

# Operational Guidance for Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

April 2023

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## 1. Background to Wetland City Accreditation

Article 3.1 of the Convention Text agrees that Contracting Parties shall formulate and implement their planning so as to promote the conservation, and as far as possible the wise use of wetlands in their territory. With regards to wetlands in and around areas of human settlement, the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP10) urged all Contracting Parties to

*pay due attention to the importance of their wetlands in urban and peri-urban environments and to take appropriate measures to conserve and protect these wetlands, while giving due consideration to different national circumstances in each case.*

In addition, Resolution X.27 encouraged

*Contracting Parties to involve municipalities in their planning processes and operational actions on wetland conservation and wise use in order to seek contributions from municipalities, including their physical planning departments, a) to assess the direct and indirect environmental impacts of urban areas on wetlands and b) to preserve or increase ecological functionality of urban and peri-urban wetlands and protect them from the negative impacts of the increasing urban consumption of wetland products and ecosystem services.*

In recognition of their efforts, Resolution X.27 further encouraged

*Contracting Parties to give recognition to local governments that exhibit exemplary management interventions, including wise use in urban and peri-urban wetlands, and to document best practices for dissemination.*

For the purposes of Resolution XI.11, COP11 confirmed that

*urban wetlands are those wetlands lying within the boundaries of cities, towns and other conurbations and that peri-urban wetlands are those wetlands located adjacent to an urban area between its suburbs and rural areas.*

Resolution XI.11 on the *Principles for the planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands* provided Contracted Parties with a set of principles which were intended to establish the foundation for the subsequent development of practical implementation guidance on urban development and wetland management, for both the wetland management and the urban planning and development communities. Through Resolution XI.11, COP11 adopted five policy principles that jointly address urban planning and management and the wise use of wetlands:

*Policy principle 1: Wetlands and the range of services they provide are essential elements of the supporting infrastructure of urban and peri-urban settlements.*

*Policy principle 2: The wise use of wetlands contributes to socially and environmentally sustainable urban and peri-urban areas.*

*Policy principle 3: Any further degradation or loss of wetlands as a result of urban development or management should be avoided, and where not possible, any impacts should be mitigated, and any residual effects appropriately compensated for by offsets such as wetland restoration.*

*Policy principle 4: The full participation of indigenous and local communities, municipalities and government sectors involved in urban and peri-urban spatial planning and wetland management decision making is vital to creating sustainable urban and peri-urban settlements.*

*Policy principle 5: The threat of natural calamities and human-made disasters and their impacts on urban populations and wetlands requires government priority and convergent actions to enhance resilience to disasters*

The intention of the policy principles was to catalyze a range of practical measures which together will deliver more sustainable urban development in combination with better maintenance and enhancement of wetlands. The practical principles covered the following five areas

*Practical principle 1: Wetland conservation*

*Practical principle 2: Wetland restoration and creation*

*Practical principle 3: Understanding the value of wetlands*

*Practical principle 4: Stakeholder engagement*

*Practical principle 5: Integrated planning*

In addition to providing the guiding principles to achieve wetland wise use in urban and peri-urban environments, Resolution XI.11 also requested that the Convention

*explores establishing a wetland city accreditation, which may in turn provide positive branding opportunities for cities that demonstrate strong and positive relationships with wetlands.*

In response to this request, COP12 approved the establishment of a voluntary Wetland City accreditation system through the adoption of Resolution XII.10. The Annex to Resolution XII.10 expected that the accreditation would encourage cities that are close to and depend on wetlands, primarily Wetlands of International Importance, but also other wetlands, to establish a positive relationship with these wetlands through increased participation and awareness and consideration of wetlands in local planning and decision making.

Thus, the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention is so labelled in order to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands and regional and international co-operation, as well as to generate sustainable socio-economic benefits for the local populations.

Through Decision SC52-16, the Standing Committee (SC) approved the composition and membership of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC). The Annex to Resolution XII.10 explained that a candidate city for Wetland City Accreditation would be approved as an accredited Wetland City by the IAC, after being proposed by the Contracting Party on whose territory it stands and completing the accreditation procedure described in the Annex.

Through the application of the criteria set out in Resolution XII.10, COP13 recognized 18 cities that have taken exceptional steps to safeguard their urban wetlands and formally accredited those cities through the voluntary Wetland City Accreditation system. Resolution XIII.16 further acknowledged the role of Wetland City Accreditation in assisting cities, Contracting Parties and stakeholders in promoting awareness and attracting support for the wise use and conservation of wetlands and other sustainable development initiatives.

However, the Report and Decisions of 57<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SC noted with respect to the Wetland City Accreditation, and particularly the success of the venture as a flagship for the Ramsar Convention, that there was a need to improve operational guidance and procedural matters.

In order to address the aforementioned issues, the Independent Advisory Committee prepared a draft resolution on updating the Wetland City Accreditation, which was adopted at COP14 (Resolution XIV.10). This Resolution includes new and updated elements such as the criteria for accreditation,

overview of the process, updated procedure, recognition process, renewal process, and administration. It also proposed contents of an operational guidance for Wetland City Accreditation, on which this Operational Guidance is based.

The Operational Guidance brings together existing criteria and procedural processes adopted by the Convention, and provides additional clarity regarding the process of nomination, accreditation and renewal of Wetland City Accreditation under the Ramsar Convention.

## 2. Overview of the Wetland City Accreditation process and criteria

### Process

The following sections of the Operational Guidance provide information and advice on the Wetland City Accreditation process. The overall process can be divided into the following three distinct but interconnected stages:

- **Stage 1 - The nomination and accreditation process:** The Secretariat commence the process in compliance with the procedure (Section 3). The first step in the process commences is the publication of a call for applications (Section 4). Guidance notes are provided for both Administrative Authorities (AAs) (Section 4) and cities wishing to apply for accreditation (Section 5). A standardised nomination form and evaluation form is used for all applications (Appendix 1).
- **Stage 2 - The recognition process:** This process commences once the SC has made recommendations on which cities are to receive accreditation and extends through to the next COP.
- **Stage 3 - The renewal process:** This process commences when a city wishes to renew its accreditation after two COP cycles (normally 6 years).

### Criteria

Resolution XII.10 established and Resolution XIV.10 updated the following criteria:

- An eligible city for the Wetland City Accreditation may be a city or any other type of human settlement according to the definitions given by the United Nations Human Settlements (UN-Habitat), with its own governance system.
- To be formally accredited, a candidate for the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention should satisfy the standards used to implement each of the following international criteria:

- Criterion 1. It has one or more Ramsar Sites, or other wetland conservation sites fully or partly situated within its jurisdiction, which provide(s) a range of ecosystem services to the city;
- Criterion 2. It has adopted measures for conservation of wetlands and their ecosystem services;
- Criterion 3. It has implemented wetland restoration and/or management measures;
- Criterion 4. It considers the challenges and opportunities of integrated spatial/land-use planning for wetlands under its jurisdiction;
- Criterion 5. It has raised public awareness about the values of wetlands by delivering locally adapted information, and enabled participation of local stakeholders in decision-making processes; and
- Criterion 6. It has established a local committee with appropriate knowledge and experience on wetlands and representation of and engagement with stakeholders to support the preparation work to apply for the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention and the implementation of proper measures to maintain the city's qualifications for the accreditation.

The criteria are explained in more detail in Section 5 and Appendix 1 of the Operational Guidance.

### 3. Accreditation procedure

The schedule in Table 1 below is based on 'Year 0' being the year of a COP, with 'Year 1', Year 2 and Year 3 being the subsequent years. It is assumed that two COP cycles would normally span a period of six years but modification to the schedule may be required if unforeseen events or unexpected changes in the Convention calendar alter this timeframe.

**Table 1: Schedule for administration processes**

Year	Actions
Year 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>During the SC meeting that immediately follows a COP, SC nominates a representative from each region for IAC</u></li> <li>- <u>New term of IAC commences with a work plan for the next triennium and election of Chair and Co-Chair</u></li> </ul>
Year 1	- <u>Within up to 6 months after the previous COP, Secretariat launches the call for applications for new and renewed accreditation</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interested cities prepare and send applications to Head of Administrative Authority (AA)</li> <li>- Heads of AA submit applications to the Secretariat through the online submission</li> </ul>
Year 2	- Secretariat forwards applications to IAC for review
Year 3	- <u>By 3 months before annual SC meeting, IAC reviews applications and determines which cities to accredit or renew their accreditation</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>At annual SC meeting, IAC reports its decision to SC</u></li> <li>- SC takes note of the IAC report and instructs the Secretariat to take the following actions after the meeting:</li> <li>- The Secretariat a) announces the list of newly accredited and renewed wetland cities, b) invites the newly accredited cities through their respective NFPs to the certificate awarding ceremony at succeeding COP and c) prepares the ceremony with support from IAC and the host country</li> </ul>
	- COP recognizes accredited cities at the certificate awarding ceremony

## 4. Guidance notes for Administrative Authorities (AA) on new accreditation

### Call for applications

Resolution XII.10 on *Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention* formalized a framework to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands and regional and international co-operation, as well as to generate sustainable socio-economic benefits for local populations.

Resolution XII.10 states that: “This accreditation would encourage cities that are close to and depend on wetlands, primarily Wetlands of International Importance, but also other wetlands, to establish a positive relationship with these wetlands through increased participation and awareness and consideration of wetlands in local planning and decision making.”

Paragraph 7 of the Framework for Wetland City accreditation of the Ramsar Convention annexed to Resolution XII.10 states that: “a candidate city for the Wetland City accreditation would be approved as an accredited Wetland City by the Independent Advisory Committee, after being proposed by the Contracting Party on whose territory it stands and completing the accreditation procedure described below. Newly accredited cities join the global network of Wetland Cities established by this framework. Accreditation as a Wetland City of the Ramsar Convention is not intended to confer any legal rights or legal obligations on the city or the Contracting Party.”

Resolution XII.10 calls (in paragraphs 13 and 14) for Contracting Parties to submit proposals to the Secretariat for forwarding to the IAC. In line with the Schedule (Table 1), the Secretariat launches the call for applications for new and renewed applications within up to 6 months after the previous COP.

### General guidance

The *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form must be completed by an applicant city or human settlement in one of the Convention’s three working languages, namely English, French, or Spanish. To assist the cities with completing the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form, an accompanying *Guidance Note for Cities* is available in each of the three working languages of the Ramsar Convention.

The information provided in the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form should be clear and succinct, and the total length of a completed *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form should not exceed the specified word limits given for each field.

In the case of a city where the wetlands have been well-studied and well-documented, or which are the subject of special field investigations, far more information may be available than can be accommodated in the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form. Applicant cities are encouraged not to append additional information, such as taxonomic lists of species’ status, management plans, copies of legal instruments, etc. but to provide succinct but comprehensive summaries in the appropriate fields.

### Specific guidance for Administrative Authority

#### *Responsibility of the applicant city*

An authorised representative of the city authority making the application needs to check and approve the accreditation form against the guidance provided. It is essential that ALL questions in Group A are answered and that appropriate supporting information is provided.

In the case of several cities making a joint submission, a representative of each authority needs to check and approve the form, and then send it to the country’s Administrative Authority who will

formally submit the completed *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

#### *Responsibility of the Administrative Authority*

Each Contracting Party is encouraged to consider local conditions when implementing the international criteria for the Wetland City accreditation. Any city submitting a completed Nomination Form to the designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention matters within the Administrative Authority should be considered to act as a model for the study, demonstration and promotion of the Ramsar Convention's objectives, approaches, principles and resolutions.

Resolution XII.10 provides that any Contracting Party that wishes to participate in the *Wetland City Accreditation* will undertake a national review to determine which cities to propose for accreditation. It is recommended that, as part of a national review, the Administrative Authority should consider how the individual nominations for *Wetland City Accreditation* will assist the Contracting Party in contributing to *inter alia*:

- a. Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024. Goal 1 – Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation: Target 1.
- b. Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024. Goal 3 – Wisely using all wetlands: Target 13.
- c. Any other targets of future Strategic Plans
- d. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular the contribution to Goal 6 – Clean water and sanitation; Goal 11- Sustainable cities and communities; Goal 14 – Live below water; and Goal 15 – Life on land. For more information on how the Ramsar Strategic Plan contributes to the delivery of the SDGs see <http://www.ramsar.org/document/how-the-ramsar-strategic-plan-contributes-to-the-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs>.
- e. National targets and plans relating to the wise use of wetlands and in particular to the sustainable development of human settlements.

In the event of an Administrative Authority (AA) receiving multiple nominations it must satisfy itself that any Nomination Form proposed complies fully with the required nomination criteria.

#### *Endorsement by the Administrative Authority*

Upon receipt and review of the completed *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form, the designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention matters in the AA will check the form and, where appropriate, provide formal endorsement at the end of the Nomination Form. If the Nomination Form fails to comply with the criteria, the National Focal Point should return it to the applicant city with a clear description and explanation of any shortcomings. Cities should be encouraged to reconsider and resubmit. Once the National Focal Point is satisfied that the Nomination Form complies fully to the criteria, the Nomination Form should be submitted online to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, no later than the date published in the call for applications.



## 5. Guidance notes for cities on new accreditation

### General guidance

The *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form must be completed in one of the Convention's three working languages, namely English, French, or Spanish. The *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form and this accompanying *Guidance Note for Cities* are available in each of the three working languages.

The information provided in the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form should be clear and succinct, and the total length of a completed *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form should not exceed the specified word limits given for each field.

In the case of a city where the wetlands have been well-studied and well-documented, or which are the subject of special field investigations, far more information may be available than can be accommodated in the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form. Applicant cities must provide succinct but comprehensive summaries in the appropriate fields. They may provide additional information, such as taxonomic lists of species' status, management plans, copies of legal instruments, etc.

The Wetland City Accreditation is valid for 2 COP cycles (normally 6 years), after which it must be renewed, providing that it continues to fill each of the 6 criteria, which then needs to be reviewed by the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC).

### Specific guidance on completing the fields of the Wetland City Accreditation Nomination Form

#### Background information

1a. **Country:** The official (short) version of the Contracting Party/country name.

1b. **Name of city:** An eligible 'city' for the Wetland City Accreditation may be a city or any other type of human settlement according to the definition given by United Nations Centre for Human Settlement. The term 'human settlements' is an integrative concept that comprises: (a) physical components of shelter and infrastructure; and (b) services to which the physical elements provide support, that is to say, community services such as education, health, culture, welfare, recreation and nutrition. (Source: United Nations (1997) *Glossary of Environment Statistics: Studies in Methods*, Series F, No. 67. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, Statistics Division. United Nations, New York. 96pp.).

1c. **Geographical coordinates:** The geographical coordinates of the *approximate* centre of the city expressed in *degrees and minutes of latitude and longitude* (e.g. in the format: 01°24'S 104°16'E or 010°30'N 084°51'W).

1d. **Administrative and wetland map:** Tick the yellow box to confirm that a map has been provided. The most up-to-date available and suitable map of the city and its wetland should be appended to the *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form (in hardcopy and, if possible, also in digital format). At least a hardcopy map is required for the consideration of the City for accreditation. The map must clearly show the administrative boundary of the city, the boundary of any designated Ramsar Site(s) and other wetland areas. If the map has been prepared in digital (GIS) format, please send a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables, and please also send a separate image file, showing the site boundaries, in a common image format (TIFF, BMP, JPG, GIF, etc.).

1e. **Area of the city:** The total area of the city within the formal administrative boundaries in hectares.

**1f. Approximate area of wetlands within the city boundaries:** Indication of the total area of wetlands within the administrative boundaries, indicating, as far as possible, how much is natural and how much is human made. If the areas of discrete wetland units are known, please also indicate each of these together with the names (or labels) used to identify and differentiate these units and show them on the administrative and wetland map.

**1g. Wetland types:** In this field list the full range of wetland types occurring within the city. Where possible list them in order of their dominance (by area) starting with the wetland type with the largest area. The Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type, as approved by Recommendation 4.7 and amended by Resolutions VI.5 and VII.11 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, provides the description of what types of wetland are covered by each of the wetland type codes (see Appendix 2). Note that the wetland types are grouped in three major categories: marine-coastal, inland, and human-made wetlands, and that wetland types under two or more of these categories may be present within a Ramsar site, particularly if it is large. Since some Marine/Coastal wetland types (e.g. Estuarine waters (type F) or Intertidal Forested Wetlands (type I) can occur far inland from the coastline, and conversely Inland Wetlands types can occur close to the coastline, please also indicate with additional text in this section the general geographical location of the site relative to the coastline, as either inland or marine/coastal.

When listing the areal dominance of the wetland types, if possible, provide the area, although it is recognised that this may be difficult for complex situations with a wide variety of wetland types.

#### *Accreditation criteria*

#### Group A: Criteria based on delivering the conservation and wise use of wetlands

##### **Criterion 1**

**A1. Name any Ramsar Site that is fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries:** A city can be nominated if there is a Ramsar Site fully or partly situated within its administrative boundaries. Provide the precise name of the designated Ramsar Site in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parenthesis after the precise name. The official Ramsar Site name and number as described on the Ramsar Information Sheet is available on <https://rsis.ramsar.org/>. If none, state 'None'.

**A2. Name any other wetland conservation site that is fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries:** A city can be nominated even if there is not a Ramsar Site fully or partly situated within its administrative boundaries but there are other wetland conservation sites that are considered to be significant in terms of their contribution to the provision of ecosystem services on which the city depends. Provide the precise name of the wetland(s) (or wetland conservation site(s)) in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parenthesis after the precise name. Indicate whether any wetland within the administrative boundaries has a relevant protected area status (either in addition to or separate from Ramsar Site status) in accordance with protected areas categories as established by each Contracting Party and/or based on IUCN categories (Appendix 3), other relevant international conservation designations, and, in the case of transboundary wetlands, bilateral or multilateral conservation measures which pertain to all or part of the site. If a reserve has been established, give the date of establishment and size of the protected area. If only a part of the wetland is included within a protected area, the area of wetland habitat that is protected should be noted. If the wetlands in the city do not have any legal conservation status, the city is strongly encouraged to provide additional information in Group B in the Nomination Form for further consideration.

## Criterion 2

**A3. National and/or local policy, legislative or other appropriate measures and regulatory instruments:** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that development avoids degrading and destroying wetlands. In order to achieve this, the city needs to have a strong set of legal or policy instruments in place supported by appropriate regulation and enforcement. These could include national, state or city laws, local bye-laws, regulations, policies and plans. Describe the national and/or local policy, legislative measures and regulatory instruments that are in use by the city to proactively prevent the degradation and loss of wetlands. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

## Criterion 3

**A4. Restoration and creation of wetlands:** Within a city environment there is considerable evidence that wetlands can play a significant role in enhancing human well-being. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it proactively encourages the restoration or creation of wetlands as elements of urban, and especially water management infrastructure. For instance, the city might have created multi-functional wetlands that can help with managing urban flooding whilst also providing other benefits such as recreation or local climate regulation. Provide specific examples (site and summary of implemented measures) of where wetlands have been created or restored within the city as elements of urban infrastructure, such as to protecting from hazards, cooling climate, improving water quality, or providing opportunities for education, etc. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

## Criterion 4

**A5. Spatial planning and integrated city management:** The wise use of wetlands within a city context can be strongly influenced by good planning, stewardship and management, which in turn can contribute to sustainable social and economic development for current and future generations. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it considers the importance of wetlands within elements of spatial planning and integrated city management (such as through Integrated River Basin Management, spatial zonation, water resource management, the development of transport infrastructure, agriculture production, fuel supply, poverty alleviation, pollution control, flood risk management, disaster risk reduction, etc.). Describe the measures (plans, policies, procedures, guidance, legislation, etc.) that ensure that the importance of wetlands is considered fully within elements of spatial planning and integrated city management. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

## Criterion 5

**A6. Principles of inclusivity, empowerment, and participation of local stakeholders:** The full participation of local stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, women, youth, marginalized and vulnerable groups, civil society, municipalities and government sectors in city spatial planning and wetland management decision-making is vital to creating sustainable human settlements. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has adopted the principles of inclusivity, empowerment, and participation of local stakeholders in decision-making and city planning and management. Describe how local stakeholders have been engaged and participate in the management of wetland-related issues and any formal instruments that may exist to ensure that full and active participatory approaches are pursued. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

**A7. Raised levels of public awareness about the values of wetlands:** The benefits provided by wetlands and their associated values are often poorly considered in city decision-making. Therefore, these values need to be articulated clearly so that citizens and urban planners can make informed decisions. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has raised levels of

public awareness about the values of wetlands, and encouraged the wise use of wetlands by a diverse range of stakeholders and communities through, for example, establishing operational wetland education or information centres, regularly disseminating information on wetlands, establishing and implementing school education programmes, etc. Describe the types of activities that have been undertaken and also how their impact, in terms of raising awareness and contributing to the wise use of wetlands, has been monitored and assessed. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

**A8. World Wetlands Day:** World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2 February. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Since 1997, the Ramsar Secretariat has provided outreach materials to help raise public awareness about the importance and value of wetlands. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has proactively promoted events around World Wetlands Day in order to raise awareness on wetlands and their importance to the city. Describe the types of events that have been delivered to celebrate World Wetlands Day and/or national wetlands day, as appropriate in the city. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

### **Criterion 6**

**A9. Established a local committee:** For the accreditation process to be robust requires knowledge and experience to be drawn from several sectors and stakeholders. The recommended approach is to establish a functional committee comprising appropriate knowledge and experience on wetlands. A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has established a local committee (or similar structure) to support and to further the aims of the Wetland City Accreditation process. Such a committee should contain appropriate knowledge and experience on wetlands and should be representative of stakeholders and communities. Describe the committee, its participants, mandate and operation. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

### Group B: Further information (optional but strongly recommended)

**B1. Standards on water quality and sanitation, including waste management:** Many cities face challenges around the management of waste, protecting water quality, sanitation and hygiene. All of these issues will affect people's health and wellbeing. Interventions are often necessary in order to address local conditions and community needs. Many solutions and management measures will require integrated approaches in order to both safeguard human wellbeing but also to ensure the wise use of wetlands. A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has applied standards on water quality (which can include chemical or biological standards) and sanitation, including waste management facilities which include collection and treatment for solid waste and wastewater (industrial, domestic and stormwater). Describe the standards, policies and regulatory framework which ensures delivery on water quality and sanitation standards. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

**B2. Ecosystem services:** Ecosystem services are the benefits that nature provides human society. In the city environment, wetlands and the range of services they provide are essential elements of the supporting structure of urban and peri-urban settlements. Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention are expected to manage all their wetlands, including Ramsar Sites, so as to maintain their ecological character. In order to do this requires the ecological character of a wetland to be described. The Ramsar Convention has defined ecological character as: *"the combination of the ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services that characterise the wetland at a given point in time"*. Therefore, the range of ecosystem services that a wetland provides is a key component of its overall ecological character. Ecosystem services are commonly grouped into four main categories: provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services. Further information on the types of ecosystem services provided by wetlands is expanded in Appendix 4.

A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it proactively recognises the ecosystem services that wetlands provide and has integrated these multiple values into decision making. Where appropriate, special attention should be applied to describing sustainable agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism and the cultural values of wetlands. Describe how the different provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting ecosystem services are recognised and the benefits that they provide human society are integrated into planning, management and decision-making. Where possible, illustrate with examples. Ensure that the consideration of ecosystem services is as comprehensive and inclusive as possible. (Please note that each field is limited to a maximum of 1000 characters per ecosystem service category).

**B3. Linkages between local communities and wetlands:** Urban development and wetland management should adopt the principles of inclusivity, empowerment and participation with local communities. A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that there is a close link between local communities and the wetlands. Describe how local communities are engaged with the wise use of wetlands and how the communities benefit from the services wetlands provide. (Please note that field is limited to a maximum of 2500 characters).

### **City approval**

An authorised representative of the city authority making the application needs to check and approve the accreditation form against the guidance provided. It is essential that ALL questions are answered and that appropriate supporting information is provided.

In the case of several cities making a joint submission, a representative of each authority needs to check and approve the form, and then send it to the country's Administrative Authority (AA)<sup>1</sup> who will formally submit the completed *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. If more than three authorities are making the submission, please insert further boxes.

Please provide the full name, position, address and contact details of the city authority. The Accreditation Form should be signed and dated prior to submission to the country's Administrative Authority.

### **Endorsement by the Administrative Authority**

Upon receipt of the completed and endorsed Wetland City Accreditation Nomination Form, the designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention matters in the Administrative Authority will check the form and, if appropriate, provide formal endorsement at the end of the Nomination Form. The Nomination Form will then be sent to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and subsequently to the Independent Advisory Committee, established under Resolution XII.10, for review and final decision-making.

Separate guidance is available for the National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention matters in the Administrative Authority in order to undertake the appropriate checking of the completed Accreditation Form.

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<sup>1</sup> The head of state or government or the Foreign Office of each Contracting Party designates a national agency to act as the implementing agency, or "Administrative Authority", of the Convention in that country. The Administrative Authority is the focal point for communications with the Ramsar Secretariat and the main agency responsible for the implementation of the treaty. It is expected that the Administrative Authority will consult and cooperate with as many other government agencies and non-governmental institutions as possible in order to ensure the best possible results in achieving the goals of the Ramsar Convention. Each Administrative Authority is expected to designate a National Focal Point to deal with Ramsar Convention matters. More information on the Ramsar Contracting Parties and the individual contact details within the Administrative Authority is available at <http://www.ramsar.org/country-profiles>.

## 6. Evaluation process

### Purpose

Evaluation of the completed and endorsed Nomination Form is undertaken by the IAC. An Evaluation Form has been produced to assist the members of the IAC in the review of nominations submitted by Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. The evaluation form serves as a tool to facilitate the objective evaluation of Nomination Forms and to promote sound judgement by the reviewer based on the accreditation criteria. The Evaluation Form is provided in Appendix 5. The Form is available in three languages: English, Spanish and French.

### Instructions to members of the IAC

As agreed by the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention, a city will only be considered for formal accreditation after satisfying all prescribed criteria (Group A: Criteria based on delivering the conservation and wise use of wetlands). To determine compliance, reviewers must look into the form and substance of the nomination forms.

In order to avoid any potential conflict of interest, IAC reviewers are not to review any application from a country where they are from or currently residing.

Each application is to be reviewed by at least two IAC reviewers for objective evaluation.

IAC reviewers are tasked to answer questions in the Evaluation Form, that correspond to the accreditation criteria, by ticking the appropriate box ("Yes" or "No"). An entry is said to comply with a criterion if:

- a. sufficient information has been provided to clearly describe the main thoughts, and
- b. supplied information is relevant and supports the criterion.

Blank fields found under Group A criteria in the Nomination Form will automatically disqualify the nomination. Likewise, if an entry does not comply with any criterion under Group A ("No"), the reviewer must discontinue the evaluation procedure and immediately disqualify the nomination. For non-complying entries, reviewers are required to briefly state the reason for such judgement.

Questions in Group B seek to acquire additional information about the city. In most cases, evaluation results under Group B would not affect the overall evaluation results. If the wetlands in the city do not have any legal conservation status, additional information provided in Group B can be used for further consideration for accreditation.

Approved nominations will be endorsed by the IAC to the Standing Committee for subsequent submission to the Ramsar Conference of the Contracting Parties.

## 7. The recognition process

The recognition process should involve the following steps:

- The Secretariat invites representatives of the newly accredited cities through their respective NFPs to attend a certificate awarding ceremony at the COP, noting that the cost associated with their attendance to the ceremony is to be covered by the representatives of the accredited cities.
- The Secretariat prepares Wetland City Accreditation certificates for accredited cities.
- An authorized representative of the accredited city notifies the Secretariat through their respective National Focal Point (NFP) or Head of their Administrative Authority (AA) of whether they will be attending the certificate awarding ceremony.
- The Subgroup on COP schedules a certificate awarding ceremony during the COP.
- Secretary General delivers certificates to a representative of each newly accredited city at the certificate awarding ceremony.

IAC recognizes the role of the host Contracting Party in determining the exact nature of the presentation ceremony but provides the following guidance:

- The Subgroup on COP should suggest a suitable time for the certificate awarding ceremony during the COP for process for the public recognition of the accreditation at the COP.
- The ceremony should restrict itself to the awarding of the certificates to the newly accredited cities.
- Films and promotional material about cities should not be part of the ceremony, except for pictures of each city for background, but may form part of a separate session, such as a side event or a separate forum, or exhibition stands.
- Only one representative from each city should receive the certificate at the certificate awarding ceremony.
- Wetland City Accreditation Certificates should be framed and at least A3 in size.

## 8. The renewal process

Cities are encouraged to renew their accreditation. The renewal process should involve the following steps:

- A call for Wetland City Accreditation renewal is announced by the Secretariat two years prior to the end of the accreditation period (see schedule in Section 3).
- An authorized representative of the accredited city completes the Renewal Form (Appendix 6) and sends it to the designated NFP in the AA for verification.
- The NFP checks the Renewal Form. If it is complete and satisfactory, the NFP signs and submits the Renewal Form to the Secretariat.
- The Secretariat forwards Renewal Forms to the Chair of IAC.
- IAC reviews the Renewal Forms received from each city.
- If clarification is required, IAC may return the Renewal Form to the NFP requesting appropriate action.
- IAC reports a list of those cities that meet the required standard for renewal to the SC.
- The SC takes note of the report of IAC and instructs the Secretariat to inform the result of the renewal process to the applicant cities.
- The Secretariat updates the dedicated webpage of the Wetland City Accreditation with cities' renewal status.

Cities may not wish to renew their Wetland City Accreditation. Where cities are not seeking renewal, an authorized representative of the accredited city must notify the designated NFP. The NFP in response to the call for Wetland City Accreditation renewal will inform the Secretariat of the decision, who in turn will notify the IAC. Formal notification of the cessation of accreditation will be published by the Secretariat on the dedicated webpage of the Wetland City Accreditation together with notification of new and renewed wetland cities.



## 9. Administration for Wetland City Accreditation

### Terms of Reference of the Independent Advisory Committee

#### *Responsibilities of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC)*

1. The IAC develops its own intersessional work plan for completing accreditation decisions and using the criteria and procedure outlined within this Annex and the terms of the proposed operational guidance for Wetland City Accreditation.
2. IAC reviews the applications for new accreditation and decides whether to accredit proposed cities. Each application is reviewed by a minimum of two members of IAC and not assigned to members of the same nationality as applicant cities.
3. IAC reviews the applications for renewed accreditation and decides whether to renew the accreditation of proposed cities. Each application is reviewed by a minimum of two members of IAC and not assigned to members of the same nationality as applicant cities.
4. IAC reports its decision on new and renewed accreditation the final full meeting of the Standing Committee prior to the next meeting of the COP.
5. IAC issues guidance on how cities and other human settlements should compile the nomination and renewal forms, especially regarding the level of detail required and the types of supporting evidence required, through operational guidance for Wetland City Accreditation.
6. IAC issues guidance, as required, for National Focal Points (NFPs) on how they could undertake a national review to determine which cities to propose to IAC, and evaluates the compiled accreditation forms to ensure that they abide by the criteria.
7. IAC issues guidance on how it will transparently and objectively review applications and decide whether criteria have been satisfied and a city can be accredited through the operational guidance for Wetland City Accreditation.

#### *Membership of the Independent Advisory Committee*

8. The composition of the Independent Advisory Committee shall be chosen by the SC from the following:
  - A. A Standing Committee member representative from each of the six regions of the Ramsar Convention
  - B. A representative of the Ramsar Convention's International Organization Partners
  - C. A representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
  - D. A representative from ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
  - E. A representative of the STRP of the Ramsar Convention
  - F. A representative of the Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Oversight Panel of the Ramsar Convention
  - G. Representatives of any concerned Ramsar Regional Initiatives
  - H. The Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention or his/her designated representative (observer)
9. Technical advisors may be co-opted to IAC as required but would be subject to approval by the SC.
10. All regional contracting party representative members of IAC are agreed at the SC meeting following each COP.

11. All members of IAC will serve for one full COP cycle, with future renewal possible.
12. The Chair and Co-Chair will be elected by IAC members within two months of determination of the full IAC membership.
13. IAC may invite consultants and observers to attend meetings as required.

#### **Responsibilities of the Secretariat**

14. The Secretariat provides the following functions subject to available resources and as appropriate:
  - Drafting and publishing the call for application for new and renewed accreditation
  - Receiving applications and forwarding them to IAC
  - Forwarding queries specifically related to the review process to IAC
  - Announcing the result of the review process at the end of the annual SC meeting preceding a COP meeting via official notification and on its website
  - Inviting newly accredited cities through respective NFPs to a certificate awarding ceremony at the COP meeting, ensuring that the invitation allows for sufficient time for accredited cities to register as observers at COP, and working with the COP host to prepare the ceremony
  - Preparing accreditation certificates and presenting them to the newly accredited cities at the COP ceremony
  - Updating the dedicated web page in the Convention website
15. The role of the Secretariat as a member of IAC is to provide updates in administrative processes and legal advices, as necessary and as appropriate, in accordance with its mandate provided by the COP. The Secretariat may attend IAC meetings as an observer and is not obliged to review applications.

## 10. Monitoring and evaluation process

### Purpose

The objective of the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention is to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands and regional and international co-operation, as well as to generate sustainable socio-economic benefits for the local populations. The accreditation, and renewal of accredited cities, must deliver on this objective.

To ensure that the Wetland City Accreditation is meeting its objectives requires a monitoring and evaluation programme. It is the responsibility of the IAC to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of Wetland City Accreditation initiative. The following sets out the approaches to monitoring and evaluating the accredited cities:

- Accredited cities will be requested to produce at least one brief report on the activities relevant to the Wetland City Accreditation.
- City leaders or Mayors will be requested, where possible, to produce short videos describing the activities undertaken and explaining how wetland wise use and Wetland City Accreditation has benefitted the citizens of the city.
- Accredited cities will be requested to produce single-page case studies for compilation and electronic distribution to other accredited cities to ensure knowledge and experiences are shared.

The IAC will prepare a report to SC and to COP. The report will be used for improvement and promotion of the initiative.

## **11. Wetland City Network**

### **Purpose**

1. Wetland Cities Accredited under the Ramsar Convention provide a huge potential to promote the conservation and wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands in support of the Ramsar Strategic Plan. The establishment of a Network of Wetland Cities aims to contribute to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention through collective efforts of local governments and local communities.
2. The Network will serve as a platform that will allow:
  - a. Effective access to communication channels among Wetland Cities.
  - b. Promotion of the exchange of information about experiences and lessons learned in managing urban and peri-urban wetlands with respect to local policies.
  - c. Facilitation of dialogues to develop environmental and socio-economic cooperation among Wetland Cities.
  - d. Exchange of human resources among Network members.

### **Membership and Composition**

3. Wetland Cities accredited by the Ramsar Convention can join the Network as members.
4. Cities that are interested in the Wetland City Accreditation scheme are welcome to participate in activities of the Network as observers.
5. Any organization, including international, national and local level governmental or non-governmental organization, that is supportive to the Network will be able to be involved in activities of the Network as observers.

### **Wetland City Network Secretariat**

6. The Ramsar Regional Center – East Asia will serve as Secretariat of the Network. The functions of the Secretariat shall be as follows:
  - Organize or assist the host city in organizing the regular meetings of Wetland City Mayors,
  - Maintain close coordination and communication among members,
  - Facilitate the exchange of information among members,
  - Maintain and update the website of the Network,
  - Forge camaraderie and partnerships among members, and
  - Invite cities and organizations that are interested to participate in Network activities.
  - Manage the development and renewal of the Strategic Plan for the Wetland City Network.

### **Operation**

7. Wetland Cities shall strive to actively participate in all Network activities.
8. Members of the Network shall meet regularly on an annual basis through the Mayors' Roundtable. The Mayors' Roundtable aims to serve as the main forum for decision-making, primarily by consensus or by majority votes, and face-to-face discussions by Wetland Cities on priority issues.
9. Network members will share information and experiences on the development and implementation of wetland-related policies and programs related to conservation, wise use, management and education.

10. A Strategic Plan for Wetland City Network will be developed on to cover two COP cycles. The Strategic Plan will provide the formal framework for the Network.

#### **Financial arrangements**

11. Members of Wetland City Network will participate in activities of the Network, including attendance to regular meetings, by utilizing their own resources.
12. For other activities of the Network such as development and management of a website for the Network, members will share the cost based on mutual agreement.

#### **Review of Terms of Reference**

13. The Terms of Reference for the Wetland City Network will be reviewed by members of the Wetland City Network at least once every three (3) years in accordance with the cycle of the Meeting of the Conference of Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar COP). Any amendments to this Terms of Reference shall require deliberation and approval by the Wetland City Network.

## Appendix 1: Nomination Form

<b>Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention Nomination Form</b>
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**Instruction for compilers:**

- i. Complete all yellow cells taking into account the specific limits on characters.
- ii. Further information on the wise use of wetlands and cities is provided in Resolution XI.11 available at: <http://www.ramsar.org/document/resolution-xi11-principles-for-the-planning-and-management-of-urban-and-peri-urban-wetlands>; and on the Wetland City Accreditation process at: <http://www.ramsar.org/document/resolution-xiv10-updating-the-wetland-city-accreditation-of-the-convention>.
- iii. Completed Nomination Forms should be sent by the designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention matters in the Administrative Authority to: [ramsar@ramsar.org](mailto:ramsar@ramsar.org)

### 1. Background information

**Notes – Also see Guidance Note for Cities**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1a. Country  | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> |  |
| 1b. Name of city   | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> | <i>An eligible 'city' for the Wetland City Accreditation may be a city or any other type of human settlement according to the definition given by United Nations Centre for Human Settlement</i>   |
| 1c. Geographical coordinates of the city                           | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> |  |
| 1d. Administrative and wetland map                                 | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> | <i>Tick box to confirm that a map delineating the administrative boundary of the city and indicating, as far as possible, all wetlands fully or partly situated within its jurisdiction, has been provided in hardcopy.</i>  |
| 1e. Area of city   | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> | <i>Area in hectares within administrative boundary</i>   |
| 1f. Approximate area of wetlands within the city boundaries        | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> | <i>Indication of the area of wetlands within the administrative boundaries, indicating, as far as possible, whether they are natural or human made</i>   |
| 1.g Define the types of wetland present within the city boundaries | <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 80px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> | <i>Use the Ramsar Classification of wetlands to describe the range of wetland types. See <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-17.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-17.pdf</a> (Annex I on Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type) or any classification recognized by your country</i> |

## 2. Accreditation criteria

**Instruction:** To be considered for formal accreditation the city must satisfy **ALL** of the following criteria. Please provide all necessary information in the yellow cells. Please note that the word limits will be strictly enforced. In addition, compilers may provide attached files or web-links to specific examples, plans, regulatory instruments, relevant reports, case studies or photographs etc.

Group A: Criteria based on delivering the conservation and wise use of wetlands

**Criterion 1: A city can be considered for accreditation if it has one or more Ramsar Sites or other wetland conservation sites fully or partly situated within its jurisdiction, which provide(s) a range of ecosystems services to the city.**

**A.1** Name any Ramsar Site that is fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries

Use the official Ramsar Site name and number as described on the Ramsar Information Sheet (available on <https://rsis.ramsar.org/>). If none, state 'None'.

**A.2** Name any other wetland conservation sites that is fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries

Specify its legal conservation status (national or local). If none, state "None" and provide additional information in Group B.

**Criterion 2: A city can be considered for accreditation if it has adopted measures for conservation of wetlands and their services.**

**A.3.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that **development avoids degrading and destroying wetlands**. Describe the national and/or local **policy, legislative measures and regulatory instruments**, urban management plans etc. that are in use by the city to proactively prevent the degradation and loss of wetlands.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**Criterion 3: A city can be considered for accreditation if it has implemented wetland restoration and/or management measures.**

**A.4.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it proactively encourages the **restoration or creation of wetlands** as elements of urban, and especially water management infrastructure. Provide specific examples (site and summary of implemented measures) of where wetlands have been created or restored within the city as elements of urban infrastructure, such as to control flooding, cool climate, improve water quality, provide recreation, etc.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**Criterion 4: A city can be considered for accreditation if it considers the challenges and opportunities of integrated spatial/land-use planning for wetlands under its jurisdiction.**

**A.5.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it considers the importance of wetlands as elements of **spatial planning and integrated city management** (such as through Integrated River Basin Management, spatial zonation, water resource management, the development of transport infrastructure, agriculture production, fuel supply, poverty alleviation, pollution control, flood risk management, disaster risk reduction, etc.). Describe the measures (policies, procedures, guidance, legislation, etc.) that ensure that the importance of wetlands is considered fully as elements of spatial planning and integrated city management.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**Criterion 5: A city can be considered for accreditation if it has raised public awareness about the values of wetlands by delivering locally adapted information, and enabled participation of local stakeholders in decision-making processes.**

**A.6.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has adopted the **principles of inclusivity, empowerment, and participation of local stakeholders including indigenous and local communities**, women, youth, marginalized and vulnerable groups **and the civil society** in decision-making and city planning and management. Describe how local stakeholders have been engaged and participate in the management of wetland-related issues.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**A.7.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has **raised levels of public awareness about the values of wetlands**, and encouraged the wise use of wetlands by a diverse range of stakeholders and communities through, for example, establishing operational wetland education or information centres, regularly disseminating information on wetlands, establishing and implementing school education programmes, etc.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**A.8.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has proactively promoted events around **World Wetlands Day** (2 February) and/or national wetlands day, as appropriate in order to raise awareness on wetlands and their importance to the city. Describe the types of events that have been delivered to celebrate World Wetlands Day in the city.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**Criterion 6: A city can be considered for accreditation if it has established a local committee with appropriate knowledge and experience on wetlands and demonstrates representation of and engagement with stakeholders to support the preparation work to apply for the Wetland City Accreditation and the implementation of proper measures to maintain the city's qualifications for the accreditation.**



**A.9.** A city can be considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has **established a local committee** (or similar structure) to support and to further the aims of the Wetland City Accreditation. Such a committee should contain appropriate knowledge and experience on wetlands and should be representative of stakeholders and communities. Describe the committee, its members, mandate and operation.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

Group B: Further information (optional but strongly recommended)

**A city can be further considered for accreditation if it has developed and applied appropriate standards regarding water quality, sanitation and management in the entire area under the city's jurisdiction.**

**B.1.** A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it has applied **standards on water quality and sanitation, including waste management** facilities which include collection and treatment for solid waste and wastewater (industrial, domestic and stormwater). Describe the standards, policies and regulatory framework which ensures delivery on water quality and sanitation standards

*(Each field is limited to 2500 characters)*

**A city can be further considered for accreditation if it recognizes and considers the socio-economic and cultural values, as well as the broader ecosystem services, of wetlands and has established good practices to consider and protect them in decision-making.**

**B.2.** A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that it **proactively recognises the ecosystem services** that wetlands provide and has integrated these multiple values into decision making. Where appropriate, special attention should be given to describing sustainable agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism and the cultural values of wetlands. Describe how the different provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting ecosystem services are recognised and the benefits that they provide to human society are integrated into planning and decision-making. Where possible, illustrate with examples.

*(Each field is limited to 1000 characters)*

**Provisioning services:**

**Regulating services:**

**Supporting services:**

**Cultural services:**

**B.3.** A city can be further considered for accreditation if it can demonstrate that there is a **close link between local communities and the wetlands**. Describe how local communities are engaged with the wise use of wetlands and how the communities benefit from the services the wetlands provide.

*(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

### 3. City approval

**Instruction:** An authorised representative of the city authority making the application needs to check and approve the accreditation form against the guidance provided. In the case of several cities making a joint submission, a representative of each authority needs to check and approve the form, and then send it to the country's Administrative Authority who will formally submit it to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat ([ramsar@ramsar.org](mailto:ramsar@ramsar.org)) If more than three authorities are making the submission please insert further boxes.

#### Authority 1

Name/Title:	<input type="text"/>		
Position:	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
E-mail	<input type="text"/>		
Date:	<input type="text"/>	Signature:	<input type="text"/>

#### Authority 2

Name/Title:	<input type="text"/>		
Position:	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
E-mail	<input type="text"/>		
Date:	<input type="text"/>	Signature:	<input type="text"/>

#### Authority 3

Name/Title:	<input type="text"/>		
Position:	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
E-mail	<input type="text"/>		
Date:	<input type="text"/>	Signature:	<input type="text"/>

#### 4. Endorsement by the Administrative Authority

**Instruction for the Administrative Authority:** Please check and endorse all the information provided in this form, before sending it to the Ramsar Secretariat at ([ramsar@ramsar.org](mailto:ramsar@ramsar.org)). Please also consult *Wetland City Accreditation Guidance Note for Administrative Authority*.

Name of  
Administrative  
Authority

Name and title of  
Designated  
National Focal  
Point for Ramsar  
Convention  
matters

Date:

Signature of the  
Designated National  
Focal Point for Ramsar  
Convention matters:

## Appendix 2: Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type

The codes are based upon the Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type as approved by Recommendation 4.7 and amended by Resolutions VI.5 and VII.11 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. The categories listed herein are intended to provide only a very broad framework to aid rapid identification of the main wetland habitats represented at each site.

To assist in identification of the correct Wetland Types to list in *Wetland City Accreditation* Nomination Form, the Secretariat has provided below tabulations for Marine/Coastal Wetlands and Inland Wetlands of some of the characteristics of each Wetland Type.

### Marine/Coastal Wetlands

- A **Permanent shallow marine waters** in most cases less than six metres deep at low tide; includes sea bays and straits.
- B **Marine subtidal aquatic beds**; includes kelp beds, sea-grass beds, tropical marine meadows.
- C **Coral reefs**.
- D- **Rocky marine shores**; includes rocky offshore islands, sea cliffs.
- E **Sand, shingle or pebble shores**; includes sand bars, spits and sandy islets; includes dune systems and humid dune slacks.
- F **Estuarine waters**; permanent water of estuaries and estuarine systems of deltas.
- G **Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats**.
- H **Intertidal marshes**; includes salt marshes, salt meadows, saltings, raised salt marshes; includes tidal brackish and freshwater marshes.
- I **Intertidal forested wetlands**; includes mangrove swamps, nipah swamps and tidal freshwater swamp forests.
- J **Coastal brackish/saline lagoons**; brackish to saline lagoons with at least one relatively narrow connection to the sea.
- K **Coastal freshwater lagoons**; includes freshwater delta lagoons.
- Zk(a) **Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems**, marine/coastal

### Inland Wetlands

- L **Permanent inland deltas**.
- M **Permanent rivers/streams/creeks**; includes waterfalls.
- N **Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks**.
- O **Permanent freshwater lakes** (over 8 ha); includes large oxbow lakes.
- P **Seasonal/intermittent freshwater lakes** (over 8 ha); includes floodplain lakes.
- Q **Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes**.
- R **Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes and flats**.
- Sp **Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools**.
- Ss **Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools**.
- Tp **Permanent freshwater marshes/pools**; ponds (below 8 ha), marshes and swamps on inorganic soils; with emergent vegetation water-logged for at least most of the growing season.
- Ts **Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils**; includes sloughs, potholes, seasonally flooded meadows, sedge marshes.
- U **Non-forested peatlands**; includes shrub or open bogs, swamps, fens.
- Va **Alpine wetlands**; includes alpine meadows, temporary waters from snowmelt.
- Vt **Tundra wetlands**; includes tundra pools, temporary waters from snowmelt.
- W **Shrub-dominated wetlands**; shrub swamps, shrub-dominated freshwater marshes, shrub carr, alder thicket on inorganic soils.

- Xf **Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands**; includes freshwater swamp forests, seasonally flooded forests, wooded swamps on inorganic soils.
- Xp **Forested peatlands**; peat swamp forests.
- Y **Freshwater springs; oases.**
- Zg **Geothermal wetlands**
- Zk(b) **Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, inland**

Note: “**floodplain**” is a broad term used to refer to one or more wetland types, which may include examples from the R, Ss, Ts, W, Xf, Xp, or other wetland types. Some examples of floodplain wetlands are seasonally inundated grassland (including natural wet meadows), shrublands, woodlands and forests. Floodplain wetlands are not listed as a specific wetland type herein.

### Human-made wetlands

- 1 **Aquaculture** (e.g., fish/shrimp) **ponds**
  - 2 **Ponds**; includes farm ponds, stock ponds, small tanks; (generally below 8 ha).
  - 3 **Irrigated land**; includes irrigation channels and rice fields.
  - 4 **Seasonally flooded agricultural land** (including intensively managed or grazed wet meadow or pasture).
  - 5 **Salt exploitation sites**; salt pans, salines, etc.
  - 6 **Water storage areas**; reservoirs/barrages/dams/impoundments (generally over 8 ha).
  - 7 **Excavations**; gravel/brick/clay pits; borrow pits, mining pools.
  - 8 **Wastewater treatment areas**; sewage farms, settling ponds, oxidation basins, etc.
  - 9 **Canals and drainage channels, ditches.**
- Zk(c) **Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, human-made**

### Tabulations of Wetland Type characteristics

Marine / Coastal Wetlands:

Saline water	Permanent	< 6 m deep	A
		Underwater vegetation	B
		Coral reefs	C
	Shores	Rocky	D
		Sand, shingle or pebble	E
Saline or brackish water	Intertidal	Flats (mud, sand or salt)	G
		Marshes	H
		Forested	I
	Lagoons	J	
	Estuarine waters	F	
Saline, brackish or fresh water	Subterranean	Zk(a)	
Fresh water	Lagoons	K	

*Inland Wetlands:*

Fresh water	Flowing water	Permanent	Rivers, streams, creeks	M
			Deltas	L
			Springs, oases	Y
		Seasonal/intermittent	Rivers, streams, creeks	N
	Lakes and pools	Permanent	> 8 ha	O
			< 8 ha	Tp
		Seasonal/intermittent	> 8 ha	P
			< 8 ha	Ts
	Marshes on inorganic soils	Permanent	Herb-dominated	Tp
		Permanent/ Seasonal/intermittent	Shrub-dominated	W
			Tree-dominated	Xf
		Seasonal/intermittent	Herb-dominated	Ts
	Marshes on peat soils	Permanent	Non-forested	U
			Forested	Xp
Marshes on inorganic or peat soils	High altitude (alpine)		Va	
	Tundra		Vt	
Saline, brackish or alkaline water	Lakes	Permanent	Q	
		Seasonal/intermittent	R	
	Marshes & pools	Permanent	Sp	
		Seasonal/intermittent	Ss	
Fresh, saline, brackish or alkaline water	Geothermal		Zg	
	Subterranean		Zk(b)	

### Appendix 3: IUCN protected area management categories

Category	Definition
<b>Ia Strict Nature Reserve:</b> protected area managed mainly for science	Area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring.
<b>Ib Wilderness Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection	Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.
<b>II National Park:</b> protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation	Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.
<b>III Natural Monument:</b> protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features	Area containing one, or more, specific natural or natural/cultural feature which is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.
<b>IV Habitat/Species Management Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention	Area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.
<b>V Protected Landscape/ Seascape:</b> protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation	Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.
<b>VI Managed Resource Protected Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems	Area containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.



## Appendix 4: Wetland ecosystem services

The information on wetland ecosystem services is compiled from various sources, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Wetland and Water Synthesis (<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/Synthesis.html>), Ramsar Technical Report (<http://www.ramsar.org/document/ramsar-technical-report-3-valuing-wetlands-guidance-for-valuing-the-benefits-derived-from>) and collaboration between the Ramsar Convention and The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) (<http://www.ramsar.org/document/the-economics-of-ecosystem-and-biodiversity-teeb-for-water-and-wetlands-report>).

	<b>Ecosystem service</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Provisioning services</b>	Provision of fresh water	Water used for domestic drinking supply, for irrigation, for livestock, etc.
	Provision of food	Crops, fruit, fish, etc.
	Provision of fibre	Timber for building, wool for clothing, etc.
	Provision of fuel	Fuelwood, peat, etc.
	Provision of genetic resources	Rare breeds used for crop/stock breeding, etc.
	Provision of natural medicines and pharmaceuticals	Plants used as traditional medicines, etc.
	Provision of ornamental resources	Collection of shells, flowers, etc.
	Clay, mineral, aggregate harvesting	Sand and gravel extracted for building use, clay extracted for brick-making, etc.
	Energy harvesting from natural air and water flows	Water wheels driven by flowing water, windmills driven by the wind, etc.
<b>Regulating services</b>	Air quality regulation	Removal of airborne particles from the exhaust of cars, chimneys of industry, dust from agricultural land, etc.
	Local climate regulation	Regulation of the local microclimate, through shading, reducing air temperature, etc.
	Global climate regulation	Regulation of the global climate through control in greenhouse gas emissions, the sequestration of carbon, etc.
	Water regulation	Regulation of flows of surface water during high and low flows, regulation of recharge of groundwater, etc.
	Flood hazard regulation	Regulation and storage of flood water, regulation of intense rainfall events, etc.
	Storm hazard regulation	Regulation of tidal or storm surges, regulation of extreme winds, etc.
	Pest regulation	Control of pest species such as mosquitoes, rats, flies, etc.
	Regulation of human diseases	Presence of species that control the species (vectors) that transmit human diseases such as malaria, West Nile fever, dengue fever, Zika virus, leptospirosis, schistosomiasis, etc.
	Regulation of diseases affecting livestock	Presence of species that control the species (vectors) that transmit diseases to livestock such as leptospirosis, schistosomiasis, duck virus enteritis, highly pathogenic avian influenza, tick-borne diseases, etc.
	Erosion regulation	Regulation of energy environment to reduce risk of erosion, presence of dense vegetation protecting soils, etc.
	Water purification	Cleaning of water, improvement of water quality, deposition of silts, trapping of contaminants and pollutants, etc.

	Pollination	Pollination of plants and crops by pollinators such as bees, butterflies, wasps, etc.
	Salinity regulation	Freshwater in the wetland provides a barrier to saline waters.
	Fire regulation	Providing physical barriers to the spread of fire, maintaining wet conditions to prevent fires spreading, etc.
	Noise and visual buffering	Wetland trees or tall reeds absorbing and buffering the impact of noise.
<b>Cultural services</b>	Cultural heritage	Importance of the wetland for historical or archaeological value, as an example of traditional uses or management practices, as a cultural landscape, etc.
	Recreation and tourism	Importance of the wetland for providing a location for recreation such as fishing, watersports or swimming, or as a tourism destination, etc.
	Aesthetic value	The wetland is overlooked by properties, is part of an of known area of natural beauty, is used as a subject for painters and artists, etc.
	Spiritual and religious value	The wetland holds plays a role in local religious festivals, the wetland is considered as a sacred site, the wetland forms part of a traditional belief system, etc.
	Inspirational value	Presence of local myths or stories relating to the wetland, traditional oral or written histories about the wetland or wetland animals, creation of different art forms associated with the wetland, development of distinct architecture based on the wetland, etc.
	Social relations	Presence of fishing, grazing or cropping communities which have developed within and around the wetland.
	Educational and research	Use of the wetland by local school children for education, site of long-term research and monitoring, site visited by organised educational study tours, etc.
<b>Supporting services</b>	Primary production	Presence of primary producers such as plants, algae, etc.
	Soil formation	Deposition of sediment, accumulation of organic matter, etc.
	Nutrient cycling	Source of nutrients present from inputs from agricultural land, internal cycling of plant material, inputs of nutrients from floodwaters, presence of fauna to recycling nutrients, etc.
	Water recycling	Presence of wetland vegetation and open water result in evapotranspiration and local recycling of water, relatively closed canopies and low exposure to winds retains water in local cycles, sandy or coarse substrates allow exchange with groundwaters, etc.
	Provision of habitat	Presence of locally important habitats and species, presence of species and habitats of conservation concern, etc.

## Appendix 5: Evaluation Form

Application number	
Country	
Name of city	

Note: Evaluation criteria reflect the numbering used within the Nomination Form

### Group A: Criteria based on delivering the conservation and wise use of wetlands

**Criterion 1: The city has one or more Ramsar Sites or other wetland conservation sites fully or partly situated within its jurisdiction, which provide(s) a range of ecosystems services to the city (NOTE: This item does not require compliance with both sub-items, compliance with either item A.1 or A.2 is acceptable).**

**A.1.** Does the city have one or more Ramsar Sites that is/are fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries?

Yes  No

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**A.2.** Does the city have other significant wetlands that are fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries?

Yes  No

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**Criterion 2: The city has adopted measures for conservation of wetlands and their ecosystem services**

**A.3.** Does the city have any of the following policies, legislative measures and regulatory instruments to proactively prevent the degradation and loss of wetlands?

	Yes	No
National policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
National laws, e.g., environmental impact assessment policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regulatory instruments and enforcement policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local city planning policies, laws, regulations or bylaws policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific urban management plans policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**Criterion 3: The city has implemented wetland restoration and/or management measures**

**A.4.** Has the city implemented measures or projects on the restoration and creation of wetlands as elements of urban, and especially water management infrastructure?

	Yes	No
Evidence of wetlands created	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of wetlands restored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of wetlands being managed for multiple benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of wetlands created	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of wetlands for urban water management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of wetlands for providing other benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**Criterion 4: The city considers the challenges and opportunities of integrated spatial/land-use planning for wetlands under its jurisdiction**

**A.5.** Has the city undertaken measures to integrate wetland conservation and wise use in its development and management plans related to river basin management, spatial zonation, water resource management, development of transport infrastructure, agriculture production, fuel supply, poverty alleviation, pollution control, flood risk management, or disaster risk reduction, among others?

	Yes	No
Evidence of integrated river basin management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of spatial zonation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of water resource management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of development of transport infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of agricultural production	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of fuel supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of poverty alleviation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of water pollution control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of flood risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of disaster risk reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of other wise use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:



**A.9.** The city has provided evidence that it has formed an operational local committee for the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention that has defined composition and functions?

Yes  No

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**Group B: Further information** (optional but strongly recommended)

**It has developed and applied appropriate standards regarding water quality, sanitation and management in the entire area under the city's jurisdiction**

**B.1.** Has the city provided evidence of policies or regulatory frameworks that promote and maintain water quality and sanitation standards?

Yes  No

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**The city recognizes and considers the socio-economic and cultural values, as well as the broader ecosystem services, of wetlands and has established good practices to consider and protect them in decision-making**

**B.2.** Has the city provided evidence of adopted formal instrument/s or policies that recognise and integrate the importance of wetland ecosystem services (including provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services)?

Yes  No

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

**The city can demonstrate that there is a close link between local communities and wetlands**

**B.3.** Within the jurisdiction of the city government, has the city provided evidence of how the local communities practice the wise use of wetland resources and how the local communities benefit from the services that the wetlands provide?

	Yes	No
Evidence of how local communities practice wetland wise use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of how local communities benefit from wetland services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If "No", please briefly state your reason/s in the space provided below:

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**Recommendation**

Do you recommend this city for accreditation?

Yes

No

If "No", you may provide more information in the space below to elaborate on your recommendation and to highlight specific information gaps and feedback for the applicant city.

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Signature above printed name of evaluator

Date:

## Appendix 6: Renewal Form

Country	
Name of city	
City authorized representative	
Date	

### Guidance Notes

**Note 1:** Following the call for Wetland City Accreditation renewal by the Secretariat, the authorized representative of the accredited city is required to complete the Renewal Form.

**Note 2:** The city's authorized representative must complete the grey boxes and append additional supporting evidence. The inclusion of visual aids (such as graphs and photographs, as appropriate) to demonstrate wise use is encouraged. The completed Renewal Form, and accompanying supporting evidence, must be sent to the National Focal Point.

**Note 3:** The National Focal Point must check the Renewal Form and supporting evidence. For each criterion, the National Focal Point must assess the performance of the city and evaluate it. A simple traffic light system is used for the evaluation:

Green	Robust evidence provided to demonstrate compliance against the criterion.
Yellow	Some evidence provided to demonstrate compliance against the criterion but insufficient to demonstrate full compliance.
Red	No or very limited evidence provided to demonstrate compliance against the criterion, or clear evidence provided that the city has not delivered on the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

**Note 4:** To qualify for renewal, a city should aim to have all criteria in Group A evaluated as 'green'. However, a city is allowed to have one criterion to be evaluated as 'yellow'. Any criterion in Group A evaluated as 'red' would result in the city's application for renewal being rejected.

**Note 5:** Where a city is seeking a second or subsequent renewal, and a previous renewal evaluation has classed a criterion as 'yellow', for the renewal application to be successful all the criteria in Group A must be evaluated as 'green'. Therefore, a city has one opportunity to fail to fully meet the criteria before future renewal is rejected.

**Note 6:** Evaluation criteria reflect the numbering used within the Nomination Form.



**Group A: Criteria based on delivering the conservation and wise use of wetlands**

<b>Completed by the Accredited City</b>		<b>Assessed by the NFP</b>		
<b>Criterion</b>		<b>Green</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Red</b>
<b>A.1. Does the city still have one or more Ramsar Sites that is/are fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries?</b>				
<b>Evidence provided</b>				
<b>A.2. Does the city still have other wetland conservation sites that are fully or partly in the city administrative boundaries?</b>				
<b>Evidence provided</b>				
<b>A.3. Does the city have policies, legislative measures and regulatory instruments to proactively prevent the degradation and loss of wetlands?</b>				
<b>Evidence provided</b>				
<b>A.4. Has the city implemented measures or projects on the restoration and creation of wetlands as elements of urban, and especially water management infrastructure?</b>				
<b>Evidence provided</b>				

	Completed by the Accredited City
Criterion	
<b>A.5.</b> Has the city undertaken measures to integrate wetland conservation and wise use in its development and management plans related to river basin management, spatial zonation, water resource management, development of transport infrastructure, agriculture production, fuel supply, poverty alleviation, pollution control, flood risk management, or disaster risk reduction, among others?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	
<b>A.6.</b> Has the city provided evidence of taking action/s to involve and ensure the active participation of local stakeholders in city spatial planning and wetland management decision-making processes through formal or informal means?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	
<b>A.7.</b> Has the city implemented activities that helped raise the levels of public awareness about the values of wetlands and encouraged the wise use of wetlands by a diverse range of stakeholders and communities?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	

Assessed by the NFP		
Green	Yellow	Red

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	Completed by the Accredited City
Criterion	
<b>A.8.</b> Has the city organized activities that support the celebration of World Wetlands Day and/or national wetlands day, as appropriate?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	
<b>A.9.</b> The city has provided evidence that it has formed an operational local committee for the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention that has defined composition and functions?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	

Assessed by the NFP		
Green	Yellow	Red

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**Group B: Further information**

	Completed by the Accredited City
Criterion	
<b>B.1.</b> Has the city provided evidence of policies or regulatory frameworks that promote and maintain water quality and sanitation standards?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	

Assessed by the NFP		
Green	Yellow	Red

	Completed by the Accredited City
Criterion	
<b>B.2.</b> Has the city provided evidence of adopted formal instrument/s or policies that recognise and integrate the importance of wetland ecosystem services (including provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services)?	
<b>Evidence provided</b>	
<b>B.3.</b> Within the jurisdiction of the city government, has the city has provided evidence of how the local communities practice the wise use of wetland resources and how the local communities benefit from the services that the wetlands provide?	

Assessed by the NFP		
Green	Yellow	Red

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**Signature above printed name of National Focal Point**

**Date:**