

Agenda item 13

The Convention's CEPA Programme

Action requested: The Subgroup on COP9 may wish to suggest that the Secretariat build on the successes of the Communications, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA) Programme and activities, described in Resolution VIII.31, and propose a new, fundable set of CEPA activities for the 2006-2008 period, linking this, where appropriate, with the revisions proposed for the Strategic Plan in Agenda item 11.

Background

1. Resolution VIII.31 adopted the *Programme on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) 2003-2008* and encouraged Contracting Parties to adopt the concept ***Ramsar CEPA for Sustainable Development*** to effectively address the ecological, social, cultural and economic values of wetlands through this programme.
2. The Programme identified key implementation activities directed at the Secretariat as well as the CEPA Working Group, Contracting Parties, and the International Organization Partners (IOPs). It instructed the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to establish, as appropriate, a CEPA Working Group with suitable members and a chair from the Panel as well as other invited CEPA experts to ensure that the CEPA perspective would be integrated as a cross-cutting tool in all STRP tasks. While STRP recognised the cross-cutting role of CEPA, lack of funding resulted in this working group being embodied only as part of the agenda of Wetlands International's Specialist Group on CEPA.
3. Despite the increasing awareness of the importance of CEPA tools in the effective implementation of all MEAs, no funds were allocated from the core budget for implementing the CEPA Programme; rather the Secretariat was asked to find voluntary funds. It has been difficult to achieve this, among competing priorities, although the generous contribution of Groupe Danone to the Convention's CEPA Programme remains a key pillar of support for the Secretariat's public relations and CEPA activities.
4. A feature of the CEPA Programme was the focus on encouraging the development and funding of the Wetland Link International initiative being delivered by The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (UK), which included a proposal for future development of Wetland Centres at Ramsar sites as key locations for promoting CEPA. Calls for financial support for this initiative have not been successful.

Proposal

5. In light of the acknowledged importance of CEPA initiatives at global, national, and local levels and the successes so far achieved in fulfillment of Resolution VIII.31, the Subgroup

may wish to recommend to the Conference of the Parties an endorsement of the progress so far made under the current CEPA Programme and encourage increased tangible support for additional work in this area.