

Report of the Working Group on the review of the Strategic Plan

Actions requested:

Standing Committee is invited to:

- i. take note of the work of the Strategic Plan Working Group, and:
- ii. amend the 4th Strategic Plan (SP4) by adding thematic Annexes that address emerging and other issues, and request the Secretariat share these Annexes with Contracting Parties to assist implementation of SP4 in the gap year to COP14;
- iii. agree that existing guidance/tools be communicated to Contracting Parties to support the implementation of SP4 in the gap year to COP14, subject to available capacity within the Secretariat;
- iv. agree to the proposed process and key elements to develop the 5th Strategic Plan (SP5), identifying any additional priority elements to be included;
- v. establish a new Working Group with membership from Contracting Parties, the STRP and International Organization Partners, to commence preparation of SP5, with the terms of reference and work plan to be agreed intersessionally;
- vi. allocate unspent funds of 18KCHF from SP4 to the development of SP5 and funds of 90KCHF for a consultancy, WG meetings and consultation, when the workplan is agreed; and
- vii. note that the Working Group will prepare a draft Resolution about the Review of the 4th Strategic Plan, proposed thematic Annexes, and areas where new guidance could be progressed in the next triennium, for the SC meeting in 2022 ahead of COP14.

Report on the Working Group and Review process

1. Resolution XIII.5 Review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention adopted a process to review the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention 2016-2024 (SP4) and requested “the Standing Committee, at its 56th meeting (SC56), to establish a Strategic Plan Working Group to conduct the review of the fourth Strategic Plan” (paragraph 20). The review process, its scope and modalities are outlined in Annex 1 of the Resolution.

2. Standing Committee at its 56th meeting (SC56, October 2018) established the Strategic Plan Working Group (WG). Its members are: Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Benin, Bhutan, the Dominican Republic, Oman, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, and the United States of America.
3. The WG provided an update on its progress to SC57 in document SC57 Doc.9, describing notably:
 - The development of a template for the Contracting Parties “to evaluate their efforts in relation to the implementation of the fourth Strategic Plan 2016-2024” (paragraph 8, Annex 1 of Res. XIII.5). The template was sent to all Parties on 11 April 2019. Responses from 26 Parties were received in time for SC57.
 - The development of terms of reference for a consultant to be contracted by the Secretariat to assist with the review process (paragraph 11, Annex 1 of Resolution XIII.5).
4. The WG met on 24 June 2019 prior to the opening of SC57 and provided an additional report to the Standing Committee on the outcomes of this meeting (SC57 Com.4), noting the election of Uganda as Chair of the WG and making a number of recommendations.
5. Based on the recommendations of the WG, the Standing Committee took the following decisions:
 - Decision SC57-06: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to share the shortlisting assessment of the candidates with the members of the Group and include the Chair of the Working Group in panel interviews of the shortlisted candidates for the consultancy.
 - Decision SC57-07: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to proceed expeditiously with the appointment of the consultant and inception of the project work plan, in order that it might be well advanced before the end of 2019, to enable the submission of an advanced draft report to SC58 in 2020.
 - Decision SC57-08: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to organize an inception meeting with the selected consultant on their appointment, to define detailed timelines and outputs, in light of existing processes such as the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) in October 2020 and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
 - Decision SC57-09: The Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to seek further responses from Contracting Parties to the survey on implementation of the current Strategic Plan and invited regional representatives of the Standing Committee to encourage Parties in their respective regions to respond.
6. The WG finalized its work plan in July 2019 and appointed a consultant (the Wolf Group) in August 2019 to assist with the review.
7. After further responses were sought from Contracting Parties, ultimately 44 Parties responded to the survey. In addition, the survey was sent to members and experts of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), International Organization Partners (IOPs) and partner organizations that had been invited to participate in the preparation of the fourth Strategic

Plan. There were no responses from these groups. The consultant was able to conduct initial phone consultations with the Chair of the STRP, the lead authors of the Global Wetland Outlook and two of the six IOPs.

8. The WG worked through email exchanges and held two teleconferences: 9 December 2019 and 16 March 2020. The consultant was instructed to prepare a combined overview of the responses to the survey and the information submitted by the Contracting Parties in their National Reports to COP13, also taking account of the elements listed in paragraph 9 a) of Annex 1 of Resolution XIII.5.
9. The consultant prepared, with further guidance by the WG, a combined analytical overview using the 44 survey results and the National Reports submitted by Parties prior to COP13 to obtain a more granular understanding of progress with implementation of the Strategic Plan. This has shown where there are similarities in responses and issues between regions, levels of economic development, country capacities, etc. The consultant also reviewed and updated his analysis of any gaps between the Strategic Plan and the 2018 Global Wetland Outlook, and relevant reports and assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).
10. Resolution XIII.5 also addresses the need to develop a new approach for advising and supporting CEPA in the Convention, inter alia to complement the work of the Strategic Plan Working Group (paragraph 26). The Convention's CEPA Oversight Panel has published the results of a survey among Parties and produced recommendations about a new approach for Standing Committee. The Chair of the WG has liaised with the Chair of CEPA Oversight Panel about the status of their work on the new approach for CEPA for the SP4 review.
11. Progress on the SP4 review during 2020 has been significantly disrupted by COVID 19, with cancellation of SC58 and the sad passing of our WG Chair, Paul Mafabi. In December 2020, Australia agreed to chair the Working Group on a transitional basis to enable the WG to finalise the review. Virtual meetings have been held on 20 January, 23 February, and 21 April 2021 to agree an approach to finalise the review tasks and make recommendations about proposed refinements to SP4, and a proposed framework and key elements to develop SP5.

Review of SP4 and identification of Contracting Parties challenges with implementation

12. The review is effectively a mid-term assessment tracking how Contracting Parties are progressing with implementation of SP4. The analysis (described above) has enabled the SPWG to identify a number of targets where Parties are experiencing challenges with implementation, namely:

Goal 1	Target 3 – private sector
Goal 2	Target 5 – transboundary sites
	Target 5 – Important Bird Area sites (now Key Biodiversity Areas)
Goal 3	Target 8 – national wetland inventories
	Target 11 – poverty alleviation
	Target 11 – socio-economic benefits of wetlands
	Target 12 – prioritization of sites for restoration
Goal 4	Target 16 – national CEPA plans
	Target 16 – national Ramsar committees
	Target 18 – securing assistance from GEF and other donors

13. For a number of these targets, there is existing Ramsar guidance/tools that could be used to support implementation and a number of modes by which this support could be provided to Contracting Parties (for e.g. the Secretariat could re-publicize the availability of such tools, and target this outreach to Parties that reported difficulties); see Annex A. With the support of its consultant, the WG identified against each target/indicator where there are existing tools:
- a) a recent Resolution on the topic providing specific guidance,
 - b) recent STRP guidance,
 - c) training/capacity building tools available from the Secretariat, or
 - d) existing best practice guidance.

Where such guidance/tools do *not* already exist, the WG has identified where guidance could be progressed during the next triennium (between COP14 and COP15) for consideration as:

- STRP priority tasks,
- strategic priorities/urgent challenges designated to receive more attention by the Standing Committee (per Resolution XIII.4), or
- priority development of specific capacity building/training materials (e.g. webinars) or best practice information to be built into the Secretariat's work plan.

Options for progressing guidance and tools in light of the postponement of COP14

14. With the postponement of COP14, the SPWG proposes that aspects of this work that do not require new resources (for example communicating the availability of existing guidance to Contracting Parties), could commence in lead up to the COP subject to the Secretariat having capacity to undertake additional tasks during this time. This existing guidance has been identified in Annex A, with this caveat around available Secretariat capacity.
15. The development of new guidance has implications for both the Secretariat and STRP's work plan in the next triennium as well as budgetary implications where consultancies may be required to help develop guidance; **see Annex A**. Where a technical role and/or development of guidance has been identified for the STRP, these projects would need to be considered and accepted as priority projects in the STRP's Work Plan for the next triennium, and approved by Standing Committee. New guidance requiring consultancy funding similarly would need to have a budget approved as well as identifying the financial implications for the Secretariat's Work Plan over the next triennium. This will be captured in the proposed Draft Resolution for COP14.

Proposed refinements to Strategic Plan 4 (SP4) to support implementation to 2024

16. The SPWG recommends minimal refinement of the Strategic Plan itself and is proposing instead to append a series of thematic Annexes that address emerging and other issues to assist Contracting Parties in fostering improved implementation of the plan over the next triennium to 2024. These annexes address the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the new approach to CEPA and, responding to gender issues.
17. A brief overview of the proposed Annexes follows, and a draft Annex for each is attached to this paper (See Annex B-E)
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): This Annex will show Parties how to link and leverage relevant SDG's to help improve implementation of the Convention.
 - CEPA: The CEPA Oversight Panel is working in parallel to SPWG on a new approach to CEPA to be agreed at COP14. This Annex will help interested Parties identify ways that they can implement this new approach in adoption of policies and practices in the next triennium.

- Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF): This Annex will map the Ramsar Goals and Targets with the post 2020 Goals and Indicators when available, replacing current Annex 2.
 - Gender: This Annex will help Parties identify ways that they can ensure wetland policies and practices are gender-responsive consistent with Resolution XIII.18.
18. With postponement of the COP14, it will not be possible to amend SP4 in the short term but the currently-available proposed Annexes could be used by Contracting Parties to support implementation of SP4 over the next year as well as being used to inform the process for SP5 (see para 17 below).

Proposed process for preparation of SP5, matters for inclusion and governance

Core Elements for SP5

19. The SPWG proposes that core elements of SP4 (Goals and targets) be retained in SP5 to maintain consistency and continuity in reporting and the opportunity for comparison between implementation periods. The WG further proposes that the findings of the GWO, the Secretariat's analysis of the 2021 national reports as well as elements external to the convention, the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (to be adopted later this year), the SDGs, and any future relevant work of IPBES or the IPCC will be useful to help inform and frame the SP5. CPs will need to consider ways to mainstream gender and CEPA into the modalities for implementation of the SP5, guided by the proposed Resolution to COP14 about the new approach to CEPA as well as the published Gender Guidelines.

Previous SP Working Group composition, technical support and Budget

20. The process to prepare SP3 and SP4 involved a discrete Working Group of the Standing Committee supported by the Secretariat. A consultant was also appointed to assist facilitate the drafting the SP4. The Working group for SP3 was chaired by the SC Vice Chair and included a Contracting Party from each region, IOP (Birdlife) and two additional Contracting Parties as observers. No intersessional meetings were held other than those held back to back with Standing Committee.
21. The Working Group for SP4 was co-chaired by Europe (France and Finland) and included Contracting Parties from each region (more than one representative for most regions), the Chairs of STRP and CEPA OP, Birdlife International and UNEP. The Working Group held three special 2 day face to face meetings in Gland and one meeting back to back with Standing Committee and conducted stakeholder consultations. Consultation on SP4 also took place at the pre-COP12 regional meetings (Standing Committee could consider this for SP5 ahead of both COP14 and COP15) and the Secretariat created a space on the Ramsar web site for the Strategic Plan consultation process.
22. The budget allocated for preparation of SP4 was 106K CHF which funded the consultant, intersessional WG meetings and consultation. 18K CHF of this budget is unspent and could be put towards the development of SP5.

Establishment of new Working Group for SP5 and Budget

23. The SPWG was proposing to recommend to COP14 that a Working Group be established to develop SP5 over the next triennium. With the postponement of the COP, the SPWG recommends that Standing Committee establish the Working Group ahead of COP14, to ensure

there is sufficient time to develop the new strategic plan for adoption at COP15 in 2024. Legal advice obtained by the Secretariat confirms the Standing Committee has the authority to establish Working Groups.

24. The Terms of Reference and work plan for the new Working Group can be agreed intersessionally and some progress made on scoping and consultation ahead of COP14. Similar to the make-up of SP4 Working Group, the SP5 Working Group should include membership from Contracting Parties, the STRP and International Organisation Partners, noting, that the CEPA Oversight Panel may need to be consulted on an ad hoc basis, if needed.
25. The SPWG further proposes that the unspent 18K CHF from the SP4 budget be redirected to the preparations for the SP5 and a further 90K CHF be allocated in the Ramsar budget to support development of SP5, including the employment of a consultant to support the efforts of the Working Group.

ANNEX A: REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES, AVAILABILITY OF EXISTING GUIDANCE, GAPS AND PROPOSED ACTION TO SUPPORT CONTRACTING ARTIES

Goal	Identified Indicator	Existing Guidance/Tools	Proposed Action	Proposed Actors, Timing and resources
Goal 1 Addressing the Drivers of Wetlands Loss and Degradation	Target 3 – Private sector: <i>Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the conservation, wise use and management of:</i> <i>a) Ramsar Sites</i> <i>b) Wetlands in general</i>	RAMSAR Handbook 5, Partnerships [2010] Resolution X.12 , Principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector Resolution XI.20 , Promoting sustainable investment by the public and private sectors to ensure the maintenance of the benefits people and nature gain from wetlands	Recall to Parties existing tools and resolutions. Call for and compile case studies of best practice by Parties ----- Development of new guidance on private sector engagement.	Secretariat Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium Funding: Existing resources ----- Consultancy to develop new guidance oversighted by a WG to develop ToR review and action publication of guidance. Timing: Next Triennium Funding: Subject to availability of new resources
Goal 2 Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Site network	Target 5 – site planning and management of Transboundary Ramsar Sites	There is no guidance available and no indicators to measure management of Transboundary Ramsar Sites COP 10 Document 32 , The evolution of the COP 10, Document 32: Transboundary Ramsar Sites initiative List of Transboundary Ramsar Sites	Development of guidance and Indicators.	STRP or Consultancy to prepare guidance STRP to develop indicators Timing: Next Triennium subject to inclusion on the STRP Workplan 2022-2024 Funding: New resources for consultancy
	Target 5 – Ramsar Sites which are also: Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas IBAs	There is no guidance available and no indicators specific to RSs that are equally IBAs noting that the	Development of guidance for KBA's and Ramsar sites. Secretariat to liaise with Birdlife International about training on KBA	Secretariat (with IUCN and Birdlife International) Timing:

Goal	Identified Indicator	Existing Guidance/Tools	Proposed Action	Proposed Actors, Timing and resources
		<p>Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) program of Birdlife International is the successor and extension of IBAs. A global standard for identification KBA's has been developed to ensure consistency between areas across the globe and to assist government meeting their conservation obligations under Ramsar and other international treaties</p> <p>Resolution X.22 Promoting international cooperation for the conservation of waterbird flyways</p> <p>Resolution VIII.38 Waterbird population estimates and designation of Wetlands of International Importance</p>	<p>methodology, as well as guidance for national initiatives, and reviewing suggestions for KBA candidate sites</p> <p>Reflect new terminology KBA's in Strategic plan (SP5)</p>	<p>Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium</p> <p>Funding: Existing resources</p>
<p>Goal 3 Wisely using all wetlands</p>	<p>Target 8 – National wetland inventories:</p> <p><i>Does your country have a complete National Wetland Inventory?</i></p>	<p>A new toolkit for National Wetlands Inventories, 2020 and associated Training Webinars</p>	<p>Recall to Parties the revised toolkit, existing online training, and the important link to SDG 6.6.1</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Explore a modification of the indicator that reinforces the connection of National Wetland Inventories with other reporting mechanisms: <i>Trends in the number of Parties that have included National Wetlands Inventories in national biodiversity, sectoral, sustainable development, and development plans</i> [2015 Indicator Experts Group]</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium</p> <p>Funding: Existing resources</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Indicator review SP5 Working Group and STRP</p> <p>Timing: Next triennium</p>

Goal	Identified Indicator	Existing Guidance/Tools	Proposed Action	Proposed Actors, Timing and resources
	<p>Target 11 – programmes or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation:</p> <p><i>Have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives or food and water security plans been implemented?</i></p>	<p>Resolution XIII.19, Sustainable agriculture in wetlands</p> <p>SDG Indicator 1.1.1: <i>proportion of population below the international poverty line [\$1.90 per day], by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)</i></p>	<p>Call for and compile case studies of Parties wetland related programs and projects that contribute to poverty alleviation.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Timing: Gap year to COP14 If capacity allows OR Next Triennium</p> <p>Funding: Existing resources</p>
	<p>Target 11 – socio-economic benefits of wetlands:</p> <p><i>Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands?</i></p>	<p>Ramsar Technical Report No. 3, Valuing wetlands [2006]</p> <p>Resolution IX.21, Taking into account the cultural values of wetlands</p>	<p>Develop guidance for Parties on defining socio-economic values and their integration in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands.</p> <p>Capacity building webinars on valuation and accounting methods</p>	<p>Consultancy to develop guidance oversights by a WG to develop ToR review and action publication of guidance</p> <p>Timing: Next triennium</p> <p>Funding: Subject to availability of new resources</p>
	<p>Target 12 – prioritization of sites for restoration:</p> <p><i>Have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, plans or projects been effectively implemented?</i></p>	<p>Resolution VIII.16, Principles and guidelines for wetland restoration [2002]</p> <p>Resolution XIII.13, Restoration of degraded peatlands to mitigate and adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity and disaster risk reduction</p>	<p>Recall to Parties existing guidance on wetland restoration/rehabilitation.</p> <p>Explore synergies with UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and IUCN Global Standard for Nature based Solutions Secretariat to liaise with UNEP and IUCN to identify opportunities to co-produce capacity building webinars</p>	<p>Secretariat (with IUCN)</p> <p>Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium</p> <p>Funding: Existing resources</p>

Goal	Identified Indicator	Existing Guidance/Tools	Proposed Action	Proposed Actors, Timing and resources
Goal 4 Enhancing Implementation	Target 16 – National CEPA plans: <i>Has an action plan (or plans) for wetland CEPA been established?</i>	Online Compilation of Wetlands CEPA methods and tools Resolution XII.9 , The Ramsar Convention's Programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) 2016-2024	Recall to Parties existing Resolution, guidance, tools and methods to support establishment of CEPA action plans. ----- Review CEPA Handbook to integrate new approach to CEPA Capacity building webinars about new Approach	Secretariat Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium Funding: Existing resources ----- CEPA OP Timing: Next triennium subject to adoption at COP14 Funding: New resources
	Target 16 – National Ramsar committees: <i>Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee?</i>	Document , Delivering the Ramsar Convention in Your Country: National Focal Points and Their Roles [2014] Recommendation 5.7 , National Committees	Encourage Contracting Parties to establish, or recognize the establishment of, national committees according to the needs of each Contracting Party, to provide a focus at national level for implementation of the Convention.	Secretariat Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium Funding: Existing resources
	Target 18 – Securing assistance from GEF and other donors: <i>% of eligible Parties that have received assistance from one or more UN and other global or regional bodies and agencies or the Convention's IOPs in its implementation of the Convention</i>	Resolution XII.7 , Resource Mobilization and Partnership Framework of the Ramsar Convention [2015] Resolution XIII.7 , Enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and other international institutions [2018] Training webinars on Grant Writing and the Green Climate Fund	Recall to Contracting Parties the existing guidance and training to strengthen their collaboration to enhance the wise use of wetlands and potential funding opportunities.	Secretariat Timing: Lead up to COP14 if capacity allows OR Next Triennium Funding: Existing resources IOPS continue to provide support to Parties on specific topics related to IOPs under Target 18. Timing: Next Triennium Funding: Existing resources

ANNEX B: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Context

The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs provide a roadmap for national and international action from governments, civil society, private sector and other actors to achieve sustainable development for current and future generations. Wetlands provide a range of values and services such as clean water, food, biodiversity, and infrastructure that sustain livelihoods and local to national economies. Investing in wetlands will result in many co-benefits to nature and society.

The commitment of Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to designate Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) and to conserve and use wisely all their wetlands is critical in achieving the SDGs. The Convention thus provides a ready platform to implement the SDGs.

The Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan (2016-2024) identifies four overarching goals and 19 specific targets that directly support achievement of both the SDGs as well as the Aichi Targets set up by the Convention on Biological Diversity. The integrated nature of the SDGs, Aichi Targets and the Ramsar Strategic Plan call for increased integration and synergies across existing multilateral agendas.

Resolution XIII.7 (paras 14-19 and 39-44) captures the breadth of SDG and Ramsar engagement, with the Secretariat further instructed to participate as appropriate in relevant international efforts to address the 2030 Goals and specifically Goals 14 and 15¹ and Targets 14.2 and 15.1. The same resolution underlined the relevance of SDGs 1, 2, 5, 11 and 13 to the Convention.²

Drawing on the Secretariat's "Scaling up.." report, the following table maps where Contracting Parties can further integrate SDGs as part of their practical implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Key Actions to support practical implementation of the SDGs

SP Goals and Targets	Actions to integrate wetlands into SDG Planning Processes	Related SDG targets
Goal 1: Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation		
1. Wetland benefits are featured in national/local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level	Adopt policies and practices for the conservation and wise use of wetlands in order to reverse current and future wetland loss and degradation Integrate wetlands conservation, wise use and restoration into diverse sectoral policies, such as agriculture, forestry or urban planning amongst others, to promote their role in meeting multiple objectives.	1.b; 2.4; 6.1; 6.2; 6.5; 8.3; 8.9; 11.3; 11.4; 11.a; 11.b; 13.2; 14.4; 14.5; 14.c; 15.9

¹ **Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; **Goal 15:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

² *FURTHER NOTING that other SDGs that are relevant to the Convention are: SDG 1, "End poverty in all its forms everywhere"; SDG 2, "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture"; SDG 5, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"; SDG 11, "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"; and SDG 13, "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts" [Para 17].*

SP Goals and Targets	Actions to integrate wetlands into SDG Planning Processes	Related SDG targets
2. Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone.	Scale up wetland interventions. A landscape or watershed approach that takes into account a larger area can help to consider both the wider ecological processes of wetlands and the human impacts of their loss, and conversely, of their restoration	6.4; 6.5; 6.6
3. The public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands		2.3; 2.5; 3.9; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6; 6.a; 6.b; 8.4; 9.1; 9.5; 11.4; 11.5; 11.6; 11.7; 12.2; 12.6; 14.1; 14.2; 14.3; 14.4; 14.5; 14.7; 14.b; 15.1; 15.2; 15.3; 15.4; 15.5; 15.6; 15.7
4. Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment		15.8
Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network		
5. The ecological character of Ramsar sites is maintained or restored, through effective planning and integrated management.	Develop multi-stakeholder partnerships as a critical means of implementation for wetland conservation, wise use and restoration. As such, efforts are necessary to promote these partnerships between different sectors of society in Ramsar Sites.	6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6; 11.3; 11.4; 11.a; 11.b; 13.1; 14.2; 15.1; 15.2; 15.3; 15.4
6. There is a significant increase in area, numbers and ecological connectivity in the Ramsar Site network in particular under-represented types of wetlands including in under-represented ecoregions and transboundary sites		6.5; 6.6; 11.3; 11.4; 11.a; 11.b; 13.1; 14.2; 15.1; 15.2; 15.3; 15.4
7. Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed.		6.5; 6.6; 11.3; 11.4; 11.a; 11.b; 12.4; 13.1; 14.2; 15.1; 15.2; 15.3; 15.4
Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands		
8. National wetland inventories have been initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.	Utilize Ramsar national reports and accompanying reporting mechanisms to provide information for inventories and monitoring related to SDG 6.6.1 and 15.1.	6.6; 11.4; 14.5; 15.1
9. The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the		1.4; 5.a; 6.5; 8.4; 11.b; 14.7; 14.c

SP Goals and Targets	Actions to integrate wetlands into SDG Planning Processes	Related SDG targets
appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone.		
10. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention, with a full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels	Engage stakeholders at all levels to facilitate integration of wetland conservation, wise use and restoration into livelihood strategies, thereby ensuring the sustainability of such efforts. In particular, the role and knowledge of local and indigenous communities is increasingly being valued as fundamental to the long-term sustainability of interventions	2.3; 2.5; 5.5; 5.a; 6.b; 12.8; 15.c
11. Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated.	Identify clearly the services that wetlands including Ramsar Sites provide for people and the environment when they are being designated to help improve understanding of a Site's values and subsequent proposed actions related to conserving, using and restoring it. Ramsar Sites can be managed as pilot sites for promoting sustainable development	1.5; 14.7; 15.9
12. Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation.	Integrate wetland services in NDCs for the Paris Agreement on Climate Change	6.6; 14.2; 14.4; 15.1; 15.2; 15.3
13. Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods		1.b; 2.4; 6.5; 8.3; 8.9; 11.3; 11.4; 11.a; 11.b; 12.b; 13.2; 14.4; 14.5; 14.c; 15.9
14. Scientific guidance and technical methodologies at global and regional levels is developed on relevant topics and is available to policy makers and practitioners in an appropriate format and language		9.5; 9.a; 14.3; 14.4; 14.5; 17.6
15. Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention		1.b; 2.5; 6.5; 6.6; 9.1; 11.a; 14.2; 15.1; 17.6; 17.7; 17.9

SP Goals and Targets	Actions to integrate wetlands into SDG Planning Processes	Related SDG targets
Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation		
16. Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness.	Ensure that wetland conservation, wise use and restoration are integrated into SDG planning and implementation	2.4; 4.7; 4.a; 6.a; 11.3; 13.1; 13.3; 15.7; 17.9
17. Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the four Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016–2024 from all sources are made available	Increase funding for comprehensive actions in wetlands including Ramsar Site to reflect the importance of these sites, not only from a biodiversity point of view, but also from a sustainable development perspective.	9.a; 10.6; 15.a; 15.b; 17.3
18. International cooperation is strengthened at all levels, (<i>locally, nationally, sub-regionally (for example RRI), regionally and globally</i>).	<p>Seize opportunities and synergies with other sectors, conventions and priorities. An important action is the need to foster collaboration between national focal points for different conventions and focal points for SDG planning and implementation and in particular Statistical Offices to advance broader landscape approaches to conservation and sustainable development related to Ramsar Sites, but also other protected areas such as World Heritage Sites</p> <p>Contracting Parties should ensure that their efforts to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan are integrated into their national SDG plans and implementation</p> <p>Contracting Parties should ensure that reports on progress on the SDGs reflect the contributions of wetlands so that their conservation, wise use and restoration link to the sustainable development agenda.</p>	1.b; 2.5; 6.5; 6.6; 6.a; 10.6; 12.4; 14.5; 14.c; 15.1; 15.6; 16.8; 17.6; 17.7; 17.9
19. Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced		2.4; 6.a; 11.3; 13.1; 13.3; 15.c; 17.9

Sources and Available Resources

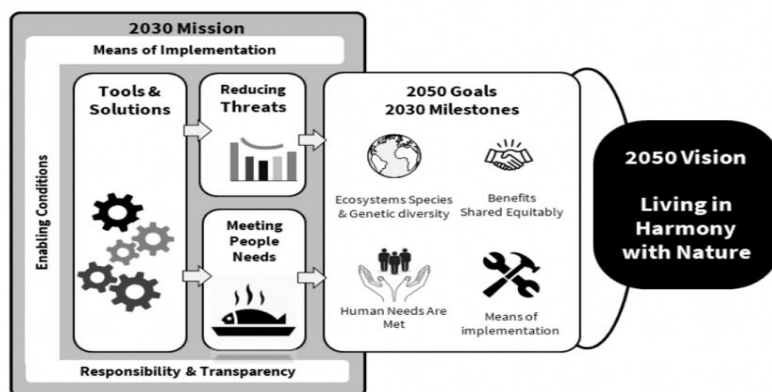
How Wetlands Achieve select SDGs: *Scaling up wetland conservation, wise use and restoration to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.*
Resolution XIII.7

ANNEX C: CBD To replace Annex 2 of SP4 when Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework agreed

Context

The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is proposed to be adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, 11-24 October, 2021.

The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework zero draft focuses its 'theory of change' on the 2030 Agenda and a 2050 Vision of living in harmony with nature.³ The theory of change (see below) is innovative in that it shapes how the CBD sees transformations over 10- and then 20- year periods.⁴



The draft proposes new Goals and indicators, a suite of which relate to wetlands ecosystems and dependent biota. There are some Headline Indicators and some numeric targets that correspond with Ramsar's Wise Use Goals and Targets (e.g. A.0.1 Extent of selected natural ecosystems (forest, savannahs and grasslands, wetlands, mangroves, saltmarshes, coral reef, seagrass, macroalgae and intertidal habitats and, 1.0.1 Percentage of land covered by landscape scale land-use plans for terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems*). It is anticipated there will be some consistency across the indicators to ensure comparability of data over time and increased alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Targets.

General Considerations to support implementation of SP4

Mapping of the new CBD targets to the Ramsar Goals and targets, replacing the existing SP4 Annex 2 (which maps the strategic plan to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which will be replaced by the Global Biodiversity Framework), using a similar format.

³ The vision of the framework is a world of living in harmony with nature where: "By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people."

⁴ **Zero Draft, para 5:** The framework is built around a theory of change (see above) which recognizes that urgent policy action globally, regionally and nationally is required to transform economic, social and financial models so that the trends that have exacerbated biodiversity loss will stabilize in the next 10 years (by 2030) and allow for the recovery of natural ecosystems in the following 20 years, with net improvements by 2050 to achieve the Convention's vision of "living in harmony with nature by 2050." **Para 6:** The framework's theory of change assumes that transformative actions are taken to (a) put in place tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming, (b) reduce the threats to biodiversity and (c) ensure that biodiversity is used sustainably in order to meet people's needs and that these actions are supported by (i) enabling conditions, and (ii) adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity and technology.

ANNEX D: NEW APPROACH TO CEPA

Context

In general, CEPA activities and CEPA elements should be integrated in planning and activities of the Convention (locally, nationally, internationally) where appropriate, with effort focused on a smaller number of high priority activities.

The guidance below provides a pathway for Contracting Parties to work towards building this new approach to CEPA into their implementation of the Convention over the next triennium.

General Considerations to support implementation of SP4

Support focal points, and build more networks and partnerships

National Focal Points and CEPA National Focal Points are important to ensure a coordinated and strategic national approach to Ramsar implementation. The CEPA Focal Points should be recognized as the key implementers of CEPA and should be provided with adequate tools and training opportunities as appropriate.

Contracting Parties should ensure that the Focal Points are informed about their responsibilities. The Secretariat can provide advice and information to Contracting Parties, for example, introduction materials about Ramsar CEPA work for new CEPA NFPs and CEPA NGO FPs and sharing good examples from other countries.

Contracting Parties with similar CEPA needs are encouraged to co-operate on CEPA activities. Such co-operation can include exchange of experiences of CEPA campaigns as well as working cooperatively to produce communications materials and translating them into languages as needed by the Contracting Parties involved. Contracting Parties should also be encouraged to coordinate with their focal points for other MEAs who are conducting similar work.

Contracting Parties should increase engagement with other sectors, consistent with priorities identified in the strategic plan at the national level. In particular, messaging should be tailored to emphasize themes that matter to the target audience.

Specific considerations to Contracting Parties can apply the new CEPA approach to support implementation of the Strategic Plan

Goals and relevant Targets	Implementing the new CEPA Approach
Goal 1: Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation	
1. Wetland benefits are featured in national/local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contracting Parties to continue to contribute wetland input to the debate on global policy issues, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and efforts to decarbonise under the Paris Accord (including through blue carbon ecosystems).• Contracting Parties to identify mechanisms for greater sectoral input to Ramsar and CEPA planning, including recognising the value, experience and resources of IOPs, NGOs, Contracting Parties and business partners in planning, resourcing, developing and implementing Ramsar CEPA messages and products.• Contracting Parties should increase engagement with sectors that have impact on wetlands, consistent with priorities identified in the strategic plan at the national level. In

Goals and relevant Targets	Implementing the new CEPA Approach
	particular, messaging should be tailored to emphasize themes that matter to the target audience.
2. Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to promote case studies of sustainable urban wetland management including examples from Wetland City Accreditation, and undertake CEPA activities that engage stakeholders and promote wise use and management of their wetlands and their surroundings in a way that both water quality and water quantity are well considered.
3. The public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties, to promote existing Convention guidance and share between CPs practical local guidance best practices and case studies which may be more broadly relevant. Contracting Parties to share best practice case studies.
4. Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties, to raise awareness of invasive alien species in wetland ecosystems through the development and dissemination of training and communication materials among the public and private sectors.
Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network	
5. The ecological character of Ramsar sites is maintained or restored, through effective planning and integrated management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to integrate CEPA activities in all Ramsar site management plans and/or activity plans.
7. Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to identify current and emerging threats, including the umbrella threat of climate change, and develop, and share between Parties, practical CEPA tools and guidance for managing Ramsar sites and other wetlands in the long-term
Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands	
8. National wetland inventories have been initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties communicate the results of national wetland inventories for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands.
9. The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Target 1 and Target 13.

Goals and relevant Targets	Implementing the new CEPA Approach
10. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention, with a full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to better engage indigenous people in wetland research, planning, management, restoration and CEPA activities (including case studies) as well as promoting the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands at national and local levels.
11. Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to support Ramsar site managers to develop signage to communicate site values
13. Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to give priority to engaging sectoral decision-makers in integrating wetland values in their planning and decision-making.
Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation	
16. Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to build on the effective CEPA activity and engagement achieved through for example World Wetlands Day, Ramsar Regional Initiatives and Wetland Education Centres. Contracting Parties to use networks and structures (Wetland Link International network, Ramsar Regional Initiatives, Wetland Education Centres, Youth Engaged in Wetlands) to improve support of implementing the convention, such as raising awareness, engagement in activities, and capacity-building Contracting Parties to use various media channels which are appropriate for the purpose, such as social media to raise public awareness (and potentially lead to public concern and pressure on decision-makers) along with other approaches to engage sectoral decision-makers. Contracting Parties to identify new communication avenues and opportunities to promote Ramsar goals.
18. International cooperation is strengthened at all levels, (<i>locally, nationally, sub-regionally (for example RRIIs), regionally and globally</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties with similar CEPA needs to co-operate on CEPA activities. Such co-operation can include exchange of experiences of CEPA campaigns as well as working cooperatively to produce communications materials and translating them into languages as needed by the Contracting Parties involved. Contracting Parties should encourage their Ramsar NFPs to facilitate CEPA activities with their focal points for other MEAs Contracting Parties to ensure that CEPA aspects are

Goals and relevant Targets	Implementing the new CEPA Approach
	<p>considered when planning and developing all Resolutions, guidance materials, STRP products and other outcomes from the Ramsar Convention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to investigate opportunities to improve wetland conservation by applying techniques drawn from behavioural economics and psychology and undertaking joint projects with behavioural insights teams or "nudge" units.
<p>19. Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Parties to build an emphasis on capacity-building, to support people with a range of roles in wetland conservation and wise use. This would involve using the expertise of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), communications and networking by the Secretariat, and sharing of experiences between Contracting Parties. Contracting Parties to evaluate the reach and effectiveness of activities including CEPA, so that effective approaches are identified, shared and implemented Contracting Parties should ensure that the Focal Points are informed about their responsibilities. The CEPA Focal Points should be recognized as the key implementers of CEPA and should be provided with adequate tools and training opportunities when necessary.

Available Resources

DRXI._ New Approach to CEPA

ANNEX E: GENDER CONSIDERATIONS AND THE RAMSAR CONVENTION

Context:

Women and men have different levels of access to and control over wetland resources, knowledge and information about their conservation and wise use. This affects how wetlands are managed, as well as rights and customary uses of wetland products and services.

Women's roles and knowledge in wetlands management continue to be overlooked and under acknowledged, with social and cultural norms often reinforcing their unequal participation in decision-making. Water collection disproportionately falls on women and girls. Lack of onsite water can increase the vulnerability to violence experienced by women and girls as travel to water sources exposes them to harassment and sexual abuse. On the other hand, increased access to water can increase school attendance and income-generation, reducing gender inequalities and poverty.

Resolution XIII.18 on *Gender and wetlands*, approved at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP13) in 2018, encourages Parties to mainstream a gender perspective in their implementation of the Convention, and requested the production of guidance on the integration of gender issues in the implementation of the Convention. National Reports to COP 14 also included for the first time information from Contracting Parties on gender balance in wetland-related activities.

Ramsar Guidance on Mainstreaming Gender has now been published to provide a series of key operational and practical entry points to enhance the mainstreaming of gender equality under the Convention. The guidance below provides a pathway for Contracting Parties seeking to meaningfully integrate gender considerations into implementation of the Convention.

General considerations to support implementation of SP4:

Contracting Parties are encouraged to implement the Strategic Plan at national and regional levels by developing national wetlands policies, strategies, action plans, projects and programmes.

These instruments should intrinsically consider gender-responsive, human rights-based, and intersectional approaches to promote conservation and wise use of wetlands to ensure:

- people-centred governance that respects women in all their diversity and those living in margins of development through full access and control of valuable assets, including land ownership, rights, and economic autonomy.
- Secure equal access to and control of natural resources for women and young women to manage and protect their livelihoods.
- Recognize women and young women as decision-makers and leaders, participating in decision-making processes at all levels in the wise use and conservation of wetlands.

Building gender considerations into the Strategic Plan

Goals	Gender considerations	Key Targets
Goal 1: Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation	<i>Parties recognize that the drivers of wetland degradation intersect with and impact gender and other social dimensions.</i>	
Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network	<i>Parties commit themselves to protect and effectively manage existing Ramsar Sites and enable full and effective participation of stakeholders, including women- in all their diversity, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities.</i>	Target 5.7 How many Ramsar sites have cross-sectoral management committee that enables participatory and inclusive decision making with women - in all their diversity, youth and indigenous peoples represented.
Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands	<i>Parties address wetlands beyond those currently included in the Ramsar Site network. Mainstreaming gender specifications in a wide range of sectors and with a broad array of actors will help to ensure the success of this effort.</i>	Target 10: The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, especially those of women, relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention, with a full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels.
Goal 4: Enhancing Implementation Paragraph 11 of Resolution XIII.18 encourages "...to consider how different genders are reflected in wetland communication material in order to promote equal representation and fairness".	<i>Parties ensure that communication strategies and materials should reflect women's perceptions, needs, and perspectives. Particular attention should be placed on the selection of communication channels that are most appropriate for women.</i> <i>Parties themselves, and in partnership with other Parties and other entities, should take a gender equality responsive approach with regard to scientific and technical advice and guidance, resource mobilization, public awareness, visibility and capacity building,</i> <i>All major environmental finance mechanisms now have gender policies, action plans and gender mandates that must be complied with to secure funding</i>	Target 16: Mainstream wetland conservation and wise use with a gender-responsive approach through capacity development, education, participation and awareness. <i>Note: The new CEPA Approach includes mainstreaming gender equality as an activity.</i>

Available Resources:

The guidance provides Contracting Parties to the Convention with a series of key operational and practical entry points to enhance the mainstreaming of gender equality under the Convention, and presents several case studies on the value of taking a gender-sensitive approach to the wise use and management of wetlands. The document is available for download

<https://www.ramsar.org/document/guidance-on-mainstreaming-gender-under-the-ramsar-convention-on-wetlands-0>