

Agenda item 9.5

A Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to consider and approve the attached draft Resolution for consideration by COP9.

Note by the Ramsar Secretariat

1. In March 2005 the Standing Committee's Subgroup on COP9 considered a proposal by the Secretariat to prepare a strategic framework for the implementation of the Convention for the 2006-2008 triennium, derived from the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008. The Subgroup on COP9 requested the Secretariat to progress the drafting of a revised Strategic Plan for 2006-2008, based upon the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 adopted by COP8, in coordination with the Subgroups on COP9 and Resolution VIII.45, and to incorporate, as appropriate, budgetary aspects and relevant elements in the proposal from WWF International on Key Performance Measures (Decision COP9 SG-11).
2. A draft COP9 Resolution is attached to this note. A draft Strategic Framework is annexed to this DR and has been prepared in consultation with the COP9 and Resolution VIII.45 Subgroups.
3. The Standing Committee may wish to consider recommending that, following COP9, the Annex to COP9 DR2 concerning the future scientific and technical implementation of the Convention should be annexed to the Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008, so as to form the Convention's Work Plan for the coming triennium.

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COP9 DR9

A Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008

1. RECALLING that Resolution VIII.25 adopted the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 as the basis for the implementation of the Convention;
2. RECOGNIZING that the implementation by Contracting Parties and others of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 has permitted a more coherent and effective realization of the Convention, but AWARE that there remain many and increasing challenges to achieving a globally consistent delivery of wetland conservation and wise use;
3. AWARE that to achieve the Convention's objectives in wetland conservation and wise use, a comprehensive but simple and easy-to-use document would be helpful to Contracting Parties for the promotion and implementation of the Convention;
4. RECOGNIZING that each Contracting Party is free to choose the extent to which it will implement the Strategic Plan, the resources it will allocate to the implementation, and the timeframes to be followed; and
5. ALSO AWARE that the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008 has been prepared by the Standing Committee through a wide consultative process with Contracting Parties, the Convention's International Organization Partners and others, including intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. APPROVES the *Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008* built upon the Strategic Plan adopted by Resolution VIII.25, as annexed to this Resolution, as the basis for monitoring and measuring the implementation of the Convention;
7. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Secretariat to finalize the text of this Framework to take into account the Resolutions adopted by the 9th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, and to make available the finalized text of the Framework to Contracting Parties and all others concerned with its implementation with minimum delay; and
8. URGES all Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, the Secretariat, and the Convention's International Organization Partners to use this Strategic Framework to take on the renewed challenge of implementing and monitoring the performance of the Convention, especially through its Key Result Areas and associated indicators.

Annex

A Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention 2006-2008

A RAMSAR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2006 - 2008

Preamble

1. Good water governance and capacity building at a local level are vital for poverty alleviation. Since 1971, the Ramsar Convention has been a key global force in promoting the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world. The Convention defines “wetland” in very broad terms: **“Wetlands are areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres” (Article 1.1 of the Convention)**. The Convention also asks each contracting government (party) to “designate suitable wetlands within its territory for inclusion in a List of Wetlands of International Importance”, which has become known as the Ramsar List.
2. Water is key to sustainable development. Water supplies of good quality are also fundamental to poverty alleviation. But water supplies are dependent upon the protection and sustainable use of wetland and related ecosystems that naturally capture, filter, store and release water, *inter alia* swamps, mires, fens, lakes and riverine systems. Component biodiversity of such systems plays a key role in ensuring continued delivery of these water-related functions. Changing component biodiversity may increase poverty, increase risks to human health, and undermine livelihood security (including food and water security). Water resources management schemes should be based on this integrated approach. Only then will human livelihoods, including food through agriculture and fisheries, access to clean water and adequate sanitation, be properly ensured.
3. Disaster reduction and early warning systems are an essential part of integrated water management, since poor people are the most vulnerable and the hardest hit by water-related disasters, such as floods, tsunamis and drought. Contracting Parties are encouraged by the Convention to develop and implement wetland and water planning so as to promote the conservation of the wetlands included in the List, and as far as possible the wise use of wetlands in their territory. They must also inform the Secretariat if the ecological character of any wetland in its territory and included in the List has changed, is changing or is likely to change as the result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference.
4. Additionally, Contracting Parties are encouraged to consult with each other about implementing obligations arising from the Convention, especially in the case of a wetland extending over the territories of more than one Contracting Party or where a water system is shared by Contracting Parties. The Convention stresses that it is essential to integrate conservation of wetlands and sustainable use as a contribution to the health and well-being of people through sustainable development everywhere.

5. With these thoughts in mind, the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands, held in Spain on 18-26 November 2002, adopted a Strategic Plan for the application of the Convention during the period 2003-2008. That Strategic Plan recognized the adoption by the Convention of a broader approach to wetland conservation and sustainable use in achieving full application of the wise use principle and safeguarding wetland resources. Developing and simplifying this plan, the Conference of the Parties meeting in Kampala, Uganda, November 2005, has agreed this Strategic Framework to be used in conjunction with the Strategic Plan during the second triennium. COP9 agreed five Goals, each to be achieved through a series of strategies with key result areas and indicators to measure effectiveness.
6. Collectively this Strategic Framework contributes to:
 - achievement of Millennium Development Goal 7 (Ensuring Environmental Sustainability);
 - the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico 2006;
 - achievement of the 2010 Biodiversity targets; and
 - implementation of decisions from CSD13 policies on water and sanitation.

What are we about? – The mission of the Convention

7. “*Conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.*” The Convention stresses that it is essential to integrate conservation of wetlands and sustainable use as a contribution to the health and well-being of people through sustainable development everywhere.

What do we want to do? – Our goals

GOAL 1. The wise use of wetlands: To stimulate and assist all Contracting Parties to develop, adopt and use the necessary and appropriate instruments and measures to ensure the wise use of all wetlands within their territories.

Delivers Articles 3.1, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 of the Convention.

GOAL 2. Wetlands of International Importance: To stimulate and support all Contracting Parties in the appropriate implementation of the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance*, including the appropriate monitoring and management of listed sites as a contribution to sustainable development, and implementation of the 2010 targets for biodiversity.

Delivers Articles 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1 and 4.2 of the Convention.

GOAL 3. International cooperation: To promote international cooperation through the active application of the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* and in particular to mobilize additional financial and technical assistance for wetland conservation and wise use.

Delivers Article 5 of the Convention.

GOAL 4. Implementation capacity: To ensure that the Convention has the required implementation mechanisms, resources and capacity to achieve its mission.

Delivers Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the Convention.

GOAL 5. Membership: To progress towards universal membership of the Convention.
Delivers Articles 2.4 and 9 of the Convention.

***How are we going to do what we want? (Our strategies),
What are the results we want to achieve? (Our Key Results Areas - KRAs),
and How effective are we being? (Our Key Performance Measures – KPMs).***

Note. In this section each key strategy is linked numerically to one of the five goals. Despite this linkage some strategies and Key Result Areas will, in the end, inevitably satisfy more than one goal.

STRATEGY 1.1.

Describe, assess and monitor the extent and condition of wetland resources at relevant scales, in order to inform and underpin implementation of the Convention, in particular application of the wise use principle. (CPs, advised by STRP as appropriate)

KRAs

By COP10:

- All Parties without completed inventories to have initiated action in line with the Ramsar Framework for Wetland Inventory, and as far as possible to have completed and disseminated comprehensive national wetland inventories, including information on wetland importance; potential Ramsar sites; wetlands for restoration; location of under-represented wetland types; and values and functions, in particular in relation to poverty eradication strategies.
- A Web-based metadatabase in place and populated with information on all national wetland inventories, managed by the Secretariat.

KPM

All stakeholders to have access to wetland inventories.

Budget impact: STRP work programme; Web database development.

STRATEGY 1.2.

Develop, review, amend when necessary, and implement national or supranational policies, legislation, institutions and practices, including impact assessment and valuation, in all Contracting Parties, to ensure that the wise use principle of the Convention is being effectively applied. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRAs

By COP10:

- At least 50 CPs to have undertaken water quality and quantity assessments.
- National Wetland Policy or equivalent instrument fully integrated into other strategic and planning processes by all Parties, including poverty eradication strategies and water resources management and water efficiency plans and national strategies for sustainable development in line with WSSD targets. SC/Secretariat to identify at least 100 Parties to initiate and if possible complete comprehensive reviews of their laws and institutions.

- SC/Secretariat to identify at least 50 Parties to have in place Strategic Environmental Assessment for policies, programmes and plans impacting on wetlands.

KPM

Wise use of wetlands as an accepted management approach as part of global IWRM efforts.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 1.3.

Increase recognition of the significance of wetlands for reasons of water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, food security, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and scientific research. (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRAs

By COP10:

- Development and implementation of wise use wetland programmes and projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives and food and water security plans at local and national levels in place.
- Full recognition of the social and cultural heritage of wetlands taken into account in their wise use and management.

KPM

- An analysis of the values and functions of Ramsar sites achieved for all CPs.

Budget impact: Staff time for analysis.

STRATEGY 1.4.

Integrate policies on the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the planning activities in all Contracting Parties, and in decision-making processes at national, regional, provincial and local levels, particularly concerning territorial management, groundwater management, catchment/river basin management, coastal and marine zone planning, and responses to climate change: all in the context of implementing IWRM. (CPs, STRP)

KRAs

By COP10

- All CPs to have made available the guidance on water allocation and management for ecosystems to support decision-making on water resource management, as a contribution to achieving the WSSD target on water resources management and water efficiency plans.
- River Basin Initiative fully operational
- Information on wetlands and their role in mitigation and adaptation to climate change completed, including an assessment of Kyoto Protocol implementation on wetlands.

KPM

- The Convention's role in IWRM plans established as part of international environmental governance, including the implications of the Kyoto Protocol on wetlands.

Budget impact: STRP work programme - and RBI management – some extra support from GEF funds if RBI is operational.

STRATEGY 1.5.

Identify priority wetlands where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial and yield long-term environmental, social or economic benefits, and implement the necessary measures to recover these sites. (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRAs

By COP10:

- All CPs with lost or degraded wetlands to have identified priority sites for restoration; restoration projects underway or completed in at least 100 CPs.
- New case studies and methods added to Ramsar wetland restoration pages on the Web site.

Budget impact: Staff time for Web site management.

STRATEGY 1.6.

Develop guidance and promote protocols and actions to prevent, control or eradicate invasive alien species in wetland systems. (CPs, STRP, other agencies, IOPs)

KRA

- By COP10 CPs to have identified problems posed by invasive species in wetland ecosystems documented in a decisive and holistic manner, making use, as appropriate, of the tools and guidance developed by various institutions and processes.

KPM

- Prevention, control and eradication of invasive species, based on case studies and documented experiences from the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), relevant MEAs, Ramsar's International Organization Partners in action.

Budget impact: Staff time for interaction with institutions.

STRATEGY 2.1.

Apply the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Handbook 7). (CPs)

KRA

- By COP10 all CPs implementing the Strategic Framework for Ramsar sites.

KPM

- Adequate management planning processes submitted with all new site nominations.

Budget impact: Staff time needed for additional inputs and management of the List.

STRATEGY 2.2.

Maintain the Ramsar Sites Database Service and constantly update it with the best available information, and use the database as a tool for guiding the further designation of wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance. (CPs, STRP, Secretariat, IOPs as appropriate)

KRAs

By COP10:

- The Secretariat has received all necessary updated Ramsar Information Sheets, and all new designations conform to the latest version of the RIS.
- Ramsar Sites Database improves its functionality and its accessibility to stakeholders, including through links between the Database, the Ramsar Sites Directory Web presentation, the Ramsar Web site, and other interactive systems, as well as the publication of special reports and other outputs.

KPM

- The Ramsar Sites Database information used as a key resource by all Ramsar Stakeholders

Budget impact: Staff time for web site management, funding for external data base management (if relevant)

STRATEGY 2.3.

Maintain the ecological character of all Ramsar sites. (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRAs

By COP10:

- Zoning measures for larger Ramsar sites, wetland reserves, and other wetlands (Recommendation 5.3 and Resolution VIII.14) and strict protection measures for certain Ramsar sites and other wetlands of small size and/or particular sensitivity in place
- Cross-sectoral site management committees for Ramsar sites, involving relevant government agencies, local community representatives, and other stakeholders, including the business sector in place.

KPM

- CPs in implementing their obligations under Articles 3 and 8.2 using the integrated package of Convention tools for site management, as presented in Ramsar Handbook 8, as well as the supplementary guidance adopted by COP9.

Budget impact: Core budget funding for Secretariat support to CPs.

STRATEGY 2.4.

Monitor the condition of Ramsar sites, notify the Ramsar Secretariat without delay of changes affecting Ramsar sites as required by Article 3.2, and apply the Montreux Record and Ramsar Advisory Mission as tools to address problems. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- All CPs with Ramsar sites whose ecological character has changed, is changing or is likely to change owing to human-induced actions to have reported this, without delay, to the Ramsar Secretariat, in line with Article 3.2.
- For all sites on the Montreux Record, and which have not been subject to a Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM), CPs to request such a Mission prior to COP10.

KPM

- The Montreux Record being used as part of the Convention's governance process, in parallel with nomination and management planning of sites.

Budget impact: Staff time and funding for RAMs.

STRATEGY 2.5.

Promote inventory and integrated management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins, including cooperative monitoring and management of shared wetland-dependent species). (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRAs

By COP10:

- All CPs to have identified their transboundary wetlands. 50% of CPs to have identified cooperative management mechanisms.
- 50% of CPs with shared basins and coastal systems to be part of joint management commissions or authorities.

KPM

- Regional site networks and initiatives for wetland-dependent migratory species, as exemplified *inter alia* by the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy, the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, in place.

Budget impact: Some staff time to monitor progress and for visits.

STRATEGY 2.6.

Support existing regional arrangements under the Convention and promote additional arrangements. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRAs

- Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) and its related action programme, the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) and its Coordination Unit continuing to develop.
- Development of regional arrangements under the Convention, applying the *Guidance for the development of Regional Initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands* (Resolution VIII.30), resulting in the establishment of new regional initiatives and/or centers.

KPM

- The Convention working effectively in a regional way, within a global context.

Budget impact: New funding required in core budget to support additional initiatives start-ups.

STRATEGY 3.1.

Collaboration with Other Institutions: Work as partners with international and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other agencies. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRAs

- Implementation of CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan, CMS/AEWA Joint Work Plan being implemented, and full participation in the CBD LG. CMS/AEWA Joint Work Plan and UNESCO-MAB Joint Work Plan achieved. Joint activities developed with UNCCD and UNFCCC, including through participation in the Joint Liaison Group and the Biodiversity liaison Group.
- NEPAD's Action Plan to have fully incorporated Ramsar issues and mechanisms, and being implemented by relevant CPs, in lines with WSSD targets.
- Partnership approaches initiated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and other relevant UN agencies, as well as through UN Water.

KPM

- Better coordination between biodiversity-related conventions obvious at national, regional and international level.

Budget impact: Funding required in core budget to support liaison activities, mainly travel for staff.

STRATEGY 3.2.

Sharing of Expertise and Information: Promote the sharing of expertise and information. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- Less time spent by CPs on managing information for national reports, but better quality and more timely reports produced.

KPM

- Harmonized information management and reporting systems available and widely used with the appropriate MEAs.

Budget impact: staff time in secretariat

STRATEGY 4.1.

Local Communities, Indigenous People, and Cultural Values: Encourage active and informed participation of local communities and indigenous people, in particular women and youth, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands, especially in relation to understanding the dynamics of cultural values. (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRA

- By COP10 further guidance on the application of the *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 5), developed.

KPM

- More participative management of wetlands seen in all CPs.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.2.

Promote the involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRAs

- By COP10, private sector applying the wise use principle (Ramsar Handbooks 1 to 6) in their activities and investments affecting wetlands.

KPM

- Environmentally sound trade in wetland products, in particular from Ramsar sites, available for all stakeholders.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.3.

Promote incentive measures that encourage the application of the wise use principle and the removal of perverse incentives. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- By COP10, 50 CPs to have reviewed policy and legal and institutional frameworks and sought to remove measures adversely affecting wetland conservation and wise use.

KPM

- Better design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of positive incentive measures and identification and removal of perverse incentives, including those relating to agriculture.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.4.

Support, and assist in implementing at all levels, the Convention's Communication, Education, and Public Awareness Programme (Resolution VIII.31) for promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands through public participation and communication, education, and public awareness (CEPA). (CPs, Secretariat, IOPs)

KRAs

By COP10:

- At least 50 CPs to have established national Ramsar-CEPA action plans.

- At least 75 CPs to have established at least one wetland education centre at a Ramsar site.
- Complete re-design of Secretariat's outreach strategy, including re-designed Web site, comprehensive media strategy, and novel approaches to promote WWD.

KPM

- CEPA used throughout all aspects of the Convention's activities.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat, funding for design and delivery of global outreach products.

STRATEGY 4.5.

Promote international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands, while ensuring that environmental safeguards and assessments are an integral component of all development projects that affect wetlands, including foreign and domestic investments. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- Each CP with a bilateral donor agency to have encouraged it to give priority for funding for wetland conservation and wise use projects in relation to poverty reduction and other WSSD and MDG targets and priorities.

KPM

- Proposed grants, loans, and development projects from international development agencies, including banks, financial institutions and private investors and developers, include environmental safeguards and environmental assessments of possible impacts.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.6.

Provide the financial resources required for the Convention's governance, mechanisms and programmes to achieve the expectations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- By COP10 better governance of the Convention and more effective promulgation of decisions.

KPM

- Adequate resources and supporting financial policies in place to enable the Convention to discharge its responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.7.

Ensure that the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and Ramsar Secretariat are operating at a high level of

**efficiency and effectiveness to support implementation of this Strategic Framework.
(CPs, Secretariat)**

KRAs

By COP10:

- A comprehensive and flexible staffing policy for the Secretariat in place allowing response to key issues as they emerge.
- National Reports used to evaluate and report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan at each meeting of the COP, and to prepare an updated Strategic Framework for the forthcoming triennium within a rolling 6-year plan.

KPM

- The organs of the Convention have adequate funding and logistic support to deliver their agreed *modus operandi* and work plans.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.8.

Develop the capacity within, and promote cooperation among, institutions in Contracting Parties to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands. (CPs)

KRA

- By COP10, existing national institutions responsible for the conservation and wise use of wetlands, reviewed and revised arrangements in place.

STRATEGY 4.9.

Maximize the benefits of working with the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others. (Secretariat, IOPs)

KRA

- By COP10, each IOP and the Secretariat to have established a programme of joint work in support of the Convention, including, where relevant and appropriate, joint actions by several IOPs.

KPM

- Support for the Convention's scientific, technical and policy work integrated into the ongoing programmes of IOPs

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 4.10.

Identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands, particularly in developing countries and countries in transition, and implement appropriate responses. (CPs, Secretariat, training centres)

KRAs

By COP10:

- The RIZA-Ramsar cooperative effort being fully implemented, linking existing and proposed training centres.

- At least half of CPs to have assessed national and local training needs.
- An appropriate capacity building effort in place for all CPs.

KPM

- Capacity building accepted and understood as part of the Conventions activities.

Budget impact: Staff time in Secretariat.

STRATEGY 5.

Membership of the Convention: Secure universal membership of the Convention. (CPs, Secretariat)

KRA

- Achieve membership of at least 160 parties by COP10.

KPM

- More effective global impact of the Convention.