

Thematic Work Area: Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)



Egalummiut Nunaat and Nassuttuup Nunaa Ramsar site, Greenland

Since STRP 16...

1. Tasks from COP 11

1. Timelines on the way to COP12

2. RIS-2012 – final elements

Implementation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) – 2012 revision

(Task 2013-15/25: **top priority**)

Enhanced & streamlined data and information management tools , including redevelopment of Ramsar Sites Database and on-line submission tools for RIS

Outcomes/outputs: On-line database to receive all data and information in the RIS – 2012 revision

Responsibility: Secretariat, with advice from STRP

RIS and guidance – further development

(Task 2013-15/25 i: lower priority)

Develop further practical guidance on defining Ramsar Site boundaries (CPs invited to provide information and case studies)

Outcomes/outputs: Supplementary guidance for CPs, for inclusion in *Strategic Framework* for Ramsar Site designation

Responsibility: STRP, with input from CPs

RIS and guidance – further development

(Task 2013-15/25 ii: lower priority)

Urgent task to consider minor modifications to the RIS – 2012 revision to support monitoring at Ramsar Sites through possible inclusion of sub-fields related to:

- change at the site;
- identification of thresholds of change in ecological character; and
- monitoring indicators.

For endorsement by StC 46 (April 2013)

Outcomes/outputs: Adjustments to RIS – 2012 as decided

Responsibility: STRP

RIS and guidance – further development

(Task 2013-15/25 iii: lower priority)

Prepare additional guidance concerning:

- a) identification, boundary-setting and management issues related to very small wetlands of international importance
- b) site zoning in management planning contexts, especially in relation to uses of Ramsar Sites by people, including implications for RIS reporting

Outcomes/outputs: Supplementary guidance for CPs, for inclusion in *Strategic Framework* for Ramsar Site designation

Responsibility: STRP

Ramsar Sites and ecosystem benefits/services

(Task 2013-15/26 i: lower priority)

Further consider recognizing the importance of ecosystem benefits/services in the future designation of Ramsar Sites and to assess the implications for the RIS

Outcomes/outputs: Advice for StC & CPs

Responsibility: STRP

Ramsar Sites and ecosystem benefits/services

(Task 2013-15/26 ii: lower priority)

Develop a more thorough understanding of the nature and extent of ecosystem benefits/services provided by Ramsar Sites individually and at national and global network scales

Outcomes/outputs: Report for StC & COP

Responsibility: STRP with Contracting Party input

Understanding national site designation processes and impediments to national Ramsar Site networks

(Task 2013-15/27: lower priority)

Better understand the various constraints & impediments to Ramsar Site designation, as a basis for the STRP and Secretariat better supporting Parties in their future designations

Includes seeking good practice examples by CPs to develop and implement strategic approaches to Ramsar Site designation

Outcomes/outputs: Initially, STRP Briefing Note, with case study CP examples

Responsibility: STRP, with Secretariat support & input from CPs

Target development to support the objectives for the Ramsar List

(Task 2013-15/28: lower priority)

Develop integrated suite of targets to respond to and support the five Objectives for the Ramsar List included in the *Strategic Framework – 2012 revision*, including linking to the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets”

Outcomes/outputs: Targets for consideration by COP12

Responsibility: STRP

Consideration of relationships between criteria for internationally important sites for biodiversity

(Task 2013-15/29: lower priority)

Contribute to IUCN's WCPA & SSC initiative to review and possibly consolidate criteria to identify 'Key Biodiversity Areas', (KBAs) in order to ensure that Ramsar Site criteria are fully taken into account

Outcomes/outputs: Report to StC/COP on implications for Ramsar

Responsibility: IUCN-WCPA/SSC, with input from STRP

Ramsar Site Criteria and identification of globally significant areas for biodiversity

(Task 2013-15/30: lower priority)

Consider implications of CBD's Decision X/31 in the context of supporting application of Ramsar's site selection Criteria, including any implications for the identification of important sites for delivery of ecosystem services

Outcomes/outputs: Report to StC and COP

Responsibility: STRP, Secretariat, with IUCN WCPA, IUCN-SSC and others

Summary

1. **RIS-2012 Roll out** Database etc. (Secretariat lead)
– Further modification of RIS format (THIS MEETING!)
2. Further guidance in **Strategic Framework**:
 - Site boundary determination
 - Identification & management of small wetlands
 - Zoning of sites re management planning
3. **Ecosystem Services/benefits**:
 - In context of site designation
 - Assessment of extent with individual sites & global network
4. Understanding practical constraints to site designation

Summary

4. Ramsar's Site selection Criteria

- Implications of ecosystem services
- Implications of IUCN's Key Biodiversity Areas
- Implications of CBD's Resolution X/31

Timelines!

Date	Task
By end of STRP 17	Agreement on final changes to RIS-2012 – proposals in paper for StC46 (by early March)
Through 2013	Advice to Secretariat re RSIS development & roll-out of RIS-2012 Initiation of other tasks Dialogue with sample CPs on several tasks – questionnaire?
For Standing Committee 47 (early 2014)	Conclusions re ecosystem services & site selection Criteria Progress report re IUCN's KBAs & implications for Ramsar
Mid-term workshop – 2014	
STRP 18	

3. Immediate task!

“to urgently consider scope for minor modifications to the RIS related to:

- change at the site, for example in fields 12a, 12c, and 16 relating to species composition and wetland type;
- identification of thresholds of change in ecological character; and
- monitoring indicators...”

“Change” - recommendation

1. As long as redeveloped RSIS allows for inter-RIS field comparisons, no need to modify the form to allow further 'reported' change
2. Explain and recommends to StC that through derived change assessments, developed RSIS will provide for requested change attributes

Using the RIS to report change



Description at designation



Year 6 update description



When change in ecological character



Year 12 update description

Diagram illustrating the process of using the Ramsar Site Information Sheet (RIS) to report change over time. The diagram shows three versions of the RIS, each corresponding to a different point in time: Description at designation, Year 6 update description, and Year 12 update description. A large blue arrow labeled "Changes through time" points downwards, indicating the progression of time and the need for updates. The RIS forms are shown in a column, with the Year 6 and Year 12 versions highlighted in red to show the changes in the description of the site's ecological character.

Ramsar Site Information Sheet

Version 1

Version 2

Version 3

Version 4

Version 5

Version 6

Version 7

Version 8

Version 9

Version 10

Version 11

Version 12

Version 13

Version 14

Version 15

Version 16

Version 17

Version 18

Version 19

Version 20

Version 21

Version 22

Version 23

Version 24

Version 25

Version 26

Version 27

Version 28

Version 29

Version 30

Version 31

Version 32

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Version 87

Version 88

Version 89

Version 90

Version 91

Version 92

Version 93

Version 94

Version 95

Version 96

Version 97

Version 98

Version 99

Version 100

Change 'derived' from RIS update submissions

RIS Year X

12c. Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum (e.g., mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, invertebrate)	Species name		Species qualifies under Criterion:						Pop'n size in site	Year of pop'n estimate	% occurrence (biogeographic population) in site	IUCN Red List status	CITES Appendix listed?
	scientific name	common name	2	3	4	6	7	9					
Bird	Calidris canutus	Red Knot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	50,000	1990/1 – 1991/5	10% of C. c. islandica	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>

RIS Year Y

12c. Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum (e.g., mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, invertebrate)	Species name		Species qualifies under Criterion:						Pop'n size in site	Year of pop'n estimate	% occurrence (biogeographic population) in site	IUCN Red List status	CITES Appendix listed?
	scientific name	common name	2	3	4	6	7	9					
Bird	Calidris canutus	Red Knot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25,000	2000/1 – 2004/5	5% of C. c. islandica	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>

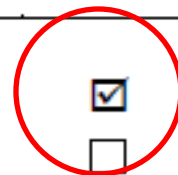
Derived change

'Reported' change

20. Water regime

Water sources, destination, permanence and stability of water regimes.
Please tick all options that apply under each heading below:

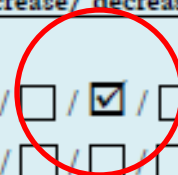
	Presence?
<i>Water permanence</i>	
Usually permanent water present; or	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>



20. Water regime

Water sources, destination, permanence and stability of water regimes. Please tick all options that apply under each heading below:

	Presence?	Changes at RIS update No change/ increase/ decrease/ unknown
<i>Water permanence</i>		
Usually permanent water present; or	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/>
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/>
Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/>



Types of change

Derived

#12 – Criteria qualification

#12a – qualifying plant species

#12b – qualifying plant communities

#12c – qualifying animal species

#12d – qualifying animal communities

#16 – Presence & extent of wetlands present and which are qualifying

Potentially any other field by comparision

Reported

#6 – Changes to site (area, boundaries, ecol. character) since designation

#17b – Invasive alien plants

#18b – Invasive alien animals

#21 – Sediment regime

#22 – Water pH

#23 – Water salinity

#24 – Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

#30 – Factors affecting ecological character

Limits of acceptable change (LAC)

“...possible inclusion of sub-fields related to ... thresholds of change in ecological character...”

Discussion points:

- LACs may relate to multiple varied factors - e.g. a text-box sub-field ...
- Request relates to ecological character only – although management planning may establish LACs for multiple factors

----- for RIS keep it simple: RIS isn't a management plan

Proposal: following field #13

Do you wish to add additional information about limits of change to the ecological character of this Site?
[Yes/No]

'Yes' would bring up [three] sub-fields:

a. What is the nature of these limits of ecological change?

Statutorily or legally established ☐

Drawn from site Management Plan ☐

From another site or national advisory process ☐

Otherwise established/recorded ☐

Unknown ☐

b) Upper limit of ecological change

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c) Lower limit of ecological change

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Monitoring indicators

“...possible inclusion of sub-fields related to ... monitoring indicators...”

Issues:

- Motivation in COP 11 discussions was a foreseen potential benefit in being able to use the new RIS format for multiple functions – especially as a tool supporting site management
- Possibly expanded RIS might sit as a ‘user-friendly’ simple summary of more detailed site management plan

Discussion points

- **But**, hard to see how RIS – 2012 could be further (simply) modified to add monitoring indicators
- Does this increasingly blur distinctions with mgmt plans and do we want to go in that direction (RIS = mgmt plan lite)?
- Option? - make available a version of database structure that would allow further national development but within a logical structure created by RIS-2012

Recommendation

- Uncertainty as to exact issue/need
- RIS-2012 may already have considerable potential depending on how it is used (*e.g.* frequency of update)
- Wait until after implementation of RIS-2012 when opportunities for development may be clearer
- Develop guidance (*STRP Briefing Note?* – perhaps more generally on conservation indicators??) on how existing RIS-2012 can be used - with other tools – to report on monitoring



That's all Folks!