technical bodies of the conventions and programmes with which memoranda of cooperation and/or joint work plans are in place, and NOTING the need for the STRP to avoid duplication of the work of the scientific advisory bodies of other conventions and programmes;
9. RECALLING that Resolution IX.11 (2005) provides clear guidelines for identification and appointment of STRP members, and also establishes that STRP working groups will work largely through electronic means;
10. NOTING that the terms of Resolution XI.16 on *Ensuring efficient delivery of scientific and technical advice and support to the Convention* may have implications for the implementation of this Resolution; and
11. AWARE that the tasks, and the priorities for these tasks which *inter alia* form the basis for the work of the STRP for 2013-2015, are identified in the annexes to Resolution XI.17;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

12. REAFFIRMS the critical importance to the Convention of the work and advice of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in providing reliable scientific and technical guidance to the Conference of the Contracting Parties with a view to enhancing the Contracting Parties' implementation of the Convention;
13. CONFIRMS that the *modus operandi* for the STRP adopted by Resolution IX.11 (2005) and subsequently refined in Resolution X.9 (2008) will apply for the 2013-2015 period and for subsequent periods unless further amended by COP decisions;
14. AGREES that:
 - i) 13 expert members will be appointed to the Panel by the STRP Oversight Committee for the 2013-2015 triennium, taking into account the priority themes and tasks for this triennium as set out in the annexes to Resolution XI.17;
 - ii) one appointed member shall have CEPA expertise;
 - iii) one appointed member shall have socio-economic science expertise; and
 - iii) at least one member, and preferably two, shall be appointed from each of the six Ramsar regions;
15. AFFIRMS that the primary roles and responsibilities of the Panel and its members are to:

- a) establish the scope, deliverables and approach to delivery for each task assigned to it by the Conference of the Parties, including through thematic scoping workshops as appropriate, and in so doing ensure input from the network of STRP National Focal Points, Ramsar Regional Initiatives, and other relevant organizations,
 - b) commission, through the Secretariat and resources permitting, an expert or experts to lead preparation of the work identified,
 - c) ensure appropriate peer review of draft materials, including consideration of how best to present the material in order to ensure its effective communication and uptake,
 - d) review (including with STRP NFPs) and approve all scientific and technical materials prior to any transmittal of them to Parties, including to the Conference of the Parties, in line with the terms of Resolution VIII.45, and
 - e) leverage their own networks of wetland experts nationally and internationally to contribute to the work of the Panel;
16. AGREES that for work areas and tasks indicated in the annexes to Resolution XI.17, the Panel will, after first evaluating and assessing any relevant work already in existence in order to avoid duplication, seek additional expertise as and when required through various means, including through collaboration with the scientific advisory bodies of other international conventions and agencies, the International Organization Partners, STRP invited observer organizations, and STRP invited experts;
17. INSTRUCTS that the Panel should, especially when considering a new or emerging issue within its mandate, first prepare and issue to Contracting Parties and others a Scientific & Technical Briefing Note outlining the issue and its relevance to the implementation of the Convention, and invite feedback from Contracting Parties before giving consideration to bringing such issues formally through Draft Resolutions for the Parties' consideration;
18. CONFIRMS that the Standing Committee will continue to have overall responsibility for the work of the STRP, that the Chair of the STRP will report to each Standing Committee meeting on the Panel's progress with its programme of work and priorities as established by the COP (Resolution XI.17) and Standing Committee, and that the STRP will report to Standing Committee on any adjustments to its programme it considers necessary and on any new tasks proposed during the intersessional period in relation to emerging issues;
19. RECOGNIZES the continuing need to ensure both that the Panel is provided with the necessary resources to undertake its work effectively and that the Ramsar Secretariat has sufficient capacity to support this work, URGES Contracting Parties and others to contribute additional voluntary resources to support the Panel's work within their capacity and in alignment with their national priorities, and THANKS those Contracting Parties and others which have already indicated the provision of such support for the 2013-2015 triennium;
20. REVISES the list of bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings and processes of the STRP, and INVITES the bodies and organizations listed in Annex 1 of this Resolution to consider establishing close working arrangements with the STRP on matters of common interest, particularly in relation to priority themes and tasks for the 2013-2015 triennium as indicated in Resolution XI.17;

21. URGES Contracting Parties to ensure that the persons they appoint as their STRP National Focal Point are appropriately qualified for this role as defined in the Terms of Reference provided as the appendix to Resolution X.9; that their STRP National Focal Points have contact with national experts relevant to the work areas of the Panel; that their STRP National Focal Points are involved in all Ramsar processes within the Contracting Party (including participation in any National Ramsar or Wetland Committee); and that the contact information for their STRP National Focal Points are kept up to date and functional;
22. ALSO URGES the 18 Contracting Parties¹ that do not currently have an appointed STRP National Focal Point to make such an appointment without delay, taking into account the Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points in the appendix to Resolution X.9;
23. REQUESTS the STRP, working with the STRP National Focal Points, to consider mechanisms for identifying task-based national expert contacts to undertake a) participation in specialist work on specific STRP tasks and b) review of draft documents;
24. REQUESTS the STRP and Secretariat to identify opportunities and mechanisms for holding intersessional regional or subregional meetings of STRP National Focal Points and other wetland experts in order to strengthen regional and subregional scientific networks, to help STRP NFPs to understand their roles, and to enhance the participation of STRP NFPs in the work of the STRP and in implementation of the Ramsar Convention in their regions;
25. INSTRUCTS the Partnership Coordinator and the STRP to assess and consider strategic funding opportunities and to target some of its work towards utilizing such opportunities for the wise use of wetlands;
26. REQUESTS the STRP and the Secretariat to consider arranging capacity building workshops for STRP National Focal Points to be held in association with the proposed intersessional regional or subregional meetings of STRP National Focal Points and other wetland experts;
27. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, the STRP, and STRP National Focal Points to make use of the STRP Newsletter and the Scientific and Technical Briefing Notes series to share good practices in wise use of wetlands; and
28. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to review the texts of Resolutions XI.16 and XI.17, once adopted, and introduce any further adjustments to the STRP's *modus operandi* for this period that might be needed to ensure consistency.

¹ As of 12 July 2012: Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Croatia, Cyprus, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland and Uruguay.

Annex 1

Bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings and processes of the STRP for the 2013-2015 triennium

- the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- the Scientific Council of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- the Technical Committee of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)
- the Committee on Science and Technology of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the Global Environment Facility
- the Secretariats of the CBD, CMS, CITES, UNCCD, UNFCCC, the World Heritage Convention (WHC); UNESCO – Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the UNECE “Water Convention”, and the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) working group of the Arctic Council
- the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- the UNEP – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- the World Health Organization (WHO)
- UN-HABITAT
- UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education
- UNESCO-IHP International Hydrological Programme
- United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)
- the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS)
- the Coordinating Committee for the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands (GGAP-CoCo)
- the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA)
- the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Conservation International (CI)
- Ducks Unlimited (DU)
- the Global Water Partnership (GWP)
- the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)
- the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)
- the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE)
- the European Space Agency – ESRIN (ESA-ESRIN)
- the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
- Group on Earth Observation – Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO-BON)
- the International Crane Foundation (ICF)
- the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program (BBOP)

- the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)
- ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
- the interim Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)