

Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2009-2011

Guidance for the development of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands

Introduction

In 2002, the 8th meeting of Ramsar's Contracting Parties (COP8) adopted *Guidelines for the development of regional initiatives* (Resolution VIII.30, cf. Annex I) as a reference against which to judge the value of regional initiatives for the implementation of the Convention. In conformity with these *Guidelines*, a number of Contracting Parties developed proposals for regional initiatives (including regional networks as well as regional centres for training and capacity building) and submitted them for the consideration of the Ramsar Standing Committee. The Committee submitted the proposals to COP9 in 2005 (information paper COP9 DOC. 21), which endorsed nine initiatives for the triennium 2006-2008 as operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention and recognized a number of additional initiatives as having the potential to become operative within the framework of the Convention at a later stage (Resolution IX.7).

A similar procedure is now proposed for regional initiatives – ongoing or new – to obtain formal endorsement by COP10 in November 2008 as operating in the framework of the Convention during the triennium 2009-2011.

Procedure for submitting requests for COP10 endorsement and possible Ramsar funding

Contracting Parties that seek endorsement of a regional initiative by COP10 are requested to submit a proposal, following the format provided below. In order to be included in the list to be considered by COP10, the request must reach the Ramsar Secretariat not later than **31 March 2008**; it will then be submitted by the Secretariat to the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee in June 2008 for evaluation and transmittal to COP10.

The format to be used follows the structure of the *Guidelines* adopted in 2002 (attached in Annex I). Please consult the *Guidelines* when preparing your proposal. The information you provide about the initiative needs to be precise, brief, and to the point and should not exceed six pages in total.

Please submit your proposal in electronic form – as a Microsoft Word document – and send it to: salathe@ramsar.org only. Should you need further help, please contact this address.

Report Format Start

AIM OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

1. Implementation of the Ramsar approach

- 1.1 Describe briefly how your initiative is promoting the objectives of the Convention and how it is implementing the Ramsar Strategic Plan through cooperation in your region:

SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

2. Complete regional adherence and bottom-up approach

- 2.1 Describe briefly if your initiative is based on a bottom-up approach:
- 2.2 List the countries in the region that your initiative covers:
- 2.3 Specify those countries in your region that do not participate in the initiative (if any):

3. Active involvement of all relevant stakeholders

- 3.1 List the participants in your initiative and their affiliation:
- 3.2 Indicate if only Ramsar Administrative Authorities at national level or also other relevant stakeholders (including other ministries, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia and economic actors) are actively involved:

4. Development of collaboration based on commonly agreed terms

- 4.1 Describe briefly how your regional network or centre is operating (attach the terms of reference (or other agreements) elaborated to guide its activities as separate documents where they exist):

5. Involvement of other regional partners

- 5.1 List relevant intergovernmental or international organizations operating in your region:
- 5.2 List those with which you have established common activities:
- 5.3 List your activities in common:

6. Scientific and technical backing

- 6.1 List the scientific and technical partners that provide a solid backing to your initiative:

7. Targets of the initiative and their links with Ramsar

- 7.1 List your initiative's strategic and operational targets for the period 2009-2011:

7.2 Specify the relations of these targets to the objectives of the draft Ramsar Strategic Plan (attach your work plan for 2009-2011, or for 2009, where it exists):

8. Raising awareness of Ramsar objectives

8.1 Describe briefly your activities in the fields of communication, education, and participatory processes with relevant stakeholders:

8.2 Describe briefly the increased support for Ramsar objectives resulting from these activities (this information may be used by Ramsar's CEPA Oversight Panel, according to Standing Committee Decision 35-14):

FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

9. Who provides political and financial support?

9.1 List all your sources and the amounts of financial support for the triennium 2009-2011. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

9.2 List your sources and amounts of financial support for the year 2009. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

9.3 List concisely, according to main budget lines, your expenditures planned for 2009:

10. Financial planning

10.1 Summarize your remaining funding needs for 2009 that are not yet covered by confirmed donations, according to the main budget lines used above:

10.2 Provide information about your fundraising plan to cover such outstanding needs:

11. Request for Ramsar core budget support

11.1 If you request a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget, specify the amount for 2009, and for the triennium 2009-2011:

GOVERNANCE OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

12. Governance mechanisms in place

12.1 Describe the governance and advisory mechanisms and structures (e.g., committees) in place or to be established to provide guidance and insight to your initiative (attach terms of references, rules of procedures, or operational guidelines, where such exist):

13. Coordination with the Ramsar Secretariat

13.1 Specify the established or anticipated operational arrangements between the governance structures of your initiative and the Ramsar Secretariat:

13.2 List the full name, telephone and e-mail contact of the main focal point of your initiative:

Report Format End

Annex I
[to Resolution VIII.30]

**Guidance for the development of regional initiatives in the
framework of the Convention on Wetlands**

AIM

1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to promote the objectives of the Convention in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.

SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS

2. Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach. As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.
3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, not only of the Administrative Authorities responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, but also of all other relevant stakeholders with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.
4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the development of networks of collaboration established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.
5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.
6. The operation of a regional initiative should be based upon strong scientific and technical backing, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.
7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention by means of policy and site technical work and activities.

FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT

8. A regional initiative requires both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region. A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.
9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.

10. Financial support from the Convention's core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a pre-determined period of time – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term. When deciding financial support from the Convention's core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.

GOVERNANCE

11. Regional initiatives should establish their own advisory mechanisms, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.
12. Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.