



CONVENTION ON WETLANDS  
CONVENTION SUR LES ZONES HUMIDES  
CONVENCIÓN SOBRE LOS HUMEDALES  
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

## **Roles and responsibilities of the CEPA National Focal Points**

1. Through Resolution IX.18 adopted at COP9 in November 2005, the Parties instructed the Standing Committee (SC) at its 34th meeting to establish a CEPA Oversight Panel. One of the key tasks of this Panel was to clarify the broad roles of the two government and non-governmental CEPA National Focal Points (NFPs) nominated by each Party. (Full details on the task of the CEPA Oversight Panel are available here [http://www.ramsar.org/outreach\\_oversight\\_panel.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/outreach_oversight_panel.htm)).
2. The roles and responsibilities of the CEPA NFPs were discussed at the first meeting of the CEPA Panel in May 2006, and recorded in the Meeting Report. This report was endorsed by SC35. The text below reflects their deliberations and should be used by Parties to guide their decisions on the nomination and roles and responsibilities of their CEPA NFPs.
3. Rationale for the nomination of CEPA NFPs and key factors to be taken into consideration by Contracting Parties:
  - It is important that both CEPA NFPs are nominated since they bring different skills to the CEPA Programme, with the NGO NFP in many cases more actively engaged at the grass roots level.
  - Nominating an active NGO engages them in the CEPA Programme, gives recognition to their work, and can often bring additional funding to a CEPA Programme.
  - While it is preferable that the Government NFP is a CEPA expert, it is recognized that many CPs may not be willing to nominate a person outside of their Administrative Authority and that frequently this means the nominated person is not a CEPA expert.
  - It is unfortunate that the Government NFP changes rather frequently in some CPs since this does not support continuity in the national CEPA Programme. Frequently the NGO NFP is the longterm representative.
  - It is important that the two NFPs should agree and collaborate on their country's CEPA Programme.
  - It is important that the NFPs are key members of the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee, where these exist, and that they are in contact with other key Administrative Authority personnel (such as the NFP or Daily Contact and the STRP NFP).
  - It is important that the CEPA NFPs are consulted by the Administrative Authority when completing the CEPA questions in the National Reports to the COPs.
  - While the current CEPA Programme (2003-2008) requires the nomination of a Non-governmental rather than NGO (Non-governmental organization) NFP, it is

recommended that it should specify NGO because of the critical role NGOs play as CEPA actors.

4. It is ultimately the task of each Contracting Party to agree precise roles and responsibilities for their nominated CEPA National Focal Points (NFPs). These roles and expectations must reflect the capacity to operate at different levels and the resourcing of the individuals filling the positions. The Contracting Parties should provide some information to potential NFPs of the expected time required to fulfill their role and responsibilities.
  
5. **Suggested major roles and responsibilities of the CEPA NFPs:**  
In providing a supportive environment in which wetland CEPA planners and practitioners can develop their work, NFPs should:
  - provide leadership for the development and implementation of a wetland CEPA programme at an appropriate level (national, subnational, local) as described in the CEPA Resolution and annexed programme;
  - be the main points of contact on CEPA matters between (a) the Secretariat and the Contracting Party, and (b) between Contracting Parties;
  - be key members of the National Ramsar/Wetland Committees (if such a body exists) or similar national structures;
  - assist in the practical CEPA implementation at the national level and in national reporting on CEPA activities to the Ramsar Conferences of the Parties;
  - ensure a high, positive public profile for the Ramsar Convention and its conservation and wise use goals;
  - be active spokespersons for wetland CEPA;
  - establish and maintain any contacts, networks, structures and mechanisms necessary to ensure the efficient communication of information between relevant actors at all levels and in all sectors.