

Agenda item 17.2

Report of the STRP Chair

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to note the report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, endorse the updated STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan, and consider possible ways and means of funding those STRP priority tasks for which sufficient resources are not yet available.

Introduction

1. This report from the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel covers STRP activities and progress since the Panel last met at STRP15 in March 2009, including the STRP mid-term workshops held recently in Gland from 22 to 26 February 2010. The report provides an overview of progress to date on priority tasks for which funding and/or resources have been available as well as a preliminary list of products expected in the 2009-2012 cycle depending on availability of funding, highlighting those products that we expect to be tabled for discussion or presented for information at COP11.
2. Other SC41 papers that are relevant to the work of the STRP are
 - DOC.SC41-26 Add. 1 (updated STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan); and
 - DOC. SC41-32 (Report of the STRP Oversight Committee).
3. This report also includes in Annex 5 initial recommendations regarding STRP participation and roles in the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11), prepared in the light of STRP members' experiences of their roles during COP10, which we would like to bring to the attention of the Standing Committee and its Subgroup on COP11 under agenda item 7 (Subgroup on COP11).

Overview of progress on the STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan

4. I am pleased to report that for those high-priority tasks for which funding and/or resources have been available, there has been substantive progress in developing the agreed products. The Panel used the opportunity of the recent mid-term workshops to advance currently unfunded priority tasks as much as possible during the time we spent together in Gland.
5. Following the mid-term workshops, the STRP has updated its Work Plan for 2009-2012 to reflect the status of each of the tasks contained in the Work Plan, with a summary of progress where relevant (see DOC. SC41-26 Add. 1 Updated STRP Work Plan). The updated Work Plan also includes modifications to task terms of reference where these have been considered appropriate, as well as suggestions for advancing currently unfunded or lower priority tasks through partnerships with other organizations.

Revised cost estimates for high-priority tasks in the STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan

6. The low level of funding available for the STRP remains a pressing concern and compromises our ability to support Convention implementation. We are most grateful to the governments of Finland, Norway, Tanzania and the United Kingdom for their provision in 2009 and 2010 of additional voluntary contributions totaling CHF 82,724, which is helping us significantly to advance selected high priority tasks, and to the Star Alliance Biosphere Connections programme which has enabled the participation of several of STRP's Invited Experts at the mid-term workshops.
7. In addition, a substantial proportion of our work continues to be delivered through *pro bono* or in-kind contributions of Panel members and invited experts, which we greatly appreciate but do not take for granted.
8. There remains a major shortfall between available funds needed for full delivery of the work plan and the revised costs estimated by the Panel at the recent mid-term workshops. Annex 1 provides the breakdown of these revised costs by Thematic Work Area (TWA) and task.
9. The STRP's revised estimate of the total 2009-2012 costs of delivering its High Priority tasks is now CHF 548,700, of which a total of CHF 460,700 remains to be found for 2010-2012 work. In order to progress those High Priority tasks which require work during 2010, CHF 104,300 of this total needs to be made available to the Panel and its Thematic Work Areas during the remainder of 2010. However, from the STRP core budget allocation it is anticipated that only CHF 17,985 can be made available towards these costs, noting also that the availability of these funds is dependent on confirmation of the final cost of holding the mid-term workshops. This leaves a short-fall for 2010 High Priority work of CHF 86,315.
10. It should be noted that these figures do not yet include estimated costs for the full development and implementation of the Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) – task 4.2 – for which costs are anticipated to be substantial (see Annex 1).
11. In addition, the Panel has recognized that funding will be needed to progress some of its lower priority 2009-2012 tasks (see Annex 1). In total these tasks need a further CHF 70,800 of resourcing, of which CHF 35,800 is needed in 2010.

STRP mid-term workshops

12. The STRP's mid-term workshops took place in the Secretariat offices in Gland, Switzerland, from 22-26 February 2010, with participation of all STRP appointed members, along with several of the 2009-2012 Invited Experts and a number of representatives of observer organizations and other experts invited by the STRP to contribute to specific tasks in its Work Plan. From 19-21 February a number of pre-session expert workshops were organized to advance the work of some of the Panel's tasks, and their outcomes are also reflected into the updated STRP Work Plan. The draft report of the STRP mid-term workshops is provided for information as Annex 2.

13. Particularly notable was the work session between UN-Habitat and Ramsar STRP experts on 19 and 20 February, which followed on from the successful introductory workshop on management of urban wetlands held in Naivasha, Kenya, in November 2009 and organized by UN-HABITAT. In Gland, the group of experts worked to identify specific wetland-related guidance which can be incorporated into UN-Habitat's Sustainable Cities Programme, thus providing an effective channel for delivery of guidance on wetlands to local governments, urban planners and policy makers. This offers an excellent example of inter-sectoral collaboration in implementation of an aspect of the Changwon Declaration (Resolution X.3).
14. Annex 3 of this report contains a preliminary list of the products planned for delivery as outputs from the revised Work Plan, highlighting those expected be tabled for consideration, or presented for information, at COP11, including potential draft COP11 Resolutions.
15. A number of significant issues were discussed at the workshops, some of which are covered in more detail in this report in order to draw these to the attention of the Standing Committee. These include:
 - re-development of the guidance for the selection and designation of Ramsar sites, and needs for data and information at the point of designation, including options for revising the format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS);
 - nomination of STRP members as authors for the upcoming 5th Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
 - redevelopment of the STRP Support Service website, within the broader context of recommendations for improving the transparency of STRP processes and document management; and
 - support for STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) to participate in STRP and regional meetings, and for STRP member participation in regional preparatory meetings in order to assist Parties in understanding and discussing technical Draft Resolutions.

Guidance for Ramsar site selection and designation, data and information needs, and options for RIS revision

16. At COP10, the Parties requested STRP to undertake a number of tasks related to the Convention's guidance on selection and designation of Ramsar sites and the needs for data and information at the point of designation. These tasks include:
 - a) a review of the consistency, logic and clarity of the targets and guidelines that support Ramsar's site selection criteria;
 - b) seeking the views of users of this guidance;
 - c) a review of options for revising the format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS), seeking to ensure linkages and synergies with other Ramsar instruments, including the framework for describing wetland ecological character, adopted by COP10, to collect and report data and information on listed sites; and
 - d) further consideration of data and information needs related to the description of ecological character at the point of designation (and assessment of potential change thereafter).

17. In view of the significant linkages in the nature of these tasks, they are being undertaken together in an integrated manner so as to harmonize the relevant technical guidances and to avoid – as far as possible – the risk of future changes. Annex 4 provides the rationale and STRP proposals in this regard.

Nomination of STRP members as authors for the upcoming IPCC 5th Assessment Report (AR5)

18. As a high priority, task 6.2 in the STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan, as set out in Resolution X.10 and approved by the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC40), requires STRP to:
 - “iii) establish ways of collaborating with the IPCC on scientific issues specifically related to wetlands and climate change, and contribute to its future work in order to raise the awareness of the climate change community regarding the importance of wetlands, including through the preparation and publication of relevant scientific reports on wetlands and climate change.”
19. A number of relevant products, including scientific reports on wetlands and climate change, are in preparation within the STRP’s Thematic Work Area on climate change (see Annex 3). However, the STRP considers that one of the most effective ways to provide high-quality, relevant wetlands information to ongoing scientific processes related to climate change is to participate as fully as possible in preparation of the 5th Assessment Report of the IPCC. To this end, three nominations for authors have been submitted to IPCC in response to their call for nominations:
 - Prof Max Finlayson of Charles Sturt University, Australia, who is the lead STRP member for wetlands and climate change, has been nominated for IPCC Working Group 2 concerning ecosystem impacts, adaptation and vulnerability;
 - Dr Colin Lloyd of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in Wallingford, UK, who has been working as an STRP Invited Expert on a current STRP task related to the role of wetlands in global carbon storage and carbon cycles, and who has also served as a member of the Danone Fund for Nature Expert Panel, has been nominated for IPCC Working Group 3 concerning mitigation; and
 - Dr Matthew McCartney, who represents the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) on the STRP, has been nominated for IPCC Working Group 2 concerning freshwater impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, and for the Africa chapter.
20. While we cannot guarantee that any of our nominations will be accepted by the IPCC, we appreciate the willingness of the candidates to be nominated by Ramsar, since this requires a very significant commitment of authors’ time and energy during the preparation of an IPCC Assessment Report.
21. Supporting the travel costs for participation of nominated authors in IPCC working group meetings is considered to be a very high priority for the available STRP funding, and we would like to suggest that Standing Committee also consider bringing this to the attention of Parties as a specific area where voluntary contributions would greatly assist this task.

Redevelopment of the STRP Support Service website

22. Over the past two triennia, the intersessional work of the STRP has been greatly facilitated by the Web-based discussion forum mechanism of the STRP Support Service (SuSe). This system was originally developed for the STRP by Wetlands International, and it continues to be hosted by them on their Web servers. STRP15 reviewed the operations and current functionality of the SuSe in relation to its evolving needs, and it concluded that it is now timely to request a full redevelopment of the SuSe system. This should include its redevelopment in proprietary user-friendly software, so as to facilitate its update and maintenance by Secretariat staff.
23. At the STRP mid-term workshops, the Panel again discussed this issue. It was agreed that redevelopment of the Support Service needed also to take into account not only liaison and communication within STRP, but also broader issues of transparency of STRP processes; tracking, review and archival of STRP's scientific documents and products; and more formalized internal and peer review processes.
24. Accordingly, a small working group was established, initially led by the STRP Chair, the STRP Support Officer, and Panel member Ms Rebecca Lee, in order to assess user needs for a redesigned Support Service, review available proprietary software and approaches used in other MEAs and scientific organizations, and report back to STRP16 in 2011 with specific recommendations for design, software and implementation. Design and installation of a redeveloped Support Service should commence during 2011, in order for the system to be fully functional and ready for implementation immediately after COP11, in time for the next STRP to be able to utilize it as soon as its members are appointed.
25. The Support Service is a fundamental aspect of the STRP's operations. To function efficiently requires a service that meets our needs, one that provides adequate transparency and tools for managing STRP's multiple work streams and for managing many different scientific products. While there is no budget required for the preparation of recommendations for redevelopment, we expect that the actual redevelopment and installation will require funding and resources in 2011, as a very high priority, and we invite the Standing Committee to bring this to the attention of Parties as an opportunity for a specific voluntary contribution.

Support for STRP National Focal Points and STRP members for participation in STRP and regional COP11 preparatory meetings

26. In Thematic Work Area 1, led by the STRP Vice-Chair, there has been substantial progress in establishing and strengthening regional networks, including encouraging participation from STRP National Focal Points in STRP processes. At the mid-term workshops, it was emphasized again that participation in meetings of the STRP and in regional meetings is an effective way to build the understanding of, and contributions by, STRP NFPs regarding the Panel's work plan and *modus operandi*, and that this understanding would enable the NFPs to contribute meaningfully both to STRP work and to supporting Ramsar implementation in their own countries. Accordingly the STRP would like to encourage all Contacting Parties to provide support, as far as possible, for their appointed STRP NFPs to participate in regional preparatory meetings and to attend STRP meetings or workshops when this is practical and feasible.

27. A number of technical Draft Resolutions are likely to be submitted for COP11 as a result of the Panel's work during the 2009-2012 cycle. Several of these are technically complex, but are intended to facilitate harmonized reporting and information collection for a number of related Convention implementation processes. At the mid-term meeting, the Panel and the Secretariat's Senior Regional Advisers agreed that it would be very helpful to have at least one STRP member available at each regional COP11 preparatory meeting to work with Contracting Parties and assist them in discussions related to those Draft Resolutions. Currently there is insufficient funding in the STRP core budget to allow any participation in such regional meetings. Hence I would like to invite Standing Committee to consider options for supporting STRP participation in regional meetings, including through encouraging voluntary contributions from Parties.

Dates and venue for the 16th meeting of the STRP

28. At its mid-term workshops the Panel agreed that its 16th meeting should take place in Gland, Switzerland, from Monday 14 to Friday 18 February 2011. In setting these dates, the Panel was mindful of the need to ensure sufficient lead-time for it to complete the final drafting of the products designed for COP11 consideration in time for their submission to the meetings of the Standing Committee in 2011.

Annex 1

Task implementation costs for STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan as revised by STRP's mid-term workshops (February 2010)

A. High Priority tasks

Total estimated cost 2009-2012: CHF 548,700

[excluding task 4.2.1 Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) design & development – see below]

Total additional funds required 2010-2012: CHF 460,700

Of which, total funds required in 2010 for priority task progress: CHF 104,300

Resolution X.10 task	Total 2009-2012 estimated costs (CHF)	Total funds required in 2010-2012 (CHF)	Of which, funds required in 2010 to progress task (CHF)	Comments
STRP Support Service				
Redevelop STRP Support Service web-based discussion forum system in user-friendly software platform	35,600	35,600	200	New website for STRP Europe NFP under trial 2010; full redevelopment anticipated for 2011/2012
TWA1 Regional networking				
1.3 Support and develop STRP NFP networks	40,500	40,500	10,000	CHF 10,250 p.a. for Regional Networking members' participation in relevant meetings; CHF 20,000 in 2011 for STRP NFP's participation in STRP16.
TWA2 Strategic & emerging issues				

2.3 Wetlands and extractive industries - guidance review	27,000	3,000	0	CHF 24,002 provided by the UK covers task implementation during 2009/2010
2.4 Wetlands and energy issues – scoping review	15,000	0	0	CHF 14,980 pledged by the UK covers task implementation in 2010
2.6 Wetlands and poverty eradication – determine scope of guidance, and prepare case studies	20,000	20,000	20,000	Initial phases being delivered through in-kind support; funds needed for workshop and writing consultancy
2.10 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) – continuing review – wildlife diseases	10,000	0	0	Funded from STRP 2009 core funds
3.1 MA response options – further advice	9,000	9,000	0	Finalization of previously funded task
3.2 Wise Use case studies - dissemination	20,000	20,000	0	Finalization of previously funded task
TWA3 inventory, assessment, monitoring, reporting				
4.2 Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS)				
4.2.1 Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) – design & development	[500,000]	[500,000]	0	2010 top priority task. Full costs to be more precisely estimated following further scoping work in 2010
4.2.2 State of the World's Wetlands report, 1 st Ed.	30,000	30,000	0	2011 top priority task, following scoping in 2010
4.3 Ramsar data and information needs – further elaboration	10,000	10,000	5,000	2010 top priority task. Workshops to update COP10 framework, including input from TWA7 Strategic Framework tasks 8.4/4.5/8.3
4.4 Describing ecological character – additional guidance	5,000	5,000	5,000	Funds for consultancy drafting work
4.6 Detecting, reporting and responding to change in ecological character – further guidance (limits of acceptable change)	17,000	17,000	12,000	Funds for consultancy drafting work

4.8, 4.9 & 4.11 Indicators of effectiveness - 1 st & 2 nd tranches	60,000	55,500	10,500	2010 top priority task: funds needed for analysis and writing workshops; CHF 4,500 from Norway contributes to 2010 costs
4.x [new task] Using wetland classifications for Ramsar conservation and wise use implementation	0	0	0	Briefing note for STRP16 to be prepared by Secretariat
TWA4 wetlands and human health				
5.1 Wetlands and human health – advice and guidance:				2010 top priority task; part funded from STRP core for 2009 work
5.1.1 Wetlands and human health <i>RTR</i>	600	600	600	funds needed for peer-review honoraria for finalizing report
5.1.2 Framework for Ramsar/WHO collaboration	0	0	0	Pro bono
5.1.3 Information sheets for wetland managers	5,000	5,000	0	
5.1.4 Case studies promoting wetlands and human health at Ramsar sites	25,000	25,000	5,000	Scoping workshop in 2010; implementation in 2011
5.1.6 Conceptual and systematic approaches to addressing wetland ecosystem health	0	0	0	Concept paper for STRP16, pro bono
5.1.8 Regional information gap analysis	12,000	12,000	0	Planned for 2011
TWA5 wetlands and climate change				
6.1 Wetlands and climate change – further review and updated guidance	5,000	5,000	5,000	2010 top priority task – largely pro bono; funds needed for revision and update of draft wetlands and carbon <i>RTR</i>
6.2 Climate change and wetlands mitigation and adaptation – collaborative activities				
6.2.1 STRP member participation in IPCC AR5 processes	40,000	40,000	6,000	Provisional, pending IPCC experts decisions
6.2.2 review of wetland implications of UNFCCC COP15 outcomes	0	0	0	Pro-bono

TWA6 wetlands and water resource management				
7.3 Wetlands and water quality - guidance	5,000	5,000	5,000	Funds needed for revision and finalization of draft RTR
7.4 Wetlands and water storage interactions – review and guidance	2,000	2,000	2,000	Funds needed for drafting of briefing note for COP11 (now includes aspect of task 8.8)
7.5 Water resources management in dry and sub-humid lands – guidance	30,000	30,000	15,000	Consultancy for review and drafting of guidance
7.7 Ramsar water and wetlands Resolutions – review of consolidation options	15,000	15,000	0	Consultancy for review and STRP briefing note preparation
7.x [new High Priority Task] “Strategy for mainstreaming natural wetland infrastructure into IWRM”	0	0	0	Briefing note to be prepared at STRP16 (2011)
TWA7 Wetlands of International Importance				
8.4 <i>Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance</i> – review and harmonization of Criteria, targets and guidance	15,000	15,000	3,000	Top priority task. Now merged as an 8.4/4.5/8.3 grouped task
8.6 Biogeographic regionalization schemes – availability and further assessment	25,000	25,000	0	Completion of work largely undertaken during the previous triennium
8.7 Assessing under-representation in the Ramsar List – advice on gaps, targets and data and information sources	0	0	0	Not recommended for further work this triennium owing to absence of relevant datasets for assessment
TWA8 Wetland management - restoration, mitigation, compensation				
9.1 Mitigation and compensation for wetland loss – guidance	15,000	0	0	Top priority task. CHF 14,980 provided by the UK covers task implementation in 2010

9.2 Wetland restoration – proposals for updating and expansion of guidance	15,000	0	0	CHF 14,650 provided by Finland covers initial phases of review and testing in planned national and regional workshops; additional funds may be needed to revise guidance in light of initial phases – to be determined at STRP16
TWA9 Wetlands & agriculture				
2.1 Agriculture and wetlands - guidelines	5,000	5,000	0	For STRP participation in GAWI further development
6.3 Biofuels - guidance	5,000	5,000	0	Costings to be further developed; funds needed for STRP participation in Round-table on Sustainable Biofuels
2.2 Agriculture and wetlands assessment	0	0	0	Completion of RTR, funded from previous cycle
TWA10 CEPA				
10.3 Contracting Party training and capacity-building in using Ramsar guidance	15,000 (development only; implementation costs additional)	15,000	0	Process to be further developed at STRP16
10.1 Optimal presentation of Ramsar guidance - further advice	0	0	0	Finalisation of review of Ramsar guidance utility undertaken in previous triennium – pro bono
1.4 CEPA assistance to other TWAs and products	15,000	10,500	0	CHF 4,500 from Norway covers CEPA expert member participation in some STRP writing workshops during 2010

B. Other (lower priority) tasks which will require funding

Total estimated cost 2009-2012: CHF 70,800

Total additional funds required 2010-2012: CHF 70,800

Of which, total funds required in 2010 for priority task progress: CHF 35,800

Resolution X.10 task	Total 2009-2012 estimated costs (CHF)	Total funds required in 2010-2012 (CHF)	Of which, funds required in 2010 to progress task (CHF)	Comments
TWA2: 2.5 economic sector issues - review	[0]	[0]	0	Initial scoping paper in 2010; further costs to be determined in 2011
TWA2: 2.7 Urban/peri-urban wetlands guidance				
2.7.1 Policy paper: Principles for managing urban wetlands	1,800	1,800	1,800	Funds needed for policy paper further drafting
2.7.2 Guidance on wetlands in UN-HABITAT Sustainable Cities process	23,000	23,000	8,000	Funds needed for drafting and review workshops
TWA2: 2.9 wetlands & tourism - scoping review	6,000	6,000	6,000	Funds needed for consultancy review
TWA2: 2.11 waterbird flyways initiatives - knowledge sharing	30,000	30,000	15,000	Approx. CHF 50,000 anticipated as available from Korea for hosting 2010 workshop; additional funds needed for workshop participation, and editing and publication of report
TWA2: 2.12 invasives & wetlands guidance	10,000	10,000	5,000	In-kind support from GISP; some further funds anticipated as needed for review and drafting of guidance for wetland managers

Annex 2

Mid-term workshops of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)

22-26 February 2010

Draft Summary Report

Notes

1. Owing to the short interval between the STRP mid-term workshops and the issuing of documents for the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee, this version of the report is a draft which is currently undergoing consultation with STRP mid-term workshop participants. Following this consultation, a final version of the report will be posted on the STRP page of the Ramsar website [references to annexes that will be part of the final report do not appear in this draft].
2. From 19-21 February 2010 a number of pre-session invited workshops took place to advance the work under some of STRP's specific 2009-2012 tasks. Their outcomes were reported to the mid-term workshops and are also reflected into the updated STRP Work Plan. These pre-session workshops were devoted to the following tasks: Task 2.7 Urban Wetlands; Tasks 4.2 and 4.1 Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) and status of inventories; Task 6.1 wetlands and carbon; Task 2.6 wetlands and poverty eradication; and Tasks 4.8/4.9 Indicators of the effectiveness of the Convention.
3. In order to maintain the efficiency of the meeting, the order in which later agenda items and sub-items were taken in plenary differs from the sequential number of agenda items.

Monday, 22 February 2010

1. **Welcome, introductions and summary of what is to be achieved in the week**
 1. **Heather MacKay, STRP Chair**, welcomed all participants: appointed members, International Organization Partners (IOPs) members, invited experts and representatives of Observer Organizations, thanked the Panel for the work done and achievements made since the meeting of STRP15 last year, and explained that the major focus of STRP 2010 mid-term workshops will be to advance as far as possible ongoing priority tasks and to identify future priorities.
 2. **Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General (DSG)**, welcomed everybody and extended greetings on behalf of the Ramsar Secretary General, Anada Tiéga, who was unable to attend the STRP workshops owing to other commitments. He also thanked the Star Alliance "Biosphere Connections" initiative for providing air tickets for some invited experts. He reported that the following invited experts, International Organization Partners and Observer organizations could not attend STRP midterm workshops and had sent their apologies: Andrej Sirin, Ernesto Briones, Kassim Kulindwa, Ebenizário Chonguiça, Sang-Don Lee and Lucy Emerton (STRP Inited experts), Glenn Guntenspergen (U.S. Geological Survey), Frederik Schutyser (European Environment Agency), Anne Larigauderie (DIVERSITAS), BirdLife International, and Observer

Organizations: FAO, Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), UNEP/AEWA Secretariat African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, Global Water Partnership (GWP), UNESCO-IHE, GEF-STAP and Secretariat of CITES.

2. Adoption of agenda

3. An annotated agenda with web-links of working documents and background documents to support discussions at the parallel sessions was prepared and circulated to all participants prior the meeting.
4. A minor adjustment was proposed to the draft agenda, which was then adopted.

3. Report from each Thematic Work Area (TWA) lead on progress to date and priorities for the mid-term sessions

5. The **STRP Chair** invited the ten TWA leads and task leads to: i) provide a list of likely products for this triennium, including potential Draft Resolutions (DRs) for COP11; ii) identify additional work and resources needed to complete products for this triennium; iii) identify any work that can be done without additional resources; iv) highlight key messages and issues for STRP's report to Standing Committee 41 in April/May 2010; and v) update the Work Plan task pro-formas and send the list of any working or reference documents tabled during the week to Monica Zavagli, STRP Support Officer.
6. The **STRP Chair** explained that the updated task pro-formas will form the basis of the revised version of STRP 2009-2012 Work Plan that will be submitted to the Standing Committee's 41st meeting with the STRP Chair's report.
7. The following ten Thematic Work Area leads provided short updates on the progresses made since STRP15 (March 2009):

TWA1: Regional networking (**Rebecca D'Cruz** – Vice-Chair)

TWA2: Strategic, emerging & ongoing issues -including general wise use of wetlands (**Heather MacKay** – STRP Chair)

TWA3: Wetland inventory, assessment, monitoring and reporting - including indicators (**Dave Pritchard**)

TWA4: Wetlands and human health (**Pierre Horwitz**)

TWA5: Wetlands and climate change (**Max Finlayson**)

TWA6: Wetlands and water resources management (**Mike Acreman**)

TWA7: Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) (**David Stroud**)

TWA8: Wetland management – restoration, mitigation, compensation (**Kevin Erwin**)

TWA9: Wetlands and agriculture (**George Lukacs**)

TWA10: CEPA (**Christine Prietto**)

8. Some remarks and comments were made during the individual presentations and taken up subsequently in the relevant TWA parallel workshop sessions.
9. **Tobias Salathe, Senior Adviser for Europe**, commenting on the proposals for possible changes to the current Ramsar Information Sheet, i) reminded the Panel that the person who fills in the RIS is often not a native English, Spanish or French speaker, ii) suggested that the RIS be considered as a “rolling document” that should be updated by the

Contracting Parties and sent to the Ramsar Secretariat every time there is a change in the Ramsar site and not only every six years, and iii) noted that the *Strategic Framework for Ramsar site* designation and other guidelines for filling-in the RIS are confusing and not easy to use, partly because the same concepts and information are repeated more than once in different pieces of the guidances.

10. **The DSG** advised that before the end of the meeting he would provide the Panel with an update on funds available and that the Panel will have to decide where to allocate these resources for the progress of some of the priority tasks. He thanked Finland, Norway, Tanzania and the United Kingdom for their voluntary contributions and requested everybody to indicate any other possible source to fund STRP activities.
11. **The DSG** also provided a summary of the process and timelines for STRP's work leading up to COP11 in 2012, including the anticipated schedule of Standing Committee and preparatory meetings, likely dates for the STRP16 meeting, and procedures for preparation, review and discussion of draft resolutions or other products/tasks which have COP-associated deliverables. He reminded the Panel that there is a set of different timelines for the different STRP products that will go to COP11 and that essentially there is about one year to produce near-final products for COP11
12. TWA leads were reminded that before deciding to prepare new guidance it would be advisable to consider how to better consolidate existing guidance and to carefully examine the need for new guidance materials, in relation particularly to who would use them.

4. Parallel Sessions

13. Participants worked in parallel TWA and task working groups. Outcomes and recommendations are reported under later agenda items, and are reflected in the updated STRP draft Work Plan 2009-2012 (DOC. SC41-26 Add. 1).

5. Evening session – urban wetlands

14. **Rob McInnes**, task lead for task 2.7 on the management of urban and peri-urban wetlands, provided an update of the outcomes of the two day pre-session workshop hosted at the Ramsar Secretariat on 19/20 February. The workshop is part of an ongoing collaborative effort initiated in 2009 between STRP/Ramsar and UN-HABITAT to develop shared guidance for managing urban wetlands. See [here](#) the link to presentation, and refer to task 2.7 in the updated STRP Work Plan for a summary of outcomes of the pre-session workshop.

Tuesday, 23 February 2010

6. General announcements; any schedule changes requested; confirmation of programme for the day

15. No changes were made to the proposed schedule for the day.

7 & 8. Parallel Sessions

16. Participants worked in parallel TWA and task working groups. Outcomes and recommendations are reported under later agenda items, and are reflected in the updated STRP draft work plan 2009-2012 (DOC. SC41-26 Add. 1).

9. Review of progress and assignment of any additional small group sessions needed

17. Participants briefly met in plenary at the end of the afternoon session to review progress. No requests for additional sessions were made.

10. Evening session – transboundary wetland management

18. **Roy Gardner**, task lead for Task 8.9 on transboundary Ramsar sites and wetlands, provided a brief introduction of the task and explained that the work being done so far was conducted thanks to the help of a group of international environmental law students of Stetson University in Florida. The students, in videoconference with the STRP, then presented some of their findings so far on different aspects of a number of case studies on officially and non-officially designated Transboundary Ramsar Sites, illustrating the diversity of site management practices and providing the opportunity to discuss with the Panel their experience and difficulties encountered during the project work. In all case studies, the involvement of NGOs seems to be helpful to good management practices. See also plenary agenda item 15.14.
19. The **Panel** extended its appreciation to Prof Gardner and the great contribution of his students.

Wednesday, 24 February 2010

11. General announcements; any schedule changes requested; confirmation of programme for the day

20. At the beginning of the day the participants met in Plenary to agree on the plan of the day. No changes were proposed.

12 and 13. Parallel Sessions

21. Participants worked in parallel TWA and task working groups. Outcomes and recommendations are reported under later agenda items, and are reflected in the updated STRP draft work plan 2009-2012 (DOC. SC41-26 Add. 1).

14. Evening Session – Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS)

22. **Max Finlayson**, task lead for task 4.1 on developing a Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS), provided an overview of the outcomes that emerged from the working group discussion held on 20 February. He explained that the outlines of a G-WOS concept (or GWO – Global Wetland Outlook) have been identified, but that there is the need to optimise the partnership links with other wetland observation initiatives and processes such as the GEO-BON, the Mediterranean Wetland Observatory, the European Space Agency's GlobWetland-II, the Living Planet Index, Red Lists, etc., in order to generate interest and collaboration in developing a global wetland (inland and coastal) observation

system. Some key issues such as governance and data management should be tackled in the very early stage of the concept development.

23. **Prof Finlayson** also reported that the working group had recognised the value and need to produce a Ramsar Convention State of the World's Wetlands and their services to people (SoWW) report as "the Convention's flagship publication presenting comprehensive and objective information and analysis on the current global state of coastal and inland wetlands and their capacity to continue to deliver major benefits to people". See also agenda item 15.10 and task 4.1 in the updated Work Plan.
24. **Mark Paganini (European Space Agency)** presented key objectives, activities and expected outputs from the recently initiated GlobWetland-II project in the Mediterranean region. The presentation was followed by a general discussion on ways forward for further collaboration in relation to inventory and assessment.
25. The **STRP Chair**, on behalf of the STRP, thanked Marc Paganini for ESA's continuing significant support to the Convention.

Thursday, 25 February 2010

26. An issue arising in several STRP workshop sessions was what is meant precisely by the term "wetland manager". To address this further, at the start of the plenary session **Christine Prietto** (TWA 10 Lead: Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness) asked each participant to draw an image of a "wetland manager". The drawings were then grouped into categories based on similarities and displayed on the wall. The exercise confirmed that there is a wide range of perceptions as to who is a "wetland manager" and that there is no single definition of a "wetland manager"; rather the term covers people with very different types of role in wetland management, from those with direct hands-on work in the field for a wetland, to others who are more office-based with broader, strategic management responsibility for a wetland.
27. Thus when STRP products are being designed to support the work of "wetland managers", the Panel needs to be clear about for what types of such managers, within this broad category of users, its materials are being prepared.

13. Timelines for delivery of products for COP11

28. The **DSG** showed a chart representing the COP11 cycle to provide indicative timelines for submission of the different STRP products in relation to the likely timing of COP11 (provisionally April 2012), noting in particular that for:
 - i) ***Draft Resolutions (including any annexed guidance for Parties)*** -- these should be ready by January 2011 for review and sign-off at STRP16 (February 2011) and be finalised by mid-April 2011 for SC42 consideration (provisionally in May/June 2011). September 2011 would be the last chance to submit COP11 DRs for consideration by Standing Committee, presuming that as in previous cycles it (or its COP11 Subgroup) would hold a second meeting in 2011 (potentially in October/November 2011).

- ii) ***COP11 Information Papers (COP11 DOCs)*** -- the timing is a bit more flexible because these documents do not need to be provided to Standing Committee. If an Information Paper provides background or the rationale for a Draft Resolution, it should be made available at the time all official COP11 documents are issued by the Secretariat three months prior to COP11 (i.e., in January 2011). Other COP11 Information Papers could reach the Secretariat not later than about one month before COP11.
- iii) ***Ramsar Technical Reports (RTRs)*** -- if they need to be available by the time of COP11, given the limited Secretariat capacity and its focus on COP11 document preparation during 2011, the final draft texts of such RTRs, following peer review, should be received by the Secretariat by the end of summer 2010.

Action STRP-MT-1: the **DSG** will post the full list of timelines for STRP document completion on the STRP Support Service.

- 29. The **DSG** also strongly reminded all STRP members not to put any formatting in draft electronic documents and to keep them as simple as possible. It will be the Secretariat's task to subsequently take care of the document formatting and layout. **Sandra Hails (CEPA Officer)** stressed that it is also important that figures are provided in rough formats and that diagrams should be kept separate from text for ease when translating documents.

Action STRP-MT-2: the **Secretariat** will provide instructions for document preparation concerning layout and formats.

- 30. **María Rivera (Senior Adviser for the Americas)** noted that it would be important to have DRs and guidelines available for discussion during the pre-COP Regional Meetings. These meetings take place normally about eight to six months before the COP and that therefore all the relevant DRs and other info documents should be made accessible by that time.
- 31. The **STRP Chair** asked all STRP members to take in consideration the pre-COP regional meetings process in the STRP COP11 planning and that, if resources allow, some of the key STRP people would be requested to participate in the Regional Meetings to assist the regional teams in the technical resolution discussions.
- 32. The **DSG** supported the proposal to ensure STRP participation at the Regional Meetings, indicating that they could be the Regional Networkers and/or some of the key TWA or Task Leads.
- 33. **María Rivera** asked if the STRP has a budget line for participation of STRP in Regional Meetings. The **DSG** explained that STRP budget does not have funds to allocate for participation at these meetings, and he urged the Senior Regional Advisers to include STRP cost participation into their meeting budgets for fundraising purposes.
- 34. The **DSG** reminded the meeting that whilst the Secretariat strives to have COP DRs available for the pre-COP regional meetings, an issue that has come up in previous triennia, there is a well-established Secretariat process and timelines for preparing and issuing COP documents. Thus there is a dilemma, in terms of the Secretariat capacity

efficiently to prepare the COP materials and at the same time be able to make all such documents available for preparatory meetings. This is particularly so if it is decided to hold a regional preparatory meeting a long time in advance of the COP, as has happened in the past, and he noted that the final versions of some DRs will not be available until after the Standing Committee has approved them at its last pre-COP meeting (likely to be in about October/November 2011).

35. The **DSG** urged that the STRP, resources permitting, seek to ensure that any substantive DRs and guidances it is preparing for COP11 are available in time for their submission to the 32nd meeting of the Standing Committee so that they will also be available to as many regional preparatory meetings as possible. He also urged the Secretariat's Senior Regional Advisors to take into account these timelines when identifying the most appropriate timing for regional COP11 preparatory meetings – he observed that it could be anticipated that a number of COP11 DRs would be issued one month prior to SC42 (i.e., around April 2011), with the second and final tranche being issued one month prior to the subsequent SC43 or COP11 Subgroup meeting (i.e., most likely in about September 2011). It should also be noted that any Contracting Party or Parties from a region wishing to prepare and submit a COP11 DR must do so not later than 60 days prior to that meeting.

Action STRP-MT-3: Christine Prietto to include the need for STRP participation in regional meetings, and STRP NFPs participation in STRP meetings, in the recommendations for STRP's involvement in COP11.

Decision STRP-MT-1: Rebecca D'Cruz and Christine Prietto will prepare, in collaboration with the Secretariat, a strategy for STRP engagement in preparation of, and participation in, the Regional COP11 Preparatory Meetings.

14. Dates and venue of STRP16

36. The **DSG** proposed to the participants three different date options for STRP16 in 2011, taking into account the time necessary to finalize products for submission to Standing Committee and COP11. Following identification of a number of STRP member availability considerations, it was agreed to hold STRP16 in Gland, Switzerland from **14-18 February 2011**.

15. TWAs & task groups: report-back on progress, planned deliverables, resources needed, issues arising and future plans and needs

37. The **STRP Chair** reminded all TWA Leads to clearly indicate for each task what deliverables are expected, their mechanisms and timelines for delivery, and the resources needed for their completion.
38. **Rebecca D'Cruz (STRP Vice-Chair)** requested all task leads to remember to include in their pro-forma any specific request that requires input from STRP National Focal Points (NFPs). The six STRP Regional Networkers will then liaise with the STRP NFPs in their region to coordinate responses.

15.2 Wetlands and water resource management

39. **Mike Acreman** reported back on TWA6: Wetlands and water resources management (MA), with particular focus on the progress made during its workshop session with Task 7.4 wetland and water storage interactions (see the presentation [here](#)). He explained that there are fundamentally three options with very different cost implications to implement the task: 1) prepare an STRP briefing note on current and emerging global policies related to water storage and dams, 2) prepare guidance/resolution directly from existing technical reports, or (3) produce a new Ramsar Technical Report on storage and then prepare guidance.
40. **Mike Acreman** advised that the task group had already started working to develop option 1, considering background information, drivers for new policy, key concepts, specific policies, and Ramsar policy. He also drew the attention to the increasing interest around the world in dam construction, alternatives for water storage, and the role of water storage in climate change adaptation strategies.
41. **Sandra Hails** pointed out that at COP8 the dams issue was contentious and wondered if a Draft Resolution (DR) on this issue for COP11 would be appropriate.
42. The **DSG** indicated that if the Panel considers that this issue is important and warrants updated attention in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies then the option of taking it further as a DR, or alternatively as a COP Information Paper to brief Parties on the issue, should be considered.
43. **Dave Pritchard (TWA3 Lead)** asked whether the proposed briefing note is meant to be a review of where things stand or to suggest a different Ramsar perspective. **Laurent Chazee (Tour du Valat)** asked whether the water storage issue will be analysed under an energy supply angle. **Mike Acreman** responded that it will be considered under a generic water storage infrastructure perspective.
44. **Archana Chatterjee (WWF India)** advised that WWF could help as it is already working on water storage issues, particularly in the the Waza-Logone wetland in Africa. **Philippe Gerbeaux (STRP Regional Networker for Oceania)** asked if economic aspects will be considered in the analysis of water storage as natural infrastructure. **Lew Young (Senior Adviser for Asia-Oceania)** requested the group to take into account the role of artificial lakes as water storage reservoirs.
45. **The DSG** advised to continue identifying the source of issues that should be included into the information or briefing document.

Decision STRP-MT-2: TWA6 is requested to prepare a 4-5 page briefing paper so as to inform the Panel on the water storage issues, and to seek further inputs to the draft note through its STRP Support Service posting, in order to help decide in advance of STRP16 whether a COP11 DR and/or guidance would be needed.

Action STRP-MT-4: **Mike Acreman and Matthew McCartney** will prepare a draft STRP briefing note on current and emerging policies related to water storage, particularly in the light of climate change adaptation policies, and provide some insights on the implications for wetlands, as well as some recommendations for how this issue might be taken forward by STRP.

46. Concerning a way forward to implement task 7.5 on water resources management in dry and sub-humid lands, **Mike Acreman** proposed a number of options, including seeking collaboration with other influential organizations presently active in this field, such as the Arab League, by holding a workshop on wetlands and water management in arid and semi-arid zones.
 47. The **DSG** noted that the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Chair of its scientific subsidiary body are invited as observers to the STRP and that this issue would be a good opportunity to build a partnership with UNCCD and its processes. The STRP should continue to explore potential deliverables for this task that could be relevant also to other conventions, and it should explore how there might be an opportunity for a multiple-convention product, particularly in relation to the CBD's programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands.
 48. **Peter Herkenrath (UNEP-WCMC)** recalled that UNCCD had hosted a workshop on similar topics back in 2004 and that it might be worthwhile to find the report of that meeting.
 49. **Lew Young (Senior Adviser for Asia-Oceania)** noted that at the meeting with the Arab League last year there were a number of potential organizations that might be interested in providing funds for such workshops on this topic. He offered to help liaising with them once a proposal is ready.
- Action STRP-MT-5:** **Mike Acreman** will prepare a draft proposal for a task 7.5 workshop and request the Secretariat to work with the Arab League and other African-Asian organizations to help in obtaining the funds.
50. For Task 7.3 on guidance on wetlands and water quality, **Mike Acreman** stressed the need to identify some funds to revise and complete the draft Ramsar Technical Report prepared last triennium, and he noted that the report should also address other issues such as agriculture and water quality.
 51. **Dave Pritchard** pointed out the relationship between water quality issues and the further guidance on describing wetland ecological character work under TWA3.
 52. The **STRP Chair** supported the proposal to make an effort to find the missing funds to take forward the technical report on wetlands and water quality, which remains in early draft form.
 53. Regarding Task 7.7a - review of strategy for engaging in the global water debate - **Christine Prietto** reminded the Panel that there is a need to very clearly define the target audience. The **STRP Chair** pointed out that we should identify which of those organizations in each sector is considered important enough to engage with, and we should allocate resources for this if we consider it necessary. **Denis Landenbergue (WWF International)** urged Ramsar to have a dedicated person to follow water fora in a more systematic way to make sure that Ramsar views are regularly heard at this type of events.
 54. The **STRP Chair** proposed that, considering the current availability of funds, the best option would be to go ahead with a preliminary brainstorming session within STRP,

facilitated by Christine Prietto, to explore an appropriate strategy for STRP engagement in international water sector processes.

55. For the implementation of task 7.7b to review and recommend consolidation, updating and retirement of water-related Resolutions, the **Panel** agreed that only an expert with thorough knowledge of Ramsar Resolutions and processes could undertake this job and recommended that this should be undertaken by **Dave Pritchard**. The consolidation of water-related Resolutions could be an example of how to consolidate a series of previous decisions and Resolutions related to a specific theme, as suggested in the earlier review prepared by Dave Pritchard in response to Resolution IX.17.
56. The **STRP Chair** also noted that having a unique DR that brings together all the water-related Resolutions and retires the old ones will make life much easier for the Contracting Parties. We should see if extra resources can be found to proceed with this task, but she noted that at COP10 the Parties agreed that the consolidation of water Resolutions and decisions should only be considered for COP12. **Dave Pritchard** recalled that to retire old Resolutions there is the “superseded” option, and noted also that STRP should consider the cost-benefit effectiveness of such procedures when proposing this task.
57. **Denis Landenbergue (WWF)** supported the proposal of having only one “water-related” Resolution, stressing that not only the Contracting Parties’ Focal Points will benefit from it, but that it will be also a much better and effective tool for other people to speak to the water sector. **Sandra Hails** also welcomed this idea, and recalled that a similar exercise was done for COP10 with the River Basin Management Guidelines consolidated by Heather MacKay. This type of approach is the most useful from an end-user point of view.
58. The **DSG** recalled the recent compilation of key messages and issues from Ramsar decisions in the Climate Change Briefing Note prepared last year for Ramsar Contracting Parties for preparation for the UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen. This is a simple approach that does not require any interpretation, just collation and categorizing of key elements of previous decisions and Resolutions, and it could be a useful model to consider for other thematic areas for which there are several Ramsar COP decisions.

Action STRP-MT- 6: The **STRP Chair** will consider how best to take forwards proposals for such consolidations to SC41, with reference to Resolution IX.17 on the Review of the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

59. Following the report on TWA6 lower priority tasks it was suggested to use the Environmental Flow Network (e-FlowNet) to pull together a bibliography of existing recent work in environmental requirements for non-riverine inland wetlands.

Action STRP-MT-7: **Mike Acreman and Stefano Barchiesi** (IUCN) to produce the annotated bibliography of existing/recent work on water needs of non-riverine wetlands.

15.4 Wetlands and human health

60. **Pierre Horwitz** reported on TWA4 - Wetlands and Human Health - and the status of the draft Ramsar Technical Report, being prepared with input from the WHO. He highlighted the need for producing a detailed report as well as a standalone key messages summary. He

requested the STRP to provide him with feedback on what else STRP has been producing that should be taken up by the Health TWA in the Report, whether the proposed draft key messages suffice on their own, and if the document is fit for purpose for the audience STRP is dealing with, as it has been designed for primary use by the wetland community, including wetland managers.

61. He also informed participants about the two possible levels of engagement with WHO for the report review process: i) to have a joint Ramsar/WHO publication, which could take up to eighteen months to go through the full WHO review process, or ii) a co-badged report, possibly with a foreword from WHO, which would take less time in the review and acceptance process. The **STRP Chair** noted that STRP would be grateful if WHO would help expedite any necessary administrative procedures to ensure that the report can be ready for COP11.
62. **Max Finlayson** reported that there is also a proposal to use the report as the basis of preparing a book on wetlands and human health. Although this would be external to STRP processes, it would be complementary to STRP work.

Decision STRP-MT-3: In addition to the co-badging option for the Wetlands and Human Health report, the Ramsar Secretariat and STRP lead human health member should discuss more formal collaboration with the WHO, possibly leading to a Memorandum of Understanding.

Decision STRP-MT-4: Mike Acreman, Ritesh Kumar, Rob McInnes, Kevin Erwin and Dave Pritchard should provide comments on Pierre's report with relevance to their STRP areas of work, by mid-April 2010; Pierre Horwitz to identify possible external peer reviewers and ask them whether they are willing to review the report.

Decision STRP-MT-5: The section of the Wetlands and Human Health report which deals with wildlife diseases will consider only zoonotic diseases where humans are accidental hosts and not where human are the main reservoirs of the disease.

Decision STRP-MT-6: For task 5.1 output 8 (regional information gap analysis) the approach for identifying potential regional data sources should be the similar to that developed by Dave Pritchard for task 4.3 on Ramsar data and information needs.

15.5 TWA2: Ongoing and emerging issues

15.5.1 task 2.7 Urban wetlands

63. **Rob McInnes**, lead for task 2.7 on guidance for planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands, provided an update of progress since the writing workshop with experts from UN-HABITAT, held immediately before the mid-term workshops. Two priority products were identified: 1) a policy paper setting out the overarching principles, and 2) a range of multiple programmes/products to be integrated into UN-HABITAT processes. For this second output the UN-HABITAT partners will give direction as to what kinds of products are needed on wetlands. **Rob McInnes** noted that a wetland restoration guidance component for urban wetlands should be linked to any further work on wetland restoration guidance, and that scoping work for developing the guidance (design, scope, form) should be carried out during 2010. Once the guidance is ready it

should be tested to identify potential gaps or inconsistencies. A work plan leading up to COP11 and beyond will be developed. Funds are available only for this year, but there is the intention of submitting a draft resolution to the governing council of the UN-HABITAT, which may also facilitate bringing in other funds for the finalization of the guidance.

64. The **STRP Chair** noted that the guidance could also become a Ramsar Handbook.
65. **The DSG** suggested that the work that has been done so far for this task could also form a good information paper or a very simple DR to COP11. To have the same resolution adopted by the UN-Habitat Governing Council would be even more significant, and we should identify what their entry points are for the range of different products.
66. **Peter Herkenrath** suggested linking into the network of the global partnership on sustainable cities and biodiversity and a range of different fora. The **DSG** recalled that the CBD COP in Nagoya could provide good linkages and opportunities for seeking additional funds, and that there will be a cities and biodiversity summit associated with the COP.

15.5.2 task 2.6 Wetlands and poverty eradication

67. **Ritesh Kumar (Wetlands International)**, lead for task 2.6, highlighted the multi-dimensional concept of poverty and noted that often the livelihood aspect is missing in dealing with poverty and ecosystem services from wetlands. Wetland ecosystem services, although forming part of natural capital, also contribute to other forms of livelihood capitals to various degrees. He explained the conceptual model developed by the task group which demonstrates the inter-linkages between wetlands and poverty eradication/alleviation through the ways wetland ecosystem services support the well-being of the poor and how the characteristics of poverty alleviation/ eradication actions influence wetland ecological character and ecosystem services. He also provided indications for expected deliverables to COP11. (See the presentation [here](#).)
68. **Dave Pritchard** suggested that the model presented by Ritesh could be applicable to the development of a “Global Wetland Outlook” being proposed for task 4.2 as part of the outputs of a Global Wetlands Observing System. **Montserrat Carbonell (STRP Regional Networker for the Neotropics)** asked how the tasks on poverty eradication, urban wetlands and human health are related. **Ritesh Kumar** indicated that the three task leads have closely worked together and considered common aspects. **David Stroud** noted that it would be significant to identify at least one case study which shows the linkages between health and poverty and urban issues at the same time.

16.3: task 2.5 Economic sector review & relevance for wetlands

69. **Ritesh Kumar** reported back on the progress with task 2.5 on a review of economic sector issues for wetlands. He explained that the approach being used was to consider each sector and look at which wetland services could be of particular interest, e.g. shoreline protection is relevant to the insurance sector. The aim is to build business cases for investing into wetland conservation and wise use. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) initiative provides many examples of the global economic benefits of biodiversity and is highlighting the growing costs of biodiversity loss and ecosystem

degradation. Although wetland examples are many in the TEEB materials, the wetland thread through these is very fragmented. He advised that Ramsar /STRP should engage more with TEEB.

70. The **STRP Chair** noted that in STRP's view it would be very helpful to see an economic synthesis of wetlands coming out of the TEEB report.

Action STRP-MT-8: Ritesh Kumar to engage with TEEB on behalf of STRP; to write an information paper for the TEEB report to try to consolidate the wetland concept and examples and to track that process; and to report back to STRP16.

15.5.3: task 2.3 Extractive industries

71. **Heather MacKay, STRP Chair**, provided a summary of the progress with the two sub-tasks of task 2.3 on extractive industries. She gave a demonstration of the pilot desk study done for the Africa: the prototype overlays GIS files for wetland distribution from data from the Ramsar Site Information Service (RSIS), flyways (from BirdLife's IBA database), and data of mining activities. This low-cost methodology allows identification of which wetlands are co-located in watersheds with mining "hotspots" and therefore are most likely to be vulnerable. The tool could be used by Contracting Parties for decision-making processes and to trigger future investigation, inventory and baseline studies; the same exercise could be applied for other regions. A Ramsar Technical Report for low cost flyway-scale methodology for identifying wetlands likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of extractive industries is one of the planned deliverables for this task.
72. The **STRP Chair** also requested the Regional Network members to help identifying sources of data on mining activities and particularly Stanley Liphadzi, Network member for Africa, to help target two or three specific countries to get further information.
73. **Denis Landenbergue (WWF)** recalled that the report of the recent Ramsar Advisory Mission no. 62 on the Marromeu Complex in Mozambique already contains much useful information.
74. In relation to sub-task 2- review of available technical guidance for assessing, avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands in the exploration, development, operation, closure and post-closure phases - the **STRP Chair** provided a summary of the methodologies used for identifying the guidelines. She also stressed the difficulties encountered in finding available existing guidance for gas and oil and from Russia and China.
75. The **STRP Chair** requested all participants to continue helping in providing case studies on extractive industries, also through the use of the network of the Ramsar STRP National Focal Points.
76. **María Rivera (Senior Adviser for the Americas)** urged that the Ramsar Technical Report cover key relevant issues such as the need to undertake impact assessments, a big issue particularly in South America. The **STRP Chair** confirmed that the report will address who should do such assessments and at what scale and level.

77. **Dave Pritchard** recalled that Ramsar already has potential good case studies on extractive industries that could be obtained through a review and digest of the 63 Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAM) from 1988. The **DSG** noted that this is a possible further task that needs to be flagged up in the pro-forma for this task. **David Stroud** suggested that mapping of the RAMs through a thematic area matrix could be a useful student project. **Dave Pritchard** offered to do a first listing of the topics of each RAM to get this process started.

Action STRP-MT-9: **Dave Pritchard** to lead on preparing a concept note for mapping of RAMs as a source of thematic case studies.

15.5.4: task 2.4 Wetlands & energy issues

78. The **STRP Chair** reported back on task 2.4, advising that this task will be initiated in 2010 and that an energy expert will be identified and contracted to prepare an initial sector trends review. This will be followed by a writing group or workshop with wetlands people to prepare a STRP briefing note to support a possible Draft Resolution for COP11.

15.5.5: task 2.12 Invasive species, wildlife diseases

79. **David Stroud**, lead for task 2.12 on invasive species and wildlife diseases, explained that we should clarify how we want to add value to other international processes already focusing on these issues. Collaboration with the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) could be a way forward and discussions in the coming weeks could be reflected in a possible DR for COP11.
80. **Sarah Simons (GISP Director)** explained that GISP finally has the capacity to take up new work and to re-engage with Ramsar on invasive species, and she said that they are keen to progress the work as soon as possible. She offered to prepare a briefing note in the next month and indicated that GISP would be willing to give Ramsar as much staff time as possible to complete the task.
81. The **Ramsar Secretariat and STRP** extended their appreciation to the GISP for their offer of help. **David Stroud** asked whether anybody else from the STRP participants has time to engage in the task.
82. The **DSG** provided a brief history of the background of the issue of wetlands and invasive species, recalling that work on preparation of a guide to invasive species guidance for wetlands managers had been done by STRP in the early 2000s, but for political reasons that guidance was not transmitted to COP8. Nevertheless that draft material could be a good starting point for review and updating. **Philippe Gerbeaux (Regional Networker for Oceania)** noted that GISP database already provides a good reference source for future work on this task.

Decision STRP-MT-7: The early 2000s STRP draft guidance document on wetlands and invasive species should be revisited to assess opportunities and needs for updates, changes and new issues to be included; this should then be provided in the form of an STRP briefing note or a possible DR.

15.5.6: Tasks 3.1 (MA responses), 3.2 (Wise use case studies) and 2.8 (Fisheries)

83. **Rebecca D’Cruz (STRP Vice-Chair)**, lead for task 3.2 on MA responses, advised that a draft information paper will be ready by the end of May 2010, without any additional financial implications.
84. **Randy Milton (STRP Regional Networker for North America)**, lead for task 3.2 on wise use case studies, advised that a draft Ramsar Technical Report is currently under review and will be finalized before COP11.
85. **Monica Zavagli (Scientific & Technical Support Officer)**, lead for task 2.8 on Ramsar sites and fisheries, advised that the Ramsar Technical Report will be finalized for peer review at the end of April 2010.

15.7 TWA5: Wetlands and climate change

86. **Max Finlayson (Lead for TWA5 on Climate Change)** reported on the progress made for tasks 6.1 on further review of guidance for wetlands and climate change and 6.2 on collaborative activities for climate change mitigation and compensation. He also summarized the progress and outcomes of the wetlands and carbon workshop held on 21 February 2010, explaining that the working group has already begun drafting a review paper on carbon storage in different wetland types, including addressing common misconceptions about wetlands and carbon. It is hoped that this will be published by September 2010 and can form input to the upcoming work of preparing IPCC’s 5th Assessment Report (AR5).
87. Concerning task 6.2, it was considered that an effective input mechanism for collaboration would be through the nomination by Ramsar Secretariat of wetland experts to participate as authors in the AR5. **Max Finlayson** proposed to establish an additional activity to investigate the development of new opportunities. He also highlighted that the cost for participation by any individuals nominated as authors for the IPCC 5th Assessment Report meetings would need to be borne by the Secretariat.
88. **Sasha Alexander (SER International)** suggested that it could be useful if SERI lobbied the REDD process to encourage its inclusion of mangroves as forests and critical for carbon sequestration.

Action STRP-MT-10: Max Finlayson, the STRP Chair, the DSG and Anada Tiega (SG) to consider further how to advance task 6.2 (i) “Establish ways and means of collaborating with UNFCCC and other relevant bodies to develop guidance for the development of mutually supportive adaptation and mitigation programs that recognise the critical role of wetlands in relation to water, food security and human health” so as to find ways to engage better with UNFCCC and other relevant bodies.

Action STRP-MT-11: Max Finlayson to engage with the World Bank (in follow up to the recently signed Ramsar/World Bank Memorandum of Understanding) in developing common priority implementation areas.

Action STRP-MT-12: Max Finlayson and Monica Zavagli to work on the Ramsar Secretariat nominations for IPCC 5AR before the deadline of 12 March 2010; the STRP Chair to report back to SC41 requesting Contracting Parties to provide financial support to the STRP-nominated members to IPCC to attend the meetings, if appointed.

15.3 TWA9: Wetlands and agriculture

89. **George Lukacs (Lead for TWA9 on wetlands and agriculture)** informed that after this meeting he will continue negotiating with FAO to develop a Strategic Scientific Framework and Investment Plan that can further the development of guidance related to good agricultural-wetland practices.

15.14 TWA7 task 8.9: Transboundary Ramsar sites and wetlands

90. **Roy Gardner (STRP invited expert)**, lead for task 8.9 on management of Transboundary Ramsar sites – review of case studies, noted that the task asks to summarise the existing range of flexible options regarding the designation and management of formally confirmed Transboundary Ramsar Sites; reported a first Technical Meeting on Transboundary Ramsar Sites, which was attended by Tobias Salathe from 29-30 January 2010 in Strasbourg; and said that a group of his international environmental law students from Stetson University is drafting a number of case studies from which an information paper will be produced for consideration at STRP16.
91. The **STRP** recognised with appreciation the contributions being made to furthering this topic by Roy Gardner and his students.

15.8 TWA3: tasks 4.8 and 4.9 Indicators of effectiveness

92. **Dave Pritchard (Lead for TWA3 on wetland inventory, assessment, monitoring and reporting)** summarized the progress made with tasks 4.8 and 4.9 on the Indicators of effectiveness of the Convention. He noted that a rolling forward plan had been produced and also stressed that in the light of the further development of the indicator set there is the need to rewrite the summary statement of the list and definitions of the indicators as approved by COP9. He also indicated that the two reports utilising the effectiveness indicators analyses prepared in 2009 as input to the CBD's in-depth review of its Programme of Work on inland waters biodiversity could be readily repackaged into a Ramsar Technical Report.
93. **Dave Pritchard** requested participants to provide updates on upcoming events at which to target possible presentations of the work of the Ramsar indicators. He advised that the task group members will prepare a paper on assessment methodologies for a possible journal publication. He also advised that there is no need for a COP11 DR specifically on indicators, but urged that the Standing Committee should be regularly updated on progress and outcomes of the work done so far on indicators. The development of the Mediterranean Wetland Observatory and its set of indicators can provide valuable input to the further indicator work, including through coordination with ESA's GlobWetland-II project now being initiated in that region. Such initiatives can provide useful contributions to the proposed State of the World's Wetlands (SoWW) report, linked with the development of the Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) – see also Agenda item 15.10.

94. The **DSG** urged that the preparation of a first edition of the SoWW, using currently available indicator assessments and other sources, should be considered a very high priority for preparation in time for COP11.

Decision STRP-MT-8: A concept note, outline and costings for a 1st edition SoWW should be prepared by Dave Pritchard and the DSG with input from CEPA member Christine Prietto, as the basis for seeking funding for a SoWW report to be prepared in time for COP11.

15.9 TWA3/7: task 4.3 Ramsar data and information needs

95. **Dave Pritchard advised** that a rolling list of action points for task 4.3 on Ramsar data and information needs has been developed as well as an initial update of the existing Framework. He also urged that the framework and its utility should be promoted to other relevant fora.

15.6 TWA 8: wetland restoration, mitigation & compensation

96. **Kevin Erwin** (lead for TWA8 on wetland restoration, mitigation & compensation) provided an update on the progress and ways forward identified for the interlinked tasks 9.1 on guidance for mitigation and compensation of wetland loss and 9.2 review of guidance on wetland restoration.
97. **Royal Gardner** presented a graphical framework for avoiding, mitigating, compensating and restoring for wetland losses, developed by the TWA8 working group, which will form the basis of the structure of the guidance to be prepared. He highlighted that avoiding wetland loss should be the priority key principle and that the concept of mitigation is to reduce impact on wetlands as much as possible.
98. The **Panel** congratulated the working group on its clear framework, which helps to clarify how and when wetland restoration as a tool can and should be applied in relation to avoidance, mitigation and compensation. It was urged that the group now focus on delivery of its specific tasks: a) preparing guidance under the framework for avoidance, mitigation and compensation and b) preparing a review and proposals for revising or updating the existing adopted wetland restoration guidance, in the light of the framework's identification of the different contexts in which restoration guidance might be needed and applied. Following STRP16 consideration of this review and proposals under b), a process for further reviewing and testing with a range of wetland restoration practitioners in different parts of the world should be developed. It was noted that members of the group had also identified a number of other possible related materials on these topics, but whilst these can be placed on the TWA 'shopping-list' for potential future STRP action, such action should await delivery of the two core tasks, and indeed the need and type of such further tools is likely to become more clearly informed by the next step outcomes of these tasks.

Decision STRP-MT-9: Royal Gardner will lead task 9.1 in preparing draft framework guidance on avoidance, mitigation and compensation for review in autumn 2010; Kevin Erwin will lead task 9.2 in preparing proposals for reviewing existing Ramsar restoration guidance, in the light of this draft framework guidance, so as to provide advice to STRP16

on whether the restoration guidance needs to be revised or updated, and if so in what way, including through subsequent testing with users.

Friday 26 February 2010

99. The **DSG** reported that following informal discussions with members and representatives of the Society of Wetland Scientists participating in the mid-term workshops on strengthening Ramsar-SWS linkages, it has been agreed to take forward a proposal to the SWS Board to create a formal “SWS Ramsar Section”. It is hoped that this can be progressed in time for announcement at the SWS 2010 conference in Salt Lake City in June 2010, at which there will be also a number of Ramsar-related sessions and presentations.

15.10 TWA3 tasks 4.2 and 4.1: G-WOS and the status of inventories

100. **Max Finlayson**, lead for tasks 4.2 and 4.1 on G-WOS and status of inventories, briefly reported that there had been further progress with the G-WOS concept and the proposal for a Ramsar report State of the World Wetlands and their ecosystem services for people (SoWW), noting that a next step agreed is the preparation of concept notes for an overall G-WOS process and for the scope and content of a SoWW.

15.11 TWA7 tasks 8.6, 8.7, 8.8: Biogeographic regionalization, under-representation, reservoirs & human-made wetlands

101. **David Stroud**, TWA7 lead, reported that for task 8.6 the priority is the finalisation of the *RTR* initiated in the last triennium on “Ramsar site under-representation and the use of biogeographical regionalisation schemes to guide the further development of the Ramsar List”.
102. Concerning task 8.7, **David Stroud** advised that no further analytical work is proposed owing to lack of access to appropriate global datasets on different wetland types that could be used for further analysis. Further elaborated descriptions of existing terrestrial biogeographical regionalisation schemes (regional as well as global), how they were derived, what their scientific strengths and weaknesses are, and how each might be used for Ramsar purposes, may be included in the revised and simplified Ramsar site designation guidance, but it is not intended to recommend a single terrestrial biogeographical regionalisation scheme.
103. Concerning task 8.8 on reservoirs and other human-made wetlands, this work is now being covered partly under TWA6 task 7.4 concerning an ecological significance review and partly under task 8.4 in relation to any additional Ramsar site designation guidance which may be needed.

15.12 TWA7 tasks 8.4, 4.5, 8.3: review of Ramsar site criteria, harmonization of RIS and site selection guidelines

104. TWA lead **David Stroud** explained that in view of the very significant linkages in the nature of tasks 8.4, 4.5, 8.3, 4.6 and 4.4, these tasks are now being undertaken together in an integrated manner in order to harmonise the relevant technical guidance. He advised that the aim of this work is to simplify the guidance associated with the Ramsar site

selection Criteria, by ‘repackaging’ the various existing agreed guidances in only one format to eliminate the unnecessary overlap of information and confusion which has developed over time. A further guiding principle is to ensure that the simplified guidance reflects the difference in data and information richness on sites in different countries and that therefore a hierarchical approach to some aspects of guidance is being explored. A simplification and restructuring of the current fields of the Ramsar Information Sheet will ensure that the necessary information to describe the ecological character at the point of designation will be already provided in there: this process will clearly reduce reporting burdens as the information can be used for multiple purposes.

105. **David Stroud** also reported that as part of the revision process, together with Ramsar Secretariat the working group will seek input from individuals in Contracting Parties and others with recent experience of compiling and submitting RISs so as to engage their help and advice in avoiding any potential ambiguities. A specific additional guidance for the inclusion of bivalve (shellfish) reefs in the Ramsar List will be also included in the reformulated guidance. It will be important to make available and explain to Parties a clear rationale for the reasons and approach being take to prepare proposals for revised simplified designation guidance and RIS structure, in advance of any materials being submitted to Standing Committee and COP.
106. The **STRP Chair** urged that all Panel members ensure that they are fully familiar with these issues and that they follow the discussion on harmonization of guidances and the Ramsar Information Sheet with the ecological character description, in order to be able to assist Parties with advice and answering questions. Contracting Parties should be periodically updated on the progress of this work through the STRP newsletter and the Ramsar Forum.
107. The **DSG** recommended that the task leads (David Stroud & Dave Pritchard) prepare a short briefing note that encapsulates the rationale of the proposed changes and the reasons why this is important to happen now, for inclusion in the STRP Chair’s report to SC41; it will be also critical to ensure that key STRP members can attend the pre-COP Regional Meetings to assist Contracting Parties on this topic. He also recommended that ensuring the participation of at least one key STRP member in the Regional Meetings should be considered a top priority for STRP budget allocation.
108. **David Stroud** noted that the existing structure of the Ramsar Site Database within the Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) does not have the facility to include all the information provided in the current Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS), and that once the RIS is redeveloped there will need to be a significant consequent redevelopment of the RSIS so as to ensure that all aspects of information provided in the RIS are on-line searchable.
109. **Denis Landenbergue** urged that the Panel to keep in mind that Administrative Authorities and their Focal Points become used to a certain RIS format, so that it could take up to two or three years for them to become fully familiar with a new one, particularly if a new format is introduced whilst they are in the process of preparing a new site for designation. He noted that such changes do lead to additional work for our Parties as well as for the Secretariat, and he suggested that the Secretariat could set a transition period from the adoption of any new RIS format before the withdrawal of the previous format. It

was agreed that in any proposals to COP11 on RIS format, the DR should explicitly indicate that the new format would come into force two years after its adoption.

15.13 TWA3 tasks 4.4 & 4.6: ecological character description issues

110. **Dave Pritchard** provided a summary of the progress made for tasks 4.4 and 4.6 on the ecological character description issues, noting that further work has been done to establish the relationships between the RIS and the COP10 Ecological Character description sheet adopted in Resolution X.15, and that a summary for a consolidated structure of the guidance will be forwarded to SC41. He also proposed that a demonstration training event at COP11 could be very useful.
111. **David Stroud** suggested that we might need to move away from the concept of “one guidance fits all”, but rather that a subset of the guidance for different categories of users could be a good solution.
112. **Montserrat Carbonell** recommended that the guidance should be presented in a flexible way so that changes can be added in the future; she also stressed that the full issue on reporting on Article 3.2 needs to be further explored.
113. The **STRP Chair** suggested that an information paper on limits of acceptable change could be an option for COP11, with an STRP briefing note that backs up the report to COP11 on changes on ecological character.
114. The **DSG** supported this idea and also highlighted that the information paper could support what might go into a DR that covers additional guidance on describing ecological character, providing information on the use and value of the conceptual model approach, as well as indicating any further steps needed for guidance on addressing article 3.2 issues.
115. **Dave Pritchard** proposed taking the key issues to COP11 and then to use the following triennium to fully address them for COP12 consideration.

Action STRP-MT-13: Dave Pritchard and David Stroud to lead preparation of an information paper on issues of addressing limits of acceptable change to ecological character.

15.15 TWA1 regional networking

116. **Rebecca D’Cruz** (lead for TWA1 on Regional networking) reported that the Regional Networkers would like to provide more support to the other TWA leads and that each task lead is requested to clearly indicate in their pro-forma what inputs they seek from the region. This approach will allow the six Regional Networkers to better liaise with STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) and other experts. She noted that the STRP Newsletter has received very good feedback and that it will be continued and integrated with more inputs from the regional networkers; a set of other improved actions to boost the Regional Network was also proposed.
117. **Rebecca Lee** (Regional Networker for Europe) gave a demonstration of the mini-website that she has developed and that could be used for STRP National Focal Points for Europe, explaining that she used off-the-shelf software, which was very easy to set up and maintain

and with little cost implication. She also noted that the same user-friendly interface could be developed for the other regions within the same website.

118. The **STRP Chair** congratulated Rebecca for her great initiative and supported the general idea of testing the website for the European region during the coming year and having feedback from Ms Lee at the STRP16. The Chair also suggested that the clear and simple front page of the website could be an ideal possible front end of a new STRP Support Service. **Sandra Hails** also congratulated Rebecca and asked whether there should be a real effort to encourage STRP National Focal Points to connect more at global level. **Rob McInnes** explained that such a format will help STRP NFPs to engage more. He noted that the STRP is responsible for putting in place mechanisms to engage more with STRP NFPs and other experts, but that at the end of the day it is a choice of the individual STRP NFP whether to engage or not. **Archana Chatterjee** pointed out that the real test of suitability will be in the developing countries where Internet access remains difficult.
119. **Philippe Gerbeaux** suggested STRP should compile a list of key documents also available in other languages and make them available to NFPs to make STRP more relevant to the different regions and to help minimize language problem.
120. **Montserrat Carbonell** requested that the budget to cover participation costs for two or three STRP NFPs at STRP meetings and assistance to Regional Networkers to attend other relevant meetings could be considered in the STRP budget for the next triennium. She also urged that bringing experts from developing countries will contribute to having different perspectives and ultimately make STRP work more effective.
121. The **DSG** noted that the current STRP core budget allocation for 2009-2012 is stretched to its limit, but concurred that it should be proposed to include such a budget line-item for the future. He also noted that thanks to our relationship with Star Alliance (Biosphere Connections), it was possible to bring in some appointed invited experts for whom otherwise the budget would not have been sufficient; the Secretariat will do its best to find ways of bringing as many people as possible at the next STRP meeting. **Monica Zavagli** noted that there is a need for better communication between Regional Networkers and Ramsar Secretariat's regional teams. **Rebecca D'Cruz** recommended that the Regional Networkers and Secretariat regional teams work together concerning opportunities for STRP and STRP NFPs to get to relevant meetings, including COP11 regional preparatory meetings.
122. The **STRP Chair** expressed her gratitude on behalf of the Panel to the government of Turkey for having supported the participation of Elif Okumus, STRP National Focal Point, in the mid-term workshops.

Action STRP-MT-14: TWA leads to indicate at the bottom of the work plan task proformas the list of input needed from STRP NFPs and by when regional Networkers should provide feedback to TWA leads.

Decision STRP-MT-10: The STRP Chair should request SC41 to encourage Contracting Parties to enable STRP NFPs to engage more with STRP and provide financial support for their participation at STRP meetings.

17.2 STRP Support Service redevelopment

123. With regard to redevelopment of the Support Service, the **STRP Chair** informed the Panel that there is no intention to migrate all the technical discussions into any new portal before the end of the triennium as it would be disruptive for the work of STRP. However the remaining time in this 2009-2012 cycle should be used as an opportunity to define uses and needs and to also take into account not only liaison and communication within STRP, but also broader issues of transparency of STRP processes; tracking, review and archival of STRP's scientific documents and products; and more formalized internal and peer review processes.
124. Accordingly, a small working group has been established, initially led by the **STRP Chair**, the **STRP Support Officer**, and Panel member Ms **Rebecca Lee**, in order to:
- i) assess user needs for a redesigned Support Service;
 - ii) review available proprietary software and approaches used in other MEAs and scientific organizations; and
 - iii) report back to STRP16 in 2011 with specific recommendations for design, software and implementation.
125. Design and installation of a redeveloped Support Service should commence during 2011, in order for the system to be fully functional and ready for implementation immediately after COP11, in time for the next STRP to be able to utilize it as soon as they are appointed. While there is no budget required for the preparation of recommendations for redevelopment, we expect that the actual redevelopment and installation will require funding and resources in 2011, as a very high priority for STRP work.
126. The **DSG** explained that the STRP Support Service is a fundamental tool for the Panel and that a budget for its redevelopment will have to be found, so Parties should be encouraged to provide voluntary contributions specifically for this task.

Action STRP-MT-15: the **STRP Chair** will initiate a discussion in the Support Service to begin the work of the working group on the redevelopment of the SuSe.

15.16 TWA10 CEPA

127. **Christine Prietto** (lead for TWA10 on Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness) provided an update on the progress of the tasks for this thematic work area. She reported that a set of recommendations for STRP involvement in COP11 has been developed on the basis of the lessons learnt from Ramsar COP10, and that input on guidance preparation and presentation has been given into a number of other TWA tasks.

Action STRP-MT-16: the **STRP Chair/DSG** to provide STRP recommendations for COP11 to the COP11 Subgroup at its SC41 meeting.

128. **Christine Prietto** requested TWA leads to provide feedback on opportunities and products that could feature in the 40th Anniversary celebrations of the Ramsar Convention during 2011. The **STRP Chair** highlighted that the 40th anniversary could be a good channel for STRP to promote their work.

129. **Roy Gardner** brought to the attention of the Panel that there are regular calls for articles in the Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy, and that a special journal edition on the Ramsar Convention has been proposed, possibly linked to the 40th anniversary. The **STRP Chair** recommended pursuing this great idea, also seeing it as an important opportunity for recognition of the work of the STRP members. She also asked Christine to set up a small working group with the STRP Chair, Rob McInnes and George Lukacs to keep a watching brief on journal publication opportunities that complement STRP's work programme and afford opportunities for the dissemination of STRP work through peer-reviewed journals.
130. **Sandra Hails** reminded the Panel that there will be a special logo for the 40th anniversary and that it should be used for any special publication or product targeted to the anniversary.

Action STRP-MT-17: Christine Prietto to recirculate the wiki-web link and Support Service's forum link to STRP members to carry on discussions on outputs for the 40th anniversary.

16. TWA2 tasks without priority deliverables for the 2009-2012 cycle

16.1. Task 2.10 Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza (HPAI) – update from the task force

131. **Rebecca Lee** provided a comprehensive summary of the progress made with task 2.10 Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza (HPAI), particularly for subtask 2.10 ii) on producing a practical guidance package/manual on the prevention and control of animal diseases in wetlands. She reminded the Panel that a user needs questionnaire was sent out in January 2010 and that the deadline for responses is the end of April 2010. The feedback derived from the questionnaires will provide key input to set the priorities in drafting the guidance.
132. The **STRP Chair** suggested that the product of this task could form a potential DR for COP11. The **DSG** noted that this would make sense as it would be a complementary package of guidance to that on HPAI adopted at COP10.

16.2. Task 2.11 Waterbird flyway initiatives

133. **David Stroud** reported back on task 2.11, informing the Panel that it is planned to organize a workshop at the end of 2010 to bring together 35-45 representatives of international initiatives for migratory (water) birds. The aim of the workshop is to review current frameworks for flyway-scale conservation of migratory birds and their habitats, to highlight lessons learnt, and to develop guidance to further strengthen waterbird flyway management frameworks.

17. TWA2 Ongoing and emerging issues

17.1 Classification systems for wetlands

134. The **STRP Chair** explained that the STRP had at various times over the years looked at wetland classifications, and that prior to the mid-term workshops and during the week there had been a number of discussions on the need for a further STRP look at issues of

wetland classification, particularly as to whether there is a single type of classification which could be recommended or whether it would be more appropriate to develop advice on suitable available wetlands classifications for different wetland conservation and wise use purposes.

135. The **DSG** explained that in the light of these discussions he had started preparation of a concept note on this topic, and he proposed an outline of what it could cover. He outlined the several different forms of wetland classification already adopted, or in use, by Parties for different implementation purposes and proposed a framework for summarising the wide range of other wetlands classifications globally and regionally in use. He stressed that it already appears that there is not one classification that fits all purposes.
136. Participants supported the approach outlined in the concept note, and identified a number of issues which need to be taken into consideration in any further advice that might be prepared through the Panel, including consideration terms in use in different regions and classifications appropriate for different spatial scales. It was noted that early translation into Spanish and French of the material could facilitate the process and that whilst the adopted Ramsar Classification of Wetland Types long used for Ramsar site designation must be maintained, it could be helpful to different regions to elaborate the explanations of what types of wetland (including local and regional terms) fall under each type in the classification.
137. It was recognised that clear understanding and consistency of use of terms is a crucial and that the TWAs should work together on this, particularly TWA3 and TWA7 to ensure consistency in their ecological character work and how it is reflected in the redevelopment of the Ramsar sites Strategic Framework. It was also noted that the classification issue should be linked to Christine Prietto's rolling paper on tracking synergies across TWAs.

Decision STRP-MT-11: The DSG is requested to further develop the concept note as a briefing paper for STRP16, at which time it will be decided in what form the paper would best be made available to Parties.

Action STRP-MT-18: the **DSG** will make available on the STRP Support Service the pro-forma outline for compiling information on other wetland classifications, and STRP members and observers are requested to complete and return the pro-forma with information on any relevant wetland classifications.

17.3. STRP review and editorial policy development

138. The **STRP Chair** commented that the STRP currently does not have a formal document management system, and it also needs a simple but well-structured review and editorial procedure: we need to be clear how we deal with the review of different types of STRP products, noting that the Support Service serves ultimately to keep track of the reviews of draft documents. **David Stroud** encouraged that STRP products should be reviewed by external peer reviewers as much as possible.

Action STRP-MT-19: the **STRP Chair** will circulate recommendations on approaches to deal with some of the review and editorial policy issues and document management options.

17.4. International Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) – STRP views to take forward into this process

139. The **STRP Chair** advised that the next IPBES meeting will be held in June 2010 in the Republic of Korea and that it would be important to capture STRP views on how this proposed Platform could affect STRP and how we could add value to its design. She suggested preparing a short summary of recommendations from STRP. **Dave Pritchard** suggested including in the paper for IPBES a component covering our needs for data and information necessary for the tasks related to the G-WOS and SoWW.

Action STRP-MT-20: STRP Chair to circulate in March a summary of what IPBES should be delivering, including on what issues the STRP could feed in its needs and ideas.

17.5. Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies (CSAB) of the biodiversity-related Conventions and MEAs – report back from Nairobi 2009 and STRP recommendations for collaboration

140. The **STRP Chair** explained that CSAB meetings work well when there are concrete proposed activities for collaborative efforts between conventions, and that at its last full meeting in 2009 CSAB had identified Ramsar to lead development of options for collaboration in ecosystem restoration programs. She asked the Panel to provide feedback on what is thought to be do-able for such collaboration across conventions.

Action STRP-MT-21: STRP Chair will post a discussion on the STRP Support Service to identify concrete activities to pursue for collaboration to be proposed at the next CSAB meeting.

18. Updated list of products due out in the 2009-2012 cycle

141. The **DSG** presented the table with list of products compiled during the various presentations from TWA and task leads. He also suggested that the STRP Chair's Report to SC41 should flag up the fact that many tasks are only being taken forward thanks to significant *pro bono* and in-kind contributions from task leads and other members, invited experts and observers. He noted that it would be very valuable for each STRP member/observer to provide an estimate of the amount of time they have contributed to STRP work on a *pro bono* basis or through in-kind support of their organisation.

Action STRP-MT-22: The Secretariat to prepare and circulate a pro-forma to STRP members, observers and invited experts to record their contributions in "time spent" on STRP tasks, so as to permit estimation and reporting of the time costs of STRP work undertaken in this way.

19. Any documents for review and/or signoff

142. No documents for sign-off had been submitted.

20. TWA2: other sectoral and/or emerging issues on the rolling list

143. Owing to time-limitations it was agreed that the **STRP Chair** would propose to continue discussion on these items through the STRP Support Service.

21. Any other business

144. **Monica Zavagli** reminded STRP members, invited experts and observers that they should keep her informed in advance when they will be participating in other meetings and processes on behalf of STRP/Ramsar, so that this information can be reported appropriately. The **DSG** pointed out that this was also important to do so that the relevant Secretariat regional team can, as appropriate, advise the Administrative Authority of the country in which such a meeting will take place that the person will be there representing the STRP. He also noted that it is important for those working with STRP to clearly distinguish between such events at which they are officially representing the STRP and other activities which they undertake in their own work, but for which they are not acting as an official STRP/Ramsar representatives.

Action STRP-MT-23: STRP members, invited experts and observer representatives to inform Monica Zavagli in advance about any participation at meetings representing the Panel.

145. **Denis Landenbergue (WWF)** suggested that for the STRP16 meeting, the Secretariat should consider including in the agenda at least a half-day for a field trip. He also offered to assist the Secretariat in identifying suitable places for the season. The **Panel** and the **DSG** welcomed the idea, but the **DSG** noted that there would be time and cost implications for adding such a field trip to the STRP16 agenda, and that this would need to be looked at carefully to ensure that there would not be insufficient budget available to bring some participants to the meeting itself.

22. Closure of the meeting

146. The **STRP Chair** and the **DSG** thanked the whole Ramsar Secretariat and the cafeteria staff for their support, and all STRP members, IOP members, invited experts and Observer Organization representatives for their very hard work and collaboration in making the meeting extremely fruitful and with such a positive atmosphere.

Annex 3

Provisional anticipated products from the work of the STRP 2009-2012

Explanatory Notes:

1. This annex provides a provisional list of the outputs and products which the STRP and its Thematic Work Areas (TWAs) and task groups currently anticipate, as of February 2010, will be prepared for consideration by Standing Committee and COP11, as well as other types of products which are also anticipated to be progressed during the 2009-2012 cycle.
2. Task numbers in the STRP's 2009-2012 Work Plan for each product are indicated in square brackets [...].
3. It is to be noted that this is a provisional list and that a) some anticipated products may not be progressed if additional funds are not secured, and b) the category of product may be changed for some products as STRP's work is further progressed and refined during the rest of the cycle.
4. The list of products is organised in six categories:
 - A. COP11 Draft Resolutions;
 - B. COP11 Draft Resolutions with annexed scientific and technical guidance;
 - C. COP11 Information Papers (COP11 DOCs.);
 - D. *Ramsar Technical Reports*;
 - E. STRP Technical Advisory Notes/Briefing Notes; and
 - F. Other types of product.
5. All titles are provisional and may be amended as each aspect of STRP's work is finalised.

A. COP11 Draft Resolutions (COP11 DRs)

- Wetlands and water resource storage [possible] [7.4]
- Wetlands and climate change - updated issues and considerations for the Ramsar Convention [6.2]
- Wetlands and energy issues [possible] [2.4]
- The status of the world's wetlands and their services to people [4.1/4.8]
- Developing guidance on wetland ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change [6.1]

B. COP11 Draft Resolutions (COP11 DRs) with annexed scientific and technical guidance

- Wetlands and poverty eradication: a Ramsar framework and indicators [2.6]
- Overarching principles for urban planning and wetlands [2.7]
- Guidance for wetland managers on invasive species and wetlands [2.12]
- Designating Ramsar sites: a revised *Strategic Framework and Guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* [8.4]

- Additional guidance on describing the ecological character of wetlands: the use of conceptual models, and identifying limits of acceptable change [4.4]
- A practical guide and manual for managing wetlands and wildlife diseases [2.1]
- Guidance on Avoiding, Mitigating, and Compensating for Wetland Losses [9.1]

C. COP11 Information Papers (COP11 DOCs)

- Wetlands and water resource storage [7.4]
- Response options from MA - their relevance to the Ramsar Convention [3.1]
- Transboundary Ramsar sites and wetlands management: a synthesis of case studies [8.9]
- An updated Ramsar Framework for data and information needs [4.3]
- Worked examples of existing RIS into ecol character format [4.4]
- Lessons learned from “no net loss” policies, the “urgent national interest” test, and other issues for wetland mitigation and compensation. [9.1]
- Review and proposals for revisions to the Convention’s guidance on wetland restoration [9.2]
- Using wetland classifications for Ramsar conservation and wise use implementation [8.x – new]

D. STRP Technical Advisory Notes/Briefing Notes

Note. This category of STRP outputs of advisory or briefing notes from the Panel are designed to provide information to Contracting Parties and others on issues arising from STRP’s work, but are shorter than the detailed technical reviews and methodological reports published as *Ramsar Technical Reports*. They will be made available on the Ramsar website in English, as well as in French and Spanish when the availability of additional translation resources permit.

- Strategies for mainstreaming wetlands in water sector [7.x]
- Current and emerging trends in energy sectors [2.4]
- A review of the utility of Ramsar guidance [10.1]
- Considerations for the future development of guidance for Ramsar implementation [10.1]
- Profiles of different categories of wetland managers [10.1]
- A summary guide to the STRP Work Plan 2009-2012 [10.4]
- A Guide to the use of Ramsar guidance for wetland managers [10.2]
- A strategic approach to STRP’s future engagement with other bodies and organizations [10.5]
- Synergies between STRP Thematic Work Areas (TWAs) 2009-2012 [10.5]

E. *Ramsar Technical Reports*

Note. *Ramsar Technical Reports (RTRs)* provide detailed technical background reviews and reports prepared by the STRP at the request of Contracting Parties which would previously have been made available in most instances only as “Information Papers” for a Conference of the Parties (COP). Publication of these materials as *RTRs* is designed to

ensure increased and longer-term accessibility of such documents. All *Ramsar Technical Reports* are peer-reviewed by the members and observers appointed to the STRP and by independent experts. *RTRs* are published in PDF electronic format and in English only, unless resources are available to provide them also in French and Spanish.

In press:

- A framework for a wetland inventory meta-database. Lowry, J. 2010. *Ramsar Technical Report* No. 4.

In preparation, completion carried over from STRP's 2006-2008 Work Plan:

- A review of Ramsar sites and fisheries management
- "Healthy wetlands, healthy people": a review of wetlands and human health interactions (with World Health Organisation input)
- Vulnerability Assessment of wetlands: Guidance on methodologies for vulnerability assessment of wetlands to change in ecological character
- Biogeographic regionalisation, and the distribution and gaps in Ramsar site designations for different wetland types
- The current status of wetland wise use for the wetlands covered by case studies in the 1993 *Towards the wise use of wetlands* Ramsar publication
- Environmental flow determination and implementation
- Population estimates and 1% thresholds for the application of Criterion 9 for Ramsar site designation
- Methods and models for assessing the role of wetlands in the global carbon cycle
- Wetlands and water quality management
- River basin management: critical path application case studies
- Determination of environmental water requirements for estuaries, coastal and near-shore wetlands
- An assessment of wetlands and agriculture interactions (joint publication with IWMI)
- Response options relevant to wetlands from the work of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA)
- The role of wetland restoration in a changing climate
- Determination of environmental water requirements for rivers
- The Convention's development of Criteria and guidelines for Ramsar site designation 1971-2005

In preparation or planned, in STRP Work Plan 2009-2012:

- Water resources management in dry and sub-humid lands [7.5]
- Poverty eradication and wetlands: a guide to guidance [2.6]
- A low-cost flyway-scale methodology for identifying wetlands likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of extractive industries [2.3] (joint report - Ramsar and AEWA)
- A guide to available guidance on assessing, avoiding, minimizing and mitigating direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands [2.3] (joint report - Ramsar and AEWA)

- Wetland restoration and its role in adapting to climate change [6.1.ii]
- A synthesis of wetlands and climate change issues in published IPCC reports [6.1.iv]
- The State of the World's Wetlands and their services to people (SOWWS) [4.2]
- A review of available methods for establishing limits of acceptable change in the ecological character of wetlands [4.4]
- Global waterbird flyways initiatives - experiences and good practices: workshop proceedings [2.11]

F. Other products

- Wetlands and human health: key messages for decision-makers and key messages for or wetland managers [5.1]
- A Ramsar Convention/ World Health Organisation framework for technical collaboration [5.1]
- Information sheets for wetland managers on wetland-relevant diseases [5.1]
- Conceptual & systematic approaches to addressing wetland ecosystem health [5.1] – concept paper
- Wetlands, natural disasters and human health [5.1] – scoping paper
- Overarching principles for urban planning and wetlands [2.7] – concept paper
- Guidance on addressing wetlands in UN-HABITAT Sustainable Cities process [2.7]
- Poverty eradication and wetlands: case studies
- Economic sectors and their relevance to wetlands [2.5] – scoping paper
- Wetlands and economics findings from the TEEB initiative [2.5] - synthesis report [to be confirmed following discussion with TEEB]
- Adaptive approaches for water management and allocation and wetlands - experiences from the Murray-Darling Basin [6.1]
- Agriculture and wetlands interactions: a GAWI Strategic Scientific Framework (SSF) and Investment Plan (IP) [2.1]
- A framework for guidance on biodiversity and rice cultivation [2.1] – scoping paper
- Developing a “Global Wetland Outlook” and “State of the World’s Wetlands” reporting through a Global Wetland Observing System (G-WOS) mechanism [4.2] - concept note
- Contracting Party experiences of completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – a questionnaire survey analysis [8.4]
- An on-line wetland inventory metadatabase [4.2] - web-site
- STRP ‘Regional’ Web-portal Support Service [1.3] - web-site
- Special edition of the Journal of International Law & Wildlife Policy: The Ramsar Convention 40 years on – possible journal issue
- The History of Wetland Ecology: proceedings of an SWS 2010 conference symposium – possible journal issue
- Waterbird flyways initiatives - experiences and good practices [2.11] – journal paper
- Misconceptions about wetland management for carbon sequestration – journal paper [6.1]
- The relationships between human population density and coastal wetlands (proposed report by CIESIN to Ramsar) [6.1]
- The resilience of different wetland types to climate change – scoping paper [6.1]

Annex 4

Development of guidance for Ramsar site selection, data and information needs, and options for RIS revision

1. COP10 requested the STRP to undertake a number of tasks related to the Convention's guidance on selection and designation of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) and its needs for data and information at the point of designation. These tasks include:
 - a) a review of the consistency, logic and clarity of the targets and guidelines that support Ramsar's site selection criteria,
 - b) seeking the views of users of this guidance;
 - c) a review of options for revising the format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) in order to ensure linkages and synergies with other Ramsar instruments to collect and report data and information on listed sites; and
 - d) further consideration of data and information needs related to the description of ecological character at the point of designation (and assessment of potential change thereafter).
2. In view of the significant linkages in the nature of these tasks, they are being undertaken together in an integrated manner in order to harmonize the relevant technical guidances and to avoid, as far as possible, the risk of needing any further future changes.
3. STRP are working to the principle of trying to simplify the guidance associated with the site selection Criteria, 'repackaging' the various existing agreed guidances which have developed separately over time and accordingly have a degree of unnecessary overlap. A further principle being adopted is to ensure that guidances and proposals reflect the very variable extent of data and information on sites available in different countries. The scientific 'ideal' may simply be impracticable in some developing countries owing to resource and other constraints. STRP are accordingly exploring hierarchical approaches to some aspects of guidance that recognize that some countries are less 'data-rich' than others.
4. A central need, repeatedly expressed by Contracting Parties and others, is to have an unambiguous description of ecological character at the point of designation which can act as a baseline description. STRP work has shown that a significant amount of the data and information used with the Convention's Ecological Character Description Sheet (as defined in Resolution X.15) can be delivered by the Ramsar Information Sheet. Ensuring that the RIS delivers the necessary information on ecological character has the advantages of:
 - a) reducing reporting burdens by seeking to collect data once that has utility for several different processes;
 - b) ensuring that data collected at the point of designation much better defines ecological character against which future changes of site status can be assessed; and
 - c) determining the potential use of data collected at the point of designation (and updates thereof) for other MEA reporting processes, still to be explored in detail.

5. Specifically, the STRP has proposed that:
- a) The existing guidance on the completion of the RIS within the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the development of the Ramsar list* is merged and consolidated to produce a single supporting document that will provide the necessary information on all aspects of the process of Ramsar site identification and designation;
 - b) This new document will largely comprise existing adopted guidance, but re-ordered, better structured and with duplication removed so as to be more easily understood by Contracting Parties and other users. It will also bring together a range of other guidance agreed by Ramsar into this single document and will more coherently integrate links with the Ecological Character Description Sheet adopted in Resolution X.15;
 - c) Emphasis will be given to simplifying the guidance and providing worked examples and illustrative case-studies which may further help those compiling (or revising) Ramsar Information Sheets;
 - d) It is aimed to provide a more consistent structuring for the guidance associated with each Criterion. This will probably follow the following model:

Criterion X

What this criterion is seeking to achieve?

How to interpret this criterion – what does it mean?

What data and information is needed to apply this criterion?

Potential ambiguities/pitfalls in applying this criterion

Where to go for further help or information

- e) There will be the need for additional guidance associated with some Criteria where the current explanations are limited or ambiguous.

Annex 5

STRP Participation in COP11: Suggestions for consideration by the Standing Committee Subgroup on COP11

1. During COP10 STRP members and experts provided technical briefings to the plenary, actively supported Parties in the negotiations related to several key scientific and technical Resolutions, led or contributed to working groups, assisted with the drafting of Resolution revisions and in general made themselves available to Contracting Parties for advice.
2. The response from Contracting Parties was very positive and the STRP was commended for its active and visible role in COP10. Based on the experience of COP10, the STRP has prepared a number of suggestions for the Panel's participation and roles in COP11 in 2012 for consideration by the Standing Committee's Subgroup on COP 11:
 - a) The COP agenda should provide sufficient time for consideration of technically complex Draft Resolutions (DRs). Complex or potentially contentious DRs should be tabled early in the agenda with technical workshops/briefings scheduled at appropriate times in order to prepare CPs for discussing and resolving potential conflicts.
 - b) Technical briefings should be offered by STRP members at both pre-COP Regional Meetings and during COP11 to help Parties better understand the elements and implications of specific technical Resolutions before they come to the floor for consideration. This will require additional resources since insufficient funding is available within the STRP core budget.
 - c) Consideration should be given to planning STRP involvement in selected side events during COP11, especially where these provide access to information that is critical for the consideration of contentious or complex DRs.
 - d) There should be a budgetary provision to have individual STRP experts leading on technical issues and working with Parties as needed on specific DRs, especially where they link directly to STRP Thematic Work Areas.
 - e) STRP National Focal Points (NFPs) should, where possible, be invited to attend COPs with their country delegations and be clearly identifiable to allow face-to-face interaction between STRP and the STRP Focal Points during the COP.
 - f) Name badges for STRP members should be distinctive in order to help delegates identify them.
 - g) Additional dedicated seating in the plenary room should be available for STRP members beyond what was available at COP10 to improve the accessibility and visibility of the STRP members when Parties wish to confer with them on technical matters.
 - h) Dedicated office space or an STRP Desk should be provided for STRP at the COP venue to enhance the capacity of the STRP to contribute to the business of the COP.
 - i) With the assistance of the STRP Support Officer, a mechanism to facilitate communication between Contracting Parties and the STRP should be made available to improve communication and accessibility during the COP.

3. The STRP is committed to involvement in COP 11 that is effective and constructive. Following discussions with the Subgroup on COP11, strategies will be reviewed at STRP16 for inclusion in an implementation plan for STRP involvement in COP11.