

**"Wetlands: water, life, and culture"**

**8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties  
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

**Valencia, Spain, 18-26 November 2002**

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**Information Paper**

**English only**

## **Joint Work Plan (2002-2003)**

### **Under the Memorandum of Cooperation between the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

As set out in the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed between the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Ramsar Convention Bureau on 6 May 2002 at the Second Ramsar Regional meeting (Apia, Samoa), both institutions are committed to promoting the principles and practices of sustainable development and to do so through cooperative and collaborative approaches, through institutional and local capacity building and empowerment, and by raising awareness and understanding of ecosystem sustainability.

This Joint Work Plan (JWP) gains its mandate from the MoC between SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau, and also from the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan 1997-2002, the Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the Pacific Islands Region 2001-2004 and the Regional Wetlands Action Plan for the Pacific Islands. Also notable in this context are the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the working partnerships which exist through bilateral Memoranda of Understanding or Cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention Bureau and SPREP.

This Joint Work Plan (JWP) describes the actions which the two signatories of the MoC have agreed form their priority actions for the period 2002-2003. These priorities were reaffirmed by the second Ramsar Regional meeting (6-8 May 2002 in Apia, Samoa) which also reviewed and provided input to the development of the JWP. The statement from that meeting is as appended, and the following extract summarises the highest priorities for action identified by the countries and territories of the region:

“...the effective planning and management of wetlands needs to recognise customary and other relevant land tenure systems.

This planning and management of wetlands also needs to be integrated with actions to ensure the sustainability of all natural resources.

Other priorities for the more effective conservation and sustainable use of wetlands identified by the meeting include:

- ❖ enhanced technical expertise and training

- ❖ continuous improvement in legislative and policy frameworks
- ❖ obtaining high level support and recognition for wetlands issues, including across all sectors of government
- ❖ the use of integrated approaches to natural resource management generally
- ❖ the need to change attitudes through enhanced understanding and communication to the public of wetlands values
- ❖ increased cooperation between countries and territories of the region, including the development of linkages between wetland projects
- ❖ access to funding and resources for capacity building
- ❖ strengthening existing local initiatives by NGOs, community based organisations (CBOs), resource owners (eg in managing Wildlife Management Areas), individual volunteers and other stakeholders
- ❖ addressing poverty alleviation in the context of environmentally sustainable use and management of wetlands.”

In formulating this JWP it is acknowledged that the 8<sup>th</sup> Ramsar Conference of Parties will be held in Valencia, Spain in November 2002 and that at that meeting the second Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention will be debated and adopted. The adoption of this new framework of action for the Convention and its Parties may justify a revision of this JWP in early 2003. It is also notable that in August-September 2002 the World Summit on Sustainable Development will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and it also is likely to provide an important global blueprint for sustainable development which the partners in the MoC may wish to consider in subsequent preparation of JWPs under this partnership.

The JWP uses the same broad framework as the MoC, which establishes five principles of cooperation. The actions shown below are organized under the same five principles. There are also some actions, such as ‘policy and programmatic collaboration’ and ‘funding’ which sit at a more generic level and these are shown separately. The final section provides an Implementation Plan which identifies the means of implementation for each action and, where appropriate, identifies lead actors and timelines for delivery.

It is agreed by the two signatories to the MoC that the focal points within the respective organizations for all actions to be pursued hereunder will be as shown below:

**SPREP:**

Mary Power  
Coastal Management Officer  
Email: [MaryP@sprep.org.ws](mailto:MaryP@sprep.org.ws)

**Ramsar Convention Bureau**

Nick Davidson  
Deputy Secretary General  
Email: [Davidson@ramsar.org](mailto:Davidson@ramsar.org)

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## **1. Collaboration for key policy and programmatic activities**

### **1.1 Fine tuning the second Ramsar Strategic Plan (2003-2008) to reflect the needs and aspirations of the Pacific Island States and territories**

The 8<sup>th</sup> Ramsar Conference of Parties (COP8) will be held in Valencia, Spain in November 2002 and at that time the second Ramsar Strategic Plan will be debated and adopted. While this document has been under development for some time, and has taken account of the Barbados Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in this process, it would benefit and be strengthened through input from the small island developing states and territories of the Pacific.

#### **Actions:**

- 1. Comment and input to the second Ramsar Strategic Plan will be sought from the participants of the Ramsar Oceania Regional meeting (6-8 May 2002).

2. SPREP will also assist the Ramsar Bureau with seeking comments and input from those states and territories which are unable to attend the Ramsar Oceania Regional Meeting. This input will be provided by the end of August 2002 at the latest.

## **1.2 Preparations for and participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)**

As organizations committed to promoting sustainable development both SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau are seeking specific outcomes from the WSSD. These have been articulated in their respective submissions to the preparatory process.

### **Actions:**

3. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will exchange information on their respective priorities and goals for the WSSD, and;
4. Where there are common interests, SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will work to assist each other in the lead up to, and at the conference itself, to see these goals achieved.
5. The Ramsar Bureau will forward copies of its WSSD submission to all Pacific island countries and territories for their information and appropriate followup actions.

## **1.3 Cooperation and working links with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

The Ramsar Convention has an MoU with CBD, as does SPREP. Under the Ramsar-CBD MoU, a third Joint Work Plan (JWP) was adopted at the CBD COP6 in April 2002. A work plan for joint actions is also to be developed under the SPREP-CBD MoU.

### **Actions:**

6. In the development of its first joint work plan with CBD, SPREP will take into consideration the relevant actions set down in the Ramsar-CBD JWP to improve integration of approaches, and enhance opportunities for synergy and value-adding.
7. If possible, appropriate activities identified through these JWPs will be pursued on a tri-lateral basis between SPREP, CBD and the Ramsar Bureau, with the agreement of all three parties.
8. In the future, consideration will be given to more closely aligning the processes used to develop the JWPs between the parties.
9. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will collaborate to ensure that the regional offices of the GEF implementing agencies (UNEP, UNDP and World Bank) are made aware of the SPREP-Ramsar MoC and this JWP, as well the desirability of seeing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans giving clear recognition of the wetland conservation and sustainable use aspirations upon which this JWP is based.

## **1.4 Seeking opportunities for synergy and closer collaboration in work programs**

Both signatories to the MoC acknowledge that through the full range of their activities, opportunities may exist for enhancing the scope of this JWP in the future, or possibly to value-add on current projects by enabling links between this JWP and those activities. Where it is appropriate, such opportunities will be explored and taken forward. Examples include the International Waters Program (IWP) being coordinated by SPREP, the International Coral Reef Action Network – Pacific Action Phase also coordinated by SPREP, the preparations being made by the Ramsar Bureau for escalating its efforts in wetland-related communication, education and public awareness (see 2.6 below), and the respective activities of the two organizations in the areas of invasive species and migratory birds.

#### **Actions:**

10. Through wide circulation of this JWP and briefing of all staff within SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau, awareness will be raised, with program managers in particular, and opportunities for synergy and collaboration will be sought. Where these emerge, they will be shared between the organizations and considered for inclusion in future JWPs. Advice regarding such future expansions to the scope of the JWP will be communicated to the countries and territories of the region to seek their views and input.
11. As part of the 4 yearly review of the SPREP Regional Action Strategy on Nature Conservation, the Ramsar Bureau will be invited to provide its comments and input.

## **2. Promoting the sustainable (wise) use of wetlands**

### **2.1 Making Ramsar's Wise Use 'toolkit' more accessible**

The Ramsar Convention Bureau has produced its Wise Use 'toolkit' of nine handbooks covering the following topics. These are resources that will be valuable for all countries:

- Wise use of wetlands;
- Developing and implementing national wetland policies;
- Reviewing laws and institutions to promote and conservation and wise use of wetlands;
- Integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management;
- Establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands;
- Promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands through communication, education and public awareness – The Outreach Program of the Convention on Wetlands;
- Strategic framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands on International Importance;
- Frameworks for managing Wetlands of International Importance and other wetlands;
- Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

#### **Action:**

12. SPREP will assist the Ramsar Bureau to provide copies of the Wise Use 'toolkit' to all Pacific Island countries and territories (in English or French as appropriate), and other relevant bodies and organizations in the region. The Ramsar Bureau will seek to provide these in both the currently available hard copy form and also on CD-Rom, once available, to reduce the distribution costs and for ease of portability.

## **2.2 Additions to the Ramsar Wise Use 'toolkit'**

It is expected that following COP8 there will be new handbooks prepared to supplement the above, relating to the following topics.

- Integrated coastal zone management;
- Wetland inventory;
- New advice in relation to management planning for wetland sites;
- Water allocation and management for maintaining the ecological functions of freshwater wetlands;
- Impact assessment
- Wetlands and climate change
- Cultural values of wetlands

### **Action:**

13. The Ramsar Bureau, again with SPREP's assistance, will facilitate the distribution of these new resources across the region once they become available (in English or French as appropriate). SPREP will operate as a regional 'warehouse' for such resource materials and facilitate distribution in an on-going capacity.

## **2.3 Tailoring guidance to the needs and perspectives of the Pacific Island nations and territories**

For the future it will be important to ensure that Ramsar's information resources, such as the Wise Use 'toolkit', are developed with the priorities and perspectives of the small island states in mind.

### **Action:**

14. In the future SPREP will assist the Ramsar Bureau, the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (whichever is appropriate), to identify individuals and organizations within the South Pacific region with relevant expertise that can provide input and be involved in the development of guidance relating to implementation of the Convention.

## **2.4 Facilitating access to global and regional expertise in wetland management**

The Ramsar Bureau operates, and has available, a range of tools for providing access to expertise in wetland management. These include the Ramsar (internet) Forum, the Ramsar newsletter and Experts Database, and the global network of Ramsar national focal points for scientific and technical matters, and communication and outreach activities.

**Action:**

15. The Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance, will promote greater access by the Pacific Island countries and territories to Ramsar's established mechanisms for sharing information and expertise on wetland management

## **2.5 Participation in the Ramsar-CBD River Basin Initiative**

The Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity are developing the River Basin Initiative (RBI), which is designed to facilitate the flow of information and sharing of knowledge about the management of freshwater resources and inland water ecosystems. The RBI is a follow up to Ramsar's Handbook 4 in the Wise Use 'toolkit' (see Action 2.1 above) "*Integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management*", and operates through an Internet list server for sharing advice, on-line 'conferences', and the development of information on 'demonstration sites'.

**Action:**

16. The Ramsar Convention Bureau will encourage the participation in the RBI by SPREP and those Pacific Island states and territories with freshwater wetlands and river systems.

## **2.6 Promoting wetland-related communication, education and public awareness**

The Ramsar Convention has an Outreach Programme to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands through communication, education and public awareness (CEPA). This is mandated by Resolution VII.9, adopted at Ramsar's COP7 which invited Ramsar Parties to develop a national wetland CEPA action plan to guide future activities, and to nominate national government and NGO CEPA focal points. The Resolution also emphasized the importance of wetland education centres as key locations for promoting wetland conservation through CEPA and identified Wetland Link International, a programme within The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, as the key instrument for developing an effective wetland centre network. It also sought to have the Bureau become a clearing house for CEPA material. In response, the Bureau has established an Outreach Web-site ([http://ramsar.org/outreach\\_index.htm](http://ramsar.org/outreach_index.htm)), which includes the contact lists for national CEPA focal points, wetland CEPA resource materials, useful CEPA links, information on the new WLI network and WLI's potential role in wetland education centre training modules, existing national wetland CEPA action plans, and an invitation to join one of the CEPA e-mail lists. Three electronic discussion groups (in English, French and Spanish) have been established that include not only the national CEPA focal points but also many others interested in wetland CEPA.

**Actions:**

17. The Ramsar Bureau and SPREP will exchange information, experiences and lessons learned on their respective activities within the broad area of wetland education, communication and public awareness.
18. SPREP will assist the Ramsar Bureau in disseminating information about the Convention's Outreach Programme and encourage Pacific Island countries and territories to make full use of the Ramsar guidelines (Ramsar's Wise Use 'toolkit',

Handbook 6) and Outreach Web site. Pacific island States will be urged to share any resource materials they have found particularly useful, and, for all interested persons to consider joining the Ramsar CEPA e-mail list.

19. The Ramsar Bureau will keep SPREP informed of the development of the WLI network and wetland education centre training plans and SPREP will encourage Pacific Island countries and territories with such centres to join the WLI network.
20. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will work together to promote suitable celebrations of World Wetlands Day (2 February) in the region.
21. SPREP will establish a regional wetland e-group to encourage the sharing of information and experience in wetland-related management among practitioners within the Oceania region.

## **2.7 Gaining an improved understanding of wetland resources to guide planning and management**

In 1993, Wetlands International published *A Directory of Wetlands in Oceania* which described those wetlands considered to be of special significance in the region. Since this time some countries have gathered improved information about their wetland resources and a number of global programs have begun (such as the Global International Waters Assessment – GIWA; the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, World Conservation Monitoring Centre’s Mangroves Atlas and Coral Reef Atlas) which aim to see water and wetland resources better described. Ramsar’s *Global review of wetland resources and priorities for wetland inventory* in 1999 undertook an initial review of wetland inventories in the Oceania region. Having all such information available to SPREP and the countries of the region will allow more focused actions, and also help to inform land use and water management planning. In addition, Ramsar’s COP8 will consider guidance that provides a “Framework for Wetland Inventory” which highlights a number of useful inventory methodologies that have already been used.

### **Action:**

22. The Ramsar Bureau and SPREP will exchange information they have on developments and current activities in relation to wetland inventory in the region, and, based on an assessment of this, determine the best way to move ahead to see the situation addressed. The involvement and assistance of Wetlands International, WWF, Birdlife International, IUCN, Conservation International, TNC and other relevant organizations operating in the region will be invited in preparing this review of the current status of inventory. (see 6. below in relation to assistance with seeking funding for national priorities).

## **3. Supporting the recognition and appropriate management of wetlands of international importance and other protected areas**

### **3.1 Expert guidance for identifying and managing Ramsar sites**

Ramsar’s Wise Use ‘toolkit’ contains as Handbook 7 the “*Strategic framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance*”. This will be further considered at COP8, with additional specific guidance adopted relating to coral reefs, mangroves, wet



grasslands, peatlands and mountain wetland ecosystems. Handbook 8 “*Frameworks for managing Wetlands of International Importance and other wetlands*” is also a valuable resource which can assist with the development of management plans and associated site monitoring. Further guidance in these areas will also be considered by Ramsar COP8.

#### **Actions:**

23. Once the additional guidance referred to above is adopted it will be made available to the countries and territories of the region (see 2.2 above also) to assist their efforts to identify and then move to designate appropriate sites as Wetlands of International Importance. This applies only to those States which are Ramsar Parties or considering such action (see 6.1 below).
24. Both SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau will provide, as their resources allow, advice and guidance to the countries and territories of the region in identifying their potential Wetlands of International Importance using the guidance referred to above. Ramsar’s International Organisation Partners will be invited to support these efforts (see MoC).

### **3.2 Ramsar sites and other wetland protected areas as demonstration sites for sustainable (wise) use**

Increasingly the world views Wetlands of International Importance as demonstration sites for the principle of sustainable development, or wise use as the Ramsar Convention labeled it in 1971. As such, it is important that resources are mobilized to allow these sites to be established, managed and recognized as models and exemplars. In addition, a range of other protected areas (World Heritage, Man and the Biosphere sites, national parks, marine reserves etc) can also serve as places to showcase the principle of sustainable use.

#### **Action:**

25. Ramsar and SPREP will seek the resources to see Ramsar and other suitable protected areas established and maintained as demonstration sites. This may involve collaboration with other ongoing programs (see 1.4 above) or the development of new funding proposals for submission to donors and development assistance agencies. Collaboration with the World Heritage centre and the Man and the Biosphere programme may also be pursued to advance this action.

## **4. Promoting international and regional cooperation**

### **4.1 Synergy and greater integration between global environment treaties**

Under this principle of cooperation the first action to be undertaken will be to promote and clarify the aspects of Ramsar’s partnership arrangements with other environment conventions. These partnerships are designed to promote more integrated implementation of these conventions so that the on-ground impacts are improved, to see the workloads associated with implementation of international conventions streamlined, and, to foster the greater flow of information, expertise and resources to support capacity building.

#### **Actions:**

26. The Ramsar Convention Bureau will supply to SPREP, and the countries and territories of the region, the specifics of:
- its MoU with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the associated 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Work Plan;
  - advice and resource information on the areas of common interest which exist between the Ramsar Convention and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and
  - the details and rationale of Ramsar's partnerships with the World Heritage Centre and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme; and
  - latest advice on the project pilot testing approaches to rationalizing the national reporting requirements under the biodiversity-related conventions (CBD, Ramsar, CITES, World Heritage and the Convention on Migratory Species) which is being advanced by UNEP and the WCMC, with close support and involvement from the Ramsar Convention.
27. The intention is that through this information, Pacific island states can move to identify ways to streamline and make more efficient their institutional frameworks for implementing these international conventions. It is acknowledged that for some countries this may require external assistance to put in place (see section 5 below).

#### **4.2 Links between the Apia Convention and the Ramsar Convention**

Consideration is being given at present to ways to energize the Apia Convention. These efforts may see moves to strengthen the operational links with relevant regional and international conventions such as Waigani, CBD, World Heritage and the Ramsar Convention.

#### **Action:**

28. SPREP will seek the direct input to the process of energizing the Apia Convention from the Ramsar Convention Bureau, with a view to promoting greater synergy between the conventions, and effectiveness with their implementation.

### **5. Assistance with resourcing for capacity building**

#### **5.1 Developing training initiatives in the region**

Many of the actions set down in this JWP focus on capacity building, which is consistent with the very high priority this issue has been given by both SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau. Training activities are a vital part of capacity building; training in terms of institutional and technical aspects of wetland management being acknowledged priorities. It is also recognized that training in-country and at regional centers such as the new SPREP facilities in Apia can form part of the overall training approach.

SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau acknowledge that there is a need to develop ongoing, long-term and reliable funding sources for wetland-related training activities under the umbrella of their MoC. Both parties to the MoC also acknowledge that there are a number of development assistance agencies actively supporting activities in the region. These include those from the developed countries of the region (Australia and New Zealand), those with territories in the region (the USA and France) and others which are currently supporting development assistance activities (Canada and Japan for example). While the allocation of resources by these agencies is very positive, Ramsar's Guidelines for International Cooperation seek to have the bilateral donors making more targeted contributions toward promoting the wise use of wetland areas.

#### **Actions:**

29. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will develop a project outline for regional capacity building initiatives for the Pacific Island nations, using Ramsar's experiences in other regions, and seek to have it supported and resourced by bilateral donors or other sources. The project outline will be shared with the countries and territories of the region for their input and the governments referred to above, all of which are Ramsar Parties, will be asked to consider financial support for this effort.
30. In the interim, SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will seek Australia's support to see the Asia-Pacific Wetland Manager's Training program continued, and for its future activities to provide enhanced support for appropriate training and capacity-building activities in the Pacific region to support the Ramsar-SPREP MoC.

### **6. Assistance to access funding support for national or territorial priorities**

#### **6.1 Assistance to access funding support**

In conjunction with 5 above, 'Resourcing for capacity building', SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau, will, as their resources allow, assist the Pacific Island countries and territories to develop and submit projects to suitable donors for undertaking actions which have been identified as national priorities for wetland conservation and sustainable use. For the dependent territories, the Ramsar Bureau will draw to the attention of the Parties concerned, the contents of the JWP and urge funding support for appropriate actions.

#### **Actions:**

31. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will endeavour to identify suitable funding sources and provide advice with project development so that the PICs and territories can progress their national or territorial priorities.
32. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will also encourage the developed countries of the region, and those with dependent territories to continue (where it applies), or escalate, their levels of support for national or territorial actions directed at promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

#### **6.2 Accessing Ramsar's Small Grants Fund**

This fund is available to Parties to the Convention and gives high priority support to capacity building and training-related activities. Papua New Guinea has received several grants through this program and used them to good effect in building enhanced wetland management capacity.

**Action:**

33. SPREP and the Ramsar Convention will provide advice to Ramsar Parties (and those considering accession – see 7 below) in the region with respect to applications to the SGF. Ramsar's IOP's (Wetlands International, WWF, IUCN and BirdLife International) will be asked to assist these efforts where they are able.

**7. Promoting accession to the Ramsar Convention, where appropriate**

**7.1 Seeking to support the expansion of Ramsar membership in the region**

A priority for the Ramsar Convention is to see more of the World's small island developing states become signatories to the Convention in order that they may gain more direct access to the tools, expertise and resources available through the convention, but also so they can become a stronger voice for the issues and concerns of small island states in the workings of the Convention.

However, SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau acknowledge that the decision to join an international convention is clearly one for each sovereign State to take, giving consideration to its own circumstances, needs and capacities.

**Actions:**

34. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will cooperate to provide States which are considering accession to the Convention on Wetlands information and advice on the relevant procedures, benefits and obligations that are entailed in accession to the Convention. As part of this action the Ramsar Bureau will make available to those countries considering accession, 'Ramsar Accession kits' to provide clear guidance with respect to the procedures required.
35. As requested by the second Ramsar Regional meeting, the Ramsar Bureau will seek to identify funds, either through donors, the developed countries of the region, or those with dependent territories to provide assistance and guidance to those countries wishing to consider or proceed toward accession.
36. The Ramsar Bureau, as also requested by the second Ramsar Regional meeting, will pursue mechanisms to build high level political support for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and the Ramsar Convention among the PICs and territories.
37. The existing Ramsar Parties in the region will be urged to escalate their efforts to encourage accession by non Parties, where these non Parties have expressed and interest in considering this action.

**8. Review procedures**

**Actions:**

38. While this JWP will operate for calendar years 2002-2003, a mid-term review of implementation will be prepared and circulated to all countries and territories of the Ramsar Oceania region in December 2002 for their information.
39. In the preparation of the JWP to follow this one – for the period 2004-2005, the views on regional priorities and required actions will be sought through appropriate mechanisms in the last quarter to 2003.

## 9. Implementation Plan

This JWP set out 39 actions, a number of which can be undertaken by SPREP and the Ramsar Convention within their existing resources. However, it is acknowledged that some of the proposed actions will require the injection of new resources if they are to come to fruition, while others can be undertaken more or less immediately. All actions are considered below with indications given for how they each will be advanced and the timeframes considered desirable.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframes</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>1. Collaboration for key policy and programmatic activities</b>		
<b>1.1 Fine tuning the second Ramsar Strategic Plan (2003-2008) to reflect the needs and aspirations of the Pacific Island States and territories</b>		
1. Comment and input to the second Ramsar Strategic Plan will be sought from the participants of the Ramsar Oceania Regional meeting (6-9 May 2002).	Consultations at regional meeting (6-8 May).	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP
2. SPREP will also assist the Ramsar Bureau with seeking comments and input from those States and territories which are unable to attend the Ramsar Oceania Regional. This input will be provided by the end of August 2002 at the latest.	Followup with countries not in attendance at regional meeting. Comments required by the end of August 2002	Ramsar Bureau, SPREP, Environment Australia
<b>1.2 Preparations for and participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development</b>		
3. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will exchange information on their respective priorities and goals for the WSSD, and;	To be completed by the end of June 2002.	Ramsar Bureau, SPREP
4. Where there are common interests, SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will work to assist one another in the lead up to, and at the conference itself, to see these goals achieved.	Once common interests identified (see above) these will be taken forward as appropriate to the meeting.	Ramsar Bureau, SPREP
5. The Ramsar Bureau will forward copies of its WSSD submission to all Pacific island countries and	As soon as possible but no later than the	Ramsar Bureau

territories for their information and appropriate followup actions.	end of June 2002.	
<b>1.3 Cooperation and working links with the Convention on Biological Diversity</b>		
6. In the development of its first joint work plan with CBD, SPREP will take into consideration the relevant actions set down in the Ramsar-CBD JWP to improve integration of approaches, and enhance opportunities for synergy and value-adding.	At the time this first joint work plan between CBD and SPREP is developed.	SPREP, with Ramsar's involvement as considered appropriate
7 If possible, appropriate activities identified through these JWPs will be pursued on a tri-lateral basis between SPREP, CBD and the Ramsar Bureau, with the agreement of all three parties.	To be resolved once action 6 above is completed.	SPREP, with Ramsar's involvement as considered appropriate
8. In the future, consideration will be given to more closely aligning the processes used to develop the JWPs between the parties.	To be determined once action 6 above is completed, and perhaps at the time of negotiating the next CBD-Ramsar JWP	Ramsar, with SPREP's involvement as considered appropriate
9. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will collaborate to ensure that the regional offices of the GEF implementing agencies (UNEP, UNDP and World Bank) are made aware of the SPREP-Ramsar MoC and this JWP, as well the desirability of seeing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans giving clear recognition of the wetland conservation and sustainable use aspirations upon which this JWP is based.	To be completed by the end of September 2002.	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau
<b>1.4 Seeking opportunities for synergy and closer collaboration in work programs</b>		
10. Through wide circulation and briefing of all staff within SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau, awareness will be raised, with program managers in particular, and opportunities identified for synergy. Where these emerge, they will be shared between the organizations and considered for inclusion in future JWPs. Advice regarding such future expansions to the scope of the JWP will be communicated to the countries and territories of the region to seek their views and input.	At the earliest opportunity, and thereafter in the lead up to the review of implementation and development of a revised JWP.	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau
11. As part of the 5 yearly review of the SPREP Regional Action Strategy on Nature Conservation, the Ramsar Bureau will be invited to provide its comments and input.	Ramsar input to be invited at the appropriate time.	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau
<b>2. Promoting the wise use of wetlands</b>		
<b>2.1 Making Ramsar's Wise Use 'toolkit' more accessible</b>		
12. The Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance, will provide copies of the Wise Use 'toolkit' to all	To the end of August 2002 to an initial list	Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance to

Pacific Island countries and territories (in English and French as appropriate), and other relevant bodies and organizations in the region. The Ramsar Bureau will seek to provide these in both the currently available hard copy form and also on CD-Rom to reduce the distribution costs and for ease of portability.	of suitable recipients provide by SPREP. Supplies also provided to SPREP for ongoing distribution. CD-Rom copies to be provided and distributed when available	distribute
<b>2.2 Additions to the Ramsar Wise Use 'toolkit'</b>		
13. The Ramsar Bureau, again with SPREP's assistance, will facilitate the distribution of the new guidance across the region once it is available (in English and French as appropriate), SPREP will operate as a regional 'warehouse' for such resource materials and facilitate distribution in an on-going capacity. .	As above – after Ramsar COP8 (November 2002) and the development of this guidance into resource documents etc	Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance to distribute
<b>2.3 Tailoring guidance to the needs and perspectives of the Pacific Island nations and territories</b>		
14. In the future SPREP will assist the Ramsar Bureau, the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (whichever is appropriate), to identify individuals and organizations within the South Pacific region with relevant expertise that can provide input and be involved in the development of guidance relating to implementation of the Convention	To take effect after Ramsar COP8 when new programs of work will be developed for the Bureau, Standing Committee and STRP.	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP
<b>2.4 Facilitating access to global and regional expertise in wetland management</b>		
15. The Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance, will promote greater access by the Pacific Island countries and territories to Ramsar's established mechanisms for sharing information and expertise on wetlands management	Information on these information sharing mechanisms to be distributed via the proposed e-group (see Action 21 below)	Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance
<b>2.5 Participation in the Ramsar-CBD River Basin Initiative</b>		
16. The Ramsar Convention Bureau will encourage the participation in the RBI by SPREP and the Pacific Island states and territories with river systems.	Information on the RBI and how to participate to be distributed via the proposed e-group (see Action 21 below)	Ramsar Bureau with assistance from Global Environment Centre
<b>2.6 Promoting wetland-related communication, education and public awareness</b>		
17. The Ramsar Bureau and SPREP will exchange information, experiences and lessons learned on	To be completed by the end of September	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP

their respective activities within the broad area of wetland education, communication and public awareness.	2002.	
18. SPREP will assist the Ramsar Bureau in disseminating information about the Convention's Outreach Programme and encourage Pacific Island countries and territories to make full use of the Ramsar guidelines (Ramsar's Wise Use 'toolkit', Handbook #6) and Outreach Web site. Pacific island States will be urged to share any resource materials they have found particularly useful, and, for all interested persons to consider joining the Ramsar CEPA e-mail list.	To be completed by the end of September 2002.	Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance
19. The Ramsar Bureau will keep SPREP informed of the development of the Wetlands Link International (WLI) network and wetland education centre training plans and SPREP will encourage Pacific Island countries with such centres to join the WLI network.	This is an ongoing activity.	Ramsar Bureau, with SPREP's assistance
20. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will work together to promote suitable celebrations of World Wetlands Day (2 February) in the region.	As soon as possible, and in time for WWD 2003.	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP
21. SPREP will establish a regional wetland e-group to encourage the sharing of information and experience in wetland-related management among practitioners within the Oceania region.	To be established by the end of June 2002.	SPREP
<b>2.7 Gaining an improved understanding of wetland resources to guide planning and management</b>		
22. The Ramsar Bureau and SPREP will exchange information they have on developments and current activities in relation to wetland inventory in the region, and, based on an assessment of this, determine the best way to move ahead to see the situation addressed. The involvement and assistance of Wetlands International, WWF, Birdlife International, IUCN, Conservation International and other relevant organizations operating in the region will be invited in preparing this review of the current status of inventory (see 6. below in relation to assistance with seeking funding for national priorities).	Timing cannot be specified as this action may require new resources.	Ramsar Bureau, SPREP, relevant organizations and interested governments.
<b>3. Supporting the recognition and appropriate management of wetlands of international importance and other protected areas</b>		
<b>3.1 Expert guidance for identifying and managing Ramsar sites</b>		
23. Once the additional guidance referred to under 2 above is adopted it will be made available to the	To take effect after Ramsar COP8 when	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP



countries and territories of the region (see 2.2 above also) to assist their efforts to identify and then move to designate appropriate sites as Wetlands of International Importance. This applies only to those states which are Ramsar Parties or considering such action (see 6.1 below).	this new guidance is available.	
24. Both SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Bureau will provide, as their resources allow, advice and guidance to the countries and territories of the region in identifying their potential Wetlands of International Importance using the guidance referred to above. Ramsar International Organisation Partner's will be invited to support these efforts (see MoC).	To take effect after Ramsar COP8 when this new guidance is available.	Ramsar Bureau, SPREP and Ramsar's IOP's and other interested organizations.
<b>3.2 Ramsar sites and other wetland protected areas as demonstration sites for sustainable (wise)use</b>		
25. Ramsar and SPREP will seek the resources to see Ramsar and other suitable protected areas established and maintained as demonstration sites. This may involve collaboration with other ongoing programs (see 1.4 above) or the development of new funding proposals for submission to donors and development assistance agencies. Collaboration with the World Heritage centre and the Man and the Biosphere programme may also be pursued to advance this action.	As soon as resources allow.	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau. This will need to be reviewed regularly to determine the resources available for advancing this action.
<b>4. Promoting international and regional cooperation</b>		
<b>4.1 Synergy and greater integration between global environment treaties</b>		
26. The Ramsar Convention Bureau will supply to SPREP, and the countries/territories of the region, the specifics of their working relations with CBD, UNFCCC, World Heritage Centre and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program and UNEP and the WCMC over harmonized national report preparations.	Initial advice to be provided on working relations with CBD, UNFCCC, World Heritage Centre and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program by the end of July 2002. Advice on harmonized national reporting to be supplied once the current pilot projects are finalized.	Ramsar Bureau.
27. The intention is that through this information Pacific island states can move to identify ways to streamline and make more efficient their institutional frameworks for implementing these	See action 25 below which is intended to relate to institutional level training as much	

international conventions. It is acknowledged that for some countries this may require external assistance to be put in place (see section 5 below).	as technical level training.	
<b>4.2 Links between the Apia Convention and the Ramsar Convention</b>		
28. SPREP will seek the direct input to the process of energizing the Apia Convention from the Ramsar Convention Bureau, with a view to promoting greater synergy between the conventions, and effectiveness with their implementation.	To be determined by progress with this review.	SPREP.
<b>5. Assistance with resourcing for capacity building</b>		
<b>5.1 Developing training initiatives in the region</b>		
29. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will develop a project outline for regional capacity building initiatives for the Pacific Island nations, using Ramsar's experiences of Wetlands for the Future, Swiss Grant for Africa and MedWet, and seek to have it supported and resourced by bilateral donors or other sources. The project outline will be shared with the countries and territories of the region for their input and the governments referred to above, all of which are Ramsar Parties, will be asked to consider financial support for this effort.	To be developed by the end of June 2002. As a first step a project concept for this will be developed and circulated for comment to the countries and territories of the region.	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP. **
30. In the interim, SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will seek Australia's support to see the Asia-Pacific Wetland Manager's Training program continued, and for its future activities to provide enhanced support for appropriate training and capacity-building activities in the Pacific region to support the Ramsar-SPREP MoC.	As soon as possible. This program is about to enter its third and final year of funding, unless renewed by Environment Australia	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau.
<b>6. Assistance to access funding support for national or territorial priorities</b>		
<b>6.1 Assistance to access funding support</b>		
31. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will endeavour to identify suitable funding sources and provide advice with project development so that the PICs and territories can progress their national or territorial priorities.	Timing to be determined by requests from the the PICs and territories	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP
32. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will also encourage the developed countries of the region, and those with dependent territories to continue (where it applies) or escalate their levels of support for national or territorial actions directed at promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands.	The Ramsar Bureau will seek to do this through its COP8 in November 2002. SPREP through appropriate mechanisms	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP
<b>6.2 Accessing Ramsar's Small Grants Fund</b>		

33. SPREP and the Ramsar Convention will provide advice to Ramsar Parties (and those considering accession – see 7. below) in the region with respect to applications to the SGF. Ramsar's IOP's, Wetlands International, WWF, IUCN and BirdLife International will be asked to assist these efforts where they are able.	Completed for Palua and Fiji. Others to be assisted as resources allow.	Ramsar Bureau and the Ramsar IOPs as appropriate. **
<b>7. Promoting accession to the Ramsar Convention, where appropriate</b>		
<b>7.1 Seeking to support the expansion of Ramsar membership in the region</b>		
34. SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau will cooperate to provide states which are considering accession to the Convention information and advice on the relevant procedures, benefits and obligations that are entailed in accession to the Convention. As part of this action the Ramsar Bureau will make available to those countries considering accession, 'Ramsar Accession kits' to provide clear guidance with respect to the procedures required.	Accession kits to be provided by the end of July 2002. Otherwise this is an ongoing activity.	Ramsar Bureau and SPREP. **
35. As requested by the second Ramsar Regional meeting, the Ramsar Bureau will seek to identify funds, either through donors, the developed countries of the region, or those with dependent territories to provide assistance and guidance to those countries wishing to consider or proceed toward accession.	This is an ongoing activity.	Ramsar Bureau
36. The Ramsar Bureau, as also requested by the second Ramsar Regional meeting, will pursue mechanisms to build high level political support for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and the Ramsar Convention among the PICs and territories.	As and when resources are available.	Ramsar Bureau
37. The existing Ramsar Parties in the region will be urged to escalate their efforts to encourage accession by non Parties, where these non Parties have expressed an interest in considering this action.	By the end of July 2002.	Ramsar Bureau
<b>8. Review procedures</b>		
38. While this JWP will operate for calendar years 2002-2003, a mid-term review of implementation will be prepared and circulated to all countries and territories of the Ramsar Oceania region in December 2002 for their information.	By December 2002	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau
39. In the preparation of the JWP to follow this one – for the period 2004-2005, the views on regional priorities and required actions will be sought through appropriate mechanisms in the last quarter to 2003.	During the last quarter to 2003	SPREP and the Ramsar Bureau

\*\* The Australian Government, which currently represents the Oceania region on the Ramsar Standing Committee (and is also its Chair) has engaged the services of MainStream Environmental Consulting operated by the former Deputy Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, Dr Bill Phillips, to assist with advancing some key aspects of this JWP in the short term.

Included among those actions is providing advice to those Pacific Island countries which are at present considering accession to the Ramsar Convention (Action 24 above) and assisting SPREP and countries to progress Actions 25, 27 and 28.