

Annex 1

STRP Priorities 2026-2028

1. Recommendations for the next STRP work plan 2026-2028 have been established through a consultative process that started with an initial discussion on emerging issues during the 26th Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel ([Annex 2, SC63.19](#)), inputs received during the 63rd Meeting of the Standing Committee ([Report and Decisions of the 63rd Meeting of the Standing Committee](#)) and subsequent consultations with Panel Members, National Focal Points, Observers and IOPs, including the third intersessional online meeting of the STRP.

Thematic Working Areas (TWAs):

2. To maintain continuity and ensure a consistent approach, the Thematic Work Areas (TWAs) have been retained from the preceding triennium (defined in [Resolution XIV.14](#), [Pre-SC62 Intersessional Decision 04](#) on the STRP work plan 2023-2025):

- TWA 1.** Wetlands of International Importance, development of the Site network and application of criteria.

This work area focuses on providing information to support Contracting Parties in designating, managing, and monitoring Wetlands of International Importance in line with the objectives of the Convention on Wetlands. It includes guidance on applying criteria for site designation and assessing underrepresented wetland types in the Site network. TWA 1 may also provide guidance on integrating Wetlands of International Importance with broader global biodiversity targets, enhancing their role in achieving international conservation objectives.

- TWA 2.** Tools for wetland assessment, mapping and monitoring, and development of inventories.

This work area aims to improve the tools and methodologies required for wetland assessment, mapping, and monitoring, including wetland carbon assessments and biodiversity monitoring. TWA 2 will explore innovative techniques for streamlining wetland inventory and reporting, including remote sensing and Earth Observation. Future actions will ensure these tools are accessible and adaptable, allowing Contracting Parties to meet their reporting obligations under the Convention and other international frameworks that consider wetlands.

- TWA 3.** Direct and climate change related pressures on wetlands, their impacts and responses.

This work area provides scientific and technical guidance on the key pressures on wetlands, including the current and projected impacts of climate change, drawing from the latest international assessments. TWA 3 aims to provide Contracting Parties with information to enable adaptation and resilience-building measures for wetlands, promoting nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches to protect ecosystem services under changing climate conditions and other direct pressures, including agricultural expansion, pollution, and urban development.

TWA 4. Wise use, sustainable management and restoration of wetlands in the wider landscape/seascape.

This work area will support Contracting Parties in implementing actions that promote the wise use and sustainable management of wetlands and restoration. TWA 4 includes assessing options for transformative change to achieve wetland wise use in alignment with sustainable development goals and supporting the integration of wetlands into national development strategies. Future activities include guidance to enhance the role of wetlands in disaster risk reduction, promote food security, and enable wetland restoration.

TWA 5. Cross cutting issues, Global Wetland Outlook (GWO), supporting functions, and synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

This work area will address cross-cutting issues that impact wetland conservation, report on the global status of wetlands (Global Wetland Outlook), and provide technical guidance to facilitate synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). TWA 5 will provide information to support Contracting Parties in applying effective approaches for wetland conservation, restoration, and wise use and promote integrated reporting mechanisms with various international frameworks, including the SDGs and KM-GBF.

Prioritized STRP tasks for the 2026-2028 triennium

3. Each STRP task is assigned to the most relevant TWA, although some tasks will likely contribute to the delivery of work under multiple TWAs. The likely type(s) of output(s)/product(s) are also listed for each task, but these may change as the scope of the work is defined further as the work progresses.

STRP task	Description	Timeframe	Output(s)	Mandate(s)
TWA 1: Wetlands of International Importance, development of the Site network and application of criteria.				
Task 1.1. Scientific and technical support towards effective monitoring and reporting on the ecological character of Wetlands of International Importance in the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS).	<p>Task 1.1. will update guidance on assessing and reporting the ecological character (and changes in ecological character) of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).</p> <p>This work will also consider any additional requests from the RIS Working Group, subject to the availability of resources.</p>	2026-2028	Revisions to Strategic Framework and RIS	<p>Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 19-21 & Annex 2).</p> <p>Report and Decisions of the 63rd Meeting of the Standing Committee.</p>
Task 1.2. Global assessment of gaps in the network of Wetlands of International Importance, and synergies with global climate, biodiversity and sustainable development goals.	<p>Task 1.2. will carry out a global assessment to identify under-represented wetland types, including associated biodiversity and habitats across biogeographic regions (including transboundary wetlands), drawing on-site details in the Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS) and other relevant sources in order to highlight to Contracting Parties opportunities for enhanced designation of Wetlands of International Importance towards biodiversity, climate and sustainable development goals.</p>	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note.	<p>Res. XII.5, Annex 1.</p> <p>Res. XIV.14, Annex 2</p> <p>Res. XIV.6, Para. 38</p> <p>Continuation from STRP 2023-25 work plan (Pre-SC62 Intersessional Decision 04).</p>

STRP task	Description	Timeframe	Output(s)	Mandate(s)
TWA 2: Tools for wetland assessment, mapping and monitoring, and development of inventories.				
<p>Task 2.1. Review of the Convention’s classification system for wetland type.</p>	<p>Task 2.1. will undertake a 2-phase review of the classification system of wetland types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: Initial assessment to determine whether sufficient evidence justifies a comprehensive review. This would clarify why a review is needed, e.g., to meet national and global assessment and reporting purposes. Phase 2: Undertake a comprehensive assessment to address the issues and opportunities identified during Phase 1. <p>Task 2.1 will consider the potential for improving the classification of wetlands, including via minor amendments to enhance harmonization with classification systems used by other MEAs and global and national reporting on wetland extent and condition.</p>	2026-2028	<p>Reports to SC (one report covering phase 1, and one report on phase 2, if applicable).</p> <p>If relevant, STRP will prepare a resolution for COP16.</p>	<p>Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 16-18 & Annex 1).</p> <p>Report and Decisions of the 63rd Meeting of the Standing Committee (Decision SC63-30).</p>
<p>Task 2.2. Advancing the development and use of technology for wetland mapping and inventory.</p>	<p>Task 2.2. will focus on the development of a cross-triennial initiative to foster dialogue, knowledge exchange and guidance on the use of Earth observation for wetland inventory, assessment, monitoring, and conservation (refer Decision SC63-30), e.g., by further developing the GEO-Wetlands initiative, drawing on models provided by GEO Flagships such as Digital Earth Africa, GEO Land Degradation Neutrality (GEO-LDN).</p> <p>Task 2.2 will also inform Contracting Parties about technological advances in wetland mapping and assessment and the application of global ecosystem typologies, including streamlining mapping and inventory approaches (e.g., those used in NWIs) to report on the conservation and wise use of wetlands, tracking the status and trends of wetlands, and</p>	Cross-triennial (subject to the availability of human and financial resources).	<p>Technical Report and/or Briefing Note.</p> <p>Report to SC on progress as related to Decision SC63-30.</p>	<p>Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 49 (h)).</p> <p>Report and Decisions of the 63rd Meeting of the Standing Committee (Decision SC63-30).</p>

STRP task	Description	Timeframe	Output(s)	Mandate(s)
	implementation of international goals and targets, e.g., the CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3 on 30x30 and SDG Target 6.6.1 on Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time.			
TWA 3: Direct and climate-change-related pressures on wetlands, their impacts and responses.				
Task 3.1. Assessing the impacts from harmful algal blooms in wetlands.	Task 3.1 will synthesize information on the occurrence and frequency of harmful algal blooms in wetlands, the key causes of harmful algal blooms, and their impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including human health and access to clean water for agriculture and other uses. Task 3.1 will also develop guidance on best practice methods to prevent and manage harmful algal blooms, maintain wetland ecological character and protect human health (e.g., in terms of the impact on ecosystem services).	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note.	Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 19-21 & Annex 2).
Task 3.2. Assessing the impact of fires in wetlands.	Task 3.2. will evaluate the occurrence and change in frequency and extent of fires in wetlands and the impact on (i) protecting biodiversity, (ii) wetland carbon stocks and sequestration potential, and (iii) human health. The task will cover impacts on people (e.g., health issues from smoke) and the effects on ecosystem services, such as food, fiber, and access to clean water, if applicable.	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note.	Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 19-21 & Annex 2).
TWA 4: Wise use, sustainable management and restoration of wetlands in the wider landscape/seascape.				
Task 4.1. An assessment of transformative change pathways for wetland conservation and wise use for nature, climate and people.	Task 4.1 will focus on reviewing and assessing models, scenarios, and pathways for transformative change that address the triple planetary crisis (climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss), the Strategic Goals of the Convention on Wetlands, and other relevant goals and targets, such as the SDGs and KM-GBF, building on related IPBES	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note.	Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 19-21 & Annex 2).

STRP task	Description	Timeframe	Output(s)	Mandate(s)
	<p>assessments (e.g., Nexus Assessment and Transformative Change Assessment).</p> <p>Where applicable, the task will strive towards integrating activities originally planned under task 3.4 in the 2023-2025 work plan, covering a synthesis of successful nature-based solutions (NbS) or ecosystem-based approaches for protecting, conserving, restoring, sustainably using, and managing wetland ecosystems to address climate change and achieve other co-benefits. If possible, it will also review diverse values and views of Indigenous and traditional knowledge as part of the drive towards transformative change.</p>		<p>Potential topic for future Global Wetland Outlook.</p> <p>Database with NbS cases</p>	<p>Vision of 5th Strategic Plan (TBC)</p>
<p>Task 4.2. Strengthening wetland restoration for climate resilience and biodiversity recovery: Building on STRP outputs and global frameworks.</p>	<p>Task 4.2 will synthesize and promote knowledge and guidance related to wetland restoration, which enhances climate resilience and supports biodiversity recovery.</p> <p>Task 4.2 will harness and build on the range of restoration-related outputs already produced by the STRP, such as Briefing Note 10 on wetland restoration for climate change resilience, Briefing Note 11 on practical peatland restoration, and the Global Wetland Outlook: Special Edition 2025. This work will also ensure the integration and communication of international developments on restoration, such as on forthcoming guidance associated with Target 2 of the KM-GBF and the UN Decade of Restoration.</p>	<p>2026-2028</p>	<p>Develop communication materials, including Policy Briefs and/or Briefing Notes if needed.</p> <p>Implement capacity-building and knowledge-exchange activities.</p>	<p>Relevant STRP activities: e.g., Res. XIV.6, Para. 45; Res. XIV.14, Annex 2; Res. XIV.16, Para. 21; Res. XIV.17, Para. 14.</p>

STRP task	Description	Timeframe	Output(s)	Mandate(s)
TWA 5: Cross-cutting issues, Global Wetland Outlook, supporting functions, and synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).				
Task 5.1. Global Wetland Outlook	Task 5.1. will serve as a flagship publication under the Convention, providing comprehensive, evidence-based assessments of the global status of wetlands, tracking progress against the Strategic Plan, and offering targeted recommendations for policymakers. The assessment process will follow a structured phased approach, encompassing scoping, data collection, expert review, and extensive communication efforts.	Cross-triennial (subject to the availability of human and financial resources).	Global Wetland Outlook 2028	Doc. SC64.18
Task 5.2. Improved global reporting on wetlands: synergies in the development of indicators and methods for the Convention's 5th Strategic Plan and other global processes.	Task 5.2. will develop guidance on addressing indicator gaps and tools for reporting on wetlands to support the assessment of indicators and targets associated with the Convention's 5th Strategic Plan and other global assessment and reporting processes (e.g., KM GBF). A key opportunity will be to continue working in parallel with the KM GBF to promote the development of ambitious and linked wetland targets and monitoring indicators, for example, as part of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note	Doc. SC63.19 (Para. 19-21 & Annex 2). Res. XIII.5 Res. XIV.14, Annex 2 Res. XIV.6, Para. 24 & 44
Task 5.3. Review of policy and legal frameworks for wetland conservation and wise use.	Task 5.3 will evaluate policy and legal frameworks to assess how effectively they support wetland conservation, restoration, and wise use. This evaluation will build on the guidance and information provided in Handbook 3: Laws and Institutions while incorporating more recent case studies and legal developments. The task will identify and showcase successful examples of wetland laws and policies that have demonstrated positive outcomes in promoting the wise use, conservation, and restoration of wetlands and provide recommendations for enhancing the implementation of these frameworks.	2026-2028	Technical Report and/or Briefing Note Policy database	SC57 Doc.8; Res. XIV.14., Annex 2; & Continuation from STRP 2023-25 work plan (Pre-SC62 Intersessional Decision 04).

Additional STRP tasks

4. Further tasks may be considered for inclusion in the STRP work plan for the 2026-2028 triennium.

Potential tasks identified during the Panel’s consultation on potential priorities are briefly itemized in the table below. However, careful thought needs to be given to availability of human and financial resources in establishing the STRP work plan for the 2026-2028 triennium.

Further emerging issues identified by the STRP	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised framework for the Convention and other MEAs to coordinate global reporting on wetland extent and degradation. 	Develop a standardized reporting framework to harmonize and enhance global coordination of data on wetland extent, condition, and degradation across multiple MEAs, improving monitoring and reporting on wetland health.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a comprehensive global wetland inventory 	Developing a global wetland inventory that consolidates existing data and fills in gaps to provide an accurate and comprehensive overview of wetland ecosystems worldwide.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetland mapping and inventory in a peri-urban context 	Address the specific challenges of wetland mapping and inventorying in peri-urban areas, where pressures from urban expansion and land-use changes pose significant threats to wetland ecosystems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in hydrological cycles and how to manage drying cycles 	Explore the effects of changing hydrological cycles, including increased drying, on wetland ecosystems and develop strategies to manage these shifts to ensure wetland resilience and functionality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for livelihoods of wetland communities 	Development of strategies to support and enhance the livelihoods of communities living in or around wetlands, ensuring that wetland conservation and wise use align with the social and economic well-being of local populations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on wetlands from the shift to electric energy sources and mineral use 	Investigate the environmental impacts on wetlands resulting from the growing demand for electric energy sources and the extraction of minerals, particularly focusing on land-use changes, pollution, and habitat degradation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges associated with biodiversity and carbon credits 	Address the complexities and challenges of integrating biodiversity conservation and carbon credit mechanisms in wetland ecosystems, aiming to propose frameworks that can maximize both carbon sequestration and biodiversity protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated wetland assessments to address threats at the river basin scale 	Assessment of wetland ecosystems at the river basin scale, incorporating hydrological, ecological, and socio-economic factors to address threats holistically and promote basin-wide wetland management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon capture potential for mineral soil wetlands 	Explore the carbon sequestration capacity of mineral soil wetlands, evaluating their role in mitigating climate change and developing best practices for their conservation and restoration.

Further emerging issues identified by the STRP	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic pollution in wetlands and wetland species 	<p>Examine the extent and impacts of plastic pollution in wetland ecosystems, particularly its effects on wetland species, and propose strategies to reduce and manage plastic waste in these critical habitats.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetlands of International Importance – guidance on shifting baselines (ecological character) 	<p>Provide updated guidance on managing Wetlands of International Importance in the face of shifting ecological baselines.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nexus assessment – building on the IPBES assessment in a wetland context 	<p>Building on the IPBES assessment, applying its nexus framework to wetlands to evaluate the interconnectedness of water, biodiversity, food, and climate.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wise use of wetlands: updated guidance 	<p>Propose revisions and updates to the Convention’s guidance on the wise use of wetlands, incorporating new scientific knowledge, best practices, and emerging environmental challenges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further work on ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’ (OECMs) 	<p>Further explore the application and integration of OECMs in wetland conservation, identifying opportunities to recognize and support non-traditional conservation areas.</p>