

Agenda item 8.6

**Establishment of an Oversight Panel for CEPA activities and  
adoption of a *modus operandi***

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is requested to consider the proposal by the Secretariat, to establish and adopt a *modus operandi* for a CEPA Oversight Panel, and to confirm its membership.

**Background**

1. In Resolution IX.18 the Parties instructed the Secretariat to prepare for the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee a detailed proposal on the establishment and operations of a CEPA Oversight Panel, using the Terms of Reference (TOR) annexed to the Resolution as general guidance in preparing the proposal. The Standing Committee is instructed by the Resolution in operative paragraph five to establish the Panel and adopt a *modus operandi*.
2. The TOR defines six main functions of the Oversight Panel including:
  - monitoring and reporting on CEPA issues within the Convention and the progress of implementation of the CEPA Programme as established by Resolution VIII.31, *The Convention's Programme on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) 2003-2008*, especially with reference to the CEPA activities of the Secretariat;
  - advising the Standing Committee and the Secretariat on the CEPA work priorities at the national and international levels, including the CEPA priorities of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP);
  - clarifying the broad roles of the two government and non-governmental CEPA National Focal Points (NFPs) nominated by each Party;
  - identifying, with the involvement of the "Ramsar Advisory Board on Capacity Building", priorities in recognition of the gaps between capacity building opportunities and needs for the broad range of wetland professionals and stakeholders;
  - liaising with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to improve synergies across conventions, as called for in Resolutions VIII.5 and IX.5;
  - advising the Standing Committee on the form and function of the next CEPA Programme, for the period 2009–2014, to be proposed to COP10.

### Establishment of the Panel

3. Consistent with the suggestions in the TOR, the Secretariat recommends the following members of the Panel in the first instance and subject to their agreement:

- i) The Vice Chair of SC, acting as Chair for the Oversight panel
- ii) Chair of the SC Subgroup on Finance: Herb Raffaele
- iii) Chair of the STRP/WI CEPA Specialist Group: Chris Prietto
- iv) Vice-Chair of the STRP : Rebecca D’Cruz
- v) Relevant experts in different aspects of CEPA not covered by the above:

Capacity-Building/Training: the Ramsar Advisory Board on Capacity Building should be requested by the Secretariat to nominate a member for the Panel;

Participation: the Secretariat should ask the advice of the CEPA Specialist Group on a suitable candidate who should be an expert on participatory techniques in wetland management and have some knowledge on how the Convention functions.

- vi) CEPA National Focal Points: it is recommended that the Oversight Panel should include one Government CEPA NFP and one NGO NFP:
  - 1) CEPA NGO NFP: Stefan Bohorquez, Ecuador.  
Stefan was recommended by Ecuador as a CEPA expert on STRP. He was not finally appointed due to the limitation of CEPA places but his capacity and experience in Ramsar’s CEPA Programme are considerable and would fit the criteria below. It would seem sensible to invite Stefan as the NGO FP member.
  - 2) CEPA Government NFP: it is suggested that the Secretariat invite Parties to recommend a CEPA Government National Focal Point to fill this position. If the NGO NFP is indeed from the Neotropics, then the Government NFP should be selected from any other region. A brief list of criteria which could form the basis of a nominee’s questionnaire to be sent to all the Administrative Authorities for nominations, is suggested below:
    - served as the Government CEPA NFP for a minimum period of two years;
    - worked collaboratively with the nominated NGO NFP;
    - took an active role in developing a strategic approach to national implementation of the CEPA Programme;
    - is fluent in written and spoken English.
- vii) International Organization Partners: Although not identified in the original TOR, the IOPs have collectively a great deal of practical experience in implementing CEPA activities as an integral part of wetland management. To ensure that the Panel

benefits from this experience, it is suggested that the IOPs elect one representative to sit on the Panel and to act as the liaison between the Panel and the five IOPs.

- viii) Ramsar Secretariat (*ex officio*): the CEPA Programme Officer and the Secretary General

It is recommended that the Panel, following consultations with the CEPA Specialist Group, invite CEPA experts in other aspects of CEPA as the need arises during the triennium.

***Modus operandi***

4. In carrying out the functions in paragraph 2, the Panel should take into account, in the first instance, priorities set by Resolution VIII.31, the key CEPA issues identified by the STRP/Wetlands International CEPA Specialist Group, key CEPA issues in the work of the STRP identified by the Specialist Group, and the implementation report presented to COP9 as DOC. 25, *Implementation of the Convention's CEPA Programme for the period 2003-2005*.
5. Members should be appointed for the period of the triennium 2006-2008.
6. The CEPA NFP representatives should, as necessary, consult with and seek input from all other government and NGO CEPA NFPs.
7. The Panel will operate as much as possible through electronic means (e-mail, teleconferences, etc.). If it is thought necessary, and if funding permits, the Panel may seek to meet during the triennium.
8. The Panel should report on its progress to each meeting of the Standing Committee.
9. Due to financial limitations, the main working language of the Panel will be English, and the results shall be translated into the official languages of the Convention and posted on the Ramsar Web site as well as the three Ramsar CEPA email lists.