



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

**Resolution X.29**

**Clarifying the functions of agencies and related bodies  
implementing the Convention at the national level**

1. RECALLING that each Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention designates within its government an agency, referred to as the Administrative Authority, to take responsibility for national implementation of the Convention;
2. ALSO RECALLING Recommendation 5.7 (1993) which encourages the Contracting Parties to establish or recognize national committees, according to the specific needs of each Party, to support the implementation of the Convention at the national level;
3. FURTHER RECALLING Resolutions VII.4 (1999), VIII.5 (2002), IX.5 (2005) and X.11 (2008) which encourage synergies and cooperation with other relevant conventions, including the harmonization of information management infrastructure;
4. FURTHER RECALLING Recommendation 4.5 (1990) on the critical role of education and training in the mobilization of human resources for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands;
5. WELCOMING the efforts of the Secretariat and the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to increase the engagement of STRP National Focal Points in the scientific and technical work of the Convention;
6. RECALLING the conclusions of the preparatory meeting for the African Region for the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, which invited the Secretariat to clarify the terms of reference of relevant national implementing agencies and related bodies;
7. WELCOMING the production of a training tool for Ramsar National Focal Points and National Wetland Committees in francophone African countries through a project led by the Atelier Technique des Espaces Naturels (ATEN), funded by the French government and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, and the subsequent provision of funding by Switzerland for its translation into English, and HOPEFUL that Contracting Parties or other donors will similarly offer to fund its translation into Spanish, in order to make it globally available in the Convention's three official languages;

8. RECOGNIZING the importance for the Convention of all efforts made by the Contracting Parties to coordinate the implementation of the Convention among relevant competent authorities and other bodies at the national level; and
9. DESIRING to clarify and harmonize the general functions of the main Ramsar national implementing agencies and related bodies with those responsible for implementing other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements, with a view to effective achievement of their respective objectives, as further stressed also in Resolution X.11;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

10. REAFFIRMS the principal role of each Contracting Party's designated Administrative Authority in ensuring the ongoing representation of that Party in the Convention and for the implementation of the Convention at national level;
11. DECIDES to change the wording "daily contact" in the designated Administrative Authority to "National Focal Point";
12. INVITES the Contracting Parties, as appropriate in light of their individual circumstances and capacities, to follow the elements provided in the annex to this Resolution, which present different possible areas of implementation of the Convention at the national level;
13. URGES Contracting Parties for whom implementation of the Convention occurs significantly through provincial, state or other subnational governments to establish or strengthen mechanisms for involving subnational agencies in the implementation of the Convention, for example through identification of focal points in such agencies and inclusion of such focal points on National Ramsar Committees and equivalent bodies;
14. RECOMMENDS that National Ramsar or National Wetland Committees should include, in addition to the considerations referred to in Recommendation 5.7 (1993), full participation by the nominated National Focal Points for Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) and the nominated National Focal Point for the STRP; and
15. ENCOURAGES the Secretariat in its efforts to develop the necessary tools for strengthening the capacities of the National Focal Points, CEPA National Focal Points, STRP National Focal Points, and National Ramsar/Wetland Committees, and WELCOMES the interest of relevant donors in supporting those efforts, especially in developing countries.

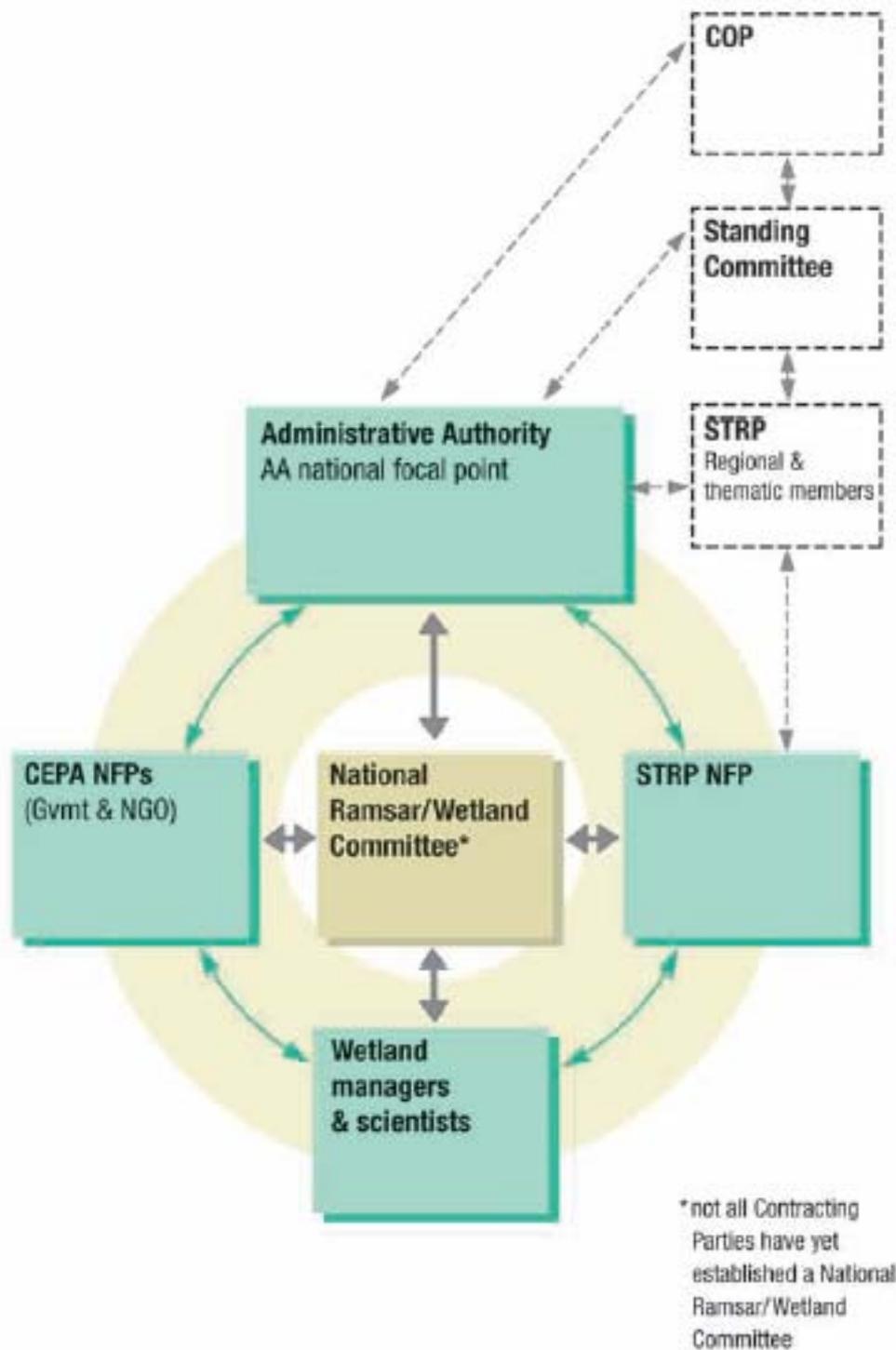
## Annex

### Summary of the general functions of national implementing agencies and related bodies

1. This Annex provides non-prescriptive descriptions of the general functions of key Ramsar Convention national implementing agencies and related bodies. As a minimum, each Contracting Party should appoint an Administrative Authority, a National Focal Point, and National Focal Points for the STRP and for CEPA. It is recommended that each Party should also consider the establishment of a National Ramsar/Wetland Committee.

| Implementing agency / other relevant body | General functions   | Key source documents   |
|---|---|--|
| Administrative Authority                  | <p>The Administrative Authority (AA) is the government agency of each Contracting Party entrusted by the national government with the implementation of the Convention at national level. The AA is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ensuring the ongoing representation</b> of the Contracting Party in the Convention.</li> <li>• <b>coordinating national actions by all relevant players for the implementation of the Convention by, <i>inter alia</i>:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) sharing information and exchanging ideas with relevant organizations, including governmental agencies, civil society and donors;</li> <li>ii) designating wetlands for the Ramsar List;</li> <li>iii) organizing appropriate management of these sites;</li> <li>iv) organizing the preparation and adoption of a national wetland policy for wetlands and facilitating the implementation of the policy by all relevant organizations;</li> <li>v) promoting Ramsar values, including approaches to the wise use of wetlands, at the national level.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>guiding and supporting relevant institutional capacity-building at subnational level.</b></li> </ul> <p>Above all, the AA should liaise with other competent government agencies with responsibilities relevant to wetlands and other natural resource issues, with a view to strengthening the implementation of the Ramsar Convention.</p> <p>Liaison with national focal points of other multilateral environmental agreements is another key function.</p> | <p>Texts of the Convention</p> <p>This task statement and roadmap of the National Focal Point; Brochure on NFPs (2007)</p> |

|                                   |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
|                                   | <p>The Administrative Authority generally appoints a person to act as a <b>National Focal Point for the Convention</b>.</p> <p>Under the direct authority of the AA, the National Focal Point represents the Contracting Party. The National Focal Point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>liaises regularly between the Contracting Party government and the Secretariat of the Convention;</b></li> <li>• <b>assists in the coordination the implementation of the Convention at the national level.</b></li> </ul>   |   |
| STRP National Focal Point         | The National Focal Point for STRP (Scientific and Technical Review Panel) is a recognized and committed technical expert in wetlands of the government or some another entity, appointed by the Administrative Authority. STRP NFPs primarily liaise between regional members of the Panel and national networks of other competent experts.   | Resolutions VII.2, VIII.28 (including terms of reference for STRP NFPs), IX.11 and X.9; Brochure on NFPs (2007) |
| CEPA National Focal Points        | The National Focal Points for CEPA are recognized experts in communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) working in government entities or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Two CEPA National Focal Points are appointed by the Administrative Authority: one governmental CEPA NFP and one non-governmental CEPA NFP. Together, they are the lead, at the national level, for the development and implementation of national CEPA programs or action plans on wetland areas of particular interest.  | Resolutions VII.9, VIII.30, and X.8; Brochure on NFPs (2007)  |
| National Ramsar/Wetland Committee | <p>The National Ramsar Committee (NRC) or national wetland committee is entrusted with the provision of guidance and advice on the national implementation of the Convention and the COP Resolutions. Such committees can also serve as a platform for national programmes relating to CEPA and to the work of the STRP. To act in the most efficient manner, national committees should include a broad representation of wetland, water and other relevant sectors and representatives of policy, science and management functions.</p> <p>The composition and structure of NRCs may differ between Contracting Parties.</p> <p>It is recommended also that National Committees establish good working relationships with, or include in their membership, the national focal points of other multilateral environmental agreements as well as relevant funding organizations, as appropriate.</p> | Recommendation 5.7; Brochure on NFPs (2007)   |



### Support tools

2. To assist the Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention at the national level, the Secretariat could produce a useful “Memorandum for the Administrative Authority National Focal Point” as well as examples of the composition and operation of National Ramsar Committees.

3. Also, a platform specifically designed for communication and exchange of information between National Focal Points could be developed on the Ramsar Web site.
4. Finally, the development of tools to be shared by the Ramsar Convention and other relevant conventions is to be encouraged.