

**Agenda item 12**

**Review of the Ramsar Convention's relationship with its International Organization Partners**

**Action requested:** The Standing Committee is invited to note the review of the Ramsar Convention's relationships with its International Organization Partners and advise on how to strengthen these partnerships.

1. In Decision SC40-6, the Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to “develop a collaborative review with the International Organization Partners of the Convention's relationships with the IOPs, in order to strengthen them strategically and make them more concrete and detailed, including in relation to in-country implementation support activities.”
2. The following is a preliminary review, in summaries and table form, including consideration and completion by the IOPs.

**Update on decisions taken at the 3<sup>rd</sup> joint meeting on 9 October 2007: Joint action and special support as of March 2010**

3. Review of joint activities with Ramsar IOPs: It is expected that, ideally, there will be a significant contribution to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention from all IOPs through their comprehensive policies/strategies, programmes and initiatives. The reality is that, for most IOPs, only a few programmes are significantly working in collaboration with the Ramsar community at global, regional and national levels. Almost all programmes have a relevance to the Ramsar Convention, however, and a number of the IOPs' programmes influence wetland conservation and wise use. For instance, the following programmes are highly relevant and can significantly influence wetland management at different levels.

**BirdLife International**

4. BirdLife International consists of a global partnership of national conservation NGOs, structured within six regions and supported by a decentralised Secretariat. BirdLife Partners also maintain large local networks (e.g., Site Support Groups and Important Bird Area Caretakers). BirdLife thus works to support implementation of the Ramsar Convention in a diversity of ways at the local, national, regional and global level. At regional or global level, many specific activities are carried out or coordinated by the BirdLife Secretariat. The very significant work of numerous BirdLife Partners in promoting and supporting Ramsar implementation nationally and locally is less visible and less easy to track and report on. However, it represents an area where the strategic relationship with Ramsar could be strengthened and should not be overlooked in this review.

5. BirdLife's strategic conservation objectives include saving species, protecting sites, conserving habitats and empowering people, with cross-cutting strategic themes on seabirds, flyways and climate change. BirdLife is carrying out work relevant to Ramsar within all of these broad areas. A particularly strong and well-established link is through the Important Bird Areas programme, since the great majority of IBAs identified for waterbirds at global level are also actual or potential Ramsar sites. Other, still emerging programmes are also very relevant, including Preventing Extinctions, Climate Change, Flyways, Seabirds and Conservation Leadership. More information is available on BirdLife's Web site: <http://www.birdlife.org/action/change/ramsar/index.html> .

## IUCN

6. IUCN's global programme and initiatives include Climate Change, Energy, Ecosystems and Livelihoods, Mangroves for the Future, Conservation for Poverty Reduction, Future of Sustainability; Water Programme; Marine Programme; Business and Biodiversity; Economics; Ecosystem Management Programme; Environmental Law Programme; Forest Programme; Global Policy; Social Policy; Species; and Protected Areas.
7. In practice, direct working relationships with the Ramsar Secretariat and sometimes with Ramsar Administrative Authorities are mainly through the Water Programme. The Secretariat is developing more working relationships with the Business and Biodiversity Programme, the Climate Change Initiative, Protected Areas and Forest Programmes. It is worth noting that the administration of the Ramsar Secretariat is provided by IUCN.

## IWMI

8. IWMI is a research centre of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Its mission is to improve the management of land and water resources for food, livelihoods and the environment. IWMI's Strategic Plan encompasses four thematic areas of work:
  - Water Availability and Access;
  - Productive Water Use (with "Sustainable Use of Wetlands as one of the sub-themes);
  - Water Quality, Health and the Environment;
  - Water and Society;
9. IWMI conducts research, primarily in Asia and Africa (but also partly in South America), with a range of national and international partners and stakeholders, including other institutions of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (e.g., WorldFish and the International Livestock Research Institute). Many of the projects and programs with which IWMI is involved have direct relevance to the Ramsar Convention. These include:
  - projects of the Challenge Programme on Water and Food (i., Wetlands-based livelihoods in the Limpopo basin: balancing social welfare and environmental security; ii., Water allocation in the Tonle Sap; iii., Valuing wetland resources in China; iv., the Nile Basin Focal project);

- the Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture, which Ramsar co-sponsored;
  - a GEF project on Sustainable Management of Inland Wetlands in Southern Africa: A Livelihoods and Ecosystems Approach;
  - an EU project on enhancing the role of wetlands in integrated water resources management of twinned river basins in EU, Africa and South-America in support of EU Water Initiatives.
10. IWMI has collaborated with Wetlands International and other partners on the Wetlands and Poverty project and the Guidelines on Agriculture, Wetlands and Water Resource Interactions (GAWI) project. IWMI's staff participate in the Japanese Space Agency's (JAXA) Kyoto and Carbon Initiative investigating remote sensing techniques for wetland inventory and monitoring. IWMI's projects on water resource management, irrigation, small-holder agriculture, environmental flows, water storage and climate change all have aspects that are relevant to Ramsar. In addition, key components of IWMI's work relate to capacity building and outreach and knowledge dissemination.
11. Regarding the Ramsar Convention, IWMI clearly affirms: "At international level, we will make sure that IWMI has a voice in key organizations like the Global Water Partnership and the Ramsar Convention".

### **Wetlands International**

12. Wetlands International's mission is "to sustain and restore wetlands, their resources and biodiversity for future generations". The Wetlands International Strategy identifies four long-term strategic global goals:
- Global Goal 1: Stakeholders and decision-makers are well-informed about the status and trends of wetlands, their biodiversity and priorities for action;
- Global Goal 2: The functions and values of wetlands are recognised and integrated into sustainable development;
- Global Goal 3: Conservation and sustainable use of wetlands is achieved through integrated water resource management and coastal zone management;
- Global Goal 4: Large scale, strategic initiatives result in improved conservation status of species, habitats and ecological networks.
13. All Wetlands International programmes are directly correlated with the work of the Ramsar Convention: Protecting wetland biodiversity; Improving people's livelihoods; Increasing resilience of vulnerable coasts; Mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change; and Improving water management. All specific programmes and projects are also contributing to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention: Central Kalimantan Peatland Project in Indonesia (CKPP); GreenCoast; Wetlands and Poverty Reduction Project; Avian Influenza and Waterbirds; Wings Over Wetlands; Wetlands and Biofuels; Wetlands and Livelihoods Project. In addition, there are also relevant projects under the Regional Coastal and Marine Conservation Programme for West Africa'
14. In addition, Wetlands International delivers the Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) for the Convention, under a contractual arrangement with the Secretariat. This is one of the key services that the Secretariat provides to Contracting Parties through this arrangement with WI. The RSIS is meant to provide on-line access to all official

Information Sheets on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS), and increasingly it also includes links to other relevant but unofficial information sources concerning Ramsar sites in different countries, such as external Web sites, publications and management plans. Wetlands International also provides the “STRP Support Service” to ensure effective communication among STRP members and STRP National Focal Points.

## **WWF International**

15. WWF’s approach to achieving its twin goals of saving biodiversity and reducing humanity’s impact on nature is consistent with Ramsar’s mission and Resolutions: Tackling the causes; Global initiatives, including the Amazon, the Arctic, China for a Global SHIFT, Coastal East Africa, Coral Triangle, Forest-based Carbon, Global Climate Deal, Green Heart of Africa, Heart of Borneo, Living Himalaya, Market Transformation, Smart Energy, Smart Fishing, Tigers. These are WWF’s 14 so-called “Network Initiatives”. In addition, there are also 35 so-called “WWF Priority Places” to be taken into account.
16. WWF Programmes are also all related to wetland conservation and wise use: Freshwater Programme; Forest Programme; Marine Programme; and Species Programme.
17. The Ramsar Convention is considered by WWF as a “Species and Biodiversity Convention” as much as a “Freshwater Convention” (for example, several WWF-supported projects have included coastal wetland conservation, e.g., deltas and mangroves, as part of Freshwater Programme activities).
18. The Ramsar Convention receives tremendous support and significant contributions in its implementation on the ground, thanks to the commitment of WWF’s Freshwater Programme. However, it would be extremely useful to extend collaborative work with all other programmes as well.
19. WWF International Freshwater Programme covers anything related to supporting implementation of Ramsar’s Three Pillars, the Strategic Plan, goals, objectives, etc., as well as for the day-to-day relationships between WWF and the Ramsar Secretariat. Depending upon the issues, regions, countries or even places, the International Freshwater Programme represents, promotes, and supports the views, objectives, policy and field work of the entire WWF network as far as Freshwater (including coastal) Ecosystems / Biodiversity issues are concerned, through historically long-established and regular cooperation with other WWF Programmes, Offices, Network Initiatives, Priority Places, etc.
20. In addition to the International Freshwater Programme, many WWF National Programmes Units or staff (including Freshwater, Forest, Species, Marine, each WWF Office having its own way of organizing itself and its own local/national/regional priorities) collaborate closely with environment/wetland conservation authorities in the region and/or country corresponding to their areas and subjects of priority engagement. In this respect, WWF’s International Freshwater Programme’s key role is one of coordination as well as promotion and communication of WWF’s worldwide wetland conservation work.

21. This summary is not comprehensive; it is rather a preliminary overview that needs to be completed in a meeting with IOPs. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to hold a meeting with all IOPs before the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee.

<i>Areas of common work between IOPs and the Ramsar Secretariat/ special support</i>	<i>BirdLife International</i>	<i>IUCN</i>	<i>IWMI</i>	<i>Wetlands International</i>	<i>WWF International</i>
Administrative and financial services to Ramsar Secretariat		Hosting the Secretariat and providing administrative and financial services		Ramsar Sites Information Service; STRP support service	Support to promote accession process to the Convention (10 new Contracting Parties during the 1999-2009 period).  Financial support to facilitate designation of Ramsar sites (through occasional co-funding of Ramsar SGF projects, or funding through WWF relevant offices or through relevant governmental offices, etc.)

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Technical support services to the Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IBA monitoring of Ramsar-listed sites and other wetlands</li> <li>- National waterbird census coordination in many countries, in liaison with Wetlands International</li> <li>- Review and tracking of waterbird species conservation status, as the Red List Authority for birds</li> <li>- Development of indicators of Convention effectiveness and the associated guidelines</li> <li>- Support to implementation of Art. 3.2</li> <li>- Lead on specific issues within STRP</li> <li>- Review of site selection criteria</li> <li>- Leading side events during COP</li> <li>- Arranging/organising technical workshops</li> <li>- Contribution to the Secretariat and the Culture Working Group with development of guidance on considering wetland cultural values.</li> </ul>			Data and analyses from International Waterbird Census – used as a tranche 2 indicator on success of implementation of the Convention; RSIS analyses	

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Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM): Lake Natron Ramsar site, Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial support (RSPB) and direct participation</li> <li>- Partner support and backstopping in-country</li> <li>- Partnership advocacy for implementation of RAM recommendations</li> </ul>	Contribution of IUCN Regional Office in Asia and IUCN Specialist Group on Flamingos			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highly appreciated contribution of WWF Int'l HQ and WWF office in Mozambique (2009);</li> <li>- Promoting governments' interest and will to request RAM is part of WWF's priorities for the 2010-2020 decade</li> </ul>
IOP support events at COP10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisation of technical meetings</li> <li>- Key side events: 'Crane conservation in north-east Asia'; and 'IBA Local Conservation Groups and wetland conservation'</li> <li>- Support to campaign for conservation of Lake Natron, Tanzania</li> <li>- Support in drafting resolutions.</li> </ul>	X	X	1) Climate Change Policies and Wetland Conservation – Conflict and Synergies 2) Wetlands and Biofuels 3) Flyways - Events were strategically placed to support resolutions (as well as others) on wetlands and climate change and wetlands and biofuels	X
Excellent participation in STRP's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to the development of new guidance materials, e.g. further "wise use" conceptual</li> </ul>	X	X	WI is contributing to several tasks under TWA 2, TWA 3, TWA 4, TWA 5, TWA 6 , TWA 9 and TWA 10	X



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	<p>frameworks and promotion of related policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical inputs on indicators &amp; reporting, knowledge management and interoperability, resolutions, assessing coherence, gaps, redundancies, conflicts, user needs, etc.</li> <li>- Assistance to the Convention Secretariat and STRP with reviews of guidances and COP.</li> </ul>			within the current STRP Work Plan.	

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Active participation in Ramsar regional meetings	Asia Division, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cameroon, UK	Vietnam, Regional Asia Office		Thailand, Oceania, Japan, China	Regional pre-COP meetings; and several regional Initiatives meetings/workshops (detail hereafter)
Financial support to regional meetings	Cambodia & UK office	Yaoundé, Cameroon, IUCN Central Africa Office			Yaoundé, Cameroon, WWF Central Africa Office
Financial arrangements and logistics to organize regional meetings		Reg Asia and Lao Office			Nepal Office

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<p>Special contribution to prepare COP10</p> <p>Staff time to develop key documents</p> <p>Financial support</p>	<p>Many inputs from BirdLife to help draft specific resolutions, guidance documents, etc.' prior to the COP</p> <p>BirdLife provided financial support to 19 delegates to attend COP 10</p>		<p>Assistance in drafting Resolutions (on Biogeographic regionalization in the application of the <i>Strategic Framework</i> and Wetlands and biofuels) and input to several other resolutions: Refinements to the <i>modus operandi</i> of the STRP; Wetlands and human health and well being; Wetlands and poverty reduction; Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies</p>	<p>Assistance in redrafting COP9 Resolution 14 on poverty eradication, flyways partnership, wetlands and climate change, wetlands and biofuels</p>	<p>WWF International sponsored some African delegates</p>
Specific campaign for the conservation and wise use of peatlands	Funding, technical and political support for peatland restoration in Belarus			X	
Joint action in Bali, UNFCCC COP13				X	

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Ramsar site designation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BirdLife Partners around the globe are highly active in identifying potential Ramsar sites (through the IBA process) and advocating for their designation</li> <li>- Technical support to governments in making progress towards the targets they have agreed for Ramsar site designations</li> <li>- Regional inventories showing the extent of coverage of wetland IBAs by Ramsar site designations ('shadow' Ramsar lists), in three BirdLife regions to date</li> </ul>	Sri Lanka Office			WWF International (support to Africa) Colombia and Peru Office Nepal Office

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Ramsar site management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many nature reserves managed by BirdLife Partners are Ramsar sites</li> <li>- BirdLife Partners play a key role through their involvement in Ramsar Sites advisory committees (through IBA Site Support Groups/Caretakers)</li> <li>- Many examples worldwide of projects aimed to achieve the wise use of wetlands</li> <li>- Partners and Secretariat working with many collaborative initiatives to improve site management, including through flyways approaches, e.g. Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, High Andean Flamingos Initiative, BirdLife Western Hemisphere Flyways Initiative</li> </ul>	X		WI supports management of several Ramsar sites in all regions; from inventory and assessment, wetland management planning to implementation support	Support in preparing the management plan of Maromeu Complex Ramsar site in Mozambique, and many more WWF contributions/support to management plans in all regions

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Specific joint projects on wetland management	Wings Over Wetlands is the outstanding example that involves both Ramsar Secretariat and another IOP	X	Comprehensive Assessment, GAWI	X	Collaboration for ChadWet, NigerWet and NileWet.
Contact group High Andean Strategy	Quito Office	Quito Office		Argentina Office	International and Colombia Office
Contact group La Plata River Basin Initiative				Argentina Office	International and Bolivia Office
Contact group Mangrove Ecosystem LAC				X	Colombia Office
East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership	X			WI is a founding partner	Oceania and China Office
Himalayan Initiative				HQ and WI-China and South Asia Offices	International and India, Nepal, Pakistan, China, Bhutan Offices
Pacific Islands Wetlands Initiative		Oceania			South Pacific Program

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Support to national capacity building for Ramsar implementation (including young professionals exchanges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic support for capacity building in policy &amp; advocacy to BirdLife Partners, including through specific Darwin Initiative-funded and Jensen Foundation-funded projects</li> <li>- Financial support to Partner staff to attend Ramsar meetings at regional and global level</li> <li>- Two pilot projects carried out for a capacity building/ mentoring programme in Turkey and Kazakhstan</li> </ul>			WI Thailand, Krabi field team	Tanzania Office
Development of wetland toolkits		X		Wetlands and Sustainable Tourism , Biorights, extensive Capacity Building programme and modules.	Wetland management guide
Offer to join common working networks		X		WoW and WIGWAG, for example; African Training Board	

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Ramsar video: assistance from the IOPs in clarifying form and content – help received so far		X			X
World Wetlands Day: communication with IOP HQs on the WWD theme, availability of materials, planning of WWD activities (Note: we already have and use to great effect our communication links with national IOP offices)	Activities and events organised and coordinated nationally and locally each year by individual BirdLife Partners	Across the regions, in several countries, the coordination of WWD celebration was made by IUCN		Across the regions	Across the regions, in several countries, the coordination of WWD celebration was made by WWF.
Ramsar CEPA at WCC		X		WoW and WPRP; WLP capacity building and outreach.	Joint WWF/Ramsar communications and/or events for 2011 - the year of WWF's 50 <sup>th</sup> birthday and Ramsar's 40 <sup>th</sup> birthday



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Participation at World Water Forum – dissemination of Changwon Declaration				Organized special session with the Secretariat at World Water Forum 4, Istanbul, Turkey on “Thinking globally , Acting Locally”.	
Specific actions to promote wetland values and sustainable use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many examples of BirdLife Partners working in countries promoting values and wise use of wetlands</li> <li>- Several IBA Site Support Groups focus on sites which are Ramsar sites or qualify for designation</li> </ul>		Wetland management for sustainable agriculture	Several programmes across Asia, Africa and Latin America	
General participation of IOPs in Ramsar Regional Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- East Africa Regional Initiative</li> <li>- MedWet</li> </ul>	X		CREHO, Himalayan Initiative, Black Sea Wet Initiative, East Asian - Australasian Flyway (EAAF) Partnership. Carpathian Wetland Initiative, Baltic, Mediterranean	X
Participation of IOPs in Ramsar/Wetlands National Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High level of BirdLife Partner participation</li> <li>- Some Partners have</li> </ul>	X		India, Mali (member of National Wetland Committee)	X

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	been designated CEPA focal points				
Participation of IOPs in Ramsar site management	Partners elaboration of management plans, co-management of sites	X		Several sites (for example, Chilika and Loktak)	X
Participation of IOPs in Ramsar site designation	BirdLife Partners have provided significant support for the accession of new Ramsar Parties (e.g., Sierra Leone, Fiji, Myanmar, Kazakhstan) and designation of new Ramsar sites (e.g., Uganda)		Not directly, but IWMI work on biogeographic regionalization and Ramsar gap analysis should inform site designation	Africa office generally asked to provide input, for example in Senegal.	X
Development and implementation of joint actions with Ramsar Administrative Authorities	X	X		Joint actions and close cooperation in India, Argentina, Mali are concrete examples from Africa, Latin America and Asia	Including support to National Wetlands Policies, e.g. Algeria Madagascar, India, Niger, Tunisia)
Joint implementation of COP Resolutions with Parties	- BirdLife Partners in countries which are Parties to the Convention are strongly supporting their governments to implement COP decisions and resolutions.			Several demonstration projects on wetlands management and poverty reduction in Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as on climate change adaptation and biodiversity	Resolution on wetlands management and poverty reduction (Res. X.28), and Res.X.13, X.24, X.26.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partners influence national implementing legislation</li> <li>- Partners press for and participate in national report preparation</li> </ul>			conservation and capacity building in various countries. Flyways programmes.	
Collaboration on the WOW project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong support to project implementation globally, subregionally and nationally</li> <li>- Demonstration projects executed by BirdLife Partners in several countries</li> <li>- Key role in development of CSN</li> </ul>			Hosted the project's coordination unit at headquarters of WI and contributed strongly to the implementation of the project.	X

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IOPs' priorities and their focus on regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wetland IBA identification, action, advocacy and monitoring work is a key focus in all regions (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Middle East and Pacific)</li> <li>- Flyways programme taking shape in Europe/Africa/ Middle East, especially West and North Africa</li> </ul>		Wetlands and livelihoods – Southern Africa and South East Asia	Central Kalimantan and Sumatran Peatlands in Indonesia; Flyways Programmes, mangrove and joint coastal management in West Africa (PRCM); River basins & flood plains (e.g. Niger, Senegal, Gambia, Nile), other wetlands vulnerable to degradation caused by anthropological pressure and climate change	14 Network Initiatives, 35 Priority Places, 13 flagship Species, 23 footprint-impacted Species (each with a freshwater/wetland conservation linkage of variable intensity depending on issues, places, species, etc.).
IOPs' priorities and their focus on wetland types	Focus on wetlands of international importance for globally threatened, restricted-range, biome-restricted and congregatory birds		Inland wetlands where small-holder agriculture is important for livelihoods but there may be trade-offs with other ecosystem services	High altitude wetland systems, coastal wetlands, floodplains, peatlands, rivers	

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IOPs' focus on thematic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biodiversity and business</li> <li>- CEPA</li> <li>- Conservation and livelihoods</li> <li>- Ecosystem-based mitigation of/ adaptation to, climate change</li> <li>- Ecosystem services</li> <li>- Flyways</li> <li>- Forests</li> <li>- Globally threatened birds</li> <li>- Important Bird Areas</li> <li>- Indicators</li> <li>- Local community engagement</li> <li>- Monitoring and indicators</li> <li>- Seabirds</li> </ul>	Climate change, biodiversity, sustainable use of natural infrastructures, including wetlands; energy, ecosystems and livelihoods, Mangroves for the Future, Conservation for Poverty Reduction; all species, including wetland dependent species; and Protected Areas.	Water availability and access; productive water use (with “sustainable use of wetlands” as one of the sub-themes); water quality, health and the environment; water and society; water and food.	Protecting wetland biodiversity; improving people's livelihoods; increasing resilience of vulnerable coasts; mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change; improving water management; wetlands and poverty reduction; avian influenza and waterbirds; flyways; wetlands and biofuels.	Protecting wetland biodiversity (including flagship species, e.g., river dolphins, sturgeons); improving people's livelihoods & contributing to reducing poverty; climate change adaptation; improving water management; integrated river basin management (e.g., cooperation with selected international river/lake basin organizations; promotion of good river basin governance); wetland conservation and infrastructures; environmental flows;

### **Suggestions to enhance collaboration with IOPs**

22. In the discussions with the International Organization Partiers concerning renewal of memoranda of cooperation with them, the Secretariat may be able to provide recommendations as to where the priority areas might be in which they can be helpful, and then see if they are able to do so within their own constraints. For instance, it is useful to join efforts with IOPs to identify key regions, countries, thematic areas or wetland types where a common focus can be achieved:
  - Better connecting IOPs' priorities with relevant target areas of the Convention.
  - Cooperation on holding regional capacity building and information exchange activities on wetland wise use and Ramsar implementation. This would include updating policy makers at different levels of government and site managers about the Convention, as well as technical sessions to enhance the role of the Convention with regard to sustainable development: role of wetlands regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation, economic development (green economy), water management and biodiversity conservation.
  - Increased involvement in policy dialogue at national or regional levels and assistance to Contracting Parties in carrying out field surveys to identify key wetlands in selected regions/countries, to work with the government to promote wetland management and wise use of Ramsar sites and other important wetlands
  - Identifying threats on wetlands and responding to challenges related to the implementation of the Convention, especially Article 3.2.
  - Mutual support regarding strategic positions to adopt on key environmental challenges: climate change, water management and land use, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
  - Increased collaboration and mutual support between the Ramsar Convention and all relevant programmes, initiatives and activities of the IOPs (Water programme, Forest programme, Biodiversity and Climate Change).
23. BirdLife seeks a deeper and more strategic engagement with the Ramsar Convention (and with the other IOPs on Ramsar issues) that maximises the value of joint efforts for wetland wise use and conservation. While continuing and building on many ongoing inputs, it is important to consolidate efforts to support national implementation – recognizing the unique structure of BirdLife as a global network of grassroots conservation organizations.
24. The Secretariat would like to build on the ongoing Secretariat-Secretariat interactions (at global and regional level) to promote and support better Partner-Party interactions (at national and regional level). It is also necessary to 'mainstream' a Ramsar element,

and to use and profile Ramsar more effectively, within a range of BirdLife's existing programmatic areas.

25. A key focus would be to build BirdLife Partners' capacity for advocacy and action, so that they can engage effectively with governments. Partners need to be equipped to make effective use of the policy tools and best practice guidance developed by Ramsar, and to support and help focus national efforts in site designation, management planning and implementation, restoration, monitoring, reporting, CEPA and training.
26. There also exists great potential for stronger collaboration at regional level, especially through BirdLife's emerging flyways work. It will be helpful to take the existing WOW project partnership forward as a collaborative flyway-level programme for waterbird and wetland conservation and to explore possibilities for similar, though regionally tailored, approaches in other major flyways.