

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
41st Meeting of the Standing Committee
Kobuleti, Georgia, 26 April – 1 May 2010

DOC. SC41-19

Agenda item 10

Progress report on the appointment of a Partnership Coordinator

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to note the progress on appointment of a Partnership Coordinator

1. At its 40th meeting the Standing Committee, acting upon Resolution X.2 annex III, took the following decision:

Decision SC40-7: The Standing Committee:

- i) requested the Secretariat to call a one-day meeting of development officers of INGO, etc., from the Geneva region as soon as possible. This could be focused on identifying value-added synergies in terms of fundraising for major initiative implementation through, for example, International Organization Partners, to support national capacity for wetland conservation and wise use;
- ii) requested the Secretariat, following this step, to assess whether any other means (e.g., a consultancy) of acquiring such information to focus the priorities and approach is needed to help develop further a focused strategy and Terms of Reference for the Partnership Officer post, consulting with selected business companies and private foundations as appropriate;
- iii) requested the Secretariat to develop draft Terms of Reference for the post, in the light of i) and ii) above and in relation to the general terms in Resolution X.2 Annex III, to be reviewed by the Standing Committee Chair and a small number of interested Standing Committee members and Parties (Jamaica, Japan); and
- iv) determined that, under this scenario, funds allocated in the 2009 core budget for the partnership development would need to be carried over to the 2010 budget in order to be able to support a full-time officer for 2010 onwards, noting that a small amount of the funds will be needed in 2009 to cover the costs of i) and ii) above.

2. In response to this decision, the Ramsar Secretariat has taken the following actions:
3. A letter was sent to eight relevant organizations based in Geneva in order to identify a suitable officer from each organization to be invited to a meeting, as requested by the Standing Committee. The intention was to convene a one-day meeting of development officers of INGOs and NGOs from the Geneva region as soon as possible. We quickly realized, however, that calling for a meeting of development officers based in Geneva was difficult in summer because:
 - i) it took a lot of time and consultation to identify the suitable officer from each organization;
 - ii) some of the organizations were not helpful and did not identify a suitable officer;

- iii) a meeting with only development officers from Geneva would not produce significant results since only two of the eight organizations responded positively.
- 4. In response to this challenge we decided to contact not only organizations that are based in Geneva but also those that are relevant but are outside of Switzerland. We contacted eight other organizations based outside Switzerland, though it took several months of consultation to identify the suitable officer within each organization. Thus, it was decided not to convene one meeting, bringing together all organizations, because:
 - i) most relevant officers were not available the same dates;
 - ii) calling for a meeting of officers outside Geneva would cost a substantial amount of money;
 - iii) the key information we are seeking is considered to be confidential and these organizations are not willing to reveal and make public their strategies for fundraising;
 - iv) some organizations perceive each other as competitors when it comes to fundraising;
 - v) the organizations did not see the Ramsar Secretariat as a competitor and they were willing to provide us with useful information in confidence, for our own use only.
- 5. Therefore, we decided to make our consultations with these organizations separately so that we could receive the information we need through a trustworthy discussion. For this purpose, we have been able to organize separate meetings with the following organizations: WWF International (2 meetings with 2 relevant officers); IUCN (one meeting with one officer); Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC (we discussed with two officers because fundraising, liaison with partners, and outreach are assigned to different positions).
- 6. In addition to the discussions, we received written useful documents from the following organizations, including terms of reference for development officers: WWF, IUCN, UNFCC, UNCCD, IWMI, and CMS.
- 7. We prepared written reports from each meeting and reviewed all reports, including key information and the lessons for us to use in the preparation of the terms of reference for the Partnership Coordinator. We proposed a first draft TOR and circulated it for comments from all staff, and we reviewed these draft TOR, taking into account the information received and the lessons learned.
- 8. The draft TOR were submitted to the Standing Committee Executive Team as well as to a small number of interested Standing Committee members and Parties (Jamaica, Japan) before the end of September 2009. We attached the lessons learned as a background document to support the TOR. This document, as well as the summary of our consultation, are attached to this paper for information.
- 9. The attached TOR is the final result of these consultations; there were no objections to the circulated draft from the Ramsar Executive Team and the Contracting Parties that made comments on the draft.
- 10. The final TOR have been reviewed by IUCN -- IUCN has confirmed that the grading for the position of Partnership Coordinator is 'M'.

11. The Ramsar Secretariat has requested IUCN to open the recruitment process.

Terms of Reference

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The treaty was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. It is the only global environmental treaty that deals with a particular ecosystem, and the Convention's member countries cover all geographic regions of the planet.

The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".

The Ramsar Convention is independent of the United Nations system of environmental treaties and reports only to its own Contracting Parties, or Member States. The Secretariat operations are administered by IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Terms of Reference

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat

Title: Partnership Coordinator

Work percentage: 100%

Duty station: Ramsar Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland

Reporting to: Secretary General

IUCN / Ramsar Function Group: M

This position is for a fixed-term three-year period, renewable by the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Summary of responsibilities

With reference to the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2015, especially Strategy 1.4, to enhance the recognition and attention in decision-making to the significance of wetlands for biodiversity conservation, water supply, food security, climate change mitigation and /or adaptation, economic development, including tourism, and human health, and (Strategy 1.3, key result area 1.4.i) to support the development of wetland programmes and projects that contribute to poverty eradication objectives, water and food security plans, human health and climate change mitigation/adaption plans at national and regional levels:

- 1) Enhance and coordinate the implementation of the Secretariat's voluntary funding strategy. Oversee the development of existing funding instruments such as Regional Initiatives and Small Grants Fund/Portfolio to maintain existing financial support and attract new sources of income, including public and private sources.
- 2) Define and prioritise key partner relationships and key fundraising priorities for Ramsar for 2009-2015. Develop effective and regular working relationships with key partners and donors.

- 3) Lead, advise and support the Ramsar community, including Contracting Parties, Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), and the Ramsar Secretariat in all activities related to partnership and fundraising.
- 4) Enhance and coordinate the Convention's overall voluntary funding strategy. Review alternative new sources of income, including public and private sources, and coordinate access to these, be that directly or indirectly.

Specific tasks include:

Partnership development

- To maintain and develop existing partnerships with key Ramsar Partners, and develop new ones, in line with priorities, including strategic alliances:
 - with the UN system;
 - with multi- and bilateral institutions such as the World Bank Group, development banks, GEF, WTO, EU, OECD, etc.
- To collaborate with the Ramsar Regional Teams and the Communication Teams in furthering the Secretariat's work as it relates to increasing the appreciation and the recognition of wetland values by existing and additional Ramsar partners in order to stimulate development of new areas of action, including programmes/projects relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, water quality, land use improvement, together with tourism development and urbanization.
- To maintain and develop existing partnerships and broker new collaborative agreements and initiatives between Ramsar and the private sector, and to collaborate with Ramsar International Organization Partners (IOPs) in the development of a private sector engagement strategy.
- In consultation with the Senior Regional Advisors, to update and improve working relationships with relevant ministries/agencies within the Ramsar Contracting Parties, especially the ministries of Environment, Foreign Affairs, Water and Finance.
- To advise and support Ramsar Contracting Parties, STRP and the Secretary General in their work with partners and donors.

Fundraising

- To build up voluntary financial contributions, and develop less reliance on Secretariat core budget, through both public and private sector sources.
- To provide stewardship for existing fundraising initiatives, such as Small Grants Fund and Regional Initiatives as well as for the Conference of the Parties (COP).
- To oversee the preparation of fundraising plans, fundraising proposals, and budgets, in consultation with the Ramsar Senior Regional Advisors and the Finance Officer.
- To develop a portfolio of projects to submit to foundations, corporate and individual sponsors, in consultation with the Ramsar Contracting Parties and Senior Regional Advisors.
- To oversee the production and review of Ramsar reports to partners/donors to ensure that they meet individual donor requirements.

- To work with relevant officers strategically placed in countries/regions and aware of funding opportunities (and through regular exchanges with our IOPs), and to relay the information to our Administrative Authorities, in order to endeavour to match national and regional funding needs with broader funding opportunities.
- To develop, coordinate and implement a global fundraising strategy for the Ramsar Convention. This will require consultation with Contracting Parties in order to prioritise funding requirements and the development of a global network of fundraising focal points, the development of fundraising guidelines, and the building and maintenance of support systems.

The aims here are always multi-dimensional and include the raising of funds both directly for the Secretariat to administer but also indirectly, for wetlands, through Contracting Parties, NGOs, IOPs, and other MEAs. The principal objective is to enhance the overall implementation of the Convention.

The above job description contains the main duties and responsibilities for this position. However, in a small organization such as the Ramsar Secretariat, staff members are expected to be flexible in their approach to work and be willing to undertake other tasks that are reasonably allocated to them but which may not be part of their formal job description. Where any task becomes a regular part of an employee's responsibilities, the job description will be changed in consultation with the employee and the Secretary General.

Requirements

The key qualities required are awareness of global challenges, skills and commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of the environment, with a focus on wetlands.

A university degree (preferably post graduate degree) or an equivalent demonstrated knowledge in at least one subject related to wetland conservation and wise use such as economics, business administration, geography, biology, hydrology, water resource management, marine sciences, natural resources management, or land-use planning.

Other requirements:

- A minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience with evidence of achievements in the area of partnership and fundraising.
- Familiarity with the UN agencies, other MEAs, major multilateral and bilateral donors and the private sector in the areas of partnership and fundraising activities.
- Demonstrated capacity for effective communication (oral and written) and selling/marketing skills. Ability to liaise, establish and maintain good working relationships with key partners.
- Demonstrated ability to build a complex network of relevant relationships across governmental, non-governmental, environmental and public sectors, and to creatively explore and match their various requirements.
- Demonstrated capacity for innovative and creative initiatives, together with strategic thinking and ability to provide leadership for a team and advice to the Secretary General and colleagues.

- Strong organizational skills and good project management experience. Ability to prioritize and work both with limited supervision and in multidisciplinary teams to contribute to a common goal.
- Well developed computer skills and ability to perform the duties described above in a fairly independent manner, with limited assistance from support staff.
- Good understanding of world current affairs, especially in the areas of resource allocation. Appreciation of regional, national and local challenges in a culturally and environmentally diverse world.
- Ability to work independently, with a team spirit and contributing to a common goal.
- Ability to work with full fluency in spoken and written English; knowledge of either French and/ or Spanish is an advantage.
- Willingness to adhere to the Ramsar Convention's values and the working customs of its Secretariat.

Annex 1. Process for recruitment of a Partnership Coordinator: Lessons learned from our consultation with partners

For Ramsar, the purpose of the meetings with various partners was to progress our definition of terms of reference for a Partnership Coordinator.

1. Most important is to define our/the Parties' list of funding priorities (funding for core activities, Ramsar projects, regional/national activities - cf Resolution X.2, annex).
2. It is advisable to have a “menu” from which donors can choose, while remaining sufficiently flexible to make new proposals if necessary; and
3. Find out where opportunities for funding in our area of work lie: with governments, with the private sector (which companies?), or both, or others...? Talk to donors to find out where their interests lie.
4. Because we have only one position to fund, it is crucial that we focus the mandate and define the modalities of work and the depth of involvement: developing projects is too time-intensive, but even brokering between donor and project proponent/implementer takes a great deal of time and raises issues of accountability.
5. Often, government agencies and multilateral agencies want to deal with someone in the country/region (accountability, ease of contacts, etc.). For Ramsar, this might mean working through, for example, the International Organization Partners (IOPs).
6. One role for the Partnership Coordinator could be to work with people strategically placed in countries/regions and aware of funding opportunities (and regular exchanges with our IOPs), and to relay the information to our AAs, and perhaps to endeavor to match the perceived needs with funding opportunities – this raises the question of tracking of results of this position for our constituency, and of accountability.

7. **Evaluation:** funding for the position is available until 2012. The position should be evaluated annually so as to provide feedback to the Standing Committee.
8. We should contact more frequently, and in parallel to our Administrative Authorities, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finances for financial support.
9. We could present a consolidated programme and budget to the Conference of the Parties, with core and additional activities. We should be more precise in specifying our different activities and their individual costs (“accounting by projects”) in order to show more clearly our needs and shortfalls.
10. We should prioritize which donors we are going for: private sector, GEF, Contracting Parties, bi- and multilateral donors? (diversification of donors, but with a focus on 10-20).
11. For meetings of the Conference of the Parties and regional meetings we should seek more Star Alliance-type partnerships.
12. It takes time to build and maintain relationships. Only through regular contacts is it possible to learn of funding opportunities.
13. The Partnership Coordinator cannot become involved in grant management.

Key skills of the Partnership Coordinator

14. The main donor community should define the profile of the Partnership Coordinator. Depending on the target for fundraising, we may have to go for different sets of skills, for instance:
15. For relationships with Official Development Assistance, probably someone with a technical, natural resources background, able to understand and improve logframes and accounting tables.
16. The importance of the Secretary General being involved in philanthropy relationships, at least with private sector donors, to seal the deal with high level partners.
17. For philanthropy work, someone with marketing and communications skills would be essential, good at interpersonal relationships, able to communicate convincing stories about what difference our actions make.

Qualities of a fundraiser for Ramsar:

18. The Coordinator should be “aggressive” (in a positive way), creative, a good writer, very good at customer service, able to sell our mandate. Partnership Coordinator should be a conduit and facilitator as well as a fundraiser.
19. Even if our focus is fundraising, it is better to maintain the title “Partnership Coordinator”, since most donors prefer to be considered as “Partners”. Partnership is a broad working relationship that may involve fundraising and mutual support/influence. Our aim should be threefold:

- promoting partnership with donors and other partners such as IOPs to mobilize financial resources to assist Parties;
- enhancing the interest of some key players that have an impact on wetlands (influencing the way they address wetland issues); and
- obtaining the strategic support of these players.

Annex 2: Consultation with relevant partners on Partnership Coordinator

Institution	Contact person and function	Type of information/assistance received	Relevance
<i>In the Geneva area/Switzerland</i>			
IUCN	Hans Friedrich, then-Head of Strategic Partnerships	TORs for Head of Strategic Partnerships	Yes, very relevant. Deals essentially with fundraising. Meeting held 07.09.09.
WWF	Chris Hails Director Network Relations Tim Geer Director Government Aid Agencies Relations	Verbal information turned into an aide-mémoire Verbal information turned into an aide-mémoire and written information	Yes – wide fundraising experience Yes – wide fundraising experience
WBCSD (World Business Council for Sustainable Development)		Email saying they have no fundraising activities and brochure about their work with ecosystems	No
IISD (International Institute for Sustainable Development – European office)	No response		
ICTSD (International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development)	No response		
<i>MEAs:</i>			
Basel Convention Secretariat	Matthias Kern, Chief of Implementation and Capacity Building Unit	Information requested	No
Stockholm/Rotterdam Conventions	Mr Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary	Letter informing us that they do not have a position dealing with partnerships, development or fundraising, but that there is a COP decision planning for joint mobilization of resources between Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel Conventions (copy sent).	No
CITES	No response		

<i>Outside Switzerland:</i>			
BirdLife International	No response		
Wetlands International	No response		
IWMI	Julie van der Bliek, Director Business Development	Written information on job description and offer to be in contact to help us refine the post and enhance synergies.	Yes – deals with fundraising and donor relations.
CMS	Melanie Virtue, Inter-Agency Liaison Officer	Written information on position description	Position is dealing with cooperation with other organizations, including World Bank and GEF, but does not include fundraising
CBD	No response		
UNFCCC	Megumi Endo, Observer Organization Liaison Officer Lyndle Lindow, Chief, Proramme Planning & Budget	Fundraising, liaison with observer orgs. and outreach are assigned to different positions. In charge of observer orgs participation in meetings Written information on Nairobi Work Programme: Work programme through pledges from other bodies. Does not seem to imply financial transactions. Written information on Guidelines for trust fund management received. Teleconference held on 2.9.09	Some relevance Yes – Information on fundraising procedures, fund and project management.
UNCCD	Sergio Zelaya, Coordinator of Policy & Advocacy on Global Issues & Platforms	Written information received	Relevant