**12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to   
the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

**Punta del Este, Uruguay, 1-9 June 2015**

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|  | **Ramsar COP12 DR1 Rev.1** |

**Draft Resolution XII.1**

**Financial and budgetary matters**

1. RECALLING the budgetary provisions established by paragraphs 5 and 6 of Article 6 of the Convention on Wetlands;
2. ACKNOWLEDGING WITH APPRECIATION the prompt payment by the majority of Contracting Parties of their contributions to the core budget of the Convention, but NOTING WITH CONCERN that a number of Parties are still have significant outstanding contributions (COP12 DOC.15);
3. NOTING WITH GRATITUDE the additional voluntary financial contributions made by many Contracting Parties through their Ramsar Administrative Authorities and other agencies, including some development assistance agencies, and also the contributions made by non-governmental organizations and private companies for activities undertaken by the Secretariat, but NOTING WITH CONCERN the continuing decline in such voluntary contributions;
4. ACKNOWLEDGING WITH APPRECIATION the financial and administrative services provided to the Secretariat by IUCN, underpinned by the Services Agreement between Ramsar and IUCN revised in 2009;
5. NOTING that Contracting Parties have been kept informed of the financial situation of the Secretariat through the audited annual financial statements for the years from 2011 to 2014 and the reports of the Standing Committee meetings in 2012, 2013 and 2014; and
6. RECOGNIZING the need to continue to strengthen financial partnerships with relevant international organizations and other entities and to explore additional funding opportunities through their existing financial mechanisms;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. ACKNOWLEDGES that since the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in 2012 the Secretariat has managed the Convention’s funds prudently, efficiently and openly;
2. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to the Contracting Parties that have served in the Subgroup on Finance of the Standing Committee during the past cycle, and in particular to Canada, which has acted as Chair of the Subgroup;
3. DECIDES that the Terms of Reference for the Financial Administration of the Convention contained in Annex 3 to Resolution 5.2 (1993) shall be applied *in toto* to the 2016-2018 cycle;
4. FURTHER DECIDES that the Subgroup on Finance, as established by Resolution VI.17, is to continue to operate under the aegis of the Standing Committee and with the roles and responsibilities specified in that Resolution;
5. NOTES that the 2016-2018 budget includes a core element funded by contributions from Contracting Parties, prepared on the basis that there are no fundamental changes to the operation of the Secretariat during 2016-2018, and a non-core unfunded element to be financed by voluntary contributions, and APPROVES the combined budget for the 2016-2018 cycle as attached in Annex 1 and 2 to enable the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
6. AUTHORIZES the Standing Committee, with the advice of its Subgroup on Finance, to revise core budgetary allocations between budget lines in the light of significant positive or negative changes during the cycle to costs, rates of inflation, interest and tax income projected in the budget, without increasing the contributions of Parties or increasing the charges paid to IUCN above the budgeted 13% maximum;
7. AUTHORIZES the Standing Committee, with the advice of its Subgroup on Finance, to revise non-core budgetary allocations and priorities depending upon the success of the Parties and Secretariat in securing voluntary funding for these activities;
8. DECIDES that the contribution of each Contracting Party to the core budget (other than those making only voluntary contributions) should be in accordance with the scale of assessments for the contributions of Member States to the United Nations budget as approved by the UN General Assembly, which for those only paying voluntary contributions is applied on an indicative basis, and except in the case of Contracting Parties which, in applying the UN scale, could make annual contributions to the Ramsar Convention Core budget of less than CHF 1,000, in which case the annual contribution will be that amount;
9. NOTES WITH GRATITUDE that at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties the Contracting Parties of Africa contributing less than CHF 2,000 agreed to increase their payments to that level, and that the difference between CHF 2,000 and their assessment will form a voluntary contribution specifically earmarked for African Regional Initiatives;
10. URGES all Contracting Parties to pay their contributions promptly by 1 January of each year, or as soon thereafter as that country’s budget cycle will permit;
11. URGES Contracting Parties with outstanding contributions to make a renewed effort to settle them as expeditiously as possible to enhance the financial sustainability of the Convention through contributions by all Contracting Parties, and REQUESTS the Secretariat to contact Contracting Parties with outstanding contributions in excess of three years and work with them to identify appropriate options and actions for addressing the situation and initiating a plan for making payment of contributions, and to report back to each Standing Committee meeting and meeting of the Conference of the Parties on activities taken in this regard and results achieved;
12. NOTES with concern the continued fall in voluntary contributions from Contracting Parties and URGES Contracting Parties and others to reverse this trend in order to fund the important non-core element of the 2016-2018 combined budget.
13. REQUESTS that the Secretariat continue to develop new approaches and tools, including signature initiatives, as appropriate, to secure voluntary financial support for priority projects;
14. REAFFIRMS its conviction that the Convention’s grants programmes, including the Small Grants Fund, are of great value in terms of the implementation of the Convention, ACKNOWLEDGES Switzerland and the United States for their contributions, and URGES Parties and others to find CHF 700,000 per annum to secure the efficient operation of these programmes.
15. REQUESTS that the Standing Committee review the operation of the programme during the triennium and definitively conclude whether the Parties should continue or cease the Small Grants Fund for the consideration of the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
16. REQUESTS the Secretariat to endeavour to maintain the Reserve Fund over the 2016-2018 triennium in accordance with this budget and to report annually to the Standing Committee on the status and propose to its Subgroup on Finance for its concurrence prior to any uses of the Fund; and
17. AFFIRMS that the rate of increase of the Ramsar Convention budget for the 2016-2018 cycle shall not be considered as setting a precedent for the budget in subsequent years or that of any other international convention.

**Annex I 2016-2018 Core budget, Scenario A with 0% increase**

**2016-2018 Core budget, Scenario B with 2% increase**

**2016-2018 Core budget, Scenario C with 4% increase**

**Annex II Non-Core Funds, 2016 - 2018**

**Annex III Illustrative Contracting Parties’ contributions 2016-2018 for 3 scenarios and change from 2015**

**Annex I**

**Proposed budget scenarios for 2016-2018**

**Scenario A, 0% increase**



Note: Total salary costs: adding the numbers manually gives CHF3,430 versus 3,429 stated on spreadsheet. This is due to rounding up.

**Scenario B, 2% increase**



**Scenario C, 4% increase**



**Annex II**

**Non-Core Funds, 2016-2018**



1. **Three Regional Officers (A)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 900,000**

There is a clear need to increase capacity of regional teams within the Secretariat, given that the number of Contracting Parties, the number of regional initiatives, and the number of Ramsar sites, have all increased over the last decade since the current regional teams (consisting of a Senior Regional Advisor and a Regional Assistant) were formed.

The volume of advice requested by contracting parties in connection with Article 3.2 cases, technical and financial resources needs has also increased significantly, which the positions of ‘Regional Officers’ could assist with. Providing more flexibility for Senior Regional Advisors to engage in wider issues connected to Sustainable Development and Green Economy would also help increase the Convention’s overall impact.

The estimated full cost of three Regional Officers for three years at P1 level is CHF 900,000, and the Terms of Reference for the positions would be similar to those of the recently announced Regional Officer for Africa.

1. **Ramsar Advisory Missions (B)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 600,000**

Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAMs) are designed to bring top scientists and other advisors together to provide detailed and informed guidance to Contracting Parties and their partners, on how to better manage a wetland of international importance facing urgent challenges.

RAMs are a useful, effective and well tested ‘tool’ within the Ramsar Convention. The estimated costs of CHF 600k would make it possible to carry out a total of 31 missions, at an assumed cost of CHF 20k per mission. Another way of viewing it is to assume conducting two or three missions per region per year. It is noted, however, that different regions may require different levels of attention through RAMs in any one particular year.

1. **Support for development of a Global Partnership for Wetland Restoration (C)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 500,000**

In order to convene a coalition of governments, private sector and civil society to explore and make a call for a Global Partnership on Wetlands Restoration, it would be necessary to secure funds for staffing the effort, convening and facilitation.

The costs are estimated to be CHF 500k over three years, based on one staff person at P2 level and at least one small workshop per year to move the effort forwards.

There has been some early interest from International Organisation Partners, Regional Initiatives and Contracting Parties to work together to design a platform for action and financing projects based on an initial concept note put together by the Secretariat. However, to build an inclusive, measurable, and action oriented agenda that is based on shared principles and is aligned with the shared interests of different parties, will take significant staff time and dedicated attention from the Secretariat, IOPs and other partners, in addition to the Parties.

1. **Introduction of Arabic (D)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 1.4 million**

At COP5 (Recommendation 5.15), COP10 (Conference Report, para. 402) and COP 11 (Resolution XI.1), the Arabic speaking Contracting Parties have expressed their strong desire for the introduction of the Arabic language as an official/working language of the Ramsar. In response, SC47 (2014) was presented with an estimate for the cost of providing Arabic into the work of the Convention (DOC. SC47-02). This estimate included provisions for the translation into Arabic of the Convention website, Ramsar Handbooks and Manual, and documents for the COP as well as for meetings of the SC and STRP. The estimate also cover the cost for interpretations during COP and SC meetings, and that to hire an Arabic speaking member of staff for the Secretariat to provide day to day support to Arabic speaking countries.

It is expected that Arabic would be introduced into the work of the Convention on a gradual basis and so voluntary contributions smaller than the amount indicated would be welcomed, e.g. to start work on translation of various key Convention documents into Arabic. Voluntary contribution would be welcomed, especially from Arabic speaking countries.

1. **Virtual Network of Wetlands Professionals (E)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 360,000**

To achieve the goal of having a network of actively engaged wetlands professionals requires a dedicated system to be set up and outreach to find the relevant professional through means of the Parties, IOPs and other Partners. First, in importance, of these would be the AA FPs and then the IOPS. Reaching out to a large audience requires checking details, communications means such as emails and addresses. The task of finding people also implies the need to ensure set up of a modernized database that can adequately hold all data and maintain the information in different categories and be used to search, which would allow the Parties, through the Secretariat, to obtain relevant information on needs, stories, activities, successes and challenges, and this network can also be used to send messages to the target audience.

The estimated costs include an upgrade of the database software in order to bring together the complete Convention audience and be able to contact, question and request feedback from thousands of wetland professionals. The upgrade is expected to cost 45,000 CHF. A junior professional would be required to manage the input, results management and capacity building for the database at a cost of 105,000 CHF per year (total of 315,000 CHF).

1. **STRP programme of work (F)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 750,000**

The Secretariat proposes to devote CHF 750,000 to support the new STRP programme of work for 2016-2018 with provisions to carry out a review of processes and products from the STRP and align it to a new strategy and into the delivery of tailored technical advice in response to identified needs. While the new Panel will be appointed after COP12, the Secretariat has produced  the following estimate of external costs associated with the production of STRP products to facilitate the development and implementation of the next work plan.

Accordingly, out of this amount, the Secretariat proposes to allocate CHF 602,000 to cover the costs for producing and publishing the following STRP products, such as Scientific and Technical Briefing Notes and Ramsar Technical Reports, which correspond to the five thematic work areas within the work programme of the STRP for the next triennium and includes:

* Methodologies/tools to monitor Ramsar Sites including surveying, mapping and inventory
  + Three Briefing Notes: one on policy measures and rationale for wetlands monitoring for policy-makers and two on surveying, mapping, inventorying and monitoring for practitioners;
  + Training: four regional workshops and three webinars (English, French, Spanish)
* Best practices for developing and implementing management plans for protected areas/Ramsar Sites
  + A Briefing Note for practitioners derived from information in Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 18, plus lifecycle management
  + Training: four regional workshops and three webinars (English, French, Spanish)

* Methodologies for valuation of goods and services of wetlands
  + One Ramsar Technical Report (RTR): Update and create a new layout for RTR No.3
  + Nine Briefing Notes: one for policy-makers on valuation of wetlands; eight for practitioners, including four for marine/coastal wetland types and four for inland wetland types
  + One factsheet on valuation of wetlands
  + Training:  four regional workshops and two webinars (each in the three Convention languages)
* Balancing wetlands conservation and development: infrastructure, urbanization and agriculture
  + Four Briefing Notes:
    - Two for policymakers: One for urban policy-makers and another for agricultural policy-makers
    - Two for practitioners: How to of successful urban wetlands and how to of wetland and agriculture balance
  + Two factsheets: one on urban wetland and one on wetlands and agriculture
  + Training: four regional workshops and two webinars ((each in the three Convention languages)
* Climate change and wetlands: methodologies for carbon capture
  + One RTR: The why and how of carbon capture and storage
  + One Briefing note for practitioners on the how-to of carbon capture
  + One factsheet on wetlands and carbon capture
* Training: one webinar in the three Convention languages

In addition, the Secretariat proposes to devote CHF 148,000 to cover more general expenses (not directly related to the five thematic areas, but of relevance to the work of the STRP), associated with the production and overhaul of more communications-oriented scientific and technical products, including:

* The production of 18 Fact Sheets covering wetland services and ad-hoc requests;
* Overhauling the Ramsar Handbooks to convert into a more training-oriented format;
* Providing database services for guidance purposes, including integration of the STRP workspace into the Ramsar website and including a public-facing guidance section in the Ramsar website.

1. **Support to Regional Initiative Networks and Centres. Funding for the priority activities (G)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 820,000**

There are 15 Ramsar regional initiatives as of the 2013‐2015 triennium. They include four

regional centres for training and capacity building: in East Africa (established in Kampala,

Uganda), the Western Hemisphere (in Panama City, Panama), Central and West Asia (in

Tehran, I.R. Iran) and East Asia (in Changwon, R.O. Korea). The Secretariat’s role is to help

them achieve strategic objectives such as:

* ensuring lasting support from the host country;
* developing substantial technical and financial support from all other countries concerned;
* developing robust, independent and transparent governance mechanisms; and
* developing and delivering a truly international capacity development programmes focusing on Ramsar’s core objectives.

In addition to the four centres, there are 11 networks for regional cooperation in 2013‐2015,

focusing on the West African coast, Niger river basin, High Andean region, La Plata river

basin, the Caribbean, mangroves and coral reefs, the East Asian‐Australasian migratory birds

flyway, the Mediterranean basin, the Carpathian region, the Nordic‐Baltic region and the

Black Sea and Azov Sea coasts. Here too, the Secretariat’s role is to support efforts to obtain

formal recognition and support by all countries concerned, to establish operational and

transparent governance structures and to implement annual programmes of work which

involve all relevant partners in addition to the Ramsar national administrative authorities.

In order to help streamline the approach of Regional Initiatives, support their alignment with the Ramsar Convention’s Strategic Plan, and transition to self-sufficiency for long term success, the assumed costs for work to be carried out includes:

* a consultancy that reviews the current and past activities, and potential for maximising the future impact of the Regional Initiatives (CHF 60k),
* a part time support officer to support our full set of Regional Initiatives (CHF 70k per year),
* an annual meeting of the heads of Regional Initiatives in order to discuss and share learnings (CHF 60k per year)
* adequate funds to support joint activities to help in fundraising and supporting financial independence of the Regional Initiatives (CHF 370k).

1. **Develop dedicated staff expertise on Earth Observation and Citizen Science (H)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 350,000**

The potential of satellite technology to deliver a step-change in knowledge about the condition and trends in the dynamics, the status and health of wetlands is enormous. The Ramsar Convention has a long and well-established track record in using satellite data to support and inform decisions on wetlands wise use, and promote international co-operation. The STRP work on ‘State of the World’s Wetlands’ is one marker for future trends while European Space Agency’s GlobWetland in both the Mediterranean region and in Africa makes better decision making for the future of wetlands possible.

For example, a global map of mangroves developed by the Japanese Space Agency can be used to inform how best to use the limited resources available to increase mangrove restoration and tackle wetland loss and degradation. Similarly, mapping of Africa’s wetlands that is now being carried out by the European Space Agency, in support of the Ramsar Convention, will make it possible to be aware and proactive about their status and changes in condition, and we now need to target capacity building interventions that can help Parties to use the data and available analysis.

In order to help develop the capacity of Parties and partners to use modern data sets, and have access to the most modern date sets, it is proposed, via webinars, a global workshop (50,000 CHF) and detailed strategic and technical advice, we seek to increase Secretariat capacity with one junior level position (100,000 CHF per year) to contribute to this goal and provide support to Parties, and support the development of targeted products.

1. **The Ramsar Culture Network: Celebrating Culture in Wetlands (I)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 400,000**

Through Resolutions VIII.19 in 2002 and IX.21 in 2005, the Contracting Parties of Ramsar Convention have moved to strengthen the role of culture in supporting wise use and international co-operation associated with wetlands, and is supported by a Guidance Document (2008). In order to help carry forwards and strengthen the appreciation of culture, wetlands and livelihoods, the Mava Foundation has provided initial funding towards a set of activities that will re-invigorate the Ramsar Culture Network – a growing network of individuals and organisations wishing to collaborate and share experiences on the topic.

There are five activity areas have been identified to focus on, which include strengthened international policy; well documented knowledge of the link that exists between culture and wetlands; building a community of organisations and individuals, globally, more deeply appreciating the cultural value and importance of wetlands; well managed and effective partnerships; and a vibrant and strong 'Ramsar Culture Network', which creates sustained impact over the long term. The five topical areas that have been selected to focus on within these areas include: i) Natural Heritage ii) Agriculture & Food iii) Leisure, Recreation & Tourism, iv) Art & Architecture, and v) Children’s story-telling.

The estimated matched funding and support that is required to deliver significant progress is CHF 400,000 over the triennium.

1. **Small Grants Funds (J)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 2.1 million**

For twenty five years, the implementation of the Ramsar convention by parties and partners has been enhanced through grants, facilitated by the Ramsar Convention, and supported by Parties. For example the Swiss Grants for Africa has provided financial support to ninety projects in over forty countries in Africa. The Wetlands for the Future fund, supported by the USA, has provided financial support to 290 projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, 83 of which have supported activities within designated Ramsar Sites. Since 1991, a further Small Grants Fund mechanism has also been used to support a wide range of activities related to the convention. In 2014, the Norwegian government provided initial support to a portfolio of projects that restore wetlands that provide benefits to people in areas of high population density, which may lead to further opportunity.

To replenish the existing funding support mechanisms listed above, and to respond to opportunities that arise, we aim to identify additional funders and funding opportunities. Preferably, new funds provided would be in excess of CHF 500,000 per year from a particular funder, to increase efficiency and a lower transaction cost burden on the Secretariat.

1. **Online system for National Reports (K)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 230,000**

To share, transparently, data about implementation of the convention, it will be useful to develop an online reporting systems based on indicators developed for the 4th Strategic Plan 2016-21.

The level of CHF 230,000 to carry out this work includes assumed costs for updating the national report format for COP 13, sub-contracting UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre to assist in the development of suitable indicators and online reporting system, translation into French and Spanish, and review by relevant Secretariat staff.

1. **Ramsar CEPA programme (L)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 600,000**

The Ramsar CEPA Programme is important for the outreach that Parties wish to provide in relation to capacity development, increasing awareness and education, and participation in the business and process of wetlands management. Central amongst the immediate needs are a series of CEPA workshops to be able to share information within a region and on specific topics such as wetland education centres at a global level.

The capacity development that is required for the wetlands professionals is linked into the virtual network which will provide areas and topics for attention while the CEPA programme will assist in preparing the necessary training manuals, webinars, online virtual courses, written materials etc. The provision of such materials will be directly or externally sourced through bodies such as University technical college, UNESCO or other water based training centres. A scholarship system would greatly assist in outreach to LDC countries to increase their capacity to attend courses such as water and wetlands management course in Wageningen University and UNESCO Delft as examples of the many courses around the world.

The inter-relationship between CEPA, the virtual network and STRP will form a flow of information that will allow the Convention to be more effectively implemented through building knowledge in people and institutions.

Part of the progression from the current STRP to a more tailored and technical product requires the preparation of a large number of scientific documents in clear easily translatable language and this is essential for outreach on CEPA issues around the world. In addition the close relationships between CEPA and STRP require that the websites are unified into one database that responses to the needs of the 168 Parties and the 150,000 wetland professionals. Assumed costs include:

* 4 Regional Workshops: 30,000 CHF each (120,000 CHF)
* 4 Topic based workshops: 50,000 CHF each (200,000 CHF)
* Scholarship programme: 100,000 CHF
* Unification of materials into the Ramsar website: 70,000 CHF
* Production of STRP/CEPA materials: 110,000 CHF

1. **World Wetlands Day (M)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 150,000**

For the last 15 years the Convention has been fortunate to have consistent, considerable and sustained support from Danone for work related to World Wetlands Day (WWD) and Wetlands communications. As we move into the next triennium, we also need to secure funds that will allow support for WWD, at least, to the same level as has been generously provided to date (150,000 euro). It is also to be hoped that a further increase may be secured by closer alignment between the ambitions and goals of the Convention and a global food and water industry.

In addition, it is considered to be strategic and necessary that Parties also provide support to this programme in order to increase their voice and relevance to the debate. The greater focus on a global audience of 7 billion people should attract interest from World Leaders who are interested in promoting wise use of wetlands and displaying best practice on communications around the world.

1. **‘Ramsar Sites Outlook’ report (N)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 225,000**

In the SC 48 approved draft resolution on ‘Status of the Ramsar List’, the Contracting Parties

“*REQUESTS the Secretariat to investigate the possibility of extending the IUCN World Heritage Outlook to another 100 Ramsar Sites which are under threat, to estimate the costs and propose financial mechanisms to support such actions, and to seek appropriate voluntary funding*.”

In order to do so, it would be most efficient to sub-contract a project to IUCN. After discussion of the project with IUCN staff, it is considered that the project would include refining the Outlook methodology for Ramsar, preparation of an assessment (100+ prioritized sites), development of an online platform to host the assessments, translation of the assessments into relevant languages and preparation of a report. The estimated costs over a three year period are CHF 225,000.

1. **Pre-COP regional meetings (O)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 650,000**

The pre-COP regional meetings are working meetings designed to analyse the major issues and concerns that characterize the expansion of the Convention and its work. The agendas are designed carefully, to allow for reviewing progress and achievements, sharing experiences, tackling common problems, and of the needs for future actions. In order for such regional meetings to take place and be successful, it is necessary to secure sufficient financial support from Contracting Parties.

The estimated cost of CHF 650,000 is based on previous experience and includes the expected travel and per diems of participants from less developed countries to help ensure full participation, as well as costs associated with venue hire and equipment, where not provided by the host country.

1. **COP Sponsored delegates (P)**

**Estimated cost: CHF 600,000**

To ensure the effectiveness of the Conference of Parties requires full participation of all Contracting Parties, and the Secretariat always seeks some level of financial assistance from over 120 Member States which are on the OECD/DAC list of aid recipients.

Assuming participation of one delegate from each country, the funding required to cover travel related expenses is CHF 600,000.

**Annex III**

**Illustrative Contracting Parties’ contributions 2016-2018 for 3 scenarios and change from 2015**



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| \* Revised UN Scale will be applied, when released. |
| \*\* As previously, 22% of total contributions from Parties |



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