

**CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

**11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel  
Gland, Switzerland, 8-11 April 2003**

**DOC. STRP11-14**

Agenda item 6.1 vi)

**Background materials concerning assessing the effectiveness of  
the Convention and the preparation of draft COP9 Resolutions**

1. Attached to this note are the COP8 Resolutions on issues related to work requested of the Panel in review and development of indicators for assessing the effective implementation of the Convention, and in the drafting and consultation of COP9 technical Resolutions:
  - i) COP8 Resolution VIII.26 “The Implementation of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 during the triennium 2003-2005 and National Reports for Ramsar COP9”; and
  - ii) COP8 Resolution VIII.45 “Operation of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the effectiveness of Ramsar Convention Resolutions and Recommendations”.
2. These materials provide the background to the high priority tasks requested of the Panel for 2003-2005 on these matters.
3. The STRP is requested to familiarize itself with the contents of these materials, as the basis for preparing its Work Plan activities.

**“Wetlands: water, life, and culture”  
8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties  
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)  
Valencia, Spain, 18-26 November 2002**

## **Resolution VIII.26**

### **The implementation of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 during the triennium 2003-2005 and National Reports for Ramsar COP9**

1. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION to the 120 Contracting Parties that submitted their National Reports to this meeting of the Conference of the Parties concerning the implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 1997-2002 during the triennium 2000-2002, and URGING the remaining five Parties to do so as a matter of priority;
2. NOTING the content of the Reports to this meeting of the COP of the Chairpersons of the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), as well as the Report of the Secretary General and the regional overviews of the implementation of the Convention;
3. AWARE of the information provided in the Report of the Secretary General concerning the experience of Contracting Parties in using the National Report Format adopted for COP8;
4. CONSIDERING that this meeting of the COP has adopted the Convention’s Strategic Plan 2003-2008 (Resolution VIII.25), which includes actions to be undertaken by Contracting Parties and others;
5. RECALLING that Contracting Parties were requested by the Standing Committee to provide to the Ramsar Bureau their provisional national targets for the implementation of the Strategic Plan in the 2003-2005 triennium, as the basis for establishing realistic global targets for the Convention, and THANKING those 57 Contracting Parties which have provided this information;
6. FURTHER RECALLING that as part of their establishment of provisional national targets for 2003-2005 all Contracting Parties were requested to indicate their priority and the adequacy of the resources at their disposal for the implementation of each of the Operational Objectives of the draft Convention’s Strategic Plan;
7. RECOGNIZING WITH CONCERN the fact that, among the Parties that have provided their provisional targets, some developed and, especially, developing countries have indicated that their level of available resources is not adequate to implement each of the Operational Objectives of the Strategic Plan during the triennium 2003-2005, including those identified as of high priority, and that in many cases the indication is that lack of resources is severely limiting, a situation that may apply to other Parties; and

8. CONSIDERING that as part of the revised *modus operandi* of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel adopted by this meeting by Resolution VIII.28, the Conference of the Parties is requested to identify priorities for the work of the Panel during the coming triennium, in view of its large number of major tasks identified in the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and the Resolutions adopted by the COP, and the limited capacity and resources of the Panel to undertake all these tasks;

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9. APPROVES the global targets for the implementation of the Convention for 2003-2005, as annexed to this Resolution, and INSTRUCTS the Bureau to prepare a Work Plan for the Convention for 2003-2005 by incorporating these targets into Section II of the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008 as adopted by this Conference (Resolution VIII.25), and to circulate this document widely to all Contracting Parties and relevant organizations;
10. URGES those Contracting Parties which have prepared Provisional National Targets and Actions for their implementation of the Strategic Plan during 2003-2005 to amend them as necessary, in the light of the Work Plan 2003-2005 to be circulated by the Bureau as per the previous paragraph, and to communicate the revised targets and actions to the Bureau not later than 30 June 2003;
11. STRONGLY URGES those Contracting Parties that have not yet prepared National Targets and Actions for their implementation of the Strategic Plan during 2003-2005 to do so as soon as the Bureau has circulated the Work Plan 2003-2005 as per paragraph 10 above, and to communicate their targets and actions to the Bureau not later than 30 June 2003;
12. URGES all Contracting Parties to undertake the revision or preparation, as appropriate, of their National Targets and Actions for the implementation of the Strategic Plan during 2003-2005 in consultation with their National Ramsar/Wetland Committees, where they exist, and also with all other relevant Government Ministries and agencies and the major groups of civil society recognized in Agenda 21;
13. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Bureau to prepare a proposal for a simple National Report Format for COP9 for consideration by the Standing Committee at its meeting in February 2003, taking into account the experiences of Contracting Parties in making their National Reports to COP8;
14. REQUESTS that the proposed National Report Format for COP9 include, *inter alia*, a) codified questions on priorities and progress in implementation; b) precise indicators for the status of, and progress in, implementation; and c) explanatory text fields for reporting implementation progress since COP8;
15. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Bureau to make available to all Contracting Parties as soon as possible in 2003 this National Report Format, once approved by the Standing Committee;
16. FURTHER INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Bureau to assist Parties in the preparation of the National Reports for COP9 by:

- a) providing analytical examples of successfully completed reports;
  - b) providing guidelines for the completion of the report, including recommendations, arranging (if resources become available) for consultancy services, and organizing training workshops at national or subregional levels;
  - c) assisting federal countries to develop more practical ways to deal with their specific situation; and
  - d) at the request of interested Parties, providing critical feedback on a first draft of the National Report;
17. URGES all Contracting Parties to use the National Report Format as a planning tool for action in the next triennium and to undertake the preparation of their National Reports for Ramsar COP9 in consultation with their National Ramsar/Wetland Committees, where they exist, and also with all other relevant Government Ministries and agencies, and the major groups of civil society recognized in Agenda 21;
  18. FURTHER URGES Parties to consider initiating trials of joint reporting involving Ramsar and other multilateral environmental agreements, seeking the advice, as appropriate, of the United Nations Environment Programme;
  19. REQUESTS the STRP to prepare a series of key indicators in relation to the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan in the next triennium, to be used as part of the National Report Format. These indicators should be adopted by the Standing Committee at its annual meeting in 2004, so that Parties may use them to complement their National Reports when they are finalised in preparation for COP9 in 2005;
  20. REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau to prepare a detailed review of the status and operations of National Ramsar/Wetland Committees, including their membership and terms of reference, and to make this available to all Contracting Parties as soon as possible, so that they may benefit from each other's good practice and experience;
  21. REITERATES its encouragement to Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to establish as soon as practicable National Ramsar/Wetland Committees which involve appropriate representation from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, and in doing so to take into account the Ramsar Bureau's review of the status and operations of such Committees;
  22. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Bureau to prepare an analysis of the priorities for the global implementation of the Convention 2003-2005 indicated in the Resolutions adopted by this meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and REQUESTS the Standing Committee at its first meeting of the triennium to determine the priority activities which should be undertaken by the Bureau and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel during 2003-2005;
  23. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Bureau to continue to prepare annual Bureau Work Plans, based on the actions of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and Work Plan 2003-2005, for approval by the Standing Committee; and

24. REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau and Contracting Parties to continue their efforts to work with bilateral and multilateral donors to mobilize funds for projects for the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the context of poverty eradication strategies which involve a river basin, coastal zone, and holistic water resource management approach, taking into account the objectives and activities identified by Contracting Parties for the 2003-2005 triennium.

## Annex I

### 2003-2005 global implementation targets for the Convention

These targets should be read in conjunction with the detailed text of each Action in Section II of the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008 (Resolution VIII.25).

#### Operational Objective 1. Inventory and assessment

##### Operational Objective 1.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
1.1.1	By COP9, all Parties without completed inventories to have initiated action in line with the Ramsar Framework for Wetland Inventory, and as far as possible to have completed and disseminated comprehensive national wetland inventories.	CPs, IOPs, Bureau, MedWet
1.1.2	All national wetland inventories initiated after COP8 to include information on wetland importance; potential Ramsar sites; wetlands for restoration; location of under-represented wetland types; and values and functions, in particular in relation to poverty eradication strategies.	CPs, IOPs
1.1.3	All wetland inventories to have full data management, custodianship, and metadata records in place.	CPs
1.1.4	By COP9, a Web-based metadatabase in place and populated with information on all national wetland inventories.	STRP, WI, CPs
1.1.5	An update to be completed of the <i>Global review of wetland resources and priorities for wetland inventory (GroWI)</i> with a report to COP9.	STRP, WI, Bureau
1.1.6	By COP9, all Parties with wetland inventories to have made these available to all stakeholders.	CPs

##### Operational Objective 1.2

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
1.2.4	Wetland ecosystem vulnerability assessment methods available to COP9.	Bureau, STRP, MedWet, IOPs, MEAs
1.2.5	SC/Bureau to identify at least 20 Parties willing to undertake vulnerability assessments and report to COP9.	CPs, MedWet, IOPs
1.2.7	At least 50 CPs to have undertaken water quality and quantity assessments.	CPs, MedWet, IOPs

#### Operational Objective 2. Policies and legislation, including impact assessment and valuation

##### Operational Objective 2.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
2.1.1	National Wetland Policy or equivalent instrument initiated by all Parties not	CPs

	having it, incorporating WSSD targets and actions, as appropriate.	
2.1.2	National Wetland Policy or equivalent instrument fully integrated into other strategic and planning processes by all Parties, including poverty eradication strategies and water resources management and water efficiency plans and national strategies for sustainable development in line with WSSD targets.	CPs, MEAs

## Operational Objective 2.2

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
2.2.1	SC/Bureau to identify at least 100 Parties to initiate and if possible complete by COP9 comprehensive reviews of their laws and institutions.	CPs
2.2.2	SC/Bureau to identify at least 50 Parties to have in place Strategic Environmental Assessment for policies, programmes and plans impacting on wetlands.	CPs
2.2.3	All CPs to have required EIA, as appropriate, for proposed projects, developments or changes which may impact on wetlands.	CPs, OCs
2.2.4	STRP to have made progress on methodologies for economic, social and environmental valuation, and all CPs with experience in this area to have engaged in the STRP work.	CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs

**Operational Objective 3. Integration of wetland wise use into sustainable development**

## Operational Objective 3.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
3.1.1	STRP to spearhead process of reviewing and updating guidance on the Wise Use concept, including the ecosystem approach, in particular in line with the outcomes of WSSD.	STRP, CPs
3.1.3	All CPs to consider how to adapt and to incorporate, as necessary, into national practice the new management planning guidelines to the wise use of all wetlands.	CPs

## Operational Objective 3.3

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
3.3.2	Analysis of values and functions of Ramsar sites prepared by Bureau/Wetlands International and circulated.	Bureau, MedWet, Wetlands International

## Operational Objective 3.4

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
3.4.4	Guidance prepared on assessment of impact of large dams on wetlands and river systems.	STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs

3.4.6	All CPs to have made available the guidance on water allocation and management for ecosystems to support decision-making on water resource management in all CPs, as a contribution to achieve the WDDS target on water resources management and water efficiency plans.	CPs
3.4.7	Guidelines on groundwater resources prepared.	Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs
3.4.8	COP8 information on wetlands and mitigation and adaptive management for climate change made available.	STRP, Bureau, MedWet, Ocs, CPs
3.4.9	All relevant CPs to have assessed implications of Kyoto Protocol implementation on wetlands (including applying COP8 restoration guidelines).	CPs, OCs

#### Operational Objective 4. Restoration and rehabilitation

##### Operational Objective 4.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
4.1.2	All CPs with lost or degraded wetlands to have identified priority sites for restoration; restoration projects underway or completed in at least 100 CPs.	CPs, MedWet, IOPs
4.1.3	Continue to add new case studies and methods to Ramsar wetland restoration Web site.	CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs

#### Operational Objective 5. Invasive alien species

##### Operational Objective 5.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
5.1.1	Address the problems posed by invasive species in wetland ecosystems in a decisive and holistic manner, making use, as appropriate, of the tools and guidance developed by various institutions and processes.	CPs
5.1.2	Guidance for invasives' management prepared.	CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, GISP, IOPs, OCs

#### Operational Objective 6. Local communities, indigenous people and cultural values

##### Operational Objective 6.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
6.1.5	Elaborated guidelines, developed jointly with CBD, available to COP9.	CPs, CEPA, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs

**Operational Objective 8. Incentives**

## Operational Objective 8.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
8.1.1	SC/Bureau to have identified at least 50 CPs to have reviewed policy and legal and institutional frameworks and sought to remove measures adversely affecting wetland conservation and wise use.	CPs

**Operational Objective 9. Communication, education and public awareness**

## Operational Objective 9.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
9.1.2	At least 50 CPs to have established national CEPA action plans.	CPs, CEPA
9.1.10	At least 75 CPs to have established at least one wetland education centre at a Ramsar site.	CPs, CEPA, IOPs, OCs

**Operational Objective 10. Designation of Ramsar sites**

## Operational Objective 10.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
10.1.1	Report on implementation progress to the Ramsar Bureau by 31 December 2003, with consolidated Bureau report circulated to all Parties by 31 March 2004. Each CP which has not designated a Ramsar site since accession to the Convention to have designated at least one new site. Designation of a further 55 million ha and 250 Ramsar sites, as progress towards global targets of 2500 sites and 250 million ha by 2010.	CPs, IOPs

**Operational Objective 11. Management planning and monitoring of Ramsar sites**

## Operational Objective 11.2

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
11.2.5	For all sites on the Montreux Record, and which have not been subject to a Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM), CPs to request such a Mission prior to COP9.	CPs, Bureau

**Operation Objective 12. Management of shared water resources, wetlands and wetland species**

## Operational Objective 12.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	

12.1.1	All CPs to have identified their transboundary wetlands (see also 1.1.1). 50% of CPs to have identified cooperative management mechanisms.	CPs
12.1.2	50% of CPs with shared basins and coastal systems to be part of joint management commissions or authorities.	CPs
12.1.4	River Basin Initiative fully operational.	CPs, Bureau, CBD, IOPs, OCs

### Operational Objective 13. Collaboration with other institutions

#### Operational Objective 13.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
13.1.1	- 3 <sup>rd</sup> CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan fully implemented. - CMS/AEWA Joint Work Plan in place and being implemented. - Joint activities developed with UNCCD and UNFCCC, including through participation in the Joint Liaison Group with UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD.	STRP, CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs
13.1.6	NEPAD's Action Plan to have fully incorporated Ramsar issues and mechanisms, and being implemented by relevant CPs, in lines with WSSD targets.	CPs, SC, Bureau, MEAs, OCs
13.1.7	Review of Ramsar's contribution to the Barbados Programme of Action, as a contribution to the WSSD target.	CPs, SC, Bureau, MEAs, OCs

### Operational Objective 14. Sharing of expertise and information

#### Operational Objective 14.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
14.1.3	At least 75 twinning arrangements to be in place and reported to the Bureau for Web publicity on the Ramsar Web site.	CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs

### Operational Objective 15. Financing the conservation and wise use of wetlands

#### Operational Objective 15.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
15.1.1	Each CP with a bilateral donor agency to have encouraged it to give priority for funding for wetland conservation and wise use projects in relation to poverty alleviation and other WSSD targets and priorities.	CPs, Bureau, IOPs
15.1.5	Relevant CPs to report to COP9 on ensuring that multilateral donor agencies afford priority to wetlands within poverty alleviation schemes.	CPs, Bureau, IOPs
15.1.9	Assistance provided to at least 15 countries in preparing projects for submission to the Global Environment Facility.	Bureau, IOPs, OCs

### Operational Objective 16. Financing the Convention

#### Operational Objective 16.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
16.1.4	Proposal for Bureau posts of a Water Officer and CEPA Programme Officer to have been prepared for consideration by COP9 for inclusion in the core budget of the Convention.	Bureau, SC, COP

### Operational Objective 19. International Organization Partners and others

#### Operational Objective 19.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
19.1.1	Each IOP and the Bureau to have established and be implementing a programme of joint work in support of the Convention, including joint actions by all IOPs.	Bureau, IOPs

### Operational Objective 20. Training

#### Operational Objective 20.1

Action No.	2003-2005 global target	
20.1.1	Ramsar Training Service in place and fully implemented.	CPs, Wetlands International, Bureau, IOPs
20.1.2	At least half of CPs to have assessed national and local training needs.	CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs
20.1.4	Resources provided to expand internship programme, including an Oceania intern.	CPs, IOPs, OCs

**“Wetlands: water, life, and culture”  
8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties  
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)  
Valencia, Spain, 18-26 November 2002**

## **Resolution VIII.45**

### **Operation of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the effectiveness of Ramsar Convention Resolutions and Recommendations**

1. RECALLING General Objective 8 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 of the Convention, which states that “the operation of the Conference of the Parties and of Ramsar subsidiary bodies and mechanisms . . . will be kept under review to ensure that they function as effectively as possible”, that “resources will be sought to guarantee the efficient operation of these mechanisms”, and that “new mechanisms may be required at international and at national level to promote more effective implementation of the Convention”;
2. ALSO MINDFUL of Action 8.1.1 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002, which directs the following: “Reorganise, as of the 7<sup>th</sup> COP (1999), the meeting into a business session, focusing upon administrative matters, and a technical session, focusing upon wetland conservation and wise use priorities, with smaller working groups as required”;
3. AWARE that the growth in the number of Contracting Parties, expansion of the issues addressed by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), and the mainstreaming of wetland conservation and wise use into a range of sectors has re-emphasized the need to streamline the operations of the Conference of the Parties;
4. RECOGNIZING that 121 Resolutions and Recommendations have been adopted by COPs 6, 7 and 8;
5. CONSCIOUS AND CONCERNED that the efforts of drafting, considering and adopting these Resolutions and Recommendations require deliberate and differing actions, time and significant cost to the Contracting Parties, the STRP, Standing Committee and the Ramsar Bureau;
6. RECOGNIZING the importance of the regional networks and regional debate fora in the Ramsar context, prior to the hosting of meetings of Conference of the Contracting Parties, in advancing discussions and, thus, facilitating consensus;
7. AWARE that Resolutions deal with different subjects, which can be broadly categorised as technical, administrative, or concerning interpretation of the Convention;
8. ALSO CONSCIOUS that to date there has been no global review to ascertain the utility and effectiveness of these COP decisions; and

9. AWARE of the need to optimise the use of time during COPs, and CONSCIOUS of the relevance that procedural aspects have in this regard;

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10. DIRECTS the Standing Committee to undertake, as one of its highest priorities, a general review of the effectiveness of the process of drafting, considering, adopting and implementing Resolutions and Recommendations adopted by the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
11. DIRECTS that this review focus on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention, from a broad perspective rather than on a country by country basis;
12. DIRECTS the Standing Committee, based upon this review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the process of drafting, considering, adopting and implementing Resolutions and Recommendations, to prepare and circulate to Parties in a timely manner a report and recommendations on this matter, including possible amendments to the Rules of Procedure, to be considered at COP9;
13. AGREES that for COP9, draft Resolutions should be considered for division by the Standing Committee into two categories, including:
- a) draft technical resolutions, providing technical guidance for the implementation of the Convention; and
  - b) other draft resolutions, including on, *inter alia*, administrative, procedural, and policy issues.
14. DIRECTS the Standing Committee to identify, as a high priority, those technical tasks included in the Work Plan of the STRP which could lead to draft technical resolutions to be considered at the next COP;
15. AGREES that those draft technical resolutions should be:
- a) drafted by the STRP;
  - b) provided to STRP national focal points with a minimum of 60 days to comment;
  - c) developed to allow time for networking among Parties during consideration;
  - d) reviewed by the STRP for endorsement by the Standing Committee after preparation; and
  - e) sent to COP for endorsement and final approval.
16. ENCOURAGES the Contracting Parties to submit draft technical resolutions and other draft resolutions to the Standing Committee before their consideration at the COP;
17. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to submit proposals for draft technical resolutions, as referred to in paragraph 15 above, to the Bureau at least 120 days before the commencement of the COP, noting that nothing in this Resolution will prejudice the right of any Contracting Party to submit any proposals according to the Rules of Procedure;
18. REQUESTS the Standing Committee to analyse, report and provide recommendations on possibilities to improve the efficiency of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties; and

19. RECOMMENDS that in preparing the agenda and programme for future COPs the Standing Committee, host country and Bureau endeavour to maximise the wise use of time on the agreed agenda for Convention business, including reports previously circulated as conference documents.