

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
7th Meeting of the CEPA Oversight Panel
London, United Kingdom, December 2013

Report of the 7th Meeting of the CEPA Oversight Panel
London, United Kingdom, December 3-5, 2013

Present:

Members: Sari Airas; Esther Koopmanschap; Christine Prietto; Kelera Macedru (replacing Nunia Thomas), Malta Qwathekana (Chair); Chris Rostron; Suh Seung-Oh; Stanley Tshitwamulomoni; **Secretariat staff:** Christopher Briggs, Secretary General; Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General (present on 5 December); Sandra Hails, CEPA Programme Officer

Apologies: James Clark

Welcome and introductory remarks

1. Malta Qwathekana, CEPA Panel Chair, welcomed Panel members, thanking several members for the work in preparing the documents for today's meeting. The Chair noted that CEPA is still regarded as a minor area of work and is often the first to be cut when budgets are tight, yet it is such an essential part of wetland conservation. The Chair welcomed the Secretary General, noting that his attendance reflects the importance of this area of work for the Convention.
2. Secretary General Christopher Briggs responded that he welcomed the opportunity to work in this area, noting he has taken over communications within the Secretariat to help develop a positive image of the Convention. This can be achieved through better outreach to all people: he identified the need for a special focus on youth. He thanked the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust for hosting the meeting at the London Wetland Centre.

Introduction of Panel members

3. The Chair invited the Panel members to briefly introduce themselves, noting their particular area of interest and their specific role on the Panel.

Adoption of Agenda

4. The agenda was adopted with a small amendment reversing the order of items four and five.

Review of the scoping paper

5. Christine Prietto introduced the Scoping Paper developed by the CEPA Oversight Panel at its 6th meeting in April 2013. This paper set out a process and timeline for drafting the new CEPA Programme 2016 – 2021 for submission to COP12. She reminded the Panel to keep in mind the following priorities which it had agreed for the new programme, and refer back to them throughout the meeting:
 - A simpler format should be used.
 - The terms Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness should be again explained and explored.
 - Participation as a CEPA tool needs to be more prominent than in the current CEPA Programme (2009 - 2015). This area of the programme needs to reflect major points from key Resolutions VII.8 and VIII.36, which focused on participation (these resolutions pre-date the inclusion of participation in the CEPA Programme).
 - CEPA Focal Points' role and tasks should be clearly stated.
 - Improving communication among CEPA Focal Points should be given higher importance.
 - Methods/tools to help CEPA Focal Points play an active role should be explored (shared communication platform, better guidance, peer-to-peer support etc.).

- Roles of individual Ramsar actors, including the Secretariat, in implementing CEPA need to be clear.
 - The role of Ramsar Regional Centres (RRCs) in delivering capacity development initiatives must be recognized and supported.
6. Panel discussion further identified the need for the key actors (such as the CEPA NFPs, the RRCs, the International Organization Partners and other NGOs etc.) to be able to understand their roles in the new programme to encourage implementation. The current programme, Resolution X.8, Appendix 3, was intended for this purpose but the Panel agreed that neither the content nor format were useful for the purpose. There was agreement to consider whether we should return to identifying the key actors in each KRA as was done in Resolution VIII.31.
7. The Panel agreed on the need for a clear link between the Convention's Strategic Plan and the CEPA programme since the former is so important for implementation planning by many governments. Similarly, the key components of the new programme need to be well articulated in the next Strategic Plan. The representative from the RRCs noted that referring to the RRC in the Strategic Plan can assist significantly in fund-raising for their activities.

Overview of CEPA Programmes past and present

8. The Panel briefly reviewed a document showing the evolution of the CEPA Programme within the Convention, noting the earliest mention of education and training, public awareness and participation from 1990 to the first adopted CEPA Programme in 1999 (Res. VII.9), the revised CEPA Programme adopted in 2002 (Res. VIII.31) through to the current CEPA resolution adopted in 2008 (Res. X.8). The guidelines on strengthening the participation of local and indigenous people in wetland management were adopted in 1999 (Res. VII.8) and the related resolution on participatory management was adopted in 2002 (VIII.36).
9. The Panel briefly reviewed Resolution X.8, and agreed that while it was simpler than its predecessor, it could and should be simplified further. It agreed that:
- The vision still seemed relevant and should be retained.
 - The summary view of goals, strategies and key result areas in Box 1 was very helpful for users and should be retained.
 - The private sector was missing as a key set of bodies with responsibility for implementation.
 - The primary aim of simplifying the Programme should be to make it easier to implement.
 - A thorough review of the appendices is essential to ensure their relevance, utility and accuracy.
 - The guiding principles currently in the CEPA Programme should be removed since they do not seem particularly helpful.

Review of the terms Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness and their definitions, and additional terms

10. A brief brainstorming session on the key terms of the programme as they currently stand showed some common understanding of their meaning but also some differences. Through further discussion the Panel agreed that current definitions used in the appendices may need to be revised to reflect the breadth of the Programme. Training and capacity building, common terms in the Ramsar lexicon and core objectives of the Convention, are not clearly accommodated under the current key terms and may be better grouped under the broader term of capacity development. In addition, it was agreed that the term 'stakeholder' (see point 13 below) needs to be clearly defined in the new programme.

Presentations on Ramsar Regional Centres and Wetland Centres as critical cohorts in programme delivery

11. Presentations on RRCs (Suh Seung-Oh); wetland centres and more specifically the Wetland Link International network of centres (Chris Rostron) were helpful in informing Panel members of the role that wetland centres and RRCs currently play in implementing the Programme as well as their needs and challenges and future directions. Panel member Stanley Tshitwamulomoni drew attention to the

ongoing plans in South Africa to develop a Ramsar Regional Initiative for southern African countries to improve networking. A first meeting is planned from 17 to 18 February.

A review of implementation of the current programme as revealed in the analysis of National Reports to COP11

12. A presentation by Sandra Hails using information taken from National Reports helped to focus on CEPA implementation at the national level, on the diversity of activities under the CEPA 'umbrella' and on the challenges and gaps. She emphasized the challenges CEPA Focal Points face in implementing the Programme, and identified some common issues including individuals filling multiple Ramsar roles, and lack of support and recognition within the country. Despite the wide diversity in national implementation among Contracting Parties, some very clear gaps need to be addressed in the new programme.

Participation principles and the future of the participatory resolutions

13. The Panel discussed the document prepared by Panel members Christine Prietto and Esther Koopmanschap, which reviewed Resolutions VII.8 and VIII.36 and extracted a number of potential draft principles with some editing to broaden the scope of the principles from local and indigenous communities to all relevant stakeholders. The Panel identified eight principles that will be included, following further review, in the final draft. These include:

- Encourage active participation of stakeholders in selection and management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands.
- In considering participation of stakeholders, it is recommended to carefully consider the appropriate level of participation. See *Levels of participation*, Res. X.8, Appendix 4.
- Create, as appropriate, the legal, policy and institutional system to facilitate stakeholder involvement in national and local decision-making for the wise use of wetlands.
- Wise use of wetlands is synonymous with mutual benefits for the wetlands and for human well-being; this cannot be achieved without participation of stakeholders.
- Traditional knowledge and experience of wetland systems should be used to assist in management of wetlands and complements scientific knowledge.
- Participation of indigenous and local communities with a cultural, spiritual, historical and economic interest in a particular wetland is integral to the development of sustainable management systems.
- Participation supports building awareness, knowledge and management skills over time.
- Ensuring participation of stakeholders increases commitment and ownership.

14. Following the discussion under paragraph 13, the Panel agreed that there was a need to also include principles for communication, education and awareness. Panel member Esther Koopmanschap agreed to provide these for the next draft. The Panel agreed that the location of the principles within the document would need further discussion.

15. After some discussion the Panel members agreed that their key task is to ensure that a new CEPA Programme is ready for consideration at COP12 to ensure the continuity of the programme. With the limited time available it was agreed that the future of Resolutions VII.8 and VIII.36 should be further considered after the Panel has completed this key task and that, time permitting, the Panel will make a recommendation to COP12 on an appropriate process to review and decide the future of the currently available participation guidance and the need for further or alternative guidance on participation in a broader context.

New name for the CEPA Programme

16. The April 2013 Panel meeting agreed that the programme name 'CEPA', is not well understood outside the Ramsar Community, although now broadly used within this community: the acronym for the uninitiated does not convey any meaning. Some Panel members noted that at this stage it may be counter-productive to remove the name completely. As an alternative, the programme could be given

a name that conveys more meaning and can be clearly understood in all settings and the key words in CEPA could be retained as a sub-title. The Panel reviewed the list of names in the scoping document, added more, and then began a process of elimination of those deemed least suitable. The final list includes seven suggestions that will go forward in the draft document to be used in the consultation process.

Wetlands and People	Connecting for wetlands
Communicating wetlands	Working for Wetlands
Awareness to Action	Working for Wetlands and People
Partners for Wetlands	

Review of the Strategies and Key Results Areas in Res. X.8 and development of the new programme

17. The Panel used various group techniques to review the current goals, strategies and key results areas (KRAs) in Res. X.8, to produce a simpler overall programme with simpler KRAs and goals that it considered feasible. The Panel agreed on eight strategies (down from nine), 28 KRAs (down from 38) and that organizing these strategies under separate goals seemed unnecessary.
18. The Panel has agreed that that the new Programme should be rapidly edited by the Panel so that it can be sent out for review by CEPA Focal Points and other selected individuals. It agreed the following consultation plan:
- An introductory text and a short set of questions should accompany the draft programme, to get feedback to help in the development of the next draft. Panel member Christine Prietto will produce this brief text in the coming days.
 - The draft will include the body of the Programme but not the appendices.
 - A selection of CEPA NFPs should be identified, beginning with those who were present at the CEPA meeting at COP11 and adding those known to be most active.
 - The draft will be translated into French and Spanish to ensure input from all regions.
 - The final draft should be ready for translation by mid-January at the latest and be sent out for comment by February 1, 2014, with a deadline for response by end of February.
19. It was agreed that an interim report should be prepared for SC47 to indicate the progress and outline the next steps leading up to the consideration of the final draft at SC48. The Secretariat will prepare this for editing and sign off by the Chair.

Review of the Appendices in the current programme and additional appendices

20. **Appendix 1. Understanding what is meant by the terms “communication, education, participation, awareness, capacity-building and training”.** It was agreed that Esther Koopmanschap would review the text in Res. X.8, Appendix 1, cross-checking with the terms used by peers (such as the CBD) and suggest any changes. In particular, it was agreed that we should use the broad term capacity development as a term which can include both capacity building and training. Included in X.8 Appendix 1 is Box 2 showing the seven levels of participation. It was agreed that this box is still necessary but Esther will review this list giving particular consideration to the contents and the order with the aim of encouraging positive and effective implementation. Additionally, it was agreed that the term ‘stakeholder’ needs to be clearly understood and defined in this appendix and in the main body of the programme.
21. **Appendix 2. Roles and responsibilities of the CEPA National Focal Points.** It was agreed that this should remain but that the Panel should review the roles in the near future and consider if any changes are necessary.
22. **Appendix 3. Tracking key actors and implementation of the CEPA Programme.** It was agreed that this was intended to encourage implementation by different actors but that it had proved to be neither

helpful nor easy to use. Panel members noted, however, that it was indeed important for the different groups of implementers to see themselves in the Programme (see paragraph 6). The Panel concluded this appendix should be deleted and the key actors should be identified in the KRAs. This approach will be tested in the draft and a final decision made on its utility.

23. **Appendix 4. Possible target groups and stakeholders of the CEPA Programme.** It was agreed that this is very long and needs significant editing. It was agreed that an effort should be made to rationalise the current diversity of groups and the target groups should be re-grouped under four levels: Global, Regional, National and Site. Christine Prietto will work on this and report back to the Panel.