

Meeting of the 5th Strategic Plan (SP5) Working Group

Thursday 9 July 2024, 12:00 – 15:00 CEST (by videoconference)

Draft Minutes

Participants

- Working Group members: Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, France, Georgia, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Chair of the STRP, BirdLife International, IWMI, WWT
- Observers: Hungary
- Secretariat: Deputy Secretary General
- Consultant: Rob McInnes & team members

Minutes

1. The Co-Chair, ZuZu Gadallah, the National Focal Point for Canada, opened the meeting, welcomed participants and indicated she would be chairing the meeting. The Co-Chair, Luiz Eduardo Andrade de Souza, the National Focal Point for Brazil, noted that during the meeting he would be primarily representing Brazil in a national capacity.
2. The Co-Chair informed the Group that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and agree on targets for Goals 1 and 2. She reminded members that reports of previous meetings and the Consultant's Phase II report were available on the 5th Strategic Plan webpage on the Convention website. She further reminded members that during the Working Group meetings of 3 June and 5 June 2024 that language for Goals 1, 2 and 3 had been agreed and that members had been invited to share proposed text for targets, and that text received from members was reflected in the *Table of Goals and Targets* that had been distributed to members in advance of the meeting.
3. The Co-Chair invited members to propose how they would like to proceed in discussing targets for Goals 1 and 2. A proposal was made that it would be useful to view the *Table of Goals and Targets* on screen and as a Group discuss the text. The Group agreed to move forward in this manner.
4. The Co-Chair introduced the proposed Goal 1 targets sharing her view that there was overlap in many of the proposed targets and that in her opinion consensus was emerging. Members expressed that they saw convergence on targets for conservation, restoration, drivers of loss and their impacts, and species.
5. A member advised the Group to be careful about respecting the mandates of different processes and to not overstep the mandate of the Convention on Wetlands. Several members expressed the importance of targets being measurable and timebound. The STRP Chair cautioned that bundling specific targets into broader targets may not result in the transformational change desired. Discussion followed on the benefits of a larger number of specific targets or a fewer number of broader targets. Members were reminded that the current Strategic Plan has four targets under Goal 1 and that there was a desire for the 5th Strategic Plan to be streamlined.

6. The Group agreed that consolidation of the proposed targets was needed but that this should be done without overly simplifying the targets. One member proposed that sub-targets could address this concern suggesting as an example that a target on impacts of drivers of loss could have sub-targets addressing climate change, unsustainable agriculture practices, urbanization, etc. The Group proceeded to broadly agree on text for three targets under Goal 1 with some text in brackets.

T1 Conserve and restore wetlands

By 2034, [ensure that] [at least xx% of] existing wetlands are effectively managed, [at least yy% of] degraded and lost wetlands are under effective restoration [and wetland representation is increased and improved within restoration policies and programs]

T2 Address the [impacts of] key global drivers of wetland degradation and loss

Prioritise specific actions to combat the impacts of drivers of wetland degradation and loss

T2.1 Address the impacts of climate change on wetland degradation and loss

T2.2 Address the impacts of unsustainable agricultural practices on wetland degradation and loss

T2.3 Address the impacts of [poorly planned] urbanization on wetland degradation and loss

T3 Addressing and reversing the loss of threatened wetland-dependant species

Prioritise actions that improve the population trajectories of key threatened waterbird, fish, and other wetland-dependant species.

7. The Co-Chair invited discussion on the proposed targets for Goal 2. A member made a proposal on combining several of the proposed targets and reordering them. Discussion followed with members expressing a variety of views including caution against modifying the established definition of wise use within the Convention, the importance of inclusion of CEPA in the targets, not introducing terminology that is not well understood and accepted, and having the Strategic Plan have utility and application for all wetlands and not just Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). Concern was expressed on the use of terminology such as “wetlands positive actions” as there is not agreement on what these actions are.
8. The Group proceeded to broadly agree on four targets under Goal 2.

T2.1 Recognise and transform human’s relationship with wetlands through enhancing our understanding of wetland values, functions and services and wise use.

Promote [and safeguard] the values wetlands provide to people and nature and the contributions wetlands make to achieving sustainable development, including food security and poverty eradication, to transform the human-wetland relationship from one of exploitation, extraction, and depletion to one where humans and nature live in harmony. [incorporate wise use and ecosystem approach within policy and planning at all level]

T2.2 Maintain the ecological character of wetlands through implementing an Ecosystem Approach [, and innovative [sustainable] utilization of wetland resources]

Take effective legal, policy and administrative measures at all levels, by 2034, to ensure the ecological character of wetlands is maintained and an ecosystem approach is applied to the planning and management of [all] wetlands, within the context of sustainable development [and innovative utilization of wetlands and their associated resources [for components, processes and ecosystem services]]

T2.3 Ensure inclusive participation in wetland decision-making and address the needs of wetland communities

Fully recognize the rights of all [Indigenous Peoples and local communities] well as the rich cultural connections and traditional knowledges that have sustained the connection between wetlands and people, support the livelihoods of wetland communities, and facilitate the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and youth- and gender-responsive participation for all aspects of wetland decision-making. [could align with Rio principles and GBF T23]

T2.4 wetland inventory

9. The Group agreed to the following actions to advance progress on targets for Goal 2;
 - a. for T2.2 China to provide a rationale for the inclusion of ‘innovative utilization of wetland resources.
 - b. for T2.3 the Group to discuss acceptable terminology to with respect to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
 - c. for T2.4 the Co-Chair invited Australia to submit a concrete proposal for a target that can be discussed at a future meeting.

One member expressed that while considerable progress was made on targets for Goal 2, further discussion was needed.

10. The Co-Chair proposed the following next steps which were supported by the Group;
 - a. Working Group members invited to provide any additional comments to targets for Goals 1 and 2 as well as comments on targets for Goals 3 and 4 to the Secretariat by 12 July
 - b. A next meeting of the Working Group to take place in early August. Group members expressed a desire to work as a Group to finalize text.
 - c. The Co-Chairs to propose compromise language on targets for Goals 3 and 4 to facilitate discussion at the next meeting. This compromise language will be shared with members in advance of the meeting.
 - d. The Consultant in consultation with the STRP will proceed to propose revisions to the zero draft SP5 text for activities and initial indicators under Goal 1 targets.
11. The Co-Chair adjourned the meeting.