

Agenda item 7.3

Refinements to the *modus operandi* of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to approve the proposals for refinements to the STRP *modus operandi* for finalization for COP10 consideration.

Note by the Ramsar Secretariat

1. Following an in-depth review at its 14th meeting in January 2008 of its revised *modus operandi* adopted by COP9 (Resolution IX.11) for the 2006-2008 triennium, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) concluded that this COP9-revised *modus operandi* has served very well to increase considerably the efficiency and effectiveness of the Panel in developing and delivering its work plan and priority tasks.
2. From its experiences in operating under that *modus operandi* during this triennium, the Panel has also concluded that some further minor refinements to the STRP *modus operandi* would further increase the capacity of the Panel to undertake its work and would reduce the need to bring a fully revised *modus operandi* to each future COP for negotiation. These concern two matters: one, STRP structure; the other a presentational issue within the current *modus operandi*.
3. The structural matter concerns the role(s) of the Chairperson. Under the COP9 construct, both the Chair and Vice Chair are appointed from the group of appointed members (regional, thematic and IOP members). Thus the Chair must fulfill a double role, that of leading Working Group and implementation tasks for his or her area of expertise, and that of overseeing the STRP implementation process as a whole and preparing for and chairing its meetings.
4. Given that this work is largely carried out *pro bono*, it is the view of the current Chair and Panel that this construct imposes a particularly heavy demand on the time of the Chair. The Panel therefore recommends that the *modus operandi* concerning the Chairperson be amended to make this a supernumary appointment, i.e., in addition to the appointed members.
5. There is also a case for treating the role of the Vice Chair in a similar manner, but the Panel has not proposed that at present since the workload of the Vice Chair is less than that of the Chair.
6. The Panel also suggests that the *modus operandi* should explicitly state that the Chair leads the Panel's Working Group concerning STRP's strategic and emerging issues and future priorities, and that the Vice Chair leads the Panel's Working Group on regional

networking. This has been the approach developed for leading this work during the current triennium, and it has worked well.

7. The presentational issue of the current *modus operandi* concerns the inclusion within the *modus operandi* itself of a number of time-limited matters, largely references to COP decisions, work during the 2006-2008 triennium, and the thematic expert membership of the Panel. This last is triennium-limited since it depends on the topics of the priority tasks and work areas for each triennium approved by the preceding COP.
8. In order to make the *modus operandi* itself more stable in the long term, rather than needing updating at every COP, the Panel is recommending a number of minor text amendments to some paragraphs of the *modus operandi* and also that the list of thematic expertise themes for which members are appointed should be moved from the annexed *modus operandi* to form an operative paragraph of the draft Resolution itself.
9. With these amendments, following COP10 it would not be necessary to bring back the entire *modus operandi* to each successive COP unless Parties should wish to consider further revisions to it.
10. At its 14th meeting the Panel also received a request transmitted by the Senior Advisor for the Americas from the discussions at the Americas regional preparatory meeting for consideration of the establishment of 'alternate members' for the appointed regional network members. The Panel considered this matter in some depth.
11. The Panel noted that one of the original reasons behind the establishment of the STRP National Focal Points was the Panel's previous experience when, in past triennia, alternates were appointed for some regions, which was that this mechanism did not work effectively. This was because an alternate only stepped in and participated in the Panel's meetings when the appointed member could not participate, in which circumstances it was very difficult for them to remain fully engaged and up-to-speed with the Panel's work. The Panel considered that there were other ways of establishing more engagement and involvement from different regions through its further development of the STRP's regional networking processes, and the STRP is therefore not recommending the re-establishment of appointments of 'alternates' at this time.
12. At its 13th and 14th meetings the Panel reviewed the Terms of Reference for the STRP National Focal Points, as adopted through Resolution VII.2 of the 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (1999), and it made suggestions on the profile and Terms of Reference for the STRP National Focal Points (NFPs). These have been incorporated into the revised Terms of Reference, including an expertise, skills and capacity profile, for STRP National Focal Points as set out in the Appendix to this Resolution.

Draft Resolution X.00

Refinements to the *modus operandi* of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)

1. RECALLING the establishment by Resolution 5.5 (1993) of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), which was to be made up of members with appropriate scientific and technical knowledge, appointed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP), but participating as individuals and not as representatives of their countries of origin;
2. ALSO RECALLING Resolutions VI.7, VII.2, VIII.28 and IX.11 on this matter, which made successive modifications in the way in which the STRP and its work were organized;
3. THANKING members of the STRP and its observer organizations and invited experts for their contributions since COP9 and for their expert advice on numerous scientific and technical issues important for implementation of the Convention, including the new and revised guidelines and reports provided to this meeting of the Conference as the Annexes to Resolutions X.[xx] to X.[yy] and others being prepared as *Ramsar Technical Reports*;
4. ALSO THANKING the government of Sweden for its financial contributions in support of the substantive work of the STRP during 2006-2008, and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), BirdLife International, and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC – UK) for their in-kind support to the work of the Panel;
5. WELCOMING the fact that the STRP has indicated that its revised *modus operandi* for the 2006-2008 triennium, with the budget provided for its work by Resolution IX.12 (2005), has enabled the Panel to develop and deliver its work plan and required tasks with increased capacity, efficiency, and timeliness;
6. RE-EMPHASIZING the need to continue establishing closer links between the STRP and the network of scientists and experts in each Contracting Party, so that the Convention may benefit from the array of existing knowledge and experience, but CONCERNED that the STRP has reported continuing difficulty in establishing effective contact and working relationships with many STRP National Focal Points;
7. THANKING the government of Austria for its initiative in calling and hosting an intersessional meeting for European STRP National Focal Points, and NOTING that the recommendations from that meeting have been taken into account in the refinements to the STRP *modus operandi* annexed to this Resolution and in the revised Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points;
8. RECOGNIZING the importance for the STRP to work in partnership with the scientific and technical bodies of those conventions and programmes with which Memoranda of Cooperation and/or joint work plans are in place, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, and other conventions and agreements;

9. ALSO RECOGNIZING the need for continuing cooperation between the STRP and a number of expert networks, specialist groups and societies which exist, some in association with the official International Organization Partners of the Convention; and
10. FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the immediate and high priorities for the work of the STRP for 2006-2008 are identified in Annex 1 to Resolution X.[xx] on *Future implementation of the scientific and technical aspects of the Convention*;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

11. REAFFIRMS the critical importance to the Convention of the work and advice of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in providing reliable guidance to the Conference of the Contracting Parties for the Parties' implementation of the Convention;
12. CONFIRMS that the *modus operandi* for the STRP by Resolution IX.11 shall, with the refinements listed in the Annex to this Resolution, apply for the 2009-2011 triennium and for subsequent triennia unless further amended by COP decision;
13. AGREES that thematic expert members shall be appointed to the Panel by the STRP Oversight Committee for the following areas of priority STRP work for the 2009-2011 triennium, to lead implementation of priority work areas for the Panel as set out in the Annex to Resolution X.[xx]:
 - Wetland inventory, assessment and indicators
 - Ramsar site designation
 - Wetland restoration and management
 - Wetlands and climate change
 - Wetlands and human health
 - Wetlands and water resources
 - Wetlands and agriculture
 - CEPA
14. CONFIRMS that the Standing Committee will continue to have overall responsibility for the work of the STRP, that the Chair of the STRP will report to each Standing Committee meeting on the Panel's progress with its programme of work and priorities as established by the COP (Resolution X.[xx]) and Standing Committee, and that the STRP will advise on any adjustments to its programme it considers necessary and on the emerging issues;
15. ALSO CONFIRMS that the STRP support functions will continue to be provided during the 2009-2011 triennium from the Ramsar Secretariat;
16. RECOGNIZES the continuing need to ensure both that the Panel is provided with the necessary resources to undertake its work effectively and that the Ramsar Secretariat has sufficient capacity to support this work, and URGES Contracting Parties and others to contribute to securing continuity of such funding;
17. REVISES the existing list of bodies and organizations invited to participate as observers in the meetings of the STRP and INVITES the following bodies and organizations to

consider establishing close working cooperative arrangements with the STRP on matters of common interest:

- the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
 - the Scientific Council of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
 - the Committee on Science and Technology of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
 - the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
 - the Secretariats of the CBD, CMS, CITES, UNCCD, UNFCCC, the World Heritage Convention (WHC); UNESCO – Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) and the UNECE “Water Convention”
 - the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - the UNEP – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
 - The World Health Organization (WHO)
 - the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS)
 - the Coordinating Committee for the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands (GGAP-CoCo)
 - the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA)
 - The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
 - Ducks Unlimited (DU)
 - the Global Water Partnership (GWP)
 - the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)
 - The Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)
 - The International Society for Environmental Economics (ISEE)
 - European Space Agency – ESRIN (ESA-ESRIN)
 - Japanese Space Agency (JAXA)
18. URGES Contracting Parties to ensure that the person they appoint as their STRP National Focal Point is appropriately qualified for this role as defined in the Terms of Reference provided as the Appendix to this Resolution; that their STRP National Focal Point has contact with national experts relevant to the work areas of the Panel; that their STRP National Focal Point is involved in all Ramsar processes within the Contracting Party (including participating in any National Ramsar or Wetland Committee); and that the contact information for their STRP National Focal Point is kept up-to-date and functional;
19. ALSO URGES the 19 Contracting Parties¹ that have not currently appointed an STRP National Focal Point to do so without delay, taking into account the Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points in the Annex to this Resolution;
20. FURTHER URGES those Contracting Parties that have designated their STRP National Focal Point to review the skills and capacity of that person in relation to the Terms of

¹ Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Djibouti, Finland, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malta, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and South Africa.

Reference for STRP National Focal Points in the Annex to this Resolution and, as appropriate, determine if an alternative appointment should be made, and if so to advise the Secretariat accordingly;

21. REQUESTS the STRP, working with the STRP National Focal Points, to consider mechanisms for identifying task-based national expert contacts to undertake a) participation in specialist work on specific STRP tasks and b) review of draft documents;
22. REQUESTS the STRP and Secretariat to identify opportunities and mechanisms for holding intersessional regional or subregional meetings of STRP National Focal Points; and
23. EMPHASIZES the value of participation by STRP members in meetings of the COP and Standing Committee and REQUESTS Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Secretariat to seek to secure any additional funding which might be necessary for this purpose.

Annex

The modus operandi of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel

(Secretariat Note. In the proposed amendments below, new text is indicated in square brackets, thus [...], and text proposed for deletion is shown as ~~strike through~~ text.)

I. Key objective of the ~~revised~~ STRP *modus operandi*

1. The key objective of this *modus operandi* is to establish ways and means of ensuring that the STRP mechanism delivers the best available scientific and technical advice to the Convention, in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, through the work of widely recognized wetland conservation and wise use experts and networks.

II. Establishment and responsibilities of the STRP Oversight Committee

2. The STRP Oversight Committee will report to the Standing Committee and will be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee, the Chair and Vice Chair of the STRP, and the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General *ex officio*. The Oversight Committee will be chaired by the Chair of Standing Committee.
3. The responsibilities of the STRP Oversight Committee are to:
 - i) appoint the members, Chair and Vice Chair of the STRP;
 - ii) provide intersessional advice, guidance and support to the operations and work of the Panel;
 - iii) keep under review, and advise the Standing Committee on, the operations of the Panel under this revised *modus operandi*; and
 - iv) provide advice to the Secretariat on expenditures under the STRP budget line.

4. The Standing Committee continues to have overall responsibility for the work of the STRP, and the Chair of the STRP will report to each Standing Committee meeting on progress with the STRP programme of work and priorities as established by the COP and Standing Committee.

III. Criteria and characteristics of candidate STRP members

5. Candidates for appointment as members of the STRP must have the following:
 - i) demonstrated capacity for networking with wetland conservation and wise use experts at local, national and international scales²], and demonstrated engagement in such expert networks]; and/or
 - ii) widely recognized experience and expertise in one or more aspects of wetland conservation and wise use, particularly those relevant to the priority work areas and tasks identified by the COP for the forthcoming work of the Panel ;
 - iii) experience of working with wetland experts at local, regional and national levels, including[, when appropriate,] ~~inter alia~~ STRP National Focal Points;
 - iv) full access to electronic mail and Web-based [information and] communication systems, through which the intersessional work of the Panel will take place;
 - v) [full] fluency in understanding, and fluent written and oral communication in, English (which will remain the working language of the Panel); and
 - vi) commitment to undertake the work required of the Panel and its Working Groups with the support, where relevant, of the member's organization or institution.

IV. Composition of the Panel

6. One Panel member shall be appointed from each Ramsar region. These members shall have experience with, and access to, networks of wetlands experts (at local, regional and/or international scales). ~~Six further Panel members shall be appointed as wetlands experts with recognized experience and expertise in aspects of wetland conservation and wise use relevant to the thematic work areas of the Panel.~~
7. ~~Six~~ Further Panel members shall be appointed as wetlands experts with recognized experience and expertise in aspects of wetland conservation and wise use relevant to the [priority] thematic work areas of the Panel. [The areas of thematic expertise required for each triennium will be approved through an operative paragraph of a COP Resolution.] For the[se] ~~latter six~~ members (~~paragraph 6 above~~), regional balance will be sought, with appointed members based in different Ramsar countries or regions and/or from northern and southern parts of the world. Gender balance will also be sought.

² Note that access to such networks is also one of the key purposes of the standing membership on the STRP of the Convention's International Organization Partners and the invitation to relevant scientific and technical organizations to participate as observers to the Panel.

8. One additional member will be appointed with expertise in Communications, Education & Public Awareness (CEPA), with a role to provide input to all stages of the Panel's work on each task from scoping the needs of the identified users to the finalization of outputs, drawing *inter alia* on the Convention's CEPA networks and those of the Convention's International Organisation Partners (IOPs).
- ~~9. The anticipated main thematic work areas for which appointments will be made, following approval of Resolution IX.2 are:~~
- ~~i) wetland inventory and assessment, including indicators;~~
 - ~~ii) wise use and ecological character;~~
 - ~~iii) water resource management;~~
 - ~~iv) Ramsar site designation and management;~~
 - ~~v) wetlands and agriculture; and~~
 - ~~vi) wetlands and human health.~~

(Secretariat note: this paragraph is deleted since the areas of thematic expert membership of the Panel are now included as operative paragraph 14. of the COP10 Resolution itself.)

~~9.40.~~ In recognition of their ongoing scientific and technical support role for the Convention, each of the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) will continue to be a member of the Panel. ~~However,~~ So as to ensure continuity of representation throughout STRP processes and meetings during [and between] triennia, each IOP will be requested to nominate its representative on the Panel, and this nomination will be considered and confirmed by the STRP Oversight Committee as part of their Panel appointment role. Such IOP nominees should be wetland experts and have a role within their IOPs for maintaining and accessing the wetland conservation and wise use expertise of their organization's regional and global networks.

~~10.44.~~ The appointed members will lead (or co-lead) the STRP's Working Groups (see below) responsible for delivering the COP-approved tasks on these themes, and will oversee the work of any task forces established within a Working Group to deliver a specific priority task, and should be prepared to undertake such a role.

~~11.42.~~ The thematic work areas for which Panel members will be appointed will be reviewed for each triennium and will be approved by the COP. The thematic work areas will depend on the priority themes and tasks identified by the Standing Committee and COP for the STRP in the next triennium, ~~as in Annex 1 to Resolution IX.2 for the 2006-2008 triennium.~~

~~12.43.~~ The schedule of Panel meetings will be confirmed by the STRP Oversight Committee and may be up to two plenary meetings during a triennium, one meeting not later than six months after the previous COP, and the other not later than six months before the next COP.

V. Procedure for identification and appointment of candidates

~~13.44.~~ Appointments for each triennium will be made by the STRP Oversight Committee.

~~14.45.~~ Nominations of candidates for appointment will be invited from:

- i) the Convention's national Administrative Authorities;

- ii) STRP National Focal Points (in consultation with their Administrative Authority);
- iii) the current Chair and Vice Chair of the STRP; and
- iv) current STRP members and observers.

~~15.46.~~ Nominations can include existing appointed STRP members, observers, and invited experts if they have a proven track record of expert contribution to the work of the Panel. Appointment of such experts to the Panel will ensure continuity in the Panel's work on ongoing thematic work areas.

~~16.47.~~ Nominations are not restricted to people from the same country of origin as the nominator, since it is networking capacity and/or relevant expertise which is being sought, regardless of the nationality or country of current domicile of the expert.

~~17.48.~~ The nominator of each candidate will provide the Oversight Committee with a short summary of the expertise and experience of the candidate and the relevance of this to the work of the Panel for the triennium, in the form of a letter of recommendation.

~~18.49.~~ Candidates being nominated will provide a declaration that they are willing to be considered for appointment to the Panel, that they have the full support of their organizations or institutions to deliver the work expected of Panel members, including time and availability for meetings, and that they have the necessary English language skills to engage fully in the work of the Panel; they will note whether they will need financial support to participate in meetings and will provide a brief summary of how they see their skills and expertise contributing to the Panel's work, along with a *curriculum vitae*.

~~19.20.~~ On the basis of the nominations received, the Secretariat will prepare an assessment and recommendations for appointments for consideration by the STRP Oversight Committee, which will reach its decisions on appointments through electronic communication and teleconferences as soon as possible after the start of the triennium, in order to permit the Panel to initiate its new programme of work as early as possible.

~~20.24.~~ In the event that a vacancy for a member of the Panel arises during the triennium, the STRP Oversight Committee will review other nominees and appoint a replacement member as soon as practicable.

VI. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel

~~21.22.~~ [The Chairperson of the Panel shall be appointed by the STRP Oversight Committee as a supernumary post (i.e. additional to the appointments of regional and thematic expert members). The Chairperson ~~should~~ [must] have broad knowledge of wetland issues and be familiar with the work of the Panel and the Convention. The Chairperson will lead the Panel's thematic work on strategic and emerging issues and future priorities.]

~~22.~~ ~~The STRP Oversight Committee will review the appointments of Panel members and identify from these appointments candidates to invite to act as Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel during the triennium. The outgoing STRP Chair and Vice Chair shall excuse themselves from this decision.~~

[22. The Vice Chairperson will be appointed from amongst the appointed members to the Panel. The Vice Chairperson will lead the Panel's thematic work on regional networking.]

- [23. The outgoing STRP Chair and Vice Chair shall excuse themselves from the STRP Oversight Committee decisions concerning these appointments.]

VII. STRP observer organizations

~~24.23.~~ The work of the Panel will continue to benefit from the involvement and input of other relevant scientific and technical organizations and their networks, invited by the COP as observers to the Panel. Each organization invited by the COP as an observer to the STRP will be requested to nominate its representative on the Panel, in order to ensure continuity of participation. The representative should have the capacity to access his or her organization's national, regional and international network of wetland experts. In order to continue contributing to the efforts to streamline and harmonise the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, invited observers to the STRP will continue to include the chairs of the equivalent scientific and technical subsidiary bodies and relevant staff of the secretariats of other environmental conventions and agreements.

VIII. Establishment and operation of Working Groups and task forces

~~25.24.~~ The appointed STRP members will, where appropriate and with the assistance of the Secretariat's STRP support, establish Working Groups at the start of the triennium and will act as their leads or co-leads to develop and progress the tasks requested by the COP. ~~This is a continuation of the STRP mechanism during the 2003-2005 triennium.~~

~~26.25.~~ Membership of any Working Group will be established by its lead or co-leads, with the advice of the STRP Chair and Vice-Chair and the Secretariat. Membership may include *inter alia* other appointed STRP members, representatives of STRP observer organizations, STRP National Focal Points with relevant expertise, and other invited experts with relevant expertise.

~~27.26.~~ As part of the Panel's work in its strategic review function on emerging issues and related matters, the [Chair] ~~person(s) appointed to lead this work~~ will coordinate the Panel's advice to the next COP concerning immediate, high, and emerging priorities for its work in the next triennium, ~~as provided for 2006-2008 in Annex 1 of Resolution IX.2.~~

~~27.~~ ~~Concerning the CEPA related work of the Panel, the role established during the 2003-2005 triennium will continue, whereby in implementation of Resolution VIII.31 CEPA input and advice to the work of the Panel is made by the STRP/Wetlands International CEPA Specialist Group from its national, regional and international network.~~

~~(Secretariat Note: this paragraph is deleted since this is a time-limited matter relating to the Convention's CEPA Programme, a new programme for which is being considered by COP10 for adoption.)~~

28. Each Working Group will develop the scope and contents of any advice, guideline, review or other output requested by COP within its thematic work area as an immediate or high priority for the triennium; will identify the mechanism for its delivery (including through an expert consultancy contract where necessary and resources permitting); and will oversee and review progress in the drafting and finalization of such materials.

29. As soon as possible after their appointment, the Working Group lead or co-leads will establish the initial membership of her or his Working Group and will undertake initial scoping work for undertaking each of the immediate and high priority tasks, for circulation

in advance of, and discussion during, the first plenary meeting of the Panel in the triennium.

30. When appropriate, a Working Group [or the Chairperson] can establish a small task force for the delivery of a particular immediate or high priority task in the STRP's programme for the triennium.
31. Each Working Group will keep under review opportunities for initiating other tasks requested of the Panel within its thematic work area (~~as listed for 2006-2011 in Annex 2 of Resolution IX.2~~), and will develop mechanisms for the delivery of any such tasks as and when capacity permits. If opportunity arises to initiate new tasks during the triennium, the Chair of the Panel will seek the advice of the STRP Oversight Committee as to establishing appropriate ways and means of developing this work.
32. Each Working Group will work largely electronically (through e-mail, the Web-based STRP support mechanism, and teleconferences) but will, resources permitting, meet in a workshop at least once during the triennium, in order to progress its work efficiently.

IX. Ensuring continuing national and regional applicability in the work of the STRP

33. One key to ensuring full national and regional input to the STRP's work is the [continuing] activation ~~in the 2006-2008 triennium~~ of the network of STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) appointed by each Contracting Party. [A revised Terms of Reference and skills profile for STRP NFPs is provided as the Appendix to this *modus operandi*.] ~~The anticipated development of this important network was hindered during the 2003-2005 triennium by a reduction in funds available for the delivery of this aspect of the STRP's work.~~
34. ~~In particular, for the 2006-2008 triennium, STRP NFPs will:~~
 - ~~i) be invited to make nominations of candidates for appointment as members of the Panel for the triennium;~~
 - ~~ii) be requested to identify their thematic areas of wetland conservation and wise use interest and expertise (through a short questionnaire) and, on the basis of that, be considered for membership of relevant STRP Working Groups;~~
 - ~~iii) be invited to join any relevant STRP Working Groups from the onset of the work for the triennium, so as to contribute to the development of the scope of delivery of each task;~~
 - ~~iv) have full access to the Web-based STRP support mechanism so that they may have input to all stages of the Panel's work, including review of draft materials as they are prepared by the Working Groups and task forces; and~~
 - ~~v) be invited to contribute to the peer review of reports and other documents being considered for publication in the *Ramsar Technical Report* series.~~
35. ~~These roles of STRP NFPs are added to those listed in the Terms of Reference approved in Resolution VIII.28.~~

(Secretariat Note: these paragraphs are deleted since these aspects of the role of STRP NFPs are now consolidated within the revised STRP NFP Terms of Reference in the Appendix to this *modus operandi*.)

- 34.~~36~~. The Secretariat will support the development of the STRP National Focal Point network through identification of the [expertise and]capacity needs of STRP National Focal Points, including seeking ways and means of supporting their development of national networks.
- [35. The Secretariat and STRP will identify opportunities and mechanisms for holding intersessional regional or subregional meetings of STRP National Focal Points;]
- 36.~~37~~. A second aspect of ensuring regional input to, and relevance of, the STRP is to have as part of its mandate the task of responding to regional scientific and technical priorities. In doing so, the STRP will consult with Contracting Parties through their STRP National Focal Points. The Panel will [continue to]develop, ~~during the 2006-2008 triennium,~~ mechanisms for the delivery of this aspect of its work, which may include *inter alia* responding to regional scientific and technical priorities identified by Ramsar regional meetings and those identified by regional initiatives operating[, by COP decision] under the framework of the Convention (Resolution [X.xx]).

X. Continuity of Panel membership

- 37.~~38~~. In order to ensure continuity of expertise and working practices, a minimum of one-third of the appointed members of the STRP should be reappointed for a second term, as appropriate.
- 38.~~39~~. The Chair of STRP, following appropriate consultations with current members, will recommend to the STRP Oversight Committee the names of those members who should be considered for reappointment, on the basis of their contributions to the work of the Panel and the relevance of their areas of expertise to the priority tasks assigned to the Panel by COP.
- 39.~~40~~. Members being proposed for reappointment must have demonstrated a capability of contributing effectively to the work of the Panel and have confirmed their willingness to be reappointed.

Appendix

Terms of Reference for STRP National Focal Points

(Secretariat Note. In the proposed amendments below, proposed new text is indicated in square brackets [...], and text proposed for deletion is shown as ~~strikethrough text~~.)

- [1. The Ramsar Administrative Authority for the Contracting Party is responsible for ensuring:
 - i) the appointment of that Party's STRP National Focal Point (NFP);
 - ii) that their STRP NFP is appropriately qualified for this role as defined in this Terms of Reference, and for providing the Secretariat and STRP with information on this

in line with the STRP NFP expertise, skills and capacity profile provided in this Terms of Reference;

- iii) that their STRP NFP has contact with national experts relevant to the work areas of the Panel;
 - iv) that their STRP NFP is involved in all relevant Ramsar processes within the Contracting Party (including participating in any National Ramsar or Wetland Committee); and
 - v) that the contact information for their STRP NFP is advised to STRP through the Ramsar Secretariat, and that is kept up-to-date and functional.]
2. The main function of the STRP ~~National Focal Point~~ (NFP) in each country is to provide input, and support as appropriate, to the implementation of the Work Plan of the STRP, as approved by the first full meeting of the Standing Committee which follows each COP.
 - [3. An STRP NFP is a person appointed to the role in their own right for their scientific and technical expertise in wetland conservation and wise use issues, and in the work of the STRP does not act to represent any organisation or government.]
 4. In order to undertake their work, the STRP NFP should ~~endeavour to~~ maintain regular contact and communication with the other Ramsar NFPs (Administrative Authority and the CEPA Focal Points) in his/her country, and as much as possible, with other STRP NFPs in the region;
 5. ~~In order to do so,~~ The STRP NFP ~~National Focal Point~~ should, as much as possible, consult with and seek input from other experts, ~~and~~ expert bodies and wetland centres in his/her country. In this regard, the NFP should mobilize local capacity at the country level, e.g., through the establishment of a Ramsar/wetland scientific and technical committee.
 6. The STRP NFP can identify and recommend other people in their country who have the specialist expertise and experience to participate in a thematic work area of the STRP. Additionally, the NFP is encouraged to provide information to the STRP on local [or national] initiatives that are relevant to STRP's work.
 7. The NFP ~~Focal Point~~ is encouraged to use the opportunities of suitable national meetings, newsletters, e-mail, etc., to canvas the views of the expert community, and, when feasible, to organize expert consultations on key issues in the STRP Work Plan. The latter should be done in consultation with the appropriate regional networking member of the STRP or relevant thematic Working Group Lead.
 8. STRP NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ in each country are expected to maintain regular contact, and endeavour to identify and undertake activities of common interest, with their equivalent National Focal Points of the technical and scientific bodies of other relevant international and regional environment-related Conventions, and especially for those with which the Ramsar Convention has in place a Memorandum of Cooperation or Understanding, namely, the Conventions on Biological Diversity, Desertification, Migratory Species, and World Heritage.

9. The STRP NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ are also expected to be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of projects funded under the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use (SGF), as may be required by the Ramsar Administrative Authority in each country and/or the agency implementing the project.
10. The National Focal Points should take an active role in supporting national wetland inventory activities and in supporting the efforts of his/her Contracting Party to implement the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance*.
11. The STRP NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ should provide advice to, and participate in, meetings of the National Wetland/Ramsar Committee or similar bodies (e.g. [National Biodiversity Committees] where they exist, and provide advice in the preparation of National Reports [to Conferences of Contracting Parties]. They should also assist in disseminating information on the work of the STRP, interpreted as appropriate to the national context, to relevant individuals and bodies in their countries.
- ~~12.3.~~ The input of the STRP NFP ~~National Focal Point~~ should be channelled, by preference, through the STRP member leading each thematic area of the Work Plan or through the appropriate ~~STRP's regional networking member of the STRP representatives~~. When this is not practical, the input of the NFP may also be channelled through the appropriate Senior Regional Advisor ~~Regional Coordinator~~ within the Ramsar Secretariat ~~Convention Bureau~~.
- ~~13.4.~~ In general, the STRP network of NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ will operate through correspondence and as much as possible through e-mail [and the Web-based STRP Support Service]. To this effect, the Ramsar Secretariat ~~Bureau~~ will include the NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ with access to e-mail connections to its [any] list-server devoted to STRP members. In addition, the Secretariat ~~Bureau will create~~ [has created] a dedicated section in ~~its~~ STRP Support Service Web site for the presentation and consideration of STRP matters.
- ~~14.5.~~ [As,] due to financial limitations, the main working language of the STRP and its network of NFPs ~~National Focal Points~~ is English. ~~In this regard, the NFP is required to be suitably proficient in the English language, [especially written English]. Nevertheless, the Ramsar Bureau will endeavour to translate into French and Spanish key discussion documents that NFPs could be particularly encouraged to comment on.~~
- [15. STRP NFPs will provide the STRP and Ramsar Secretariat information concerning their thematic areas of wetland conservation and wise use interest and expertise (though a short questionnaire), and on that basis the STRP Working Groups in which they wish directly to participate;]
- [16. STRP NFPs are provided with full access to the Web-based STRP Support Service mechanism so that they may have input to all stages of the Panel's work, including the development of the scope of delivery of each priority task, the review of draft materials as they are prepared by the Working Groups and task forces, and for contributing to the peer review of reports and other documents being considered for publication in the *Ramsar Technical Report* series.

[An expertise, skills and capacity profile for STRP NFPs]

- [17. For consideration for appointment by their Contracting Party Administrative Authority, an STRP NFP should have:
- i) good understanding of national/regional issues and priorities concerning water and wetlands;
 - ii) demonstrated capacity for networking with wetland conservation and wise use experts at local and national scales (and international scale if appropriate), demonstrated engagement in such networks, and ability to facilitate consensus among people with different backgrounds (e.g., scientists, government and NGO sector);
 - iii) widely recognized experience and expertise within their country in one or more aspects of wetland conservation and wise use, particularly those relevant to the priority work areas and tasks identified by the COP for the forthcoming work of the STRP;
 - iv) experience of working with wetland experts at local to national levels, and facilitating discussions and coordinating and consolidating review responses on science-based documents;
 - v) full access to electronic mail and Web-based information and communication systems, through which the intersessional work of the STRP will take place;
 - vi) full fluency in understanding, and fluency in reading and writing, English (which will remain the working language of the STRP); and
 - vii) full commitment and the time necessary to undertake the work required of the STRP NFP, and with the support, where relevant, of the NFP's organization or institution.]
- [18. When a Contracting Party appoints a new STRP NFP, or reaffirms the appointment of an existing STRP NFP, the Party should provide to the Secretariat information on the expertise, skills and capacity of their STRP NFP in relation to the criteria listed in paragraph 17 above.]

Figure 1. STRP schedule and process during a triennium

[Secretariat note: this schedule is predicated on the Convention continuing on a triennial cycle with COP in the autumn of year 3. If COP10 decides otherwise, the schedule below will be amended to reflect any such decision.]

