

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
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Agenda item 9.4

**Proposals for Regional Initiatives within the framework of the
Convention**

This document provides the detailed information provided by those Parties proposing each regional initiative for consideration by COP9 for recognition within the framework of the Convention in line with Resolution VIII.30. It includes budget information where the initiative is requesting an allocation of funds from the Convention core budget 2006-2008.

Initiatives are listed by Ramsar region:

Africa
West African Coastal Zone Wetlands Network (WacoWet)
Awareness raising campaign on conservation and wise use of wetlands for the sustainable management of natural resources and the fight against poverty in Central Africa. [Campagne de sensibilisation sur la conservation et l'utilisation rationnelle des zones humides pour la gestion durable des ressources naturelles et la lutte contre la pauvreté en Afrique Centrale]
Asia
Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia in Iran
Himalaya Initiative
Asia/Oceania/North America
WSSD Type II Partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds in East Asia, South East Asia and Australasia (The Partnership) <i>(Note. The implementation of the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy was endorsed by Resolution VIII.37)</i>
Europe
Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI)
The Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet)
Neotropics
Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Wise Use of High Andean Wetlands [Estrategia Regional de Conservación y Uso Sostenible de los Humedales Altoandinos] <i>(Note. The approach embodied in this proposal was requested in Resolution VIII.39)</i>
Neotropics/North America
Regional Initiative to apply the Ramsar Convention: Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO)
Oceania
Regional initiative for the protection and wise use of wetlands for the Pacific Islands

AFRICA

West African Coastal Zone Wetlands network (WacoWet)

Countries involved: **Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo**

Proposal submitted by: **Republic of Benin**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.	WacoWet aims at 1) contributing to a best conservation and integrated wise use of the ECOLOGIC CONTINUUM which stretches from Liberia to Nigeria and comprises i) marines ecosystems, ii) lagoons and iii) mangroves, through 2) strengthening of the cooperation among administrative authorities in the view raising awareness at ECOWAS level
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.	All the concerned Ramsar National Focal Points who attended the PreCOP9 meeting in Arusha (3-9 April 2005) have been approached and showed strong interests in the initiative. They all agree for the submission of the initiative to the standing committee and committed themselves to report positively to their national administrative authorities for high level political support. Many efforts are ongoing currently for the conservation and wise use of mangroves and lagoons ecosystems at national levels in all the countries while some tentative transboundary management cooperation are underway between Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, Togo and Benin, etc.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues , intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.	The Ramsar national focal points involved with this initiative agreed on the fact that the network is built in the participatory approach and comprises : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific NGOs like Flora and Fauna International (Liberia), SOS-Forêt (Côte d'Ivoire), Green Earth Organization (Ghana), Homme pour la Nature et l'Environnement (Togo), Tropical Nature (Benin), Nigerian Conservation Foundation (Nigeria) ○ Private sector ○ National institutions in charge of the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) of Gulf of Guinea project; ○ The Centre for African Wetlands
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.	The Ramsar National Focal Points of the involved countries are considered to be the backbone for the launching and the technical running of WacoWet.

<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>WacoWet will incorporate and work tightly with any important initiatives at regional level like :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Large Marine Ecosystem of Gulf of Guinea ○ Centre for African Wetlands
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>Many scientific and research centers exist though they need capacity building :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Centre for African Wetlands ○ The University of Ouagadougou Master of Science on Wetlands studies ○ National universities and research centres
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>WacoWet will contribute directly to the following goals and operational objectives of Ramsar Convention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goal no.1 on wise use ○ Goal no.3 on international cooperation ○ Goal no.4 on implementation capacity <p>The following operational objectives are targeted directly by WacoWet :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contribute to adequate management of wetlands for preventing the impacts of climate change and sea level rise at global level ○ Contribute to restore degraded and destroyed wetlands including their ecologic, economic and cultural values and functions ○ Contribute to eradicating threats from invasive species to wetlands ○ Leading regional cooperation on wetlands within ECOWAS region especially for the wise use and conservation of freshwater ecosystem, coastal zone, transboundary hydrographic basins, and common migratory species ○ Contribute to reinforcement of the coordination pertinent regional conventions ○ Improving liable information sharing and promoting the creation of networks (sites, experts) ○ Providing efficient mechanisms for training and capacity building to help contracting parties implementing the Convention.
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>The Benin Environmental Agency (BEA) is candidate for hosting the regional bureau and provides logistic facilities (bureau, communication) for the launching of the initiative.</p> <p>Also, through the Community Based Coastal Biodiversity Management Project (CBCBMP) of Benin (2006-2010) co – funded by GEF and the Government of Benin, kick – of financial support is secured for the launching activities of WacoWet (as outreach objective).</p>

<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>Key basic activities for the launching of WacoWet will focus on :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elaboration of agreement document, strategic plan, technical information, etc., (French and English) ○ Workshops ○ Plead <p>As mentioned above (see section 8) the costs of these basic activities will be met through financial support of the Benin CBCMP.</p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>There is not any initiative allowing the contracting parties of West Africa coastal region, which share very particular ecosystems of wetlands, to network and benefit from each other while implementing the Ramsar Convention.</p> <p>A financial support from the central Budget of Convention, whatever its value, will constitute a substantial political and psychological support to this sub-region and a blow of hand to the national focal points vis-à-vis their governments.</p> <p>The threats from coastal erosion, climatic changes and sea level rise, degradation of the ecosystems of mangrove, invading species, and degradation of the coastal lagoons are very alarming in this area. That thus deserves a support of the central level of Convention.</p>
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>WacoWet will functions based on principles and guidelines that are cost-effectiveness oriented :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clear and participatory approach mechanism for decision making ○ concrete and well – oriented Strategic Action plan (SAP) which declines the Global Ramsar Strategic Plan ○ easy reporting system for informing as wide as possible all the interested parties and actors especially the Ramsar Bureau
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>WacoWet is committed working for the definition of clear and effective mechanism which facilitates information sharing with the Ramsar Secretariat. MedWet experiences will be largely used and adapted in this field.</p>

WacoWet Budget 2006-2008

Items	Total cost (CFA)	FY01 in \$	FY02-03 in \$	Support
Internet communication infrastructure				
Setting up	700000	1400		Benin
Bandwidth allowance (64 Kbp) per month	6696000	13392	13392	Benin
WacoWet Website development and management				
Basic website development	300000	600		Benin
Website management	200000	400	400	Benin
Bilingual secretary				
Recruitment process (announcement and selection)	300000	600		Benin
Salary per month	4800000	9600	9600	Ramsar Core Budget or ECOWAS
Material of bureau				
Desktop (Pentium IV, DVD, Graver and Zip)	1500000	3000		Benin
Laptop (Pentium IV, DVD, Graver)	2000000	4000		CBCM* Project
Printer	400000	800		CBCM Project
Scanner	150000	300		CBCM Project
Video projector	1500000	3000		CBCM Project
Numeric camera	250000	500		CBCM Project
Table (bureau)	400000	800		Benin
Seat	120000	240		Benin
Document storage units	100000	200		Benin
Tel/Fax	200000	400		Benin
Office running costs and communication				
Furnitures (paper, bubble for printer, etc.) per month	600000	1200	1200	Benin
Telephone / communication	600000	1200	1200	Benin
Stamps	10000	20		Benin
Acquiring of Bank account	500000	1000		Benin
Creation of the Network, Adoption and Implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action				
Preparation of fundamentals (MoU, Strategy Plan)	2000000	4000		Ramsar Core Budget
Launching workshop (02 persons / 8 countries) for adoption of the fundamentals	24000000	48000		Ramsar Core Budget
Elaboration of the detail action plan	3000000	6000		Benin
Sensitization of decision makers at sub-regional level (ECOWAS, States)	1000000	2000		Ramsar Core Budget
Creation and updating of the Network's Database	20000000	40000	2000	Ramsar Core Budget CBCM Project

Adoption of a WacoWet Transboundary Guidelines on Wetlands management (elaboration, adoption)	20000000	40000		Ramsar Core Budget
Creating and updating a Professionals register	2500000	5000	5000	Ramsar Core Budget
	93826000	187652	32792	
Total FY1-3		253236 \$		

Note. CBCM project is a GEF-funded project on "Community Based Coastal Biodiversity Management" running from 2006-2010.

Contribution of Benin

Items	Total cost (CFA)	FY01 in \$	FY02-03 in \$	Support
Internet communication infrastructure				
Setting up	700000	1400		Benin
Bandwidth allowance (64 Kbp) per month	6696000	13392	13392	Benin
WacoWet Website development and management				
Basic website development	300000	600		Benin
Website management	200000	400	400	Benin
Bilingual secretary				
Recruitment process (announcement and selection)	300000	600		Benin
Material of bureau				
Desktop (Pentium IV, DVD, Graver and Zip)	1500000	3000		Benin
Table (bureau)	400000	800		Benin
Seat	120000	240		Benin
Document storage units	100000	200		Benin
Tel/Fax	200000	400		Benin
Office running costs and communication				
Furnitures (paper, bubble for printer, etc.) per month	600000	1200	1200	Benin
Telephone / communication	600000	1200	1200	Benin
Stamps	10000	20		Benin
Acquiring of Bank account	500000	1000		Benin
Creation of the Network, Adoption and Implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action				
Elaboration of the detail action plan	3000000	6000		Benin
	15226000	30452	16192	
Total: years 1-3			62836 \$	

Contribution requested from Ramsar Core Budget

Items	Total cost (CFA)	FY01 in \$	FY02-04 in \$	Support
Internet communication infrastructure				
Material of bureau				
Creation of the Network, Adoption and Implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action				
Preparation of fundamentals (MoU, Strategy Plan)	2000000	4000		Ramsar Core Budget
Launching workshop (02 persons / 8 countries) for adoption of the fundamentals	24000000	48000		Ramsar Core Budget

Sensitization of decision makers at sub-regional level (ECOWAS, States)	1000000	2000		Ramsar Core Budget
Creation and updating of the Network's Database	20000000	40000	2000	Ramsar Core Budget CBCM Project
Adoption of a WacoWet Transboundary Guidelines on Wetlands management (elaboration, adoption)	20000000	40000		Ramsar Core Budget
Creating and updating a Professionals register	2500000	5000	5000	Ramsar Core Budget
	69500000	139000	7000	
Total: years 1-3	153000 \$			

Contribution from CBCM Project

Items	Total cost (CFA)	FY01 in \$	FY02-03 in \$	Support
Material of bureau				
Laptop (Pentium IV, DVD, Graver)	2000000	4000		CBCM Project
Printer	400000	800		CBCM Project
Scanner	150000	300		CBCM Project
Video projector	1500000	3000		CBCM Project
Numeric camera	250000	500		CBCM Project
	4300000	8600	0	
Total: years 1-3	8600 \$			

Other contribution

Items	Total cost (CFA)	FY01 in \$	FY02-03 in \$	Support
Bilingual secretary				
Salary per month	4800000	9600	9600	ECOWAS
Material of bureau				
	4800000	9600	9600	
Total: years 1-3	28800 \$			

Awareness raising campaign on conservation and wise use of wetlands for the sustainable management of natural resources and the fight against poverty in Central Africa

[Campagne de sensibilisation sur la conservation et l'utilisation rationnelle des zones humides pour la gestion durable des ressources naturelles et la lutte contre la pauvreté en Afrique Centrale]

Countries involved: **République Démocratique du Congo, République du Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Cameroun, Gabon, République Centrafricaine, Guinée Equatoriale, Sao Tomé et Principe, Togo, Bénin, Tchad**

Proposal submitted by: **République Démocratique du Congo**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide education and information programmes for local populations, in rural and urban environments, on the role and the values of wetlands for survival; - Popularize the Convention, - Encourage everyone's participation in activities; - Develop awareness and positive attitudes.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a framework for dialogue between Contracting Parties involved in order to plan activities and elaborate a harmonized sub regional action strategy; - Agree on priority actions according to a participatory approach which will take into account the true problems of the grass root stakeholders, and involve these in the process.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues , intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List all local stakeholder (local populations, NGOs, young people, women, researchers, universities, farmers, hunters, fishermen, political and administrative authorities, and local/indigenous authorities, the scientific community, the media, industry, economic operators, religious communities, students, etc.); - List external operational or potential governmental bodies and international organizations, foundations, etc ; - Organize consultation days with all the stakeholders which have been identified.
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop national collaboration networks in each member country, which will be officially approved by the Government; - Establish agreed functioning mechanisms in order to ensure the success of the core initiative identified.

<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify other active intergovernmental or international partners present in the region being studied; - Examine possible synergies and set priorities while avoiding overlapping activities;
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate the situation and problems in the various countries of the region, with the assistance of competent institutions; - Establish a data base, based on the analysis of the data gathered, and ensure follow-up of the programme.
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonize the views between the Parties in the implementation of the main initiative; - Make sure that the operational objective of the Strategic Plan is respected, with regard to taking into account national policies and laws in this matter.
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure that the Contracting Parties support the agreed programme, politically and financially; - Request an important support from the host country in order to create a regional office in charge of following-up and coordinating activities.
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call on the Contracting Parties, on the Convention Secretariat and on partners in order to mobilize their financial contributions for the initiative.
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create autonomous funding mechanisms, calling on financial contributions from each Contracting Party, and from voluntary donors; - Ensure equitable geographical distribution of financial resources between the countries of the geographical area in question.
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish adequate mechanisms for consultation at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels, which will take into account realities regarding the Convention and the initiative; - Prepare periodical reports to be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat with a view to these being transmitted to the Conference of the Parties and to the Standing Committee.

<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Obtain from the Secretariat the specific guidelines which rule coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention and which have been adopted by the Parties;- Implement the Convention and the above-mentioned guidelines.
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ASIA

Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia (RRC-CWA) in Iran

Countries involved: **Western and Central Asian countries**

Proposal submitted by: **Islamic Republic of Iran**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>Overall Goal The RRC-CWA will enhance the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the region through training, research, advocacy and public awareness programmes. It will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build human capacity and engage in outreach ○ Promote scientific and technical cooperation and exchange knowledge, ○ including traditional knowledge, ○ Promote wise use of wetlands through research and sustainable management ○ Encourage accession of non contacting parties in the region.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>The 8th Conference of Parties to Ramsar Convention held in Valencia, Spain from 18 to 26 November 2002 agreed to the creation a Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia in Ramsar city, in Islamic Republic of Iran, by adopting Resolution VIII.41.</p> <p>So this Center will try to involve Contracting and non-Contracting Parties through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinate and hold courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, meetings at national, regional and international levels in order to expand the knowledge of wetlands and about the Convention; ○ Promote and coordinate scientific research and study in the region in order to expand knowledge of wetland functions and values, their biodiversity and indicators of ecological characteristics, and also regarding the economic valuation and management of the ecosystems with the purpose of prompting their sustainability and conservation, including through nomination of wetlands of international importance. ○ Produce of information and bibliographical material where possible in a range of languages contributing to better knowledge of wetlands through printed and electronic means.
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the</p>	<p>For involving all stakeholders we have a plan to form Administrative bodies of the Center as below:</p>

<p>Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>The Center will be made up of the following bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Collaborative Management Board B. The Secretariat <p>The Collaborative Management Board formed initially of the following members will administer the Center;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A representative of the Iranian Government, who will act as the chair; The representative of the government on the Management Board will be the Head of the Department of the Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, or whoever he/she designates for the purpose; 2. The West and Central Asia representative(s) on the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention. 3. A representative of Ramsar Secretariat; 4. One representative of the International Organisation Partners of the Ramsar Convention; 5. One representative of Iranian NGOs, and two representatives of NGOs from other countries. 6. One representative from UNESCO through the National Committee of UNESCO and one representative from UNDP. 7. One representative of DoE Mazandaran. 8. Executive Director as ex-officio member. <p>Donor countries and Institutions (such as Universities) interested in participating in the work of the Center will be invited to attend as appropriate. So in this administrative body all stakeholders are involved and each initiative will entail the participation, including local people through representative of NGOs and all representatives can discuss on wetlands issues that they are faced with.</p>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>Promote and coordinate scientific research and study in the region in order to expand knowledge of wetland functions and values, their biodiversity and indicators of ecological characteristics, and also regarding the economic valuation and management of the ecosystems with the purpose of prompting their sustainability and conservation, including through nomination of wetlands of international importance</p> <p>Coordinate the establishment of a network to collect and disseminate information;</p> <p>Encourage the countries in the region to establish wetland education centers and establish a network between these centers</p> <p>Produce of information and bibliographical material where possible in a range of languages contributing to better knowledge of wetlands through printed and electronic means</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should</p>	<p>There is a lot of opportunity for collaboration with other</p>

<p>seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>intergovernmental or international partners including CEP (Caspian environmental program) and ECO in region. There is also numbers of project with UNDP/GEF in Iran and other country in this region. For example Iranian wetlands conservation project, can support center for held workshops and making network among countries and sharing information and set up management plan for conservation of wetlands that have same ecological characteristic. We also have a plan to involve wetlands international with wetland projects in the region through the UNDP projects.</p>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>Enter into agreements for technical cooperation, technology transfer and research with universities, research centers, government and non-government agencies and other Wetland Centers at local, regional and global level.</p>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>As the Center has just started its work, it does not yet have its own strategic and operation plan, yet but we have a plan to design it base on Ramsar Convention guidelines during this year. The Center will also:</p> <p>Develop assistance and consultation activities aimed at the study and management of the wetlands;</p> <p>Facilitate a harmonised approach to scientific monitoring on wetlands and their components in the region, for processing, studying and exchanging relevant information to assist decision-making processes</p>
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>The government assumes the obligation of carrying out the steps required to obtain premises appropriate to the Center's activities;</p> <p>Within the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Center will be granted the legal status required to carry out its functions;</p> <p>The Center, its officials, technicians and experts will be granted the same privileges and immunities granted in the Islamic Republic of Iran to the officials of the international organizations;</p>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>The government shall commit itself to contribute as much as possible to the budget of the Center.</p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become</p>	<p>The following financial mechanisms will be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request for financial support from the convention's core budget for first three years. ○ The government will allocate budget for center annually. ○ A trust fund will be established to meet the expenditures of the Center. The Management Board decides about the budget lines and the expenditure

<p>financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>biannually;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Center may receive grants, donations, bequests and legacies made by interested persons or legal entities, national or foreign, public or private sectors and NGOs on voluntary basis.
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>The advisory mechanism will be the Collaborative Management Board.</p> <p>The functions of the Collaborative Management Board will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Guidance for the Center, based on the ToR; 2. Approval of the programs and activities of the Center; 3. Approval of the Center's budget; 4. Review of the biannual reports submitted by the Executive Director of the Center and provision of any guidelines considered necessary; 5. Approval of the financial regulations of the Center; 6. Meeting in biannual regular sessions and in special sessions called by the Chair or at the request of at least half of the members of the Management Board; 7. Establishment of its own Rules of procedures; 8. Decide on policy related matters concerning human resources. <p>As the Ramsar Convention Secretariat representative and members of Standing Committee are involved in management board, the Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee will receive, through the Ramsar Secretariat, reports on Center activities and will oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>Cooperation with Ramsar Secretariat on technical activities;</p> <p>Preparation and submission of a biannual report to the Ramsar Secretariat;</p> <p>Informing the Administrative Authorities of relevant Parties of the Ramsar Convention in the Region about programs and activities carried out by the Center every year or at the request of the Administrative Authorities.</p>

Name of proposed regional initiative: **Himalayan Initiative**

Countries involved: **China, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan & Bangladesh**

Proposal submitted by: **China**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.	Yes, it promote wetland conservation and wise use of high mountain wetlands, through sharing information and knowledge, development of wetland policies, promote designation of mountain wetlands, and accession of new parties to Ramsar Convention. This initiative encapsulate all crucial aspects of the Ramsar Convention, such as the wetland and biodiversity, wetland and water, culture livelihood, IRBM, adaptation of climate change, etc, etc.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.	Yes, this initiative has been based on a bottom-up approach, so far all parties in the region have been involved, a series of workshops have been carried out, more than 10 Ramsar sites have been designated by China, India, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan since the initiative kicked off in 2002. China designated 9 Ramsar Sites in 2004, 8 of which are located in high attitude area.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues , intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.	Yes, other stakeholders, such as international organization, WWF, IUCN, WI, and ICIMOD (International Center for Integrated Mountain Development); national institutions (Chinese Academy of Sciences), universities, and local NGOs, etc.
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.	A framework agreement under discussion

<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have close cooperation with ICIMOD, which is an inter-governmental organization covering the Great Asia Mountain ranges; - Have been involve Mekong River Commission
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>Yes, participation of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the university from India and China, as well as the technical staff from the Ramsar AA, Ramsar IOPs provided strong technical backing</p>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>Yes, operational targets under discussion covers the following: climate change impacts and adaptation responses; approaches to enforcement of legislation; engaging participatory involvement of all stakeholders; empowering high-altitude wetland custodian communities through incentives and education and awareness and capacity building; development of policy and management plans; inventory and assessment; cultural values of wetlands; traditional knowledge, including traditional medicine; hydrological aspects in management of wetlands, the role of wetlands in groundwater recharge and aquifers; the role of wetlands in poverty alleviation and wealth generation; engaging improved awareness of wetland values and services at local government level; promoting downstream and upstream linkages; and addressing common issues of ecological safety (wetlands-related disasters).</p>
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>China is considering offer pre-service (secretariat?) for the starting of the initiative</p>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>Project proposal under development, among which one has been approved by EU (WI & ICIMOD on wetland inventory), one concept has been submitted to UNEP. Other resources from WWF and Evian Ramsar Fund have been supporting the initiative</p>

<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>For the first three years, it is important to be supported by Ramsar core budget. We estimate annual support from Ramsar core budget 100,000 CHF for international coordination, on the basis of secured project fund, such as EU Eco Programme, 400,000 Euros, Chinese Sanjiangyuan Wetland Conservation and Restoration Programme (ca. 900 million USD been approved for the next 5 years).</p> <p>Since the Himalayan regional has becoming a global concern with its sensitive to global warming, its ecological function provided to more than 1.4 billions people at downstream, we believe after three year core budget support, this initiative will be able to generate fund for its continuation.</p>
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>Yes, in the past, three workshops, and Evian Encounter function like a Forum, under and consensus from the Evian Encounter, the framework agreement under discussion will define its advisory mechanism.</p>
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>This initiative has been supported by Ramsar Convention Secretariat, good coordination has been running so far. We are ready for a formal agreement on this.</p>

EUROPE

Carpathian Wetland Initiative

Countries involved: **Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Ukraine**

Proposal submitted by: **Slovak Republic**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>Coordination and strengthening in implementation of the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (its biodiversity and wetland/river basin conservation and management articles), establishment of coherent national and international network of important wetland sites, enhancing the wise use and conservation of mountain wetlands in the Carpathian region.</p>
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>The Initiative started after consultations with experts, Ramsar Administrative Authorities and Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Steering Committee members in all 7 Carpathian countries. The initial workshop was held on 28-30 April 2004 in Slovakia based on invitation of minister of environment of the Slovak Republic and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic to all Ramsar and Carpathian Convention nominated institutions in the region, Ramsar Partner Organizations and MedWet Initiative.</p>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>Ramsar and Carpathian Convention Administrative Authorities, Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) Steering Committee, BirdLife International, IUCN Programme Office for Central Europe, WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme and Wetlands International are involved in the initiative from the beginning. DAPHNE Institute of Applied Ecology (Slovakia) as an expert NGO experienced in the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative and previous regional activities is also participating. A working group (contact people) for the wetland issues within the CNPA Steering Committee includes specialists from relevant ministries, specialized institutions, agencies, nature conservation bodies, protected areas managers, universities. Other relevant stakeholders are to be identified by governments and all will be invited for future cooperation and meetings.</p>

<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>The Initiative is based on activities of the Ramsar Convention specialists and the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and its Steering Committee. Together with the Carpathian Convention Interim Secretariat will be established a Working Group on Wetland issues and terms of reference for such a Group will be prepared.</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>Carpathian Convention Interim Secretariat, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) Steering Committee, BirdLife International, IUCN Programme Office for Central Europe, WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme and Wetlands International are involved in the initiative from the beginning, together with DAPHNE Institute of Applied Ecology (Slovakia) as an expert NGO involved in the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative and in expert work for the Carpathian Convention.</p>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>The operation of the Initiative will be based upon work of relevant managers of Ramsar sites and protected areas and identified scientific and technical institutions in the Carpathian countries with supervision of the Ramsar Partner Organizations. Some of them cooperated already in development of the initial map and database of identified important wetlands in the region.</p>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>The Initiative is developed under the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, but the activities within this initiative are based on the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 with its three pillars of action (see enclosed journal Carpathi for more details). Drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding between Ramsar and Carpathian Convention was included in work plans of secretariats of both Conventions.</p>
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>The Initiative was supported by all Carpathian countries (relevant ministries and agencies), Secretariats of the Ramsar and Carpathian Convention, and by invited Ramsar Partner Organizations (BirdLife, IUCN, Wetlands International, WWF International/DCP). The substantial support from the start was provided by the Slovak Government and the Norwegian Government through the project "Network of Carpathian Protected Areas and Ramsar Sites" funded in 2003-2004 in the framework of the Plan of Action for Candidate Countries to the EU of the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a framework of this project a provisional office was established and has been funded as a part of coordinating body – Velka Fatra National Park Administration.</p>

9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.	The activities of the Initiative and the office are funded recently from the core budget of the Slovak State Nature Conservancy (Velka Fatra NP Administration) and a new project proposal has been developed and consulted with all relevant stakeholders.
10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.	The Carpathian Convention and the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas are proposed that will roof the activities and it is expected that this Initiative will be included in future Protocols of the framework Carpathian Convention. But the Carpathian Convention has not been ratified by sufficient number of Parties so far and it has not been in force yet. Support from the Ramsar Convention's core budget for the first three years will help in bridge of the period of consolidation of Contracting Parties of both Conventions, which include European Union member states, candidate countries and countries in process of consultations with the European Community. Other funding sources are sought. Additional budgetary information for period 2006-2008 please find attached.
GOVERNANCE	
11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms , involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.	The Working Group is in place consisting of nominated representatives of all Carpathian countries, this will be complemented with other identified (by Governments) stakeholders and will establish its own advisory mechanisms using the structures and mechanisms of the CNPA. The office agreed upon all Carpathian countries will provide coordination and reporting activities (existing provisional office is available).
12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.	Specific arrangements should be included in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.

Annex I

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: Budgetary information

Estimated expenses for the period 2003-2008				
Activity	Specification	CHF Total budget (2006-2008)	CHF Sought from the Ramsar core budget	CHF Other sources of funding *
Staff costs	Coordinator salary and social charges	42,000	42,000	
	Assistant of coordinator	30,000	30,000	
External staff	database, GIS and web site experts	30,000	35,000	
	accountant	4,000		4,000

	specialists/consultants	5,000		
Travel	travel expenses of the project staff	10,000	9,000	1,000
	travel expenses of participants from 7 Carpathian countries and invited speakers for meetings	35 participants x 1,000 = 35,000 invited speakers 6 x 1,000 = 6,000 Total 41,000	40,000	1,000
Conference expenses	organizing of meetings and conference on wetlands (space rental, hospitality, stationery, copying, technical services etc.)	11,000	10,000	1,000
Translation/interpreting services	interpretation during meetings, translation of texts in publications	2,000	1,000	1,000
Purchase/rental/maintenance of equipment Office supplies	PC set and printer	8,000		4,000
	A3 copy machine	3,000	6,000	3,000
	furniture	3,000		2,000
	other	2,000		1,000
Printing costs for publications and materials	bulletin, maps, leaflet, proceedings	13,000	12,000	1,000
Transport/insurance	transport of participants of the meetings,	2,000		
	insurance	1,000	2,000	1,000
Administrative expenses Operating costs	office space rental	6,000		
	telecommunications	4,000	14,000	1,000
	postage	2,000		
	stationery	2,000		
	copying	1,000		
Other	miscellaneous	2,000	1,000	1,000
Total		224,000	202,000	22,000

* State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic; Other, not specified source of funding is expected from the core budget of the Carpathian Convention and from other Carpathian countries

The Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet)

Countries involved: **Denmark/Greenland, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia and Sweden**

Proposal submitted by: **Norway**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.	The overall aim of the regional initiative will be to promote the objectives of the Convention, thereby contributing to more effective conservation and wise use of wetlands and enhanced international wetlands co-operation in the region.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.	All the countries in the region will participate; Denmark/Greenland, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia and Sweden.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues , intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.	Stakeholders, NGO's etc will be invited to the Wetland Initiative's first ordinary meeting. See also summary from the Working Group Meeting; <i>Management and governance</i> - para 1, 2
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.	An initial approach of NorBalWet is to establish a communication network for exchange of information and experiences, thereby enhancing multilateral and transboundary co-operation by embracing a problem-oriented and practical approach to improve wise use and conservation of wetlands, in particular the network of Ramsar sites and other protected areas.
5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region , by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.	Based on the participation for seen as a result of para 1, 2 (page 3) further co-operation will be considered at the Wetland Initiatives first meeting.
6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing , provided by relevant	Reference is made to "Priority areas and possible means and approaches - initial steps" - page 3 in the summary from the WG-Meeting. Relevant scientific institutions etc

institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.	will be involved – e.g. the International Mire Conservation Group.
7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.	Priority areas and possible means and approaches as outlined are in line with the Strategic Plan of the Convention. E. g. transboundary/regional co-operation, wetland restoration etc
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region . A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.	Initial Meetings have been financed by The Nordic Council of Ministers and Norway. Further discussion is expected to take place at the Wetland Initiative's first ordinary meeting.
9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.	Relevant projects and possible financial support will be sorted out and presented at the Wetland Initiative's first ordinary meeting. The Nordic Council of Ministers will be contacted specially.
10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term . When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.	A discussion will have to take place regarding the feasibility of applying for Convention Core Budget support for selected activities.
GOVERNANCE	
11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms , involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.	It has been agreed that in order to secure timely preparations and coordination of activities under the Wetland Initiative, a working group should be established. The chairmanship will be rotated among the member countries. It was agreed, however, that management and governance related to the Wetland Initiative will have to be refined further as the initiative develops and matures. Norway will take on the initiative Chairmanship until October 2005 – followed by Sweden.
12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the COP .	The Ramsar Bureau and the MedWet participated in the Working Group Meeting where the Nordic-Baltic wetland Initiative was initiated. Both organizations have expressed their willingness to continue their roles as advisers.

NEOTROPICS

Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Wise Use of High Andean Wetlands

[Estrategia Regional de Conservación y Uso Sostenible de los Humedales Altoandinos]

Countries involved: **Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Perú, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica**

Proposal submitted by: **Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Perú, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.	The goal is the conservation and wise use of wetlands and wetland complexes in <i>páramos, jalca, puna</i> and other High Andean ecosystems.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.	Involves those countries situated along the Andean mountain range (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela), as well as Costa Rica as it hosts <i>páramos</i> with similar characteristics as those found in the Andes.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues , intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.	Constructive participatory process promoted by the Contact Group on High Andean Wetlands, composed of the Ramsar focal points of seven Andean countries – Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela – and Costa Rica, the Ramsar Secretariat, the Ramsar International Organisation Partners (IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International, BirdLife International), the Ramsar Regional Centre in Panama (CREHO) and two specialised technical networks, and the International Working Group on Páramos (<i>Grupo Páramo</i>) and the High Andes Flamingos Conservation Group (GCFA), enriched, complemented and validated with the contribution of numerous governmental and non-governmental actors. In the national arena, the Strategy has the intention of being linked from the moment of its inception to national/state/local development policies and plans of action, with emphasis on topics relating to biodiversity (National Biodiversity Strategy), water resources (National Water Action Plans), watersheds, agriculture, tourism and culture, among others.
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of	Suggests the participation of national and local governmental bodies, indigenous, peasant and black

<p>collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>communities, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, academic and research institutions, in coordination with supranational agencies like the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), MERCOSUR, the international organisations associated to the Ramsar Convention, and the technical networks that work in <i>páramos</i> and <i>punas</i>, among other interested parties. Its development and implementation stages are directed toward local, rural and urban beneficiary communities, non-governmental organisations, the private sector (industry, trade, tourism, agriculture and mining, among others) and academic and research institutions related to the conservation and wise use of High Andean wetlands.</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>The Contact Group on High Andean Wetlands includes, besides the Ramsar focal points and the Ramsar Secretariat, the Ramsar International Organisation Partners (IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International, BirdLife International), the Regional Ramsar Centre (CREHO) and two specialized technical networks, the International Working Group on <i>Páramos</i> (<i>Grupo Páramo</i>) and the High Andes Flamingos Conservation Group (GCFA).</p>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>Technical networks have been developed dealing with High Andean wetlands, such as the International Working Group on <i>Páramos</i> (<i>Grupo Páramo</i>) and the High Andes Flamingos Conservation Group (GCFA). The <i>Grupo Páramo</i> involves governmental and non-governmental organisations, research centres and representatives from the private sector of the countries with <i>páramos</i> and other countries with similar ecosystems. The GCFA involves Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru, and is composed of governmental and non-governmental institutions and universities from the four countries. Other academic and research institutions working for the conservation and wise use of High Andean wetlands also participate.</p>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>The Strategy will contribute to compliance with General Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan of the Convention: The wise use of wetlands. Favours the implementation of Resolution VIII.39: “High Andean Wetlands as Strategic Ecosystems”, consistent and complementary to Resolutions VIII.5, VIII.11, VIII.12 (“Enhancing the Wise Use and Conservation of Mountain Wetlands”), and VIII.17, as well as compliance with Operational Objectives 1.2; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 3.4; 4.1; 6.1; 7.1; 8.1; 9.1; 10.1 (specifically Action 10.1.2 which recommends paying special attention to the designation of under-represented wetland types in the Ramsar List, among others, mountain wetlands); 11.1; 11.2; 12.1; 12.2; 12.3; 13.1; 14.1; 15.1; 15.2; 18.1; 19.1; 20.1.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT</p>	

<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>Has the support of the focal points of all the involved Contracting Parties, the organisations associated to the Convention and the participation of various local and regional organizations.</p>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>A financial strategy is being developed in which potential national and international sources of funds and national funding mechanisms are being identified. As part of the financial strategy a portfolio of projects is being elaborated in order to guarantee that the initiative will be put into practice. Different projects are currently being developed in the region that fall within the scope of the High Andean Regional Strategy objectives. The private sector has communicated its interest in supporting this strategy.</p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>The Strategy will be submitted for consideration in the next Conference of the Parties (COP 9, Uganda, November 2005) for its adoption and eventual request for financial resources.</p>
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>The constitution of a Management and Follow-up Committee for the Strategy is being envisaged. Until now the Contact Group is in charge of the coordination tasks.</p>
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>The Ramsar Secretariat integrates the Contact Group through the Senior Advisor for the Americas.</p>

NEOTROPICS/NORTH AMERICA

Regional Initiative to apply the Ramsar Convention: Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO)

Countries involved: **Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Republican Dominican, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.**

Proposal submitted by: **Panama, Argentina, Nicaragua, United States, Canada, Bahamas,** representing the Western Hemisphere Contracting Parties.

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>The Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) promotes the Convention objectives in general and specifically the execution of its Strategic Plan through regional and subregional cooperation, capacity building, knowledge and information exchange with respect to matters of common interest relating to wetlands and the principles of the Ramsar Convention, as outlined in the agreement between the Government of Panama and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat for the establishment of CREHO.</p>
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion (s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>At the 20th meeting of the Standing Committee held in Gland, Switzerland, in 1997, a proposal was submitted to create a Regional Ramsar Centre for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere, taking advantage of the benefits and facilities offered by Panama at the City of Knowledge. Subsequently the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), formed by the Ministers for the Environment of Central America, in its XXIV regular session held in Belize in 1998, also endorsed the creation of the Centre.</p> <p>The governments of the region endorsed the proposal for establishing the centre at the first Pan-American meeting of the Ramsar Convention, held in Costa Rica in June 1998, and it was then endorsed by the 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, held in San José, Costa Rica, from 10 to 18 May 1999, through Resolution VII.26.</p> <p>The Government of Panama and the Ramsar Bureau signed a Memorandum of Understanding for establishing the Centre during the 29th meeting of the Standing Committee held in Gland, Switzerland, in February 2003.</p>

	<p>The Centre started activities in January 2004.</p> <p>The first meeting of the Board of Directors, which is composed of government representatives of the all subregions in the Hemisphere, took place in Panama City on 27 May 2003, followed by a second meeting in November 2004.</p> <p>The level of priority of this regional initiative was reiterated by the Western Hemisphere Parties to the Convention during the III Pan-American meeting, held in Mexico in November 2004.</p>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>This initiative is focused on the full participation of all Ramsar Convention parties in the Western Hemisphere, as well as other key actors. The design of the plan of work for CREHO has been based on a needs assessment which was carried out consulting all parties as well as an extensive list of contacts working on wetland issues in the region. CREHO will generate and facilitate alliances with different key wetland actors in the region, as well as promote their close involvement in the development of multiple activities performed by the Center, directly or indirectly. To achieve this, CREHO is establishing technical and research cooperation agreements with universities, research centers, governmental and non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental institutions at local, regional and international levels.</p>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>Activities carried out by CREHO include the procurement of space for establishing a network for knowledge and information exchange, such as: case studies, technology, and research, among others. In addition, CREHO is working to establish a wetland information and monitoring network for the region, which will first be built upon existing initiatives in an effort to join forces and prevent the duplication of actions, looking for an information exchange channel, and facilitating the use of information necessary in decision-making, whenever necessary contributing with the processing and analysis of information.</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>In its constitutive agreement, CREHO recognizes the existence of other programs and actions in the region working on wetlands, as well as the need to create complementary activities, to join efforts and create added value through collaboration and generation of exchange to prevent duplication. To accomplish this, CREHO is identifying key actors and actions currently under way in order to prepare a database with information to generate these exchanges and collaboration.</p> <p>IUCN is a member of CREHO's Board of Directors representing the Ramsar IOPs, and this place will be rotated among other IOPs in the forthcoming years.</p>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant</p>	<p>Since the beginning, CREHO has had the support of different entities participating in the Convention, including Contracting Parties of the Western Hemisphere, the</p>

institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.	Convention's Partner Organizations, and others such as the Smithsonian Institute as member of their Board of Directors and as scientific and technical advisor. CREHO's operative structure has identified two committees (scientific and development), which are currently being established as advisory committees at the local and regional levels.
7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.	For the first triennium (2004-2006) CREHO has designed a strategic and operating plan based on guidelines of the Convention and its Strategic Plan. CREHO's indicators of success can also be identified within the Convention Plan in order to monitor its progress on the different levels of policy and technical work.
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region . A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.	CREHO has had the political support of all Contracting Parties of the Western Hemisphere as well as other partners, such as the UICN and the Central American Commission of Environment and Development (CCAD). The financial support of Panama as host country has been the base for its operation since January 2004, the United States and Canada have also provided financial support for training activities, and in-kind support has also been provided by Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia through the provision of trainers from their countries.
9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.	With the constitution of CREHO, Panama assumed a government commitment to support this initiative for its basic operation and provide the necessary conditions for its operation (US\$500,000 for ten years), for which a law has been passed in Panama.
10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term . When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.	It is proposed that for the 2006-2008 triennial, additional CREHO financial support will come from the core budget of the Convention as presented below, considering the principle of equitable geographic distribution established in Resolution VIII. 30.
GOVERNANCE	
11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms , involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their	According to CREHO's operative structure, it has its own advisory structure based initially on the Board of Directors, in which it maintains a principle of equitable regional participation based on the regional representation adopted by the Contracting Parties of the region at every COP, and followed by a scientific advisory committee operating at international and local levels.

general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.	
12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.	CREHO's establishment agreement has defined a mechanism for coordination with the Convention Secretariat. Based on it, the Convention Secretariat has a permanent seat on CREHO's Board of Directors as well as communication and coordination mechanisms for operating and technical matters.

CREHO Provisional Budget 2006 – 2008 (in US \$)

Budget Component	2006			2007			2008			TOTAL
	Panama	Ramsar	Others	Panama	Ramsar	Others	Panama	Ramsar	Others	
1) Operation	71800	50000	205000	39800	60000	229400	39800	55000	317900	1068700
1.1. Personnel	43200	30000	104000	13200	40000	163400	13200	42000	228900	677900
1.2. Subcontracts	10000	5000	5000	8000	5000	5000	8000	5000	10000	61000
1.3. Travel	11000	5000	20000	11000	5000	20000	11000	5000	25000	113000
1.4. Capital goods	0	5000	18000	0	0	0	0	0	0	23000
1.5. Perishable goods	7600	0	1000	7600	0	1000	7600	0	1000	25800
1.6. Other expenses and income in kind	0	0	50000	0	0	50000	0	0	50000	150000
1.7. Board of directors - follow up	0	5000	3000	0	5000	3000	0	3000	3000	22000
2) Training courses	0	30000	611550	0	25000	614550	0	25000	619550	1925650
<i>2.1. Regional courses (2 -E & S- per year for 30 participants 2 weeks)</i>	0	30000	439250	0	20000	447250	0	20000	447250	1403750
<i>2.2. Courses per country (4 one week event per year for 30 participants)</i>	0	0	172300	0	5000	167300	0	5000	172300	521900
3)	0	0	219600	0	0	116800	0	0	124300	460700

Information and monitoring system for wetlands										
4) Regional and subregional initiatives CREHO participation	0	0	35800	0	0	35800	0	0	35800	107400
TOTAL	71800	80000	1067950	39800	80000	1009550	39800	80000	1097550	3566450

OCEANIA

Regional initiative for the protection and wise use of wetlands for the Pacific Islands

Countries involved:

Current Oceania Contracting Parties - **Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Samoa, Marshall Islands.**

Pacific Island Countries (PICs) in advanced stages of accession – **Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga**

Other Pacific Island Countries who have shown interest in joining the Ramsar Convention - **Niue, Nauru, Tokelau, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu.**

Overseas Dependent Territories in Oceania – **New Caledonia, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Marianas**

Proposal submitted by: **Australia, New Zealand, PNG, Palau, Samoa, and Marshall Islands**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and sub regional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>The initiative implements the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 as amended at COP 8, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Action 13.1.3 (under Operational Objective 13) - to give priority to the implementation of Memoranda of Cooperation with different MEAs including that with SPREP. ➤ Action 12.3.2 (under Operational Objective 12) - to continue the development and implementation of joint work plans under the Memorandum of Cooperation between Ramsar Convention and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) ➤ 2002-2005 global resources identified to expand internship program, including an Oceania intern. <p>The initiative strongly reflects and gains its mandate from the CoP8 resolution on Small Island Developing States in the Oceania Region (resolution VIII.42)</p> <p>The initiatives main objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance conservation and wise use of the wetlands of the Pacific, especially its coral reefs, mangroves and small and unique freshwater wetlands • to promote the wise use principles of the Ramsar Convention, including Ramsar listing, as appropriate, of internationally significant wetlands with SPREP member countries • To facilitate/enhance the protection, management and wise use of wetlands of international and national significance in SPREP signatory member countries and more broadly across the region

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To integrate the protection and wise use of wetlands principles in key regional and national strategies, such as National Sustainable Development strategies, the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Strategy, and the Action Strategy for Mainstreaming Nature Conservation. <p>Key strategies of initiative include: To continue supporting a SPREP based dedicated Ramsar position, as per Ramsar SPREP MoU, currently co-funded by the Ramsar Bureau and Australia and consistent with Strategic Plan Action 13.1.8. (Refer to attachment 1)</p> <p>Continuing support for this position will enable SPREP to review/update and leverage funding for the SPREP/Ramsar Secretariat Joint Programme of Work consistent with the SPREP programmatic approach and incorporation of wetlands conservation and wise use into the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (component 1.2), biodiversity conservation (component 1.3) and people and institutions (component 1.4) of the SPREP Island Ecosystems Strategic Programme) focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Policy development and governance (enabling environment)</i> Clearing house mechanism On country activities Communication, Education Public Awareness and Capacity building Facilitate the accession of island countries to the Convention <p>(Refer to Annex 2 for details of activities)</p>
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and sub regional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or sub region(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>The initiative draws on backstopping from regional policies and programmes for which the Oceania SIDS, ODTs and regional partners have pledged support and approval including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Wetlands Action Plan (RWAP) 1999 The Pacific Island Regional Oceans Policy (PIROP) The Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands Region 2003-2007 The SPREP Action Plan 2001-2005 The SPREP Strategic Programme 2004-2013 Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the International Waters of Pacific SIDS. Pacific Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Sustainable Water Management (Sigatoka, 2002) Caribbean and Pacific Joint Programme for Action on Water and Climate (Kyoto, 2003) Pacific Wastewater Policy (Majuro, 2001) <p>The Proposed initiative will continue to support contracting parties as well as engaging non contracting parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the national level, SPREP will continue to support National Ramsar Committees in contracting parties, which have broad stakeholder representation and

	<p>facilitate establishment of linkages to related national committees such as NBSAP committees and other intergovernmental committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the regional level, SPREP will facilitate engagement/representation/input from those bodies, as relevant, in existing regional for a such as the action strategy for nature conservation and continue engaging non contracting parties in regional activities such as training, and information sharing on Ramsar wise use principles and wetland management and facilitate accession to the Ramsar Convention when appropriate
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>Contracting parties (Australia, Samoa, PNG, Palau, Marshall Islands, New Zealand) have considered the attached work programme through their National Ramsar Committees which have broad stakeholder representation</p> <p>SPREP will work with contracting parties to ensure interdepartmental representation in/ or effective linkages with) national committees in particular fisheries, natural resources and planning authorities.</p> <p>SPREP will endeavour to facilitate the engagement of non government stakeholders, NGOs, academia and industry at national level and actively promote such engagement at regional level, through regional mechanisms (see criterion 5)</p>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>The Initiative builds on the existing networks involving Administrative Authorities and relevant stakeholders in the region and those existing mechanisms within SPREP such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, The Locally Managed Marine Area network, The Council of the Regional Organization of the Pacific (CROP) (ie Marine Sector Working Group) The Roundtable on the Action Strategy for Mainstreaming nature conservation SPREP focal points for wetland-related issues in the ODTs, national focal points and the International Waters Programme national focal points
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>The initiative will strengthen collaborative links with the Ramsar Convention’s international partner organizations and other international NGOs and networks as appropriate, at both international and regional levels in the development and implementation of programmes of action relating to the mandate of the Convention.</p> <p>The Initiative will strengthen existing collaboration and synergies between the regional bodies represented in the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP) including PIFS, SPREP, SOPAC, SPC, SPTO, FFA, USP, and other regional IGOs at the policy and technical levels to</p>

	<p>better support Pacific Island countries through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning international policy frameworks such as the Mauritius strategy, the Pacific Plan and the Pacific Island Regional Oceans policy, the regional climate change strategy and the Regional Wetlands Action Plan • Ensuring effective implementation of MEAs by signatory states • Developing joint activities with CROP agencies related to Wetlands <p>In addition, collaborations with regional and international NGOs, the private sector and donors through the Roundtable for the Action Strategy on mainstreaming nature conservation provides a vehicle regionally for the implementation of the CBD's island biodiversity programme of work.</p> <p>At the international level by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming new, and strengthening existing co-operative arrangements with Ramsar's partner organizations (IUCN, Wetlands International, BirdLife International and WWF) and other international NGOs and networks as appropriate, at both international and regional levels in the development and implementation of programmes of action relating to the mandate of the Convention; • Maintaining, as appropriate, contact with appropriate counterparts in the secretariats of regional and international Conventions to assist with harmonized implementation and joint actions, and in other international and regional intergovernmental bodies working in environmental and natural resources management issues.
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions, which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>Scientific and technical backstopping for the initiative will be provided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant CROP agencies (SPREP, SOPAC, SPC, PIFS, FFA, UNDOALOS, UNEP-GRID) • Conservation International, • Wetlands International Oceania, • WWF South Pacific • NIWA-NCCO, • NTF <p>And through regional academic institutions such:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Centre for tropical Wetlands Research (NCTWR) • Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist (ERISS) • Academic institutions in the region, such as The University of the South Pacific and other institutions based in Australia and new Zealand

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, support from national academic institutions will be solicited through their representation in National Ramsar Committees.
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>The initiative aims to support the implementation of the objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan as amended at CoP8 to reflect the Oceania SIDS resolution (VIII.42), at the regional and national levels through implementation of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 13.1.3 under Operational Objective 13 - to give priority to the implementation of Memoranda of Cooperation with different MEAs including that with SPREP. • Action 12.3.2 under Operational Objective 12 - to continue the development and implementation of joint work plans under the Memorandum of Cooperation between Ramsar Convention and SPREP. • 2002-2005 global: resource identified to expand internship program, including an Oceania intern. <p>The Ramsar-SPREP MoC and JWP (2002-2004) reflects the general objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and will provide the basis for effectively implement the Strategic Plan objectives. Relevant actions under the initiative (see attached workplan) which will contribute to the Strategic Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the development of National Wetland Policies and/or other appropriate policy instruments designed to ensure the conservation and wise use of wetlands; • Designation of additional sites to the List of Wetlands of International Importance (the “Ramsar List”) and the development and implementation of management plans for these; • Monitoring of the ecological character of Sites. • Assisting in the updating of Ramsar Information Sheets as appropriate. • Assisting in preparation of national reporting to the CoP • Review of the Regional Wetlands Action Plan for the Pacific Islands (1999) • Facilitate the updating of the Oceania Directory of Wetlands (1993)
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p><i>Political support</i> As a long-standing representative of the Oceania region on the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention, Australia has been actively building on previous efforts to increase the presence of the Ramsar Convention in the Oceania region.</p> <p>Ramsar’s COP6 also adopted Recommendation 6.18</p>

	<p>“<i>Conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Pacific Islands region</i>” which urged actions ranging from accession by these countries to Ramsar working in partnership with other conventions to explore opportunities for cooperation.</p> <hr/> <p>Resolution VIII.42 adopted at CoP8 held in Valencia Spain in 2002, called for increased assistance towards countries in Oceania for the wise use and conservation of wetlands. This resolution was sponsored by Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.</p> <p><i>Financial support</i> A total of AU\$88 190 for a SPREP based Assistant Ramsar Officer position for a period of 18 months, starting from 1 July 2004, was provided by Australia, WWF international, The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands and the Swedish SIDA</p>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>See criterion 8.</p> <p>The initiative, as an integral part of the Coastal and Marine programme of the SPREP’s Island Ecosystem Strategic programme, will benefit/complement proposed activities, in particular those under the AFD/UNF funded Coral Reef Initiative in the Pacific.</p> <p>In addition, the Initiative will build upon support previously provided under the UNEP-ICRAN to Ramsar activities in the region, notably the nomination of Jaluit Atoll as Marshall Island’s first Ramsar Site (2004), the SPREP based GEF International Waters Project, to be completed in 2006, and the GEF funded SPBCP programme (1992-2002).</p> <p>Additional funding will be leveraged for targeted activities from a range of sources to complement funding received from the Ramsar Secretariat, contracting parties and the UNF/AFD funds.</p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention’s core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention’s core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p>It is proposed that the initiative been funded through the Convention’s core budget for the first three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continuation of the initiative after this period will depend largely on the needs and priorities of the PICs in relation to the Ramsar Convention and wetlands conservation after the period of support and on the availability of funds for the continuation of a programme of support. • SPREP will assist countries in developing new and strengthening existing mainstreaming strategies to ensure wetlands conservation and wise use is reflected in national agendas and activities and takes lessons from the SPREP based GEF International Waters Project, to be completed in 2006. • SPREP, through the CROP regional process will ensure that wetland conservation and wise use is integrated into

	<p>regional priorities, policies and programmes, including the Pacific island Regional Oceans Policy and the SOPAC GEF funded Pacific Water Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To add additional support to the initiative, SPREP will formulate and implement an investment strategy to secure long term funding and is actively seeking such funding through available mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and philanthropic organizations
GOVERNANCE	
<p>11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initiative will seek to use existing regional and national advisory mechanisms such as the Marine Sector Working Group of the CROP, the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation, which aim to engage a broad range of regional, national and international stakeholders (eg NGOs, GOs, Academic institutions, Donors, Industry), National NBSAPs as well as contracting parties advisory mechanisms such as Australia's New Zealand Wetlands and Birds Taskforce. As appropriate, new mechanisms may be developed such as a regional technical reference group At the national level, the National Ramsar Committees will have this role.
<p>12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>The basis of such coordination is the SPREP-Ramsar MoC and JWP. SPREP will work with PNG, The Standing Committee representative for Oceania.</p>

Annex 1
Oceania initiative budget information

Item	2005-06 (\$US) Ramsar		2006-07(\$US) Ramsar		2007-08(\$US) Ramsar		2008-09(\$US) Ramsar	
Assistant Ramsar Officer								
Salary	50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000	
Travel (regional/international)	20,000		25,000		25,000		25,000	
Printing, Email, Phone, Fax	5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000	
Stationery	1,500		1,500		1,500		1,500	
Sub-total	76,500		81,500		81,500		81,500	
Admin. Fee (10%)	7,650		8,150		8,150		8,150	
Grand total	84,150		89,650		89,650		89,650	
(USD)								\$353,100
Approx. equivalent in Swiss CHF (based on exchange rate for 17-5-05)								CHF 534,488

Secretariat note: the conversion from US\$ to CHF appears to be incorrect, and should be c. CHF 431,812.

Annex 2
Oceania initiative Proposed Programme of Work 2006 – 2008

SPREP will seek funding (through the Assistant Ramsar Officer position) for the activities below for the 2006-2008 period:

Objective	Outcomes	Activity
<p>Support and assistance for national level activities in Pacific Islands Countries</p> <p>To assist Pacific Island Countries with planning and implementation of National level activities on wetlands conservation and wise use.</p>	<p>Wetlands conservation & wise use translated into sustainable programmes at the national level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and conduct a case study on harmonizing legislative and policy frameworks related to wetlands in 3 contracting parties • Coordinate an update of the Directory of wetlands in Oceania (1993) • Assist in developing and reviewing management plans for Ramsar sites in Contracting parties as appropriate • Assist non-parties in the region with national accession activities
<p>Communication, Education and Public Awareness & capacity building</p> <p>To strengthen regional and national awareness and capacities to meet the objectives of the Convention and implement the conventions wise use principle</p>	<p>Awareness strengthened and enhanced regional and national capacities for wetlands conservation and wise use planning and informed decision making at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and integrate a Wetlands component into SPREP Regional Communication strategies • Develop, edit and print and widely disseminate awareness materials on wetlands wise use and the Ramsar Convention • Plan and implement the Wetlands International-SPREP workshop on wetlands wise use and the Ramsar Convention • Refine and implement an awareness raising component for the Ramsar convention to be integrated into the annual SPREP-USP Pacific Islands Community based Conservation Course • Assist PICs and Territories to plan and implement suitable national activities for World Wetlands Day • Develop and refine a project proposal for regional capacity building initiatives for PICs and seek to have it supported and resourced by bilateral donors or other sources.

<p>Enhancing Policy Frameworks</p> <p>To review national and regional policy frameworks to reflect existing and emerging issues and challenges facing wetlands conservation and wise use.</p>	<p>An enabling environment for wetlands conservation and wise use is facilitated at the international, regional and national levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and coordinate a review of the Regional Wetlands Action Plan 1999. • Plan and implement a case study on the Integration of wetlands issues into regional policies (Roundtable, PI Regional Oceans Policy, PI Climate change framework) and national agendas (NBSAPs, NDSDs) and institutions • Develop and implement an Investment strategy engaging the private sector and to forge partnerships for wetlands conservation and wise use. • Assist and support Oceania Contracting Parties with Ramsar CoP preparations and the work of other related MEAs • Facilitate international cooperation on related MEAs (eg CITES, CBD, UNFCCC)
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ASIA/OCEANIA/NORTH AMERICA

**WSSD Type II Partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of sites
of international importance for migratory waterbirds in East Asia South
East Asia and Australasia (The Partnership)**

Countries involved: **Japan, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, United States of America, and Viet Nam.**

Proposal submitted by: **Japan**, [Australia]

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
AIM	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p>At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg in September 2002, Japan, Australia and Wetlands International co-sponsored a Type II partnership initiative on migratory birds designed to build on the cooperative activities established under the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main purpose of the Partnership is to encourage international cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of internationally important migratory bird sites; and to encourage the sharing of information, exchanging of data, cooperative research, and capacity building. <p>The objectives of the Partnership are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the conservation and sustainable use of a network of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway. ▪ Promote exchange of information and data on migration research, population monitoring and site management activities for internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway. ▪ Enhance public awareness of the importance of conserving migratory waterbirds and their habitats. ▪ Build capacity for network site managers and communities that share habitat with these species to harmonize conservation activities with sustainable use principles. ▪ Provide an international framework to promote dialogue and cooperation between a range of stakeholders including national, state and local governments, site management agencies and owners, Conventions, technical institutions, development agencies, industrial and private sector, academe, non-government organisations, community groups and local people who share a responsibility in conserving a

	common international resource.
SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS	
<p>2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<p>The Partnership will encourage and assist Network site managers to engage local neighbouring communities in conservation and sustainable use activities, particularly where mutual benefits can be established. [ecotourism, employment opportunities, social and economic benefits] It will also encourage the development of Site and National level Partnerships that will promote the wise use of wetlands.</p> <p>Throughout the East Asian – Australasian Flyway there are 22 countries. Sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds have been identified in almost all of these countries. As a matter of priority the Partnership is seeking to engage as many as possible of the Ramsar contracting Parties in the Flyway.</p>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<p>The Partnership is open to Governments, Inter-Governmental Organisations, International non-Government organisations (including national non-Government organisations that coordinate waterbird conservation activities in more than one country in the Flyway) and the international business sector, which have committed to actions under this Partnership.</p> <p>The first meeting to discuss the Partnership was held in November 2004 in the Republic of Korea. Potential Partners (22 Governments, 7 Inter-Governmental organisations, and 4 International non-Government organisations) were invited to attend.</p> <p>A working group made up of 5 Governments, (Japan, Australia, Philippines, Bangladesh and America) 1 inter-Governmental organisation (Ramsar Bureau), 3 international non-Government organisations (Wetlands International, Birdlife International and WWF) and the 3 chairs of the existing technical working groups of the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy was established to develop the Partnership.</p>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<p>The effective conservation of migratory waterbirds across the East Asian-Australasian Flyway requires international cooperation between countries and communities that have responsibility for important habitat with these species. It was recognized that a Partnership would enhance collaboration between a range of stakeholders including governments, site management agencies and owners, Conventions, technical institutions, development agencies, industrial and private sector, academe, non-government organisations, community groups and local people who share a responsibility in conserving a common international resource, and contribute towards achieving the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals.</p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other</p>	<p>The Partnership will be useful in building on existing initiatives, mainly on the ‘Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird</p>

<p>intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>Conservation Strategy: 2001-2005' (the Strategy) and its associated Action Plans.</p> <p>Other Intergovernmental organizations invited to participate include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convention on Migratory Species ▪ United Nations Development Program ▪ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ▪ Asian Development Bank ▪ The World Conservation Union
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<p>An important element of the plan will be the promotion of the site network approach to conservation of internationally important habitat.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Partnership will provide for the development of a scientific consultative committee drawn from government and non-government organisations with scientific expertise in wetlands and migratory waterbirds across the Flyway. The Working Group will review nominations to the site network to ensure that the site meets the criteria for inclusion in the network and if applicable make recommendations to the Migratory Waterbird Partnership Committee to include the site in the network. The Working Group will prepare an annual workplan which identifies priority research and monitoring activities throughout the Flyway.</p> <p>Relevant international institutions with scientific expertise in Wetlands and Migratory Waterbird issues, including, but not limited to, Wetlands International, Birdlife International and the World Wide Fund for Nature should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<p>The strategic and operational targets of the regional initiative are fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and technical work and activities.</p>
FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p>The Partnership will be useful in building on achievements of existing initiatives, including the 'Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 2001-2005' (the Strategy) and its associated Action Plans.</p> <p>The Strategy and its Action Plans are due to conclude at the end of 2005. The WSSD Type II partnership will be a way to continue the work that has been achieved through that process, by moving into a new phase. This new phase may help overcome some limitations of the Strategy, including a lack of commitment from governments, some difficulty in securing funds, and a general lack of profile in</p>

	<p>the region.</p> <p>The Partnership offers a more formal framework for the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the region, including the ability for states to sign on to the Partnership in the form of a non-legally binding arrangement.</p> <p>By linking the Partnership to broader Government objectives of sustainable development it is the aim of the Partners to increase commitment of governments to migratory bird conservation activities in the region.</p> <p>No regional office is proposed at this stage, but a Partner or organization will be engaged to coordinate activities under the Partnership.</p> <p>The main source of funding for the initiative is likely to initially be the Governments of Japan and Australia. As Governments sign on and commit to the objectives of the Partnership financial (assessed) contributions will be encouraged in line with level of development.</p>
9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.	The commitment of the Governments of Japan and Australia to this initiative ensures that adequate funding will be made available for start up activities and projects.
10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.	It is expected that the initiative will generate its own funding and be self sufficient in the long term. However it would be encouraged that the Convention provide technical and scientific support for some activities and other in-kind support as well as fund a representative to attend meetings of the Partnership.
GOVERNANCE	
11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms , involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.	<p>Each Partner to the Partnership will be represented on the Committee (Migratory Waterbird Partnership Committee (MWPC)) that will be established to oversee implementation of the Partnership. The MWPC will report to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties on the activities carried out under the Partnership that relate to the policies of the Convention.</p> <p>Technical Working Groups will also be established to advise on priority actions of the Partnership.</p>
12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out	It is preferable that the Ramsar Secretariat will participate as a Partner in the WSSD Type II Partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of sites of international

<p>by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>importance for migratory waterbirds.</p>
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