

**CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

**30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee  
Gland, Switzerland, 13-16 January 2004**

**DOC. SC30-4**

Agenda item 6.1

**Report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel**

***Action requested:* The Standing Committee is invited to receive the Report of the Chair of the STRP and to weigh the issues identified as arising from the implementation of the STRP's *modus operandi*, with a view possibly to the preparation of a revised *modus operandi* for CoP9 consideration.**

1. This report covers the first seven months of the work of the STRP since it met for the first time during this triennium in April 2003. It first makes some general observations on progress and then identifies a number of key issues emerging from the experience to date of applying the STRP's *modus operandi* adopted by CoP8 Resolution VIII.28. Information on the progress of each of the tasks being undertaken by the Panel's Working Groups and other processes established by the Panel, in the form of tabular summaries, is provided as an Annex.
2. A report on progress in the implementation and work of the STRP Support Service is provided separately in DOC. SC30-5.

**General progress**

3. The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, held on 8-11 April 2003, reviewed the tasks allocated to it by CoP8 and previous CoPs and the priorities established for these tasks by the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee.
4. The STRP established six Working Groups to undertake the substantive work for each of the six high priority areas identified to the Panel by the Standing Committee. Two co-leads for each Working Group were appointed by the Chair of the STRP. The Working Groups are as follows:

	<b>Co-leads</b>
Working Group 1: Wetland inventory and assessment	Max Finlayson (Australia) & Lijuan Cui (China)
Working Group 2: Wise use concept	Steve Edwards (IUCN) & Randy Milton (Canada)
Working Group 3: Water resource management	Heather MacKay (South Africa) & Rebecca Tharme (IWMI)
Working Group 4: Ramsar site designation	David Stroud (UK) & Dick Ho (Malaysia)

Working Group 5: Wetland management	Francisco Rilla (Uruguay) & Frank Alberts (RIZA-Netherlands)
Working Group 6: Assessing the effectiveness of implementation of the Convention	Teresita Borges (Cuba) & David Pritchard (BirdLife)

5. In the course of the meeting, each Working Group established the scope of, and mechanisms for, each of its requested tasks; identified timeframes and lead persons for undertaking these tasks for delivery to the Standing Committee and CoP9; established whether a mid-term workshop or workshops would be needed to progress its work; and identified for which tasks it would need additional expertise and/or resources.
6. The STRP also established mechanisms for addressing high priority cross-cutting issues of communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) and agriculture in the work of each of the six Working Groups.
7. The STRP also agreed ways and means for progressing some of the work indicated by the Standing Committee as lower priority, with the exception of work on incentives, through the identification of a lead organization or organizational representative to develop the work requested; agreed mechanisms for delivering the ongoing tasks of the Panel; identified several key strategic issues for the Convention in the future; and identified tasks which it proposed to defer until the 2005-2008 triennium.
8. The STRP's proposed Work Plan 2003-2005 was approved by circulation by the members of the Standing Committee in May 2003.
9. Despite the helpful prioritization of work areas made by the Standing Committee, it must be noted that within the six areas directed as high priority there still are a very large number of substantive specific tasks, which involve the preparation by the Panel of some 26 major technical reports, reviews and guidelines for Parties. It needs to be recognized that this is a very challenging programme of work for the Panel to complete given its current capacities and levels of resourcing.
10. Under the STRP *modus operandi* approved by CoP8, the expert Working Groups are now working largely through electronic discussion mechanisms until the next and final meeting of the Panel during this triennium in December 2004. However, all Working Groups have now indicated that they wish to hold a mid-term workshop in mid-2004 to review and revise draft materials.
11. Subsequent to its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and the approval of its Work Plan 2003-2005, co-leads and members of the Working Groups have been further defining terms of reference, scope, contents and timeframes for a number of their tasks, and further identifying which tasks require additional funding for their implementation.
12. As planned, STRP's Working Group 6 on the effectiveness of implementation of the Convention has completed the first phase of its work, and a separate paper proposing a suite of indicators of Convention effectiveness has been prepared by the Working Group

co-leads with the assistance of the Secretariat for the Standing Committee's consideration (see DOC. SC30-7).

13. To facilitate the work of the Working Groups, the STRP Support Service, provided by Wetlands International under contract from the Ramsar Secretariat, has established a mini-Web site, with separate pages of resource materials, access to a searchable experts' database, and a discussion forum with associated e-mail listserver for each Expert Working Group. Similar mechanisms have been established by the STRP Support Service for other work areas in the STRP's work plan 2003-2005. The STRP Web site is password accessible to all members and observers of the STRP and to those additional experts who have been invited by the co-leads of each Expert Working Group to contribute to the work of their groups.
14. The STRP Support Service has been assiduous in assisting Working Groups with utilising the facilities of the STRP Web site and in reminding groups of their established deadlines, as well as in reporting on progress to the STRP Chair and Vice-Chair and the Ramsar Secretariat.
15. The Working Groups have now identified that a significant number of their tasks require additional resources to engage professional assistance in preparing draft guidelines and other reports and materials. These tasks and their estimated costs have been compiled by the STRP Support Service and provided to the Ramsar Secretariat, which is currently seeking funds to undertake this work through voluntary contributions from Parties and others. An update on progress on this fundraising will be provided to the Standing Committee at its 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Strategic issues**

16. An important ongoing priority task for the Panel is the identification of key additional strategic scientific and technical issues that should be considered by the Panel during the triennium (Annex to Resolution VIII.28). At its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting the Panel identified seven such issues and established a mechanism for bringing these to the attention of the Standing Committee and CoP (see section E of the Annex to this report). Importantly, the Panel recognized that in providing its advice on strategic issues it should highlight scientific and technical challenges for the Convention as a whole, as well as identifying future tasks for the Panel itself.
17. This strategic advice on future scientific and technical issues will be included in the Report to CoP9 of the Chair of the STRP. The Panel will also consider preparing a draft CoP9 Resolution on these matters for consideration by the Standing Committee.

### **Issues arising from the current *modus operandi* of the STRP 2003-2005**

#### **Involvement of appointed members**

18. It is a serious concern that several Working Group co-leads and the STRP Support Service report that the level of engagement of a significant number of the appointed members of the Panel in the work of the Panel and its Groups has been extremely low or non-existent. Despite the efforts of the Secretariat and Standing Committee to ensure that those experts appointed in their own right to the Panel are willing and able to contribute fully to the

work of the Panel, this is a repeat of the situation which occurred in the last triennium. Whilst the appointed members are not, under the *modus operandi*, expected to lead in preparing substantive materials, it can be anticipated that they must have the capacity and interest at least to review and comment on relevant materials (at this stage such as task terms of reference, discussion papers, etc.) posted on the STRP Web site. With notable exceptions, this is not happening.

19. The removal in the current *modus operandi* of a mid-term full meeting of the Panel also means that there is little opportunity to better engage appointed members during the period when the main preparatory drafting work and consideration of draft materials takes place. The proposal by most Working Groups to hold mid-term workshops (in mid-2004, if resources permit) to review progress and draft texts may help the process. However, in the core budget for STRP support there is only a small sum (Sfr 20,000) allocated for 2004 for costs of sponsored member support, and if the present very limited input from many of these members continues, they are unlikely to be able to contribute significantly to the workshop process.
20. Therefore, the Standing Committee may wish to consider whether the current structure, and the substantial core budget line for sponsored STRP member support for meeting attendance, offers the most efficient and cost-effective *modus operandi* for the STRP for the next triennium. There is a case for considering a substantial overhaul of how scientific and technical materials are prepared for consideration by the Standing Committee and CoP. This also has relevance to the work of the Standing Committee's Subgroup on Resolution VIII.45.
21. One model to consider might be that for any scientific and technical topic indicated as a high priority by the Standing Committee, a small Working Group is immediately established by the Ramsar Secretariat and STRP Support Service, and a lead expert or experts identified who is willing and able to draft each substantive paper required. Each Working Group would then meet in one or more mid-term workshops to review and revise draft materials, before these are sent for peer review to a wider network including through the STRP National Focal Points. Experts representing their region/subregion (on a pro-rata basis, as currently) would then meet as the STRP to consider and approve final draft materials for transmission to the Standing Committee and CoP. For the first year of the triennium, this could have the advantage of freeing up the core budget allocation for sponsored appointed members' participation in meetings, which might then be made available for at least partially funding the expert drafting of materials.

### **STRP Support Service**

22. Wetlands International is to be congratulated for its rapid establishment of the STRP Support Service, including in preparation for the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the STRP, and its further work, notably in establishing the STRP Support Service Web site, and updating and reminding leads of each task on progress needed, and keeping the Secretariat and Chair and Vice-Chair of STRP up to date on progress. This work is significantly assisting the Secretariat in providing support capacity for developing the substantive work required of the Panel.
23. Some elements of the Support Service work have proved harder to implement, notably in identifying and engaging input from additional global experts and from external expert

networks, including Specialist Groups. In addition, it has proved essential for the Secretariat, notably the Deputy Secretary General, to continue to provide advice and guidance on some of the STRP's work areas, particularly in relation to the history and development of Convention materials and other related Convention processes.

24. As is anticipated in Resolution VIII.28, the operations of the STRP Support Service will be kept under review by the Secretariat and Wetlands International, in consultation with the STRP Chair and Vice-Chair, Working Group leads and other STRP participants, so as to bring forward any proposals for changes to the Support Service operations for discussion, in the first instance by the Panel at its 12<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 2004.

#### **Funding of the Panel's work**

25. As had been anticipated, although a number of major tasks set for the STRP are being undertaken by members or observers working in a voluntary, unpaid capacity, the Working Groups have indicated that work on a significant number of products requires additional funding in order to engage the help of global experts in drafting materials on these topics. In addition, further resources will be needed to fully cover the costs of mid-term workshops indicated by the Working Groups as required in mid-2004 to progress their work.
26. Since there is no core 2003-2005 budget allocation for this substantive work, to fully deliver the STRP's tasks requires additional, voluntary contributions to be made. The Secretariat has been seeking such additional funding from Parties and is grateful to the Government of Sweden for its support in this matter, which has ensured that several key areas of STRP work are now being progressed. However, additional resources are still required, without which not all high priority STRP tasks will be completed during this triennium.
27. In addition, the time needed to seek such funding, subsequent to all Working Groups having established which tasks need funding and how much, delays the commencement of the work itself. The issue of adequate financing of the STRP's work continues to be one of the main impediments to the efficient and effective delivery of scientific and technical guidance to the Convention.
28. It may be useful to request the STRP Support Service to assess and advise the Chair and Vice-Chair on the financial mechanisms used by other conventions to engage experts and draft necessary documentation for consideration by their scientific and technical subsidiary bodies.

#### **Other issues**

29. Through two nominated focal points, the STRP has been actively involved in the development of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA). Discussion is now focusing on how the Assessment can best contribute to the work of the STRP over the next 12 months, including through increasing the contribution of experts from the MA process to relevant specific tasks being undertaken by the STRP's Working Groups and contribution to, and review of, the MA's Synthesis Report for the Ramsar Convention. It is anticipated that the STRP and the Assessment will be able to demonstrate many mutual benefits from this ongoing collaboration.

30. Similar mutual advantage is being developed through collaboration with the Japanese (JAXA) and European (ESA) space agencies to develop satellite-based tools for mapping and assessing the condition of wetlands. The expertise and knowledge gained through these programmes will provide a valuable contribution to the STRP's work on ecological character and change in ecological character, including the status and trends of Ramsar sites. This work would not be possible without the contributions made or being planned by these agencies.

## Annex to DOC. SC30-4

### Progress on tasks in the STRP Work Plan 2003-2005

This Annex provides a summary of progress to date (the end of November 2003) by the Panel and its Working Groups on each task approved in the Panel's Work Plan 2003-2005. An update on any further progress by January 2004 will be provided to the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee. Work agreed to be deferred until the 2005-2008 triennium is not included in this progress report.

#### A. High priority areas of work

##### Working Group 1: Wetland inventory and assessment

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>A. Wetland Inventory</b>		
<b>1.1</b> Contribute to update of the <i>Global Review of Wetland Resources and Priorities for Wetland Inventory</i> , reporting to CoP9 [1.1.5]	Progress report and summary of regional/global inventory status. Lead: Bureau/Wetlands International	Project concept will be developed by Wetlands International and Ramsar Secretariat in early 2004.
<b>1.2</b> Further review application of remote sensing data, low-cost GIS, and classification systems in wetland inventory, reporting to CoP9 [R1.1.i] (Resolution VIII.6)	Guidelines on use of remote sensing and GIS methods in wetland inventory Lead: Max Finlayson.	First stage outline for the review paper prepared.
<b>B. Wetland Assessment</b>		
Further review and, as appropriate, develop guidance and report to CoP9, concerning identified gaps and disharmonies in defining and reporting the ecological character of wetlands through inventory, assessment,		

<p>monitoring and management of Ramsar sites and other wetlands, giving priority to advice and guidance on practical matters on issues that should include:</p>	<p>i) wetland classification review</p> <p>ii) revised Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type</p> <p>iii) review and recommendations on continuing use of biogeography in RIS</p>	<p>i) review paper in draft with workshop to discuss review planned for July 2004</p> <p>ii) No progress achieved, awaits completion of i) above</p> <p>iii) Review in draft</p>
<p><b>1.3</b> the Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type, (bio)geographical regionalization schemes, and their application in defining and reporting the ecological character of wetlands</p>	<p>Lead: Vic Semeniuk (invited expert)</p>	
<p><b>1.4</b> determining the ecological character of Ramsar sites and other wetlands, including techniques for delineating and mapping wetlands and for evaluating their values and functions and goods and services</p>	<p>i) Guidelines for defining the “ecological character” of Ramsar sites and other wetlands Lead: Max Finlayson.</p> <p>ii) Guidelines on techniques for delineating and mapping wetlands Lead: UNEP-WCMC &amp; WI</p> <p>iii) Guidelines for evaluating the values and functions, goods and services provided by wetlands Lead: Lijuan Cui (with IUCN input)</p>	<p>i) Australian guidelines under review for broader adaptation</p> <p>ii) Proposal developed under discussion between UNEP-WCMC, Bureau and WI</p> <p>iii) Draft paper provided by invited expert Dolf de Groot (NL)</p>
<p><b>1.5</b> Incorporation of assessment and management processes and practical methods (including multi-scalar methods for wetland assessment and monitoring) developed by other programmes, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), into the series of Ramsar Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands</p>	<p>None – deferral to next triennium, to await availability of relevant MA products</p>	

<p><b>1.6</b> Practical methods, including indicators, for monitoring wetlands and for the rapid assessment of wetland biodiversity, including both inland waters and coastal and marine systems</p>	<p>i) practical indicators for monitoring wetlands</p> <p>ii) rapid assessment guidelines: inland waters and marine/coastal</p>	<p>i) Proposal developed by IUCN-SSC and UNEP-WCMC and under review by WRI</p> <p>ii) East African assessment example under development by IUCN-SSC</p>
<p>Lead: IUCN-SSC &amp; UNEP-WCMC</p>		
<p><b>1.8</b> Consider consolidation of existing Convention guidance and develop an integrated framework for wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring [R1.2.ix] &amp;</p>	<p>i) An Integrated Ramsar framework for wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring</p> <p>ii) Report on harmonized definitions and terms in Ramsar guidance</p>	<p>i) Two papers have been contributed by eriss which will be adapted to a Ramsar framework</p> <p>ii) Millennium Ecosystem Assessment conceptual framework to be used as source</p>
<p>Harmonization of definitions and terms throughout the suite of Ramsar guidance on inventory, assessment, monitoring and management of the ecological character of wetlands [R1.2.viii] (Resolution VIII.7)</p>	<p>Lead: Max Finlayson, eriss &amp; Wetlands International</p>	
<p><b>1.9</b> Contribute to, review, and utilize the work of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in reporting to CoP9 on wetland status and trends [1.2.1]</p>	<p>Guidance and review of MA's products. Incorporation of MA guidance into STRP products.</p>	<p>Following discussions with MA Secretariat, it is planned that relevant MA experts will contribute to a number of STRP's tasks. STRP will be requested to contribute to, and review draft of, MA's Synthesis Report for Ramsar, during 2004.</p>
<p>Leads: Max Finlayson and Douglas Taylor.</p>		
<p><b>1.10</b> Contribute to assessment of contribution of Ramsar sites and other wetlands to fisheries maintenance, and recommend sustainable management practices [1.2.6]</p>	<p>i) summary of Ramsar sites with respect to fisheries</p> <p>ii) short guidance on sustainable management practices for inland and nearshore coastal fisheries</p>	<p>i) Under discussion between IUCN and World Fish Centre, as a possible student project</p> <p>ii) Workshop planned for December 2004 based on the outcome of the summary in i).</p>
<p>Lead: IUCN</p>		
<p><b>1.11</b> Develop methodologies for vulnerability assessment</p>	<p>Report on vulnerability assessment</p>	<p>Concept paper under development by UNEP-WCMC</p>

of wetlands to change in ecological character (incl. to impacts of climate change, alien species invasion and agricultural practices) [1.2.4]	methodologies, and summary of early warning systems on wetlands	(Lara Miles)
Lead: UNEP-WCMC		
<b>C. Monitoring the condition of Ramsar sites, including application of Article 3.2 and Montreux Record</b>		
<b>1.12</b> Prepare further consolidated guidance on the overall process of detecting, reporting and responding to change in ecological character, including guidelines for determining when such a change is too trivial to require reporting, having regard to the reasons why a given site is important, and the conservation objectives set for it [R11.2.ii] (Resolution VIII.8)	Supplementary guidance on Article 3.2 requirements for Integrated Inventory Assessment and Monitoring Framework (see task 1.8)	WI has drafted concept and aims to deliver draft text in February 2004
Lead: STRP Support Service/Secretariat		
<b>1.13</b> Prepare an analysis and report of the status and trends in the ecological character of sites in the Ramsar List, and set, as far as possible, the status and trends of Ramsar sites within the wider context of the status and trends of marine, coastal and inland wetlands, drawing upon the results of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and other assessment initiatives as appropriate [R11.2.ix] (Resolution VIII.8)	i) Report of state of knowledge base on status and trends of Ramsar sites  ii) Report of pilot status and trends test for selected Ramsar sites	No progress reported on i) and ii), but developing this task has now been included in work plan for WI Inventory team for 2004, and products developed for 50 Ramsar sites through the European Space Agency's "GlobWetland" now being initiated will contribute.
Lead: Wetlands International		

## Working Group 2: Wise use concept

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>2.1</b> Review the Wise use concept, its applicability and consistency with sustainable development objectives [3.1.1]	Review, and as necessary reformulation, of the Ramsar wise use concept and Guidelines, in relation to the CBD Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Use	WG2 co-leads, with input from STRP Chair and Secretariat, have further reviewed the proposed approach and are developing a revised scope for task 2.1, in relation to linking Wise Use guidance with CBD's materials and

<p><b>2.2</b> Compile advice, methods and best practice studies on wise use of wetlands, including application of the ecosystem approach [3.12]</p> <p><b>2.3</b> Develop new tools to assist Parties with the implementation of the wise use principle [17.1.5]</p> <p><b>2.4</b> Contribute to technology transfer initiatives for sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems [R3.1.iv]</p>	<p>Principles, comparable systems associated with other global conventions, WSSD goals, Sustainable Development principles, ICZM, IWRM, etc.</p> <p>Lead: Steve Edwards &amp; IUCN-CEM</p> <p>Report for CoP9 on “necessary conditions” which must be in place to assist Contracting Parties implement the wise use concept</p> <p>New tools based upon identified need, using a “bottom-up” approach.</p> <p>None</p>	<p>the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment’s Conceptual Framework; they will seek expert consultant to prepare draft document which will now incorporate significant elements of tasks 2.2 and 2.3.</p> <p>See 2.1 above</p> <p>See 2.1 above</p> <p>The Secretariat is contributing to UNFF/ITTO guidance on mangrove technology transfer, which will be made available to all Contracting Parties.</p>
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### Working Group 3: Water resource management

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>3.1 River basin management:</b> Review case studies compiled through the River Basin Initiative and other sources and prepare additional guidance (as necessary) on integrating wetlands, biodiversity and river basin management [3.4.3]	i) Compilation and review of case studies ii) Additional guidelines for Parties on wetlands and basin management, if required  Lead: Jorge Jimenez	i) ToR to be developed by focal point with assistance of STRP Deputy Chair by December 2003, followed by a briefing document to guide the Support Service in compiling case studies  ii) No progress reported
<b>3.2 Dams:</b> Develop guidelines for considering full environmental, social and economic impacts of large dam construction on wetland and river systems, for CoP9 [3.4.4]	None [some additional guidance may be included in task 3.1 products]	
<b>3.3</b> Prepare report on <b>environmental flow methodologies</b> , to assist in management of dam-related	i) Review of environmental flow methodologies, for 1) rivers, and 2) other	i) IWMI (Rebecca Tharme) is drafting the review

impacts, for CoP9 [R3.4.v] (Resolution VIII.2)	wetland types/components	ii) STRP Vice- Chair has contacted proposed authors, but no further progress reported
	ii) Guidelines for determination of environmental flows	iii) No progress reported
	iii) Guidelines for implementation of environmental flows (issues paper only)	
<b>3.4 Water allocation and management:</b> Contribute to report to CoP9 on successes achieved and lessons learnt from demonstrating good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining ecological functions of wetlands [R3.4.ix] (Resolution VIII.1)	Lead: Rebecca Tharme (IWMI) None [elements addressed under 3.1 above]	
<b>3.5</b> Review Resolutions VIII.1 and VIII.2 and prepare further guidance, if required, for CoP9 [R3.4.xi] (Resolution VIII.1)	None [some additional guidance covered under task 3.3]	Deferred for full review of Resolutions and their implementation for CoP10
<b>3.6 Groundwater:</b> Review and prepare guidelines, as appropriate, on the role of wetlands in groundwater recharge and storage and of groundwater in maintaining the ecological character of wetlands, and on the impacts of groundwater abstraction on wetlands [Resolution VIII.1]. Prepare guidance, as appropriate, on sustainable use of groundwater to maintain wetland ecosystem functions [3.4.5]	i) Technical paper: review of interactions between groundwater and wetlands ii) Technical paper: practical guidance for use and management of groundwater resources/aquifers so as to maintain ecosystem functions iii) Guidelines for Parties on groundwater and wetlands  Lead: Heather MacKay	Preliminary drafts are expected by March 2004, subject to availability of funding, and a workshop to review is proposed for June/July 2004.

#### Working Group 4: Ramsar site designation

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
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Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<p><b>4.1 Definition of ‘under-representation’.</b> Provide interpretation of the term ‘under-represented type’ in the context of available information on the global extent of different wetland types and representation of these in the Ramsar List, and investigate methods for defining targets for representation of wetland types in the Ramsar List in the context of the <i>Strategic Framework for the future development of the List (Resolution VII.11)</i>, and report to CoP9. [R10.1.iii] (Resolution VIII.11)</p>	<p>a) Definition and interpretation of different types of under-representation (Note links with actions in CBD/Ramsar joint work plan)  b) Development of (?regional) targets for biotope representation in the Ramsar list</p> <p>Leads: Dick Ho &amp; Wetlands International</p>	<p>a) Specification draft completed October 2003 by David Stroud.  Next steps are to identify and engage contractor to undertake drafting work for a final draft by June 2004.</p> <p>b) no progress reported</p>
<p><b>4.2 RIS development</b></p>	<p>Revised RIS structure and additional guidance on ecological character and criteria application, changes in structure and content, including additional field for wetland type, harmonization with inventory core data fields, and site boundary field</p> <p>Lead: David Stroud</p>	
<p><b>4.2 a)</b> Prepare guidance for the clear definition of the ecological character features in the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS), including recommendations for change to the structure and content of the RIS and, as appropriate, further guidance on the application of the Criteria for the identification and designation of Wetlands of International Importance in the <i>Strategic Framework and future development of the Ramsar List (Resolution VII.11)</i> and the additional guidelines for the identification and designation of under-represented wetland types (Resolution VIII.11) in the definition of the ecological character of Ramsar [R10.1.x](Resolution VIII.7)</p>		<p>Initiation of this work is dependent on outputs from WG1 in 2004 concerning defining ecological character.</p> <p>No progress reported. Expected after planned July 2004 workshop</p>
<p><b>4.2 b)</b> Consider allocating an open field in section of the</p>	<p>(included in 4.2 a) above)</p>	<p>Minor task - will be considered in light of RIS structure</p>

Ramsar Information Sheet concerning wetland types, to facilitate the process of review of the Ramsar wetland classification system with a view to including additional types [R10.1.xii] (Resolution VIII.13)		review in task 4.2 a) above.
<b>4.2 c)</b> Harmonize of the layout and information fields of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) and the core data fields recommended in the Ramsar <i>Framework for Wetland Inventory</i> [R10.1.xiii] (Resolution VIII.7)	(included in 4.2 a) above)	To be considered in the context of the Data and information needs review (Task 4.6 below)
<b>4.2 d)</b> Investigate the inclusion of a core data field in the Ramsar Information Sheet to allow for the insertion of a precise site boundary description and consider the preparation of guidance about this field for inclusion in the accompanying RIS <i>Explanatory Notes and Guidelines</i> [R10.1.xiv] (Resolution VIII.21)	(included in 4.2 a) above)	To be considered in context of work on Mapping standards and guidance (Task 4.5 below)
<b>4.3 Rolling criteria review</b> Keep under review the Ramsar Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance to ensure that these reflect global wetland conservation and wise use priorities [17.1.5]		
<b>4.3 a) Criterion 6 guidance</b>	Enhanced guidance for the application of Criterion 6 (to be included in outputs of task 4.2 above)  Lead: David Stroud	The Global Flyways Conference (“Waterbirds around the world”, Edinburgh, April 2004) will be used to review current guidance and prepare further materials, as appropriate. David Stroud is preparing a paper for this Conference, as basis of preparing enhanced guidance.
<b>4.3 b) A quantitative criterion for ‘aquatic megafauna’</b>	b) Exploration of potential for quantitative (e.g. 1%) criterion for ‘aquatic megafauna’  Lead: David Stroud (with input from relevant WWF species groups & IUCN Specialist Groups)	Initial summary posted on Support Service Web site. Review of input to be led by David Stroud, with completion date July/August 2004.
<b>4.3 c) Expansion of Ramsar criteria to match CBD</b>	Report advising on need for additional	No progress reported.

<b>Annex I</b>	criteria and guidance and/or expanded guidance for existing criteria  Lead: Stephen Njuguna	[Note. This issue will also be partly covered by the development of cultural and socio-economic criteria – see task 4.4 below.]
<b>4.4 Cultural and socio-economic criteria</b> Develop, for consideration by CoP9, additional Criteria and guidelines for the identification and designation of Ramsar sites concerning their socio-economic and cultural values and functions that are relevant to biological diversity, as listed in Annex 1 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which would be applied on each occasion in conjunction with one or more existing criteria for the identification and designation of Ramsar sites; and include in this work a full analysis of the implications for Contracting Parties of the implementation of such criteria for the management of Ramsar sites, including Contracting Party obligations and responsibilities for maintaining the ecological character of any such sites so selected so as to ensure that the coherent national networks of Ramsar sites fully incorporate all relevant aspects of the biological diversity of wetlands. [R10.1.xi] (Resolution VIII10)	Additional Criteria and guidelines for socio-economic and cultural values and functions in Ramsar site designation	
<b>4.4 a) Development of cultural and socio-economic criteria</b> (both tangible & intangible values) for use with existing criteria, and guidelines for their application NB. Development of this task should also link with and draw upon that of Working Group 2 on wise use guidelines.	Leads: María José Viñals & Manichand Puttoo	Discussion paper drafted by David Stroud. María José Viñals has also developed a document which is being further developed by Secretariat, DS and Maria. – further action has been requested from the Working Group regarding this.
<b>4.4 b)</b> Full analysis of implications of these criteria for the management of Ramsar sites	Leads: Dick Ho/ David Stroud	This issue is covered by the discussion paper in 4.4 a)
<b>4.4 c)</b> Consolidation of tasks 4.4 a) & 4.4 b)		

<p><b>4.5 Mapping standards and guidance</b> Provide further guidance concerning Ramsar site maps on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) where the additional information called for in paragraphs 14-16 of Annex III to the RIS <i>Explanatory Notes and Guidelines</i> (Resolution VIII.13) would be incorporated into the RIS;</li> <li>ii) the value and feasibility of supplying digital mapping (called for in paragraphs 17-22 of Annex III);</li> <li>iii) the compatibility of such data at a global scale;</li> <li>iv) the use of such data by third parties; and</li> <li>v) issues of data licencing, copyright, access and fees. [R10.1.xv] (Resolution VIII.13)</li> </ul>	<p>Further guidance on Ramsar site maps: boundary description, digital maps, data compatibility, data use and copyright/access issues</p> <p>Lead: Wetlands International</p>	<p>[Note. Work is largely evolutionary, building on existing RIS guidance on standards.]</p> <p>Draft expected January 2004.</p>
<p><b>4.6 Data and information needs review</b> Review the multiple sources of information available on Ramsar Sites, including RISs, the <i>Ramsar Sites Directory</i>, site management plans, and data that might be collected under other international instruments; review the needs for such information, their uses and users; and make recommendations to CoP9 as to how the supply and international reporting of information on Ramsar Sites might be better harmonized to give possible efficiency and cost savings. [R10.1.xix] (Resolution VIII.13)</p>	<p>Review and recommendations on improving harmonization of international supply and reporting of information from multiple sources on Ramsar sites</p> <p>Lead: David Stroud</p>	<p>David Stroud drafted the specification in October 2003, which awaits feedback from the Group</p>
<p><b>Inclusion of cross-cutting issues</b></p> <p><b>CEPA:</b> Relatively few direct CEPA issues, other than the general need to ensure that any new guidance is ‘user friendly’ to greatest extent, since the main target audience for the products of this Working Group will be CPs, not the public. There will be an important message to communicate regarding the outcome of under-representation review (task 4.1) and its implications in relation to strategic future Ramsar site designations.</p>		<p>CEPA Specialist Group is organised and ready to provide input to other groups, with lead identified for each Working Group.</p> <p>Agriculture cross-cutting issues identified by Rebecca Tharme (IWMI) and posted for comment. Feedback now requires collation by identified agriculture leads in each Working Group.</p>

**Agriculture:** There will be a need to fully take account of agricultural ‘cultural landscapes’ including socio-economic issues, in the context of the development of cultural criteria.

## Working Group 5: Wetland management

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<p><b>5.1 Management planning “Field-guide”</b> Develop a field guide for the practical application of the guidelines [on management planning] adopted by Resolution VIII.14, recognizing that there may be circumstances that limit the application of the guidelines in full. [R11.1.viii] (Resolution VIII.14)</p>	<p>A ‘field guide’ for applying Ramsar’s management planning guidelines  Lead: Frank Alberts (RIZA)</p>	<p>Terms of Reference have been developed and made available on the discussion forums of WG5 and CEPA, and consultations are on-going. Progress in drafting requires availability of consultancy funding.</p>
<p><b>5.2 Zonation guidance</b> Review and prepare further guidance on zonation and monitoring programmes and methodologies for Ramsar sites and other wetlands, including indicators and rapid assessment methodologies and the use of remote sensing [R11.1.xiii]</p>	<p>Further guidance on zonation methodologies in management planning  Lead: Tatiana Minaeva  [Note. Guidance on monitoring is covered under Working Group 1]</p>	<p>ToR for a consultancy developed by Tatiana Minaeva. Awaiting resources for consultant to be selected and commissioned.</p>
<p><b>5.3 Montreux Record questionnaire</b> Provide advice on the redesign of the Montreux Record questionnaire</p>	<p>Revised MR questionnaire, harmonized with RIS and Article 3.2 report forms  Lead: Frank Alberts</p>	<p>No progress reported.</p>

<p><b>5.4 Responding to change in ecological character</b> Prepare further consolidated guidance on the overall process of detecting, reporting and responding to change in ecological character, including guidelines for determining when such a change is too trivial to require reporting, having regard to the reasons why a given site is important, and the conservation objectives set for it [R11.2.ii] (Resolution VIII.8)</p>	<p>Further guidance, if appropriate, on responding to change in ecological character [Note. The aspects of detecting and reporting change in ecological character are covered under Working Group 1]  Lead: Frank Alberts</p>	<p>The STRP agreed that work concerning monitoring and reporting on the status of Ramsar sites should be undertaken by Working Group 1, so as to avoid a risk of duplication of work. Working Group 5's attention to this topic is limited to the issue of responding - through management processes - to change in ecological character. No progress reported.</p>
<p><b>5.5 San José Record</b> Assist the Bureau to establish the procedures for the creation and maintenance of the "San José Record" [11.1.3]</p>	<p>Advice to the Secretariat, as required</p>	<p>No comments yet required.</p>

Note. Work requested by Resolution VIII.34 concerning establishing a framework for identifying, documenting and disseminating good agriculture-related practice and preparing wetland-type specific management guidelines concerning wetlands and agriculture is dependent on initial review work on the topic being first prepared by the IOPs and other relevant organisations, and is deferred until such time as this material becomes available.

## Working Group 6: Assessing the effectiveness of implementation of the Convention

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
<p>Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].</p>		
<p><b>6.1</b> Assist the work of the Standing Committee in reviewing the process of the preparation, and adoption of Resolutions and Recommendations by CoP (Resolution VIII.45)</p>	<p>Advice to the Standing Committee on scientific and technical Resolution preparation</p>	<p>Essentially reactive, dependent on requests for advice which may come from the Standing Committee's subgroup on Resolution VIII.45. Co-lead D Pritchard represents IOPs on this subgroup and so will provide the link, including informing the subgroup on progress with the work of STRP Working Group 6.</p>
<p><b>6.2</b> Prepare a series of key indicators in relation to the</p>	<p>List of key indicators on effectiveness of</p>	<p>Paper proposing suite of 'outcome-oriented' ecological</p>

effective implementation of the Strategic Plan in the next triennium, to be used as part of the National report Format [indicators to be adopted by the Standing Committee at its annual meeting in 2004 so that Parties may use them to complement their National Reports to CoP9] (Resolution VIII.26)	implementation, for pilot use by Parties [Guidelines for use of the indicators – if requested]  Leads: David Pritchard & Teresita Borges	indicators has been prepared by WG6 for consideration by the 30 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (DOC. SC30-7).
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## B. Cross-cutting areas of work

### 7. Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
For each task within the STRP's programme of work for the triennium, provide ongoing input [from CEPA experts] to the various working groups to ensure CEPA issues are considered fully and reflected appropriately in the guidance developed for Parties' consideration at CoP9. (Resolution VIII.31) [R9.i.iii]	CEPA elements fully incorporated in other guidances prepared by the STRP	<p>As agreed at STRP11, the revitalised Wetlands International CEPA Specialist Group will undertake this role and work.</p> <p>The WI CEPA Specialist Group is undertaking the following tasks concerning the work of the STRP and Resolution VIII.31:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) provide the review function necessary to ensure the full inclusion of CEPA in guidances being prepared by the STRP; and</li> <li>ii) Design a work programme consistent with the tasks identified in Annex II of Resolution VIII.31.</li> </ul> <p>To date the CEPA Specialist Group has agreed its work plan and has proposed a comprehensive programme of</p>

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work, to address the activities identified in Resolution VIII.31 (work additional to the specific STRP-related task), and which will require resourcing. The CEPA group is in discussion with relevant Working Group leads and Secretariat concerning scope and resourcing of certain of its STRP-related tasks.

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## 8. Agriculture

### Task

The following high priority STRP cross-cutting task concerning agriculture was identified by the Standing Committee:

STRP tasks 2003-2005 Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Ensure that adequate consideration of agriculture and wetland issues is incorporated into other relevant areas of work that the STRP may be dealing with, including global climate change, groundwater and its interaction with surface water, toxic chemicals and desertification [R3.4.xxii] (Resolution VIII.34)	<p>Texts concerning agriculture and wetland issues included, as appropriate, in other guidances prepared by the STRP</p> <p>Working Group focal points are as follows:</p> <p>Working Group 1: MedWet (Spyros Kouvelis)            Working Group 2: Tobias Salathé            Working Group 3: Rebecca Tharme            Working Group 4: David Stroud            Working Group 5: Frank Alberts            Working Group 6: David Pritchard</p>	<p>Working Group 3 (Lead: Rebecca Tharme (IWMI)) is taking the lead in ensuring a common approach on agriculture among all the Groups, through preparation of outline guidance of issues to consider. Feedback now requires collation by identified agriculture leads in each Working Group.</p> <p>After collation and review of the results of this process, the Panel will determine whether any additional expert assistance is needed to fully cover agricultural issues in elements of its work.</p>

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## C. Lower priority areas of work – activities to be undertaken through lead organizations

### 9. Environmental and strategic impact assessment

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>9.1</b> Prepare advice for Contracting Parties on applying strategic environmental assessment in the context of the Convention's guidelines [R2.2.v] (Resolution VIII.9)	Advice, including wetland case studies, on application of strategic environmental assessment (SEA).  <b>Lead:</b> IAIA.	Explanatory paper on SEA will be prepared by consultant as part of materials for implementation of IAIA's "biodiversity and impact assessment" project, during first half of 2004.
<b>9.2</b> Prepare a synthesis of lessons learned from case studies [of impact assessment on wetlands] submitted by CPs, including indications of linkages with existing Ramsar guidance on other topics where relevant [R2.2.viii] (Resolution VIII.9)	Report on experience of applying impact assessment on wetlands.  <b>Lead:</b> IAIA.	No case studies yet supplied by Parties. Experiences on wetland IA will be compiled for selected countries as part of IAIA's "biodiversity and impact assessment" project, during 2004/5. In addition, a recent CBD information paper (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/18) includes a number of wetland-related case studies and lessons learned.
<b>9.3</b> Review references to impact assessment in Ramsar CoP decisions, guidelines and other Ramsar publications, and in particular identify and seek to correct if necessary any inconsistencies of approach, and make the results of such a review available as an updated index of references to impact assessment in Ramsar materials [R2.2.ix] (resolution VIII.9)	Update of 1996 (CoP6) review of impact assessment issues in Ramsar materials.  <b>Lead:</b> BirdLife International (Dave Pritchard).	To be prepared in early-mid 2004.
<b>9.4</b> Continue to identify wetland-related elements of existing guidelines on impact assessment, to identify important gaps where such guidance is failing fully to meet the needs of Contracting Parties, and to investigate	Proposals for filling any gaps in existing guidance.  <b>Lead:</b> IAIA.	CBD CoP7 (Feb 2004) will consider recommendations to further elaborate their CoP6 guidance (endorsed by Ramsar CoP8) to provide guidance on other aspects of EIA than project screening and scoping, and on Strategic

possible ways of filling such gaps, taking into account CBD's CoP6 guidance on impact assessment in relation to sacred and indigenous and local communities' lands [R2.2.x] (Resolution VIII.9)		Environmental Assessment. It would be most appropriate for Ramsar to capitalize on any such further guidance and interpret it for application in the Ramsar context, in line with the approach in CoP8 Resolution VIII.9.
1.7. incorporation of environmental impact and strategic environmental assessment into wetland risk assessment procedures.	<p>i) identified linkages between risk assessment and EIA and SEA; and</p> <p>ii) short statement clarifying the relationship between EIA, SEA and risk assessment</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> IAIA (Biodiversity &amp; Ecology Section), with input from Dave Pritchard and risk assessment expert.</p>	Short explanatory report to be drafted in early 2004 (Andrea Athanas) for comment and input from IAIA section, BirdLife and risk assessment expert.

## 10. Peatlands

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
10.1 Contribute to establishment of a Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands [xxxxxxx] (Resolution VIII.9)	<p>No specific product.</p> <p><b>Leads:</b> Tatiana Minaeva. IPS &amp; IMCG</p>	As requested in Resolution VIII.9, the Ramsar Secretariat convened the first meeting of a Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands (Wageningen, October 2003), with participation from STRP member Tatiana Minaeva and Wetlands International, and STRP observers IPS and IMCG, which agreed Terms of Reference and initiated development of an implementation plan for global action on peatlands.

## 11. Climate change

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<p><b>11.1</b> If, as requested, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has prepared a Technical Paper on the relationship between wetlands and climate change, in time for consideration at the second STRP meeting prior to CoP9, develop, on the basis of the IPCC Technical Paper, a synthesis of key issues on wetlands and climate change as an information paper, which should undergo a review process as determined by the STRP, for consideration by Contracting Parties at CoP9. If the IPCC is unable to undertake preparation of a Technical Paper on the relationship between wetlands and climate change, the STRP is requested to prepare an information paper, based on the IPCC Third Assessment Report and other authoritative, updated information, that synthesizes key issues on wetlands and climate change, which should undergo a rigorous peer review process as directed by the Standing Committee upon the advice of the STRP, and which should be made available for consideration by the Parties at CoP9. [R3.4.xxi] (Resolution VIII.3)</p>	Information paper: synthesis of key issues on wetlands and climate change	The Ramsar Secretariat is exploring with IPCC and UNFCCC ways and means of developing a Technical Paper or alternative mechanism for providing information on wetlands and climate change.
<p><b>11.2</b> Collaborate with IPCC and UNFCCC to promote management of wetlands and mitigation of climate change impacts (particularly in context of land use, land use change and rising sea levels, forestry, peatlands and agriculture [3.4.8])</p>	Input to IPCC and UNFCCC work	Ramsar Secretariat participated in UNFCCC workshops on convention synergies ((July 2003) where potential Ramsar collaboration was discussed. Opportunities for STRP inputs will be further reviewed in the light of UNFCCC CoP9 (Dec 2003), especially in relation to climate change adaptation.

## 12. Restoration and rehabilitation

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>12.1</b> Compile information on new research and methodologies for restoration and rehabilitation of lost wetlands and disseminate this information [4.13].	Additional methodologies for wetland restoration <b>Lead:</b> IUCN-Commission on Ecosystem Management	No progress
<b>12.2</b> Contribute to identification of training opportunities and expertise in wetland restoration and creation of relevant training modules as part of the Ramsar Wetland Training Initiative, once established. [R4.1.vi] (Resolution VIII.16).	Training opportunities and training modules provided to Ramsar Wetland Training Initiative <b>Lead:</b> Wetlands International - to be confirmed	No progress
<b>12.3</b> Contribute relevant addition information on wetland restoration projects and experience to Ramsar's restoration Web site, and particularly provide demonstration projects that illustrate the application of the principles and guidelines adopted by Resolution VIII.16. [R4.1.ix] (Resolution VIII.16)	Case studies added to wetland restoration website <b>Lead:</b> IUCN-Commission on Ecosystem Management	Review of legislative frameworks for wetland restoration (prepared in part as carried-over task from STRP 1999-2002 Work Plan) posted on Ramsar Web site.
<b>12.4</b> Further develop tools and guidance on wetland restoration, including a glossary of wetland restoration terminology and guidance on small dams and wetland restoration [R4.1.x] (Resolution VIII.16)	i) Glossary of wetland restoration terminology ii) Guidance on small dams and wetland restoration <b>Lead:</b> IUCN-Commission on Ecosystem Management	No progress. Society for Ecological Restoration has prepared a draft glossary, working with IUCN-CEM, which will be made available to Ramsar once completed.
<b>12.5</b> Prepare guidance on compensation for wetland losses, in response to Resolution VII.24, and report to CoP9 [R4.1.xi] (Resolution VIII.16)	Guidance on compensation for wetland losses <b>Lead:</b> to be confirmed	North American Wetlands Conservation Council Canada has indicated willingness to initiate work building on earlier materials distributed to CoP8, through electronic dialogue, but this has yet to be initiated.

### 13. Invasive alien species

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>13.1</b> STRP should continue to contribute to the development (with GISP, CBD, IOPs and interested Parties) of practical guidance on prevention, control and eradication of alien species. (Resolution VIII.18).	No action required until contacts with GISP established	Secretariat has discussed (Nov 2003) with GISP Secretariat GISP plans for wetland-related work, and this will be followed up in 2004. Draft materials on invasive species prepared by the STRP in the last triennium have been made available to CBD/GISP/TNC work in 2003 on report on impacts of invasives on inland water ecosystems. Depending on outcomes of CBD's CoP7 (February 2004) on invasive species, the Standing Committee may consider requesting STRP to review and update its draft materials.

### 14. Participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in wetland management

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
<b>14.1</b> Prepare for CoP9 methodologies or guidelines for effective implementation of Participatory Environmental Management (PEM), gathering case studies and taking into account the content of the annex to that resolution, which provides outline guidance on benefits of PEM and aspects to consider in developing PEM strategies (Resolution VIII.36).		The Panel agreed (Decision STRP11-8) to invite the sponsoring Parties of Resolution VIII.36 and those involved in its drafting to prepare methodologies or guidelines for effective implementation of PEM, as requested by the Resolution, for STRP review at its second meeting in 2004. No progress on this work has been reported. A multi-convention approach to the development of

further guidance on participatory management is under discussion by the Bureau and CBD secretariat under the terms of the CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan, and will be further discussed at a CBD expert meeting in Dec 2004.

## 15. Further guidance for designating wetland types in the Ramsar List

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
15.1. Prepare further guidance on identification and designation of other coastal wetland types, including <i>inter alia</i> intertidal and subtidal mud and sand flats and seagrass beds. [R10.1.xvii] (Resolution VIII.4)	Additional identification and designation guidelines Lead: WRI, UNEP-WCMC & WI.	The Secretariat has received an offer to draft guidance on tidal flats from the Mangrove Action Network, and this has been passed to the STRP leads on this topic.
15.2. Review the ecological roles played by reservoirs and other human-made wetlands, including their use by aquatic and other water-dependent biota, and to prepare (if indicated as priority by Standing Committee) guidance for Contracting Parties concerning the identification and designation of such wetlands for the Ramsar List, taking into account the experience gained by Parties that have already done so. [R10.1.xviii] (Resolution VIII.2)	a) Report on the ecological roles of reservoirs and dams b) Additional identification and designation guidelines Lead: Heather MacKay, with LakeNet & David Stroud	No progress reported – information from Millennium Ecosystem Assessment main reports awaited as information source.

## 16. Sharing expertise and information

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Proposed product(s) and task lead(s)	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		

16.1 Assist in promoting the sharing of knowledge (traditional, indigenous and more recently derived technologies and methods) through STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) [Action 14.1.1].	Lead: STRP Support Service	Initial pilot steps, to be undertaken as part of STRP Support Service role in establishing improved links with STRP NFPs, will focus specifically on disseminating all relevant work undertaken through the STRP to NFPs.
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## D. On-going tasks of the STRP

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Mechanisms	Progress
Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].		
17. <b>STRP National Focal Points:</b> establish and maintain contact with STRP National Focal Points, with the assistance of the STRP Support Service, so as to ensure that their advice and expertise is fully contributed to the work of the Panel. [Annex to Resolution VIII.28]	Each appointed STRP member will agree with which countries' NFPs and/or on which topics they will maintain contact.	Country and/or topic allocation of contact responsibilities for NFPs agreed by STRP members.
18. <b>Regional categorization advice:</b> advise on any request from a Contracting Party to participate in the activities of a different Ramsar Region to that which they are assigned under the regional categorization of the Convention (Resolution VII.1).	The STRP noted that there were no established criteria for deciding such an issue or of a common scheme of biogeographic regionalization for the Convention which could form the basis of a decision.	In the absence of criteria for deciding the issue, the Panel had no objection to Azerbaijan's request made at CoP8 to participate in the work of the European region. (Decision STRP11-21). No further requests have been received.
19. <b>Ramsar Small Grants Fund projects:</b> at the request of the relevant Administrative Authority, ensure the involvement of the STRP National Focal Point in monitoring and evaluating an SGF project.	The STRP determined to consult with the STRP Support Service on how to proceed if such a request should be received. (Decision STRP11-22)	No requests received.
20. <b>Wetland project development and evaluation:</b> upon request, assist Contracting Parties and bilateral	The STRP determined to consult with the STRP Support Service on how to proceed	No requests received.

<p>development agencies in screening, development and evaluation of wetland projects.</p>	<p>if such a request should be received. (Decision STRP11-23)</p>	
<p><b>21. Ramsar Sites Database:</b> receive progress reports and advise on future needs and developments of the Ramsar Sites Database, maintained for the Convention by Wetlands International.</p>	<p>Continue to advise Bureau/WI on future RSD development, in light of progress reports from Wetlands International.</p>	<p>No action required since STRP11.</p>
<p><b>22. Montreux Record:</b> advise the Bureau on requests from Contracting Parties for removing Ramsar sites from the Montreux Record of sites facing damaging change in ecological character.</p>	<p>Contribute to review of analysis of RISs for CoP9 on Ramsar site designation progress. Continue, if requested, to advise the Bureau on information provided by a Contracting Party requesting a site's removal from the Montreux Record, circulated through the STRP listserve.</p>	<p>STRP provided advice to Secretariat on one Montreux Record removal request, concerning three Ramsar sites in the Ukraine.</p>
<p><b>23. Collaboration with other Conventions and agreements:</b> ensure cooperation, exchange of information and coordination of activities, where appropriate, with other MEAs' scientific and technical subsidiary bodies (and their related processes), including through actions in Joint Work Plans. [Action 13.1.1]</p>	<p>Continue, if requested, identify appropriate Members/observers to participate in any Ramsar Advisory Mission concerning removal of site from the Record. The Panel (Decision STRP11-25) identified leads to represent the STRP and report back to it, as follows: CBD SBSTTA: Dave Pritchard (BirdLife International) CMS Scientific Council: Francisco Rilla (in liaison with the STRP Chair) UNESCO-MAB (Biosphere Reserve Integrated Management (BRIM): Max Finlayson UNCCD 2003 CoP (Havana, Cuba): Teresita Borges Each STRP Working Group will determine how best it can establish links with related</p>	<p>CBD Secretariat has identified a Programme Officer to participate as a member of each STRP Expert Working Group and other STRP mechanisms relevant to delivery of the CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan 2003-2005.</p>

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| <p><b>24. Drafting technical Resolutions:</b> Prepare draft Technical Resolutions, circulate for consultation to STRP National Focal Points and review for transmission to the Standing Committee. (Resolution VIII.45)</p> | <p>working group processes in other conventions.<br/>This task forms part of the work expected of all Expert Working Groups and other mechanisms established by the STRP, and will be addressed in the natural course of events towards the end of the Panel’s cycle of work.</p> | <p>No action required at this stage of STRP cycle.</p> |
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### E. Key additional strategic issues

STRP tasks 2003-2005	Mechanisms	Progress
<p>Strategic Plan Action and CoP8 Resolution Action numbers are shown in square brackets [...].</p> <p>Identify key additional strategic issues for consideration by the STRP during the triennium and establish a Working Group to progress these for reporting to the next CoP. (Annex to Resolution VIII.28).</p>	<p>The Panel recognized the need for enhanced procedures for transmitting its advice to the Standing Committee and CoP, and adopted the following process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) two STRP current mechanisms will be used:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) drafting technical Resolutions; and</li> <li>ii) the ongoing priority task of advising the Standing Committee on the STRP’s strategic review of emerging scientific and technical issues and gaps in current guidance to Parties;</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) review outcomes identifying priority future issues for STRP work will be</li> </ul>	<p>The Panel identified the following future key strategic issues for the Convention, and noted that their advice to Standing Committee and CoP on these issues should highlight scientific and technical challenges for the Convention as a whole, as well as identifying future tasks for the Panel itself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) pollution (including non-point sources and point sources such as through accidental discharges from mines) and water quality in relation to maintaining wetland ecosystem values and functions;</li> <li>ii) mainstreaming Ramsar issues within the water sector;</li> <li>iii) fisheries and wetlands;</li> <li>iv) Ramsar site designation: development of brief</li> </ul>

included in the STRP Chair's Report to CoP, and the STRP may prepare a draft CoP Resolution on the issue for Standing Committee consideration;

c) the STRP Chair will ensure that the Panel's views and recommendations are fully recognized by CoP and the first Standing Committee meeting of the next triennium (including through attendance at these meetings), and urge these to be taken into account in setting the STRP's next phase of priority work; and

d) the Standing Committee is urged to provide an explanatory note to the next STRP setting out its rationale for the priorities it establishes.

guidance on the whole range of wetland types and features (i.e., not only 'under-represented wetland types');

- v) wetlands and forest ecosystems: input to CBD's programme of work on forest ecosystems; and
- vi) addressing, through the Ramsar Convention, the WSSD 2010 target of significantly reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity.

Initial work on topics iii) and vi) is being undertaken by STRP's current Working Groups and on v) by the Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands. A short note on the case for including future work on water quality issues is being prepared for Standing Committee consideration (Leads: Doug Taylor & David Stroud). An outline "Strategy for mainstreaming Ramsar issues within the water sector" will be prepared through an e-mail discussion group (Lead: Heather MacKay) .