



The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the **conservation** and **wise use** of wetlands and their resources.

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STRP Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Ramsar Convention

STRP 17: A PERSPECTIVE FROM AN STRP NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

Issue no. 1/2013



Left to right: Barry G. Warner (Canada's STRP National Focal Point), Rob McInnes (Society of Wetlands Scientists' Representative) and Mike Acreman (STRP invited expert), during STRP 17.

Geneva in February is perhaps not the optimal time of the year to visit if you are a tourist, but it is a good time for an indoor business meeting at the Ramsar Secretariat's Headquarters. Temperatures were cool and the sun was shining. I am happy to report the sun continued to shine for the whole week both inside the meeting and outdoors.

As Canada's new National Focal Point (NFP) for the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), I needed to gain a full appreciation for the STRP, and how I, as a new NFP, will be expected to link with the Panel. Perhaps old-fashioned in this electronic era, I believe still that to be effective one must establish personal connections with colleagues and fellow Panel members with whom one is expected to interact over a three-year term. The first meeting of the STRP at the beginning of a new triennium is the logical time to begin the relationship.

The experience and time spent, a succession of five long days, was well worth the long airplane travel, jet lag, and busy airports. I encourage every new STRP NFP to participate in the meeting. Though I realize that if it were to happen, the Secretariat's staff, organizing the event, would be overwhelmed and the venue and logistics would have to be different.

STRP NFPs are expected to support and assist in the implementation of the STRP's Work Plan. What better time for NFPs to get started than when the Panel meets to develop the Work Plan that will guide it for the triennium. This 17th meeting of the STRP began with an overview of the Convention, its structure and processes, followed by a briefing on past and on-going STRP initiatives. I am sure all NFPs, as I did, would find this background informative and useful.

The meeting covered next some of the new Resolutions that came out of COP11, with some in-depth discussion of Resolution XI.16 and its focus on "Ensuring efficient delivery of scientific and technical advice and support to the Convention." The group heard presentations on the status of wetland activities undertaken by various

Multilateral Environmental Agreements and organizations (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Environment Programme and the International Union for Conservation of Nature). I was largely unaware of the growth of interest there is for wetlands around the globe.

As a wetland scientist, who has been involved in considerable research on wetlands internationally, I am gratified to see the vast array of knowledge networks of new information and emerging expertise that will continue to be needed to tackle the growing list of challenges for wetland conservation.

I was reminded during the meeting that the Ramsar Convention was the first of the modern intergovernmental environmental agreements. Thus, I cannot help but think how right the visionaries were, who saw the need for a Convention on Wetlands and who were able to bring together governments to execute a global work plan, a process that has worked every triennium for the last 42 years. Clearly it was a model seen to be successful and one that governments wanted to emulate for other purposes.

Much of the remainder of the meeting concentrated on the Themes in the STRP's Work Plan to be implemented by a number of Working Groups (WGs). Specific examples included: WGs on wetland inventory and assessment, Wetlands of International Importance, wetlands and health, climate change, water resource management, agriculture and ecosystem benefits/services, among others.

The STRP and its NFPs represent a dedicated, knowledgeable and passionate network of wetland specialists who are practitioners, managers, researchers and conservationists. The Secretariat worked long and hard to collect and prepare a large volume of materials to ensure the completion of an ambitious meeting agenda.

I left the meeting feeling the time was very well spent, and I was better prepared to work with my wetland colleagues at home on behalf of the STRP and the Convention.

It became clear to me how important the STRP and its NFPs network are to keep up with and assimilate the great diversity and discovery of new wetland information constantly emerging. At the time the Convention came into being, wetlands were still being defined and identified and the science was crude. Today, wetlands are known to exist, even in the most extreme parts of the world, and the science is much more sophisticated and enigmatic than ever imagined. My sleeves are rolled up, and I am ready to work!

Barry G. Warner

Barry Warner is Professor and Chair at the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Waterloo, Canada.

New Ramsar Sites:

- RÍO BLANCO; RÍO MATOS; SITIO RAMSAR RÍO YATA-BOLIVIA
- PARQUE NACIONAL MANGLARES DEL BAJO YUNA-DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- MANGLARES DEL ESTUARIO INTERIOR DEL GOLFO DE GUAYAQUIL "DON GOYO"; SISTEMA LACUSTRE LAGUNAS DEL COMPADRE; SISTEMA LACUSTRE YACURI-ECUADOR
- MALPAIS/SINT MICHEL; MUIZENBERG; NORTHWEST CURAÇAO; RIF-SINT MARIE-NETHERLANDS
- PAUL DA PRAIA DA VITÓRIA (PRAIA DA VITÓRIA MARSH); VASCÃO RIVER (RIBEIRA DO VASCÃO)-PORTUGAL
- BLAHNITA; BORCEA ARM (BRATUL BORCEA); CALAFAT-CIUPERCENI-DANUBE; CANARALELE DE LA HARSOVA; DANUBE ISLANDS-BUGEAC-IORTMAC (OSTROAVELE DUNARII-BUGEAC-IORTMAC); JIU-DANUBE CONFLUENCE (CONFLUENTA JIU-DUNARE)-ROMANIA
- WILPATTU RAMSAR WETLAND CLUSTER-SRI LANKA
- HAWANE NATURE RESERVE AND DAM; SAND RIVER; VAN ECK-SWAZILAND
- COMPLEXE LAC DE TUNIS; COMPLEXE DES ZONES HUMIDES DE BARRAGE GHDIR EL GOULLA ET BARRAGE EL MORNAGUIA (AL MORNAGUIA); COMPLEXE DES ZONES HUMIDES DE SEBKHET OUM EZ-ZESSAR ET SEBKHET EL GRIN-TUNISIA
- SAN FRANCISCO BAY/ESTUARY (SFBE)-U.S.A.
- CLEVELAND DAM; CHINHOYI CAVES; DRIEFONTEIN GRASSLANDS; LAKE CHIVERO AND MANYAME; MANA POOLS; MONVALE WETLAND; VICTORIA FALLS NATIONAL PARK-ZIMBABWE

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RAMSAR'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
CONSULTATION ON WATER

With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) nearing expiration in just two short years, January 2013 started off with a bang with the international community initiating a stakeholder consultation process on a Post-2015 Development Agenda for water. The process included a series of online consultations accompanied by framing papers and development questions inviting participation from the public, water professionals and practitioners. Consultations were separated into three streams: water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); water resources management (WRM); and wastewater and water quality (WW).



The water resources management (WRM) consultation stream was particularly relevant to Ramsar's STRP Task 15 to develop a strategy for engaging in the global water debate. A sub-consultation on *Water for Nature, Nature for Water* was led by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and partners (e.g., the World Wide Fund for Nature, United Nations Environment Programme and Convention on Biological Diversity) and featured questions on the connection between freshwater ecosystems and water security. In each case, respondents agreed that investments in natural infrastructure, such as wetlands and freshwater ecosystems, were highly important, with consensus revolving around not whether or not to make such investments, but *how* to make them.

Summary of this sub-consultation revealed that ecosystems provide multiple benefits for development and that greater efforts are needed to inform and educate the public on the benefits of ecosystems for development. An important point made was to use valuations of nature's water service (e.g., a water services chain) in decision-making on water security. Emphasis was put on the need for water sharing arrangements to incorporate nature, better platforms, tools and institutional capacities for collaborative decision-making. Stakeholders indicated that the Development Agenda should incorporate the economic case for investing in ecosystems and for restoring critical water-related ecosystems, including rivers and wetlands. In this regard, the recently released report on *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) for Water and Wetlands* played a significant role in the consultation and on strengthening this point. Finally, and not surprisingly, participants re-emphasized that implementing WRM should have the highest priority in the process of making trade-offs over water needs, including sharing water with nature.

The next step of the Post-2015 consultation process is the arduous task of condensing the recommendations into a clear and concise set of goals and targets for the political process before forwarding recommendations to the UN Secretary General in September 2013. Ramsar has played its part in having a direct influence on shaping the agenda for Water for Nature, through its Secretary General's active involvement in the Post-2015 Development Agenda Consultation on Water and the release and critical discussion of the TEEB report on the final day of the *Water for Nature* sub-consultation. Going forward, Ramsar must continue to be at the centre of the scientific and policy debate on freshwater ecosystems—as this is a time when its active voice is most urgently needed.

Patrick MacQuarrie

KEY BIODIVERSITY AREA (KBA)
CRITERIA AND DELINEATION WORKSHOP

The workshop, held on March 11-15 2013 at the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation in Front Royal, Virginia, U.S.A., was organized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Joint Task Force on Biodiversity and Protected Areas. Forty participants from around the world attended the workshop, which was part of the consultation process for developing globally agreed standards for defining and delimiting Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

Five draft criteria were proposed, defining KBAs that contribute significantly to the global persistence of:

- threatened biodiversity (genes, species and ecosystems);
- geographically restricted biodiversity;
- sites that are exceptional examples of ecological integrity;
- outstanding biological processes; and
- biodiversity as determined by quantitative analysis (to be determined at a forthcoming workshop).

A process was suggested whereby KBAs are proposed to the relevant Conventions and other entities, as candidate Ramsar Sites (or Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSA), etc.).



Participants discussed how viability of the species/site will be treated in KBA selection. Recommendations were also made for a comprehensive and consistent process of recording documentation.

Guidelines were proposed for delineating KBAs, focusing on an iterative and adaptable process. Sites would initially be delineated based on biological distribution.

The boundaries of the sites could then be refined based on recommendations for creating the management areas that are most likely to be successful for conservation.

Later in 2013, there will be a workshop on defining thresholds for the criteria. There will also be three subsequent workshops on marine issues, governance, and end users.

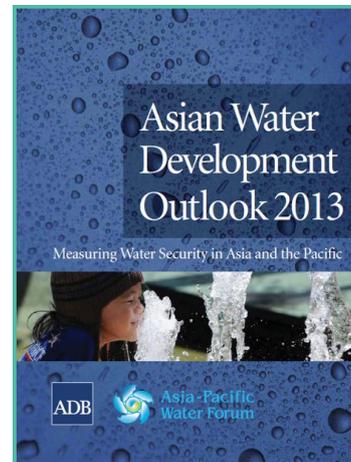
The final results of the consultation process should be ready for launching during the World Parks Congress in 2014.

Ian Harrison

ASIA WATER WEEK: SECURING WATER FOR ALL



Recently, Mr Anada Tiéga, Ramsar Secretary General, and Lew Young, Senior Regional Adviser for Asia-Oceania, attended this year's [Asia Water Week](#), which was organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, Philippines, from 13 to 15 March 2013.



The theme of the meeting was *Securing Water for All* and was divided under three main themes: basin water management, urban water services, and rural water services. The meeting was also an opportunity to launch the ADB's *Asia Water Development Outlook 2013* (downloadable from <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/asian-water-development-outlook-2013.pdf>).

The Outlook gives a stark assessment of the water security situation in the Asia-Pacific region with nearly two thirds of people not having any clean, piped water at home despite the region's strong economic growth. This problem was blamed on poor management and a lack of investment in infrastructure rather than short supplies.

At the end of the week, Mr Tiéga gave a presentation to the staff of the ADB about the recently released report on *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Water and Wetlands (TEEB)*, which was well received.

Lew Young



STRP MEMBER ELECTED TO THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY EXPERT PANEL OF IPBES



The first plenary session of the newly established [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#), IPBES-1, was held in Bonn, Germany, from 21-26 January 2013. Established in Panama City, Panama, in April 2012, IPBES is the biodiversity equivalent of the extremely effective, Nobel Prize-winning [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change \(IPCC\)](#). Prof Zakri Abdul Hamid (Malaysia) was elected Chair of IPBES and Prof Robert Watson (U.K.) was elected Vice-Chair. Randy Thaman, Professor of Pacific Islands Biogeography at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, and member of the Ramsar STRP, was elected member of the first IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), which will ensure the scientific credibility and independence of IPBES work.

relevant to the Convention."

In his capacity as both a MEP and STRP member, Randy Thaman has said that he will place the highest priority on maintaining strong links between IPBES and Ramsar, with particular interest in island and ocean wetlands, invasive species and diseases and the integration of local and indigenous knowledge systems, as a basis for maximizing the relevance of the outputs of both IPBES and Ramsar.

Randy Thaman

The four main work areas of IPBES are to:

- identify and prioritise key scientific information needed for policy-makers and to catalyze efforts to generate new knowledge;
- perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages;
- support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies; and
- prioritise key capacity building needs to improve the science-policy interface, and to provide and call for financial and other support for the highest-priority needs related directly to its activities.

Five hundred delegates attended IPBES-1, including representatives from IPBES' Member States; observers from other multilateral entities, including Ramsar; members of organisations of indigenous peoples and communities; and the private sector. Ramsar representatives included former STRP Vice-Chair Rebecca d'Cruz and the Secretary General, Anada Tiéga, who gave a closing speech highlighting the important synergies that could be achieved between Ramsar and IPBES. Ramsar brought one of the first requests to IPBES, on behalf of members and governing bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions, inviting IPBES "to address science-policy linkages relating to conservation and wise use of wetlands" and in the implementation of the programme to "take into account the needs of the Ramsar Convention and its contracting parties by integrating scientific, technical and technological information



Left to right: Fiji's Representatives to IPBES-1: Rahul Chand and Randy Thaman. © IPBES-1 Official Photographer.

30 YEARS OF RAMSAR SITE MANAGEMENT: AN INNOVATIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP



One of the sophisticated machines for fen removal developed for, and used in, the Grande Cariçaie. © Eltel SA.

Site managers at the southern shores of Lake Neuchâtel, the first and largest Ramsar Site in Switzerland, recently celebrated 30 years of integrated management, through a unique public-private partnership that can serve as a model for wetland conservation and entrepreneurship. The Site was named [Grande Cariçaie](#), after its fen mires, referring to the Carex rushes growing there.

Since 1982, local authorities have been cooperating with an innovative firm, [Eltel SA](#), to cut the fen vegetation at the Site with special equipment to prevent wet fens from growing over with bushes and trees. Whilst managing fen vegetation with modern machinery (instead of using animal grazing) may seem to be affordable only to rich countries, it can offer benefits to everyone. The cut vegetation matter is being converted into high-quality horticultural substrate and sold in the markets, which Eltel has already started doing.

This is good news for the maintenance of peatlands. Whilst peat clearing is prohibited in Switzerland, up to 150,000 tonnes of peat are still [imported](#) for horticultural use, contributing to peatland degradation worldwide. In 2012, the Swiss government, as an act of international solidarity and making specific reference to the Ramsar Convention ([Resolution VIII.17](#)), decided to phase out peat use and imports. As an initial phase, the government hopes that voluntary measures, such as those implemented at the Grande Cariçaie, can replace peat as a substrate. Fiscal measures may be enacted if voluntary measures fail. In this context, it is good to realize that vegetation management at this Ramsar Site is having a positive impact, rather than producing waste, and that it is contributing to reducing peatland degradation abroad.

Tobias Salathé

STETSON'S INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION FOCUSES ON PEATLAND CONSERVATION

The Ramsar Convention played a prominent role in an international legal competition that culminated at Stetson University (Florida, U.S.A.) in March. Eighteen teams from thirteen countries travelled to Stetson after advancing through regional rounds across six continents. The hypothetical problem involved peatland burning that caused transboundary haze and adversely affected an endangered species.

The event, now in its 17th year, is the world's largest moot court competition that focuses exclusively on global environmental challenges. Students submit a written memorial and then make arguments before panels of judges. The final round judges included Ramsar's Deputy Secretary General Nick Davidson, *Journal of International Wildlife Law & Policy* editor-in-chief Wil Burns, and Stetson law professor Luz Nagle.

Pepperdine University defeated the Law Society of Ireland, Dublin, in the final round. China University of Political Science and Law, which received the best memorial award, was a semi-finalist, along with National Law University, Lucknow, India. The team from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil, received the Spirit of Stetson Award, a peer-nominated honour that recognizes civility, collegiality, and fair play.

To learn more about the International Environmental Moot Court Competition at Stetson, visit <http://www.law.stetson.edu/international/iemcc/>.

Roy Gardner



Roy Gardner with the Team from the University of Zimbabwe.
© Stetson University College of Law.

NATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RAMSAR SITE MANAGEMENT IN EL SALVADOR

Under a more holistic and integral vision, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador has developed a *National Plan for the Improvement of Wetlands Management*, which is part of its programme of ecosystem and landscape restoration.

As part of the Plan and as a tool for the dissemination of information, the Ministry prepared a strategy and an operational plan for all Ramsar Sites in El Salvador, as well as a map catalogue.



Ramsar Site Complex Jaltepeque, El Salvador.
© MARN, el Salvador.

The catalogue identifies each of the six Ramsar Sites in the country, along with the critical zones in each Site affected by anthropogenic and natural activities. The catalogue also includes a physical, chemical and bacteriological characterization of the Sites. This tool will help the environmental authority and other stakeholders to identify in detail the problems in each Ramsar Site and to develop a strategy and action plan for the mitigation, attenuation and adaptation of impacts to achieve the restoration of those wetlands.

By developing a National Plan for wetland management, El Salvador is fulfilling different Strategies under the Strategic Plan of the Convention, especially those related to the status of Ramsar Sites, management planning and wetland restoration. We congratulate the wetlands team of El Salvador for this effort and encourage them to continue working to achieve the wise use of these important Ramsar Sites. [Click here](#) to download the catalogue.

María Rivera

WE ARE UNDERVALUING OUR WETLANDS: TEEB WATER AND WETLANDS REPORT AVAILABLE



TEEB for Water and Wetlands reports during the launch

As foreshadowed in the last STRP Newsletter, *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) for Water and Wetlands report* was launched as part of 2013 World Wetlands Day celebrations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 1 February 2013.

All readers of this Newsletter will (or certainly should) know that wetlands (despite still often being regarded as 'wastelands') are extremely important for both nature and people around the world. Yet the full value and importance of both coastal and inland wetlands continue to be ignored in trade-offs and decision-making—and wetlands continue to be destroyed.

The TEEB report tells us that even we, in the 'wetland community,' have not realized just how valuable our wetlands are. It finds that in many cases the value of naturally functioning coastal and inland wetlands is vastly higher than that of other systems. For example, compared with even tropical forests, which are frequently regarded as the world's most important ecosystem, average recorded values for wetlands (per hectare) are almost 1.5 times higher for rivers and lakes, over eight times higher for inland vegetated wetlands (such as floodplains, marshes and swamps) and, remarkably, over 60 times higher for coastal vegetated wetlands (such as mangroves and salt marshes). Much of this value (85-95%) comes from their 'water-related' benefits/services, such as flood control, water purification, water for agriculture and energy generation, as well as storm protection.

The report stresses the need for all of us to transform our approach, by putting wetlands and their water-related services at the heart of water management in the transition to a resource-efficient, sustainable economy. To achieve this, and in line with the *Framework for avoiding, mitigating and compensating for wetland losses*, adopted by Ramsar COP11 ([Resolution XI.9](#)), the imperative is that we must *avoid* further destruction of wetlands, and *mitigate* and *compensate*, including through *res-*

toration and *rehabilitation* of those wetlands we have destroyed. The report recognizes that such restoration is often costly for wetlands, since it can take many decades to achieve, and even then, the full range of former benefits/services is seldom returned.

The *Water and Wetlands* report, which was launched as part of the 2013 World Wetlands Day celebrations, was appropriately linked to 2013, because it is also the [UN International Year for Water Cooperation](#).

The full report (in English) and summary report (in English and French) are available on: <http://www.teebweb.org/wetlands/>. Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian versions of the summary report will be released later in 2013.

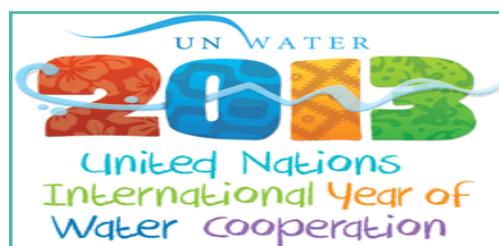
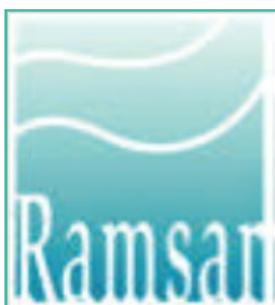
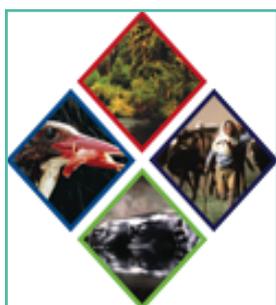
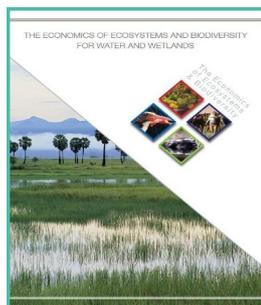
The work of the TEEB initiative has helped to raise awareness about the importance and value of the benefits people gain from ecosystems in general. Enhanced availability and access to such information is a key to supporting well-informed decision making on the future fate of the natural environment. But previously, there has been no single source of information on the value of the natural infrastructure of wetlands and the services, especially water-related services, which they deliver.

This important new report, commissioned by the Ramsar Secretariat from the TEEB, with financial support from the Norwegian, Swiss and Finnish governments and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is designed to fill that gap by providing a synthesis of the TEEB findings that relate to water and wetlands. The STRP and the Ramsar Secretariat have been closely involved in the report preparation, with authors including: Wetlands International's Ritesh Kumar, IUCN's Mark Smith, and the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat's David Coates, as well as myself.

I urge everyone to read and use this valuable report, and to bring it to the attention of all your policy-making and decision-taking colleagues. To support these efforts, a second phase of the TEEB water and wetlands initiative is now underway, for outreach and capacity-building—coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)-TEEB unit. This will include the preparation of training materials, short thematic policy briefs and the following capacity-building workshops during 2013:

- TEEB training workshop on mainstreaming values of wetlands into policy-making, 13-14 July 2013, Kigali, Rwanda (after the Forum on Wetlands for Livelihood, 8-12 July 2013, Kigali).
- TEEB training workshop on mainstreaming values of wetlands into the decision-making process, 1-6 September 2013, Stockholm, Sweden (parallel to the World Water Week, 1-6 September 2013, Stockholm).

Nick Davidson



STRP 17: HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTCOMES

WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND WHO?

During the week of 25th February to 1st March 2013, the STRP held its 17th Meeting (STRP 17) at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland. The forty-five Participants included: appointed STRP members, including members of the International Organization Partners (IOPs), invited experts (see bios [here](#)), representatives from Invited Observer Organizations and STRP National Focal Points.

STRP 17 was the first full meeting of the Panel since COP11, where a newly appointed Panel, led by Prof Royal C. Gardner (Chair) and Ms Christine Prietto (Vice-chair), established its draft Work Plan for the 2013-2015 triennium for approval by the Standing Committee at its 46th meeting (SC 46), 8-12 April 2013.

The newly elected members started working eagerly on further developing the themes and tasks requested by COP11 in [Resolution XI.17](#).



Group photo of STRP members, participants and Ramsar Secretariat staff during STRP 17.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Panel:

- welcomed the new Scientific & Technical Support Officer, Ms Marcela Bonells;
- established Working Groups (WGs) for each of the Top Priority Themes in Annex II to [Resolution XI.17](#), and a WG on ecological character and change in ecological character to consolidate closely-related tasks appearing in different Themes;
- developed Terms of Reference for STRP members and participants for further clarification and transparency about their roles, products and processes;
- created a group of Panel members, experts and observers to contribute to the review of the second order Draft of the *2013 Supplement to the 2006 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: Wetlands* ; and
- welcomed baby Charlotte Walpole, newborn daughter of STRP member, Matt Walpole!

OUTCOMES

The Panel adopted its draft Work Plan for the 2013-2015 triennium, recommending special attention to the following top priority tasks:

- Assess and support the capacity-building and knowledge-sharing needs of Contracting Parties in implementing the Ramsar Convention;
- Invasive species and wetlands-guide to available guidance;
- Further guidance on monitoring for change in ecological character: standardised terminology concerning Article 3.2 issues;

- Implementation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS)-2012 revision, led by the Secretariat with the STRP's advice;
- Implications of, and advice on, climate change for Convention implementation: review and advice on relevant decisions adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity COP11;
- Ramsar, water and wetlands: review and development of a strategy for engaging in the global water debate, work which would provide input to the preparation of the next Ramsar Strategic Plan for post-2015;
- Wetlands and poverty eradication- guidance and case studies; and
- Economics of wetland ecosystem benefits/ services.

The STRP recommended no further modification to the RIS, adopted at COP11, based on the request in [Resolution XI.8](#) to "urgently consider minor" modifications to the RIS.

Finally, the Panel welcomed offers from the Ramsar Regional Centre-East Asia (RRC-EA) to host a workshop for Asian STRP National Focal Points in Changwon, Republic of Korea, in late 2013, and from STRP member, Cui Lijuan, to host a workshop in China to advance the work of the climate change WG.

During the coming months, the Panel will continue developing its 2013-2015 Work Plan and will advance its tasks through workshops and the forthcoming Web-based STRP Platform.

Once approved at SC46, the Work Plan will be available on the Ramsar website and the STRP Platform.

THANK YOU HEATHER AND MONICA!

During STRP 17, the Panel expressed their sincere gratitude and appreciation to Ms Heather MacKay, STRP Chair 2009-2012, for her invaluable contributions to the work of the Panel, and to Ms Monica Zavagli, Scientific & Technical Support Officer 2009-2012, who played a key role in capacity building, redevelopment of the old STRP Support Service, and development of the STRP newsletter, among other things.

Monica travelled to Gland during the week of 10th February 2013 to make a hand-over to her successor, Ms Marcela Bonells.

Monica spent six years working at the Secretariat, first as Assistant Adviser for Europe and later as Scientific & Technical Support Officer. Her outstanding communication skills, dedication to Ramsar, and contagious enthusiasm will be missed.

The Panel wishes Heather and Monica all the best and hopes they remain engaged with the work of the STRP!



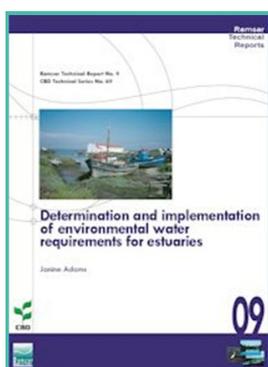
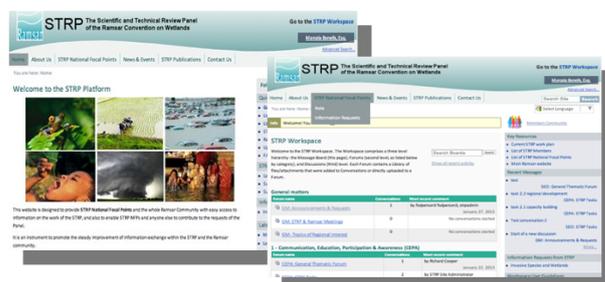
Left to right: Heather McKay and Monica Zavagli during the STRP meeting in July 2011, Wallingford, U.K.

Announcements

UPCOMING: STRP PORTAL AND WORKSPACE

The new and upcoming STRP Platform, which will replace the '[STRP Support Service](#)' (SuSe) portal, was showcased during STRP 17.

The Platform, designed to facilitate the STRP's intersessional work and to make STRP materials more accessible, will include: the 'STRP Workspace,' a closed password-protected area for the STRP, STRP National Focal Points and observers, as well as a 'Portal,' the public interface of the platform to make STRP news, activities and materials available to a wider audience. The new platform will be launched in late April 2013.

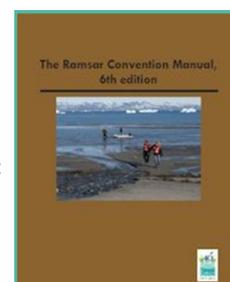


NEW RAMSAR TECHNICAL REPORT (RTR No. 9) AVAILABLE

In early 2013, the Ramsar Secretariat released a new Ramsar Technical Report (no. 9 in the RTR series), published jointly with the Convention on Biological Diversity as CBD Technical Report no. 69). The illustrated 36-page paper entitled, *Determination and implementation of environmental water requirements for estuaries*, by Janine Adams of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa, reviews the available methods for determining the environmental water requirements of estuaries and discusses the trends in method development and requirements for the successful implementation of those requirements, with a special focus on three countries that have made substantial progress in developing such methods, Australia, South Africa and the U.S.A. Eight pages of references and three tables of site examples round out the work. You can find the list of published RTRs at www.ramsar.org/RTR. To view and download the present report, go to: <http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/lib/rtr9-estuaries.pdf>.

RAMSAR MANUAL, 6th EDITION

The sixth edition of the Ramsar Manual, updated as of January 2013, has now been released in PDF format in English, French and Spanish. In 110 pages, the Manual describes the Convention, its structures and its activities in detail, reviews its history and highlights and provides 30 pages of background materials and references. The text can be found at these links in [English](#) | [français](#) | [español](#).



STRP WEBCASTS: CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS!

In an effort to reach a wider audience and to foster a greater dialogue about current wetland conservation efforts and challenges, we will be hosting a series of STRP webcasts. Presenters will be broadcast over the Internet to registered participants who will have the opportunity to comment and ask questions. The programmes will then be archived for future access. Initial programmes are expected to focus on projects in Mongolia and Colombia (which will be presented in Spanish). Please contact **Roy Gardner**, STRP Chair, at gardner@law.stetson.edu, if you have suggestions about future programmes.

INTERACTIVE VIDEO: 4 EASY STEPS TO UPDATE A RAMSAR INFORMATION SHEET



To help Contracting Parties fulfil their commitments to provide updated information for all of their Ramsar Sites, no later than six years or in the event of any significant change in the Site's ecological character, the Ramsar Secretariat designed a step-by-step video guide that will take you through the necessary steps to submit your updates. This user-friendly training tool is currently in English but will soon also be available in French and Spanish. Watch the video and submit your updated Ramsar Information Sheets to the Ramsar Secretariat! [English here](#) | [français](#) | [español](#)

WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2013: ADAPTATIONS AND REPORTS

Since World Wetlands Day, 2nd February 2013, the Secretariat has been busily uploading Parties' reports and adaptations, which indicate this was another successful celebration! Visit the reports page [here](#) and the adaptations page [here](#). If you have not done so yet, please send your report and adaptation. The deadline for submissions is **31st May, 2013**.



Upcoming Meetings

- III Meeting of the Ramsar Regional Initiative for the conservation and wise use of mangroves and coral reefs, Montelimar, Nicaragua, 22-26 April 2013.
- **Katoomba XVIII: Forests, water and people**, Beijing, China, 16 May 2013.
- Wetlands and urbanisation project in West Africa: Local stakeholders' workshop, City of Aneho, Togo; Ga South Municipality, Ghana; Somone Municipality, Senegal. Ramsar Secretariat and UN-HABITAT, 17-25 June 2013.
- Workshop on guidelines for sustainable use of inland wetlands: validation of the French version and planning of the project's remaining activities. FAO and Ramsar Secretariat, Accra, Ghana, 21-22 June 2013.
- **Forum on wetlands: Wise use, smart plans**, UNESCO-IHE, Ramsar Secretariat, REMA, Kigali, Rwanda, 8-12 July 2013.
- Workshop on Globwetland II presentation and Globwetland III users' consultation, ESA and Ramsar Secretariat, Rome, Italy, 15-19 July 2013.

Publications

- Hobbs, R.J., Higgs, E.S., Hall, C. (eds.). (2013). *Novel Ecosystems: Intervening in the New Ecological world Order*. U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell. See student companion website: <http://bcs.wiley.com/he-bcs/Books?action=index&bcsId=8020&itemId=1118354222>.
- Lloyd, C.R., Rebelo, L-M., Finlayson, C.M. (2013). *Providing low-budget estimations of carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions in agricultural wetlands*. *Environmental Research Letters*, 8:1, 1-13.
- Sirin, A. A. (ed.). (2013). *Wetlands of International Importance in Russia*. Moscow: Wetlands International Russia Programme Publication.
- Waage, S., Kester, C., Armstrong, K. (2013). *Global Public Sector Trends in Ecosystem Services, 2009-2012*. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR).
- European Environment Agency (EEA). (2012). *Invasive alien species indicators in Europe-a review of Streamlining European Biodiversity (SEBI) Indicator 10*. EEA Technical Report No. 15/2012. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Gardner, R.C., *Mitigation banking and reputational risk*. (2012). *National Wetlands Newsletter*, 34:6, 10-11.
- Graham, A., Day, J., Bray, B., Mackenzie, S. (2012). *Sustainable Drainage Systems: Maximizing the potential for people and wildlife, A guide for local authorities and developers*. U.K.: Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
- Musgrove, A.J., Aebischer, N.J., Eaton, M.A., Hearn, R.D., Newson, S.E., Noble, D.G., Parsons, M., Risely, K. & Stroud, D.A. (2013). Population estimates of birds in Great Britain and the United Kingdom. *British Birds*, 106: 64-100.

Useful links

List of STRP National Focal Points [Click here](#)

List of Ramsar Administrative Authorities [Click here](#)

List of CEPA National Focal Points [Click here](#)

List of STRP Members [Click here](#)

STRP Support Service <http://www.wetlands.org/strp/>

The Ramsar Site Information Service <http://ramsar.wetlands.org/>

The Global Environmental Flows Network www.eflownet.org

Ramsar's International Organization Partners (IOPs):

BirdLife International www.birdlife.org

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) www.iucn.org

IWMI (International Water Management Institute) www.iwmi.cgiar.org

Wetlands International www.wetlands.org

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF): www.panda.org

This newsletter has been prepared by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat in collaboration with STRP members and Observer Organizations with the purpose of keeping STRP National Focal Points and other STRP friends informed of the progress of the Panel's work during the 2013-2015 cycle and to provide you with useful information on wetland conservation for the implementation of the Convention in your own country, as well as to enhance our STRP network throughout the regions.

Previous editions of the STRP Newsletter are posted on the main Ramsar website. You can view them [here](#).

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CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER AS WELL! SEND US ARTICLES AND OTHER INTERESTING NEWS RELEVANT TO WETLANDS IN YOUR COUNTRY AND REGION IN ANY OF THE CONVENTION LANGUAGES!

send to strp@ramsar.org

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