



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.

<http://www.ramsar.org/>

STRP Newsletter

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

Issue n. 4/2010

Ramsar, STRP and the CBD COP10 in Nagoya ...notes from the Deputy Secretary General



Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention.

Following the failure of the Copenhagen climate negotiations last year, there was much global attention on the Convention on Biological Diversity's COP10 "biodiversity summit", and whether it could reach inter-governmental agreement on key issues, including what to do about the general failure to achieve the 2010 target of reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity. In that sense COP10 is being widely regarded as a success, with agreement reached on the highly contentious "Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation" (ABS); a new "Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020; and on a "Strategy for Resource Mobilisation".

Ramsar was represented by Secretary General Anada Tiega, DSG Nick Davidson, and STRP experts Rob McInnes and Dave Prichard. Ramsar led or participated in a number of side events, including on Ramsar/CBD linkages (with Japan Ministry of Environment), during which a new agreement with the Japanese space agency (JAXA) on sharing wetland and Ramsar Site imagery from their ALOS satellite was signed; UNEP initiatives in information and knowledge management; water-bird global status (with launch of WI's new "State of the World's Waterbirds 2010" report); and the European Space Agency's "Globwetland-II" project on North African wetlands.

A number of CBD COP10 Decisions have direct relevance for Ramsar and its long and well-recognised role as CBD's lead implementation partner on wetlands, and here's a summary of some of these issues and outcomes.

The new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

A key Ramsar-relevant issue that emerged from the "in-depth" review of CBD's inland waters programme of work (which itself had a major input from Ramsar and STRP) was that of ecosystems and water – not just that all biodiversity depends on water of the right amount, timing and quality, but also importantly that healthy ecosystems are crucial for maintaining the global water cycle and supplies of water to people. CBD's SBSTTA in May recognized that the Convention has paid remarkably scant attention to managing water being crucial to addressing ecosystems and biodiversity loss, and recommended that a specific water target be included in the new Strategic Plan. Whilst this did not happen, The Strategic Plan's Target 14 on ecosystem services does include specific reference to water, and importantly the decision also stresses that "the paramount importance of water" should be highlighted in the technical rationale to be prepared for this target. A joint statement made by CITES, Ramsar, CMS and World Heritage Conventions to the High Level Segment of the COP stressed our conventions' support for working together to implement an inclusive Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

Inland water ecosystems strongly reflects the Ramsar (including STRP) and CBD collaborations, and here stresses water management issues and the role of ecosystems as natural infrastructure in the sustainable delivery of water-related or dependent ecosystem services. The Decision has much of direct relevance to Ramsar's and STRP's implementation work, including reinforcing networks of Ramsar Site designations throughout river basins, and recognising the importance of wetlands in carbon storage and climate mitigation and adaptation activities.

Protected areas. As for ecosystem programmes of work, until now the CBD Protected Areas programme of work has singularly failed to recognise the relevance of existing selection and designation mechanisms such as for Ramsar Sites. This has now been redressed in the COP10 Decision, which now recognises both Ramsar's standard criteria for identification of sites of global biodiversity conservation significance, and the designation of Ramsar Sites.

For **more** insights read the full article [here!](#)

Nick Davidson

New Ramsar Sites:

- RIVIÈRE NOSIVOLO ET AFFLUENTS –MADAGASCAR
- ROSWELL ARTESIAN WETLANDS— USA
- HUMEDAL MAQUENQUE – COSTA RICA
- FIVE RAMSAR SITES IN MEXICO: 1) LA MINTZITA, 2) LAGO DE SAN JUAN DE LOS AHORCADOS, 3) MANGLARES Y HUMEDALES DEL NORTE DE ISLA COZUMEL, 4) LA ALBERCA DE LOS ESPINOS, 5) LAGUNA DE HANSON

Inside this issue:

GENERAL MATTERS	2
TOPIC OF THE QUARTER	5
ANNOUNCEMENTS	6
UPCOMING MEETINGS	7
PUBLICATIONS	7
USEFUL LINKS	7

General Matters

STRP AT STETSON UNIVERSITY

Members of the two STRP task forces - from the left: Rob McInnes, Randy Milton, Monica Zavagli, Kevin Erwin, Dave Pritchard, Nick Davidson, Heather MacKay, Roy Gardner and Aileen Anderson.



Florida is known for providing habitat for many different types of migratory birds, from herons and egrets to storks and cranes. In October 2010, a rare breed descended upon the state: members of the STRP!

Stetson University College of Law, which recently signed a [memorandum of cooperation](#) with the Secretariat, hosted a group of STRP members and invited experts at its Tampa campus from 5-8 October. The workshop focused on two primary tasks: **wetlands and energy issues**, and **guidance on mitigation of and compensation for losses of wetland area and values**. Heather MacKay and Aileen Anderson greatly progressed

on guidance related to wetlands and the energy sector, while the other participants developed an outline for an integrated framework and guidelines for avoiding, mitigating and compensating for wetland losses. Marcela Bonells, a second-year law student and Stetson Biodiversity Fellow, presented her findings on the extent to which the "avoid-mitigate-compensate" approach appears in environmental laws and policies in Latin America and the Caribbean. She said that "working with the STRP was a wonderful experience" and found that "the most interesting part was learning about different regulatory approaches to environmental protection throughout South American and the Caribbean, and seeing how some of these countries have adopted the principles of the Ramsar Convention in their wetland protection laws and policies." The workshop provided other Stetson students opportunities to learn about the Convention as well. One evening, as part of a Biodiversity Lecture Se-

ries, Nick Davidson and Heather MacKay spoke to the Stetson community about the history and future of the Convention and the role of the STRP. A post-lecture contingent met long into the night discussing a range of wetland issues, including candidate sites for Ramsar designation. On the workshop's concluding afternoon, Kevin Erwin led a delegation of workshopers and students into the tangled thickets of mangroves at Fort DeSoto Park. All workshop participants reported that the event was productive and well-organized, although one high-maintenance tea aficionado did express his disappointment with being offered Vanilla Rooibos (although to be fair, Rooibos comes from the needles of an African bush and is not technically a tea). Stetson hopes to host similar events in the future.

Roy Gardner

WORLD CHAMPION IN STRP

The Panel warmly congratulates Ms Aileen Anderson, co-lead of the STRP task on Energy & Wetlands to win a third prize at the world championship of the Off Road Triathlon in Maui, Hawaii in October 2010 with time records of: swim: 25:55 minutes—bike: 2:11:16 hrs -Run: 1:02:55 hrs, Overall 03:43:11.

Who if not our energy expert could have made it? Bravo!



Aileen Anderson, STRP Invited Expert

FURTHER PROGRESS ON REVISING RAMSAR INFORMATION SHEET

A small workshop involving key STRP members and the Ramsar Secretariat was held in Gland from the 2nd to 4th November 2010 to advance STRP tasks on 1) revising the structure of the Ramsar Information Sheet and 2) Reformatting/repackaged the Strategic Framework. These quite complex and inter-linked tasks, were already extensively explained in the previous edition of our STRP Newsletter ([n. 2/2010](#)). The rationale behind the New RIS is to simplify the form and provide a logical structure for the different types of information requested that will aid compilers in their task; the new RIS will

also better capture information on the ecological character of the Ramsar Site and facilitate the development of on-line reporting and RIS submission. The repackaging of the Strategic Framework will provide a much clearer guidance on site selection and RIS completion. With the assistance of Secretariat, STRP has sought input from individuals in Contracting Parties and others with recent experience of compiling and submitting RIS. Learning from such experience has been important to avoid potential ambiguities in new proposals. The **STRP** would **welcome volunteers** to comment on the current drafts so as

these comments can be reflected in the version that will be presented and discussed at the 16th Meeting of the STRP, in February 2011. Please contact the lead for this task: David Stroud at David.Stroud@jncc.gov.uk.

Monica Zavagli



CITY BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT 2010

The City Biodiversity Summit 2010 was held in Aichi/Nagoya between 24-26th October during the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The aim of the summit was to reaffirm the critical role of local authorities in biodiversity management, facilitate the exchange of information and share experiences worldwide on how cities can be positive agents in protecting and restoring biodiversity.

In a plenary presentation, the Ramsar Secretary General Anada Tiega highlighted the key role that cities have in protecting wetlands both within urban boundaries and beyond within wider watersheds and also the potential that wetlands have in providing solutions to urban issues such as water supply and sanitation. He also stressed the importance of the collaborative partnerships which Ramsar has established with key actors in this area including UN HABITAT, CBD and ICLEI. The Summit has strengthened these relationships and contributed directly to the on-going work of the STRP in this area.

In the discussion sessions Rob McInnes, STRP Task Lead on Urban and Peri-Urban Wetlands, emphasised several key points including: the fact cities are a primary consumer and moderator of water; that as urbanisation increases the pressures on natural resources at some distance from a city increase resulting to impacts on biodiversity and the water cycle; and that when given cross-sectoral consideration the protection and restoration of wetland habitats can deliver a multitude of benefits to a variety of stakeholders.

The meeting concluded with the 650 delegates representing cities and organisation across the world agreeing to the [Aichi/Nagoya Declaration](#) on Cities and Biodiversity and charged the Governor of Aichi Prefecture and the Major of Nagoya to present this at the High Level Segment of the CBD COP for consideration by all the parties .

Rob McInnes



Plenary session of the City Biodiversity Summit 2010 in Nagoya

“THE POTENTIAL THAT WETLANDS HAVE IN PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO URBAN ISSUES SUCH AS WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION ”

NEW REGIONAL ACTION PLAN TO CONSERVE PACIFIC WETLANDS



Participants on a field trip to "Plaine des Lacs" (Proposed Ramsar Site)

A new three-year action plan that seeks to promote and strengthen the wise use and conservation of wetlands in the Pacific Islands is being finalized outlining activities, responsibilities and targets.

The new Regional Wetlands Action Plan covers the period 2011-2013 and was developed during a regional workshop held in August 2010 in Noumea, New Caledonia, as a follow on the implementation review of the 1999 Regional Wetlands Action Plan. A total of 13 Pacific island countries and territories participated. While the new three-year plan action plan was the key outcome of the workshop, there were also other benefits that arose from the gathering. Participants had the opportunity to share experiences and exchange information on national issues, challenges and priorities related to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. Better understanding of the benefits and required steps for join-

ing the Ramsar Convention, as well as better understanding of implementation issues, processes and procedures for the contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands were also one of the successful outcomes of the workshop. In addition to that, participants learnt about conservation measures, lessons and initiatives in New Caledonia and made new contacts with French experts working in this field. The event was made possible through the generous financial support of the Governments of France, Australia, United States and Norway. It was hosted by Government of New Caledonia and was co-organised by SPREP and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

The full article by Vai Jungblut can be viewed here http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=818

Philippe Gerbeaux



PROGRESSING INDICATORS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Anyone needing state-of-the-art intelligence about wetlands in the Mediterranean Basin is now better served than ever, thanks to the work of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), based at the Tour du Valat research station in the Camargue, France (<http://www.medwetlands-obs.org/>).

One of the Observatory's central initiatives is the development of a suite of indicators designed to provide policy-relevant information to decision-makers on the status and trends of wetland resources, drivers of change, policy/management responses and delivery of ecosystem services. A working group on these indicators met at the Headquarters of Wetlands International in Ede, The Netherlands, on 15-16 September to agree a final definition and prioritisation of indicator topics, data sources,

likely analysis methods and reporting plans. Close coordination with Ramsar's indicators of Convention effectiveness has been sought throughout; and the STRP's lead on indicators Dave Pritchard represented the Convention at the meeting.

Some of the MWO's eventual 28 or so indicators will be based on data generated through Ramsar processes, and hence will provide a picture of aspects of Convention implementation analysed specifically in the Mediterranean context. Other indicators offer the prospect of MWO-compiled data forming a regional input to the Convention's own reports on the state of the world's wetlands.

The Ede workshop gave particular attention to ways of measuring and revealing the role of wetlands in delivering a variety of ecosystem ser-

VICES, many of them based on the cross-cutting significance of water for a wide range of sectors beyond the environmental conservation sector. When such crucial issues are at stake it is heartening to see the extent of collaboration between the MWO and the STRP, and to have such a progressive example of regional-scale application of global priorities for technical work on wetlands.

The Coordination Unit of the MWO has informed the Ramsar Secretariat that the 1st report on the status and trends of Mediterranean wetlands will be launched at the next World Wetlands Day (2nd February 2011) as a contribution to the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention.

Dave Pritchard

WRITING WORKSHOP ON WETLANDS AND POVERTY ERADICATION

The STRP members of the working group on Wetlands and Poverty Reduction have met at the Ramsar secretariat in Gland from the 8th to the 12th of November to progress the work on the STRP task 2.6 that calls for "development of a framework that links poverty eradication and wetland conservation and wise use" including identification of the most appropriate scale at which each type of poverty eradication action should take place; the framework, which builds on existing thinking in conservation and development sectors, will analyze wetlands & poverty interactions with identification of response options. At the end of the three days the working group have almost finalized the first draft that will be further discussed in next February with the rest of STRP members at the 16th Meeting of the

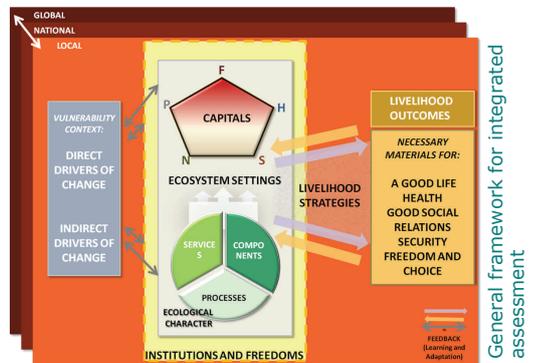
STRP. Task 2.6 also calls for development of practical structured 'guide to the available guidelines and tools' for addressing poverty eradication in relation to wetlands; and 'Collation and review of examples' on how wetland degradation affects people's livelihoods and how maintenance or restoration of the ecological character of wetlands can contribute to poverty alleviation. But let's do one thing at a time!...also because resources are very limited.

Congratulations to Ritesh, Sonali, Seb, Randy and Pierre for the fruitful discussions and the progresses made so far!

Monica Zavagli



Left clockwise: Randy Milton, Sonali Senaratna, Pierre Horwitz, Ritesh Kumar and Seb Buckton



RAMSAR RESTORATION GUIDANCE



Mr Kevin Erwin,
STRP thematic Lead
on Restoration

The work for updating the current Ramsar Guidance on wetland restoration continues. After its review to map out target audience, objectives, gaps and initial needs, the task force has been holding workshops with wetland restoration practitioners to collect information on available existing useful restoration material and also to identify where are the major obstacles and gaps to restoration. A key compo-

nent is to identify whether the needs for further guidance should address issues at institutional or rather at ground level. This year small workshops were held at the Conference of the Society of Wetland Scientists in Salt Lake City, at the SER Europe conference in Avignon, at the UNDP/GEF Volga Delta Restoration meeting in Russia, and some other informal workshops in the US and Belgium. A question-

naire was also produced to collect information on existing available guidance and to collect case studies to be integrated into the future updated/expanded Ramsar guidance.

If you feel you can contribute please contact task leads Kevin Erwin KLErwin@environment.com and Rob McInnes robmcinnes@bioscanuk.com

WORKSHOP OF THE STRP AFRICAN NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS AND OTHER WETLAND EXPERTS IN THE REGION

**Topic of
the
Quarter**

Only few days left before the start of the Ramsar workshop of the African STRP National Focal Points and other Wetland Experts in the Region.

The workshop will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa from the 30th November to the 2nd December 2010, and will bring together more than fifty participants among which thirty STRP National Focal Points from all over the continent, representatives of IWMI, WWF, Wetland International, AEWA, STRP members, the Water Research Commission and the South African Administrative Authority.

Attending from the Panel: the STRP Chair, Dr Heather MacKay, STRP Africa Networker Mr Stanley Liphadzi and the STRP Experts: Mr Rob McInnes, Prof Kassim Kulindwa and Dr Kym Morton, while from the Ramsar Secretariat there will be Ms Monica Zavagli, Scientific and Technical Officer and the Ramsar Africa Team: Dr Paul Ouedraogo and Ms Cathleen Cybèle.

The workshop will provide an excellent opportunity to share experience, to build a better understanding of the Ramsar Convention and STRP processes as well as to specifically advance some of the key STRP tasks. In particular, three work sessions will be held respectively focusing on Management of Urban Wetlands, Wetlands and Extractive Industries and building a stronger STRP Network in Africa. There will be also some time for discussion on the Wetland Restoration Guidance and the New Ramsar Information Sheet as well as other STRP priority tasks and expected deliverables to COP11.

This is the first time ever that the STRP National Focal Points of the Africa region will get together and the STRP and the

Ramsar Secretariat are very excited to meet with them and to engage in constructive discussions. The programme of the meeting is structured with the intent to give voice to the Focal Points and the other Experts in the region!

The full agenda with links to briefing notes for the various work sessions and presentations is provided [here](#)

The outcomes of the workshop and their recommendations will be shared with everyone and reported to STRP16 in February 2011 and also to the next Standing Committee meeting. (and for sure in the next edition of our STRP Newsletter too!)

The workshop has been possible thanks to the generous contributions of the Water Research Commission and the Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa, the Governments of Switzerland and Tanzania, the Ramsar Secretariat and Star Alliance/Biosphere Connections.

Extra efforts were made by the Organizing Committee to find additional resources to have English-French interpretations at the workshop. In fact, although the working language of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel is English, we felt it would be critical to provide additional facilities to our francophone participants. (However all the documents will remain in English.)

A special section in the main Ramsar Website will provide "live" insights as the workshop progresses. Stay tuned in!

We wish all a very successful meeting and that it be the first of many others in Africa and in the other Regions!

Monica Zavagli



Announcements



40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAMSAR CONVENTION IN 2011

To celebrate 40 years of the Convention on Wetlands next year, the Secretariat is pleased to release the PDF versions of a commemorative booklet that will be officially launched on 2 February 2011. This 32 page booklet in the three official Convention languages is a brief reflection on, and celebration of, the evolution and achievements of the Convention since 1971.

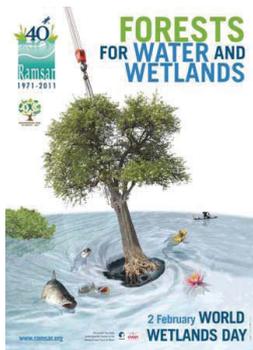
the PDFs in English, French and Spanish are now available online here: <http://www.ramsar.org/40-anniversary/>

WWD 2011—WETLANDS AND FORESTS

This is the theme for World Wetlands Day 2011, especially chosen because 2011 is the UN International Year of Forests.

Our slogan is simple – **Forests for water and wetlands** – allowing us to look at the ‘big picture’ of forests in our lives, including:

- *Forested wetlands and the special benefits they bring.* Mangroves, peat-swamp forests, freshwater swamp forests: biologically diverse, helping us manage our freshwater, and providing us with many other ‘services’ across the globe including vital roles in carbon storage – our allies in the face of climate change. Despite their utility, they are often under threat from development, from drainage and conversion.
- *The role of forests – wet or not – in our lives, and why looking after them matters.* Vital to all human lives, freshwater availability on a global scale depends on our forests. So too, to a large extent, does freshwater quality.
- *The role of forests in how our wetlands function.* It’s simple: the health of our wetlands, whether forested or not, is linked to the health of forests in our catchments. Losing and degrading forests means losing and degrading wetlands.

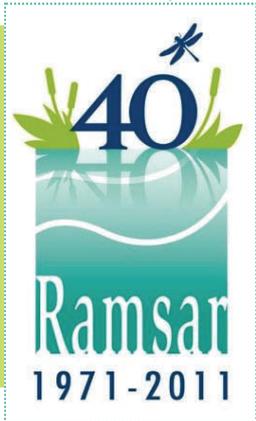


We cannot manage without forests, whether terrestrial forests or forested wetlands, given the critical roles that they play in our lives – for water, for food, for livelihoods, for recreation....and more.

Do you want to make your contribution to the celebrations?

Use the special 40th Ramsar Logo under your electronic signature saying “**Celebrating 40 years of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**”

Download the Logo [here](#).



RAMSAR KEY DOCUMENTS TRANSLATED IN RUSSIAN

A set of key Ramsar documents were translated in Russian in consultation with our focal points in the Russian Federation and other Contracting Parties that were members of the Former Soviet Union. For the list of documents click [here](#).

NEW SENIOR ADVISER FOR AFRICA AT THE RAMSAR SECRETARIAT

Welcome to **Dr Paul Ouedraogo** who joined the Ramsar Family on the 13th of November 2010.

Paul’s many year of hands on experience in wetlands management will be very valuable for the STRP work!

Read more about Paul [here](#).





Call for Proposals at the Society for Ecological Restoration SER

The Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) is now accepting proposals for special sessions, symposia, workshops and training courses at its **4th World Conference on Ecological Restoration**, 21-25 August 2011 in Merida, Mexico. If you are interested in organizing a session or training opportunity to complement the scientific programme, please submit your proposal no later than 1 December 2010. (<http://www.ser2011.org/en/registration/call-for-proposals/>)

Upcoming Meetings

- UNFCCC Conference, 29 November to 10 December 2010, Cancun, Mexico
- 6th Meeting of the STRP, 14-18 February 2011, Gland– Switzerland
- 4th meeting of the Chairs of the Subsidiary Advisory Bodies (CSAB) of the biodiversity-related Conventions will be hosted by the Ramsar Secretariat in Gland in February 2011. The exact date will be soon confirmed.

Publications

- Government policies for environmental flows. Quesne et al 2010. download it [here](#).
- Science news article on 2010 target and 2020 indicators. download it [here](#).
- TEEB Report: a practical guidance on how to deal with the challenge of biodiversity loss at a local and regional level. <http://www.teebweb.org/ForLocalandRegionalPolicy/tabid/1020/Default.aspx>

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
WWF www.panda.org

Get in touch with the STRP Regional Networker for your region:

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- **Oceania:** Philippe Gerbeaux (pgerbeaux@doc.govt.nz)

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

send to strp@ramsar.org

This newsletter has been created 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 on the progress of the Panel's work during the 2009-2012 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.

Acknowledgements: special thanks for the contributions to this newsletter go to Nick Davidson (Ramsar Secretariat), Dave Pritchard (STRP), Roy Gardner (STRP), Marcela Bonells (Stetson University), Heather MacKay (STRP Chair), David Stroud (STRP), Philippe Gerbeaux (STRP), Aileen Anderson (STRP Invited expert) and Monica Zavagli (Ramsar Secretariat).

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

Photos on the front page: left - Ramsar Site n.1916 *Rivière Nosivolo et affluents* in Madagascar, right: Ramsar Site n. 1923 Laguna de Hanson, Parque Nacional Constitución de 1857 in Mexico.