

Agenda item 13.2

Future Secretariat structure and staffing

Action requested: The Standing Committee is invited to a) approve the interim Secretariat structure for 2008; b) endorse the Secretariat “vision” and guiding principles for its operations; and c) advise on the Secretary General’s proposals for Secretariat staffing and structure for 2009 onwards designed to meet the future needs of the Convention, in order to further develop these proposals for consideration by the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Background

1. At its 35th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC), the Management Working Group and the SC as a whole considered proposals from the then-Secretary General for a rearrangement of aspects of senior Secretariat staff roles and responsibilities, with a view to helping to address significant work overloads being faced by a number of staff members, including notably the Deputy Secretary General, the regional teams, and the communications team.
2. In Decision SC35-31, “The Standing Committee requested the Secretary General to work with the Management Working Group to propose an organizational structure and terms of reference for senior staff to better reflect the strategic priorities and needs of the Convention for the next five years, for consideration by SC36. The Committee also endorsed the recruitment of a P1 post in the Secretariat to support the work of the Senior Regional Advisors.”
3. This P1 post has now been filled, with Alexia Dufour joining the Secretariat in 2007 as our “Regional Affairs Officer”.
4. Following his arrival in his post in August 2007, the Secretary General reviewed the roles and responsibilities of all Secretariat staff against the current and anticipated future needs of the Convention and its organizational growth, and he identified a number of gaps and weaknesses in capacity and skills impeding the effective accomplishment of what the Secretariat is expected to deliver, both currently in a COP year, and beyond.
5. This resulting paper provides the Management Working Group and Standing Committee with:
 - i) a proposal for a 2008 interim (transitional) revised Secretariat staff management structure and responsibilities designed, without adding to staff posts or costs, to establish a clearer functional unit structure and line management responsibilities of staff;

- ii) a Secretariat “vision”, commitments and guiding principles for its operations and future development, in relation to the broader issues and strategic priorities for the organizational growth of the Convention and its Secretariat; and
 - iii) a proposed organizational structure and staffing of the Secretariat for the next triennium.
6. Since the Secretary General’s proposals for Secretariat structure and staffing for 2009 onwards have implications for the core Convention budget for the 2009-2011 triennium, this document should be read in conjunction with DOC. SC36-22 “Financial and budgetary matters”.

Proposed 2008 interim (transitional) revised Secretariat staff management structure

7. The proposed amendments to the present structure and line management responsibilities, as an interim arrangement for 2008, are summarized in the Secretariat line-management ‘organogram’ provided in Annex 1. The proposed changes are as follows:
- i) grouping the Secretariat staff into four “function units” for clearer management structure and purpose. These are: Secretary General’s office; Administration Unit; Science & Communication Unit; and Regional Unit.
 - ii) creating a clearer and more logical line-management structure in the Administration Unit, with the Senior Administrative Assistant working to the Secretary General and having responsibility for the management of the other Administrative Assistants;
 - iii) recognizing the Deputy Secretary General as a) undertaking the role of deputizing for the Secretary General, and b) as “Chief of the Science and Communications Unit”, responsible for management of those areas of Secretariat work, as at present;
 - iv) addressing the need for a senior staff coordination and management role within the Regional Unit by means of the currently longest-experienced Senior Regional Advisor taking on the role, for 2008, of “Acting Chief of Regional Unit”, with line management responsibility for other Senior Regional Advisors and the Regional Affairs Officer.
8. Note that this staffing organogram is organized as a line-management structure for the sake of clarity, whilst in fact in day-to-day practice the Secretariat staff work together on each different area of work as task teams (with a task leader) often drawn from across line-management structures.
9. Concerning current staffing of the Asia/Oceania Regional Team, the Standing Committee will be aware that the Secretariat is currently undertaking a re-recruitment process for the Senior Advisor for Asia/Oceania, following the very unfortunate withdrawal from this post shortly before the starting date of the officer appointed in 2007. The Secretariat does not now anticipate a new officer coming into post until mid-2008. In the meantime, and in order to ensure continuity of experience and service to Asia/Oceania Contracting Parties up to and through COP10, with the agreement of the Standing Committee Chairs, the current Asia Assistant has been appointed to a one-year junior professional post (P1 grade),

entitled Technical Officer Asia/Oceania, until January 2009. Recruitment of a new Asia/Oceania Assistant will be made for a start date in early 2009.

10. Two posts shown on the 2008 staffing organogram are not funded from core Convention budget. One is a Projects Officer, funded through the Secretariat's agreement with the Danone Group, with the role of maintaining the Secretariat's ongoing liaison with Danone and administering projects to be funded under a new Danone/Ramsar initiative. The other post, about which the Secretariat is in discussion with the COP10 hosts, the Republic of Korea, concerns a possible secondment from Korea of a COP10 Logistics Assistant, so as to ensure strong communications between the Secretariat and Korea about logistical preparations for COP10.

The Ramsar Secretariat's "vision", commitments and guiding principles for its operations and future development

11. The issues and approaches outlined in this section provide a view of the approach and commitments of the Secretariat in relation to the broader issues and strategic priorities for the organizational growth of the Convention and its Secretariat, and they supply a background to the proposals for future Secretariat structure and staffing in the section that follows.

Working with a Vision

12. Our "Vision" is our perspective, our way of seeing our role and responsibilities; it guides our choices, our attitude, and our behavior.
13. We believe that true direction is born with a Vision. An effective vision provides guidance and it gives direction to our Secretariat. It begins when we accept it as a team, and it becomes a reality when our Standing Committee and the Contracting Parties they represent respond to it.

Ramsar Secretariat Vision

A dedicated team made up of people with a common goal and a mutual commitment to promote and support the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.

We do our best to remain a constructive team made up of people with different aptitudes, and playing different positions and roles, to assist the Contracting Parties in achieving increasing progress in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

14. The Ramsar Secretariat believes in team work at all levels, and we strive to promote partnership at local, national and international levels so that each stakeholder group uses its particular style and strengths to integrate wetland issues in their work and create a powerful partnership, one that enhances synergy in wetland conservation and wise use.

The Secretariat's commitments

15. The team members of the Ramsar Secretariat are committed to:

- bringing the particular skills and experience of each staff member to the team and working together with respect and appreciation for one another to create a powerful team;
- providing high-quality support to the Ramsar Contracting Parties;
- promoting a clear and shared understanding of wetland issues by key players;
- providing timely and high-quality information that is understandable and reliable to facilitate the right decision at the right time and right place;
- promoting effective communications to facilitate partnership at local, national and international levels; and
- enhancing the image of the Convention and encouraging the recognition of wetland values and their importance for sustainable development by key decision-makers.

The Secretariat's guiding principles to meet our commitments

16. We choose to respect those for whom we work (the Ramsar Contracting Parties). We value what others do and the ways in which they contribute to the work of the Convention.
17. We keep in mind that the degree to which we value our ability is the degree to which others will value our ability.
18. We look for options and opportunities to:
 - enhance a common understanding of “*what are wetlands and their importance for sustainable development*”?;
 - innovate and make progress;
 - encourage other players and help them become better than we are and give them credit for their achievements;
 - continually invest in a disciplined and consistent way of learning and growing; and
 - take ownership of our capacity and provide all we can offer to the Contracting Parties.
19. The Standing Committee may wish to review and comment on the statements above and endorse these as providing a guiding approach and principles for the future operations of the Secretariat.

Proposed organizational structure and staffing of the Secretariat for 2009 onwards

20. The proposals for future the Secretariat structure and staffing (2009 onwards) are made with the following assumptions concerning the organizational growth of the Convention:
 - i) The Ramsar Convention is committed to growing and developing its work to meet persisting and emerging challenges.
 - ii) The Contracting Parties are committed to making positive changes to keep the Convention modernized and well-run in order to adjust to a changing environment.

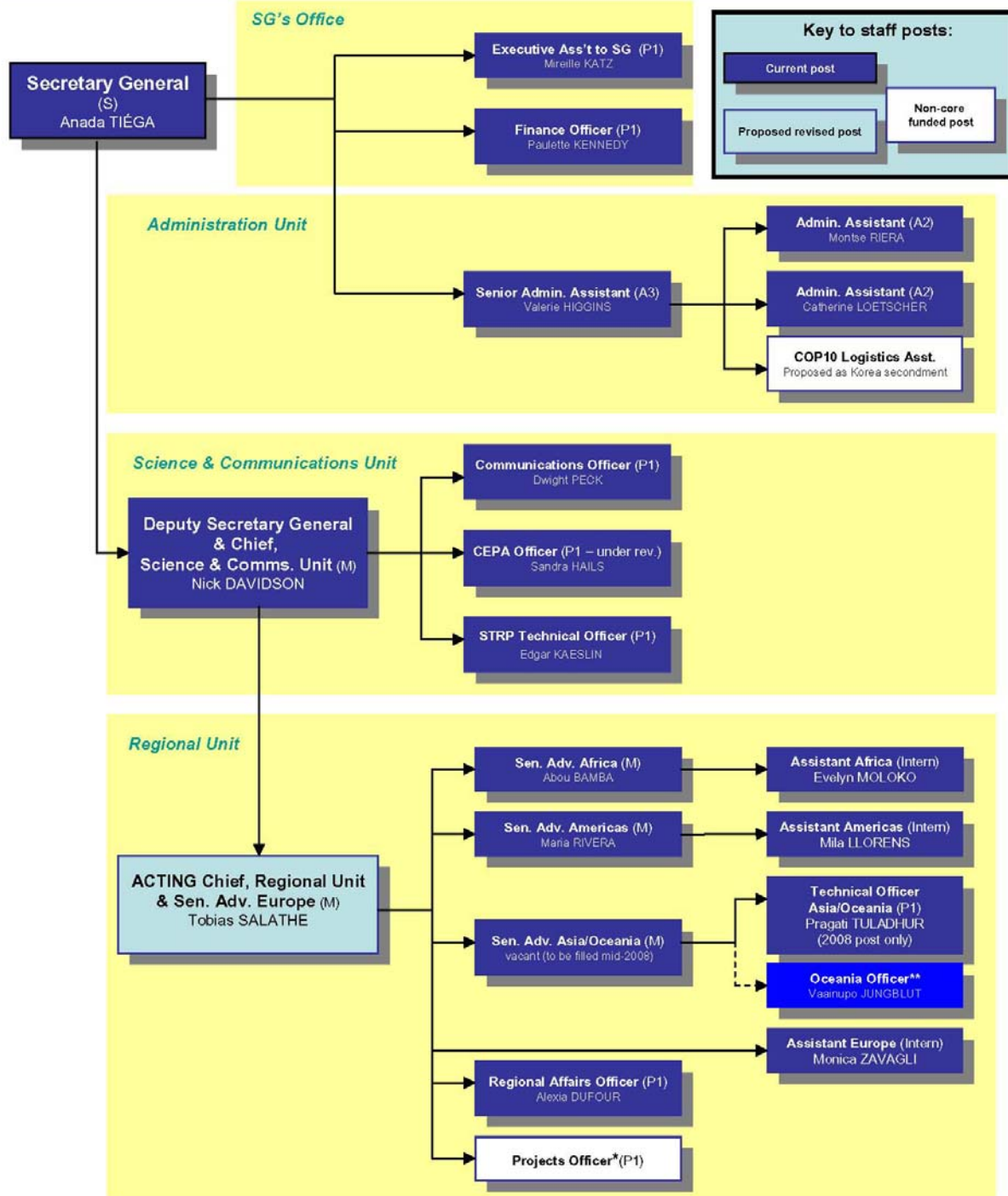
- iii) The Contracting Parties are willing to spend money to ensure the growth of the Convention and enhance its achievements, taking into account new challenges.
 - iv) The Contracting Parties are committed to supporting the difficult decisions necessary for the success of the Convention.
 - v) The Contracting Parties support the Vision of the Secretariat.
 - vi) The Standing Committee and the Contracting Parties they represent think big.
21. With increasing membership of the Convention, and recognition of the Convention's key role in securing the future sustainability of wetlands, the capacity of the Secretariat has become increasingly overstretched, putting at risk its ability to deliver the services expected by Contracting Parties and partners in an efficient and timely manner.
22. Following the Secretary General's review in late 2007 of current staffing and capacities, as well as the gaps in current capacity and skills needed to deliver the work of a Convention Secretariat in the modern world, the Secretary General has identified the following needs for additional staff skills and expertise to undertake various aspects of the Secretariat's mandate and work plans. These cover:
- i) the establishment and staffing of a "Partnership Development Unit" in the Secretariat, including a senior post of "Chief, Partnership Unit", to further develop and maintain the increasingly necessary work on partnerships and synergy with other relevant processes and organizations, including *inter alia* other multilateral environmental agreements and United Nations agencies and organizations; the non-governmental sector, especially the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs); and the private sector and governmental donor community; and importantly, to take on the lead responsibility for planning and coordination of COP preparations with the host country – an area of work which currently places a heavy load on the Secretary General, particularly in a COP year;
 - ii) the establishment of a senior post of "Chief, Regional and Administration Units", in order to better support, coordinate and manage the regional teams and administrative staff of the Secretariat;
 - iii) the establishment of an information technology junior professional officer post, to ensure that the IT needs, such as databases, further Web-developments, etc., are effectively developed and maintained and result in the smooth running of the Secretariat and Convention in an increasingly technological world;
 - iv) the addition of a junior professional post of "CEPA Assistant" to the Communications Unit, in recognition of the current severe overload this unit faces in delivering the implementation of the Convention's CEPA programme, including *inter alia* maintenance and update of the CEPA pages of the Web site, World Wetlands Day preparations, preparation of Ramsar publications, and imminent redevelopment of the Ramsar Web site;

- v) the creation of a “Legal Officer” post, in view of the increasing need for professional legal advice to the Convention on matters such as the future status of the Secretariat, the hosting agreements with IUCN, and ongoing project and contractual matters. It is anticipated that this post would not be a full-time staff post and it is indicated at 20% on a retainer basis, but this would need funding from core budget; and
 - vi) in view of the proposed establishment of additional Secretariat posts as outlined above, the need to have a concomitant increase in the administrative capacity of the Secretariat in order to provide support to an increased staff, through establishing an additional junior “Administrative Assistant” post.
23. The proposed Secretariat staffing and structure for 2009-2011, including these further staff posts, is shown in the Secretariat line-management ‘organogram’ provided in Annex 2.
 24. Further rationale for the proposed “Partnership Development Unit” and its staffing, and outline terms of reference of its proposed staff posts is provided in Annex 3, and outline rationale and terms of reference for other proposed posts cited above are provided in Annex 4.
 25. As for the interim staffing arrangement for 2008, the proposed structure for 2009-2011 (annex 2) is organized as a set of “function units” within the Secretariat, with a clear line-management structure within each unit. All units report to the Secretary General through the Chief of that unit.

Annex 1 Proposed interim Secretariat staffing and structure for 2008

[a more readable version of this chart is available as a separate PDF:
www.ramsar.org/sc/36/key_sc36_doc16_anx1.pdf]

Annex 1. Ramsar Convention Secretariat – proposed interim staffing & structure 2008



* Danone-funded for 2008

** Oceania Officer is funded from core budget, but is directly employed and line managed by SPREP (Samoa) under contract.

1. Black lines and arrows indicate the proposed line-management structure. But note that many staff work across function units as teams to deliver specific work areas.

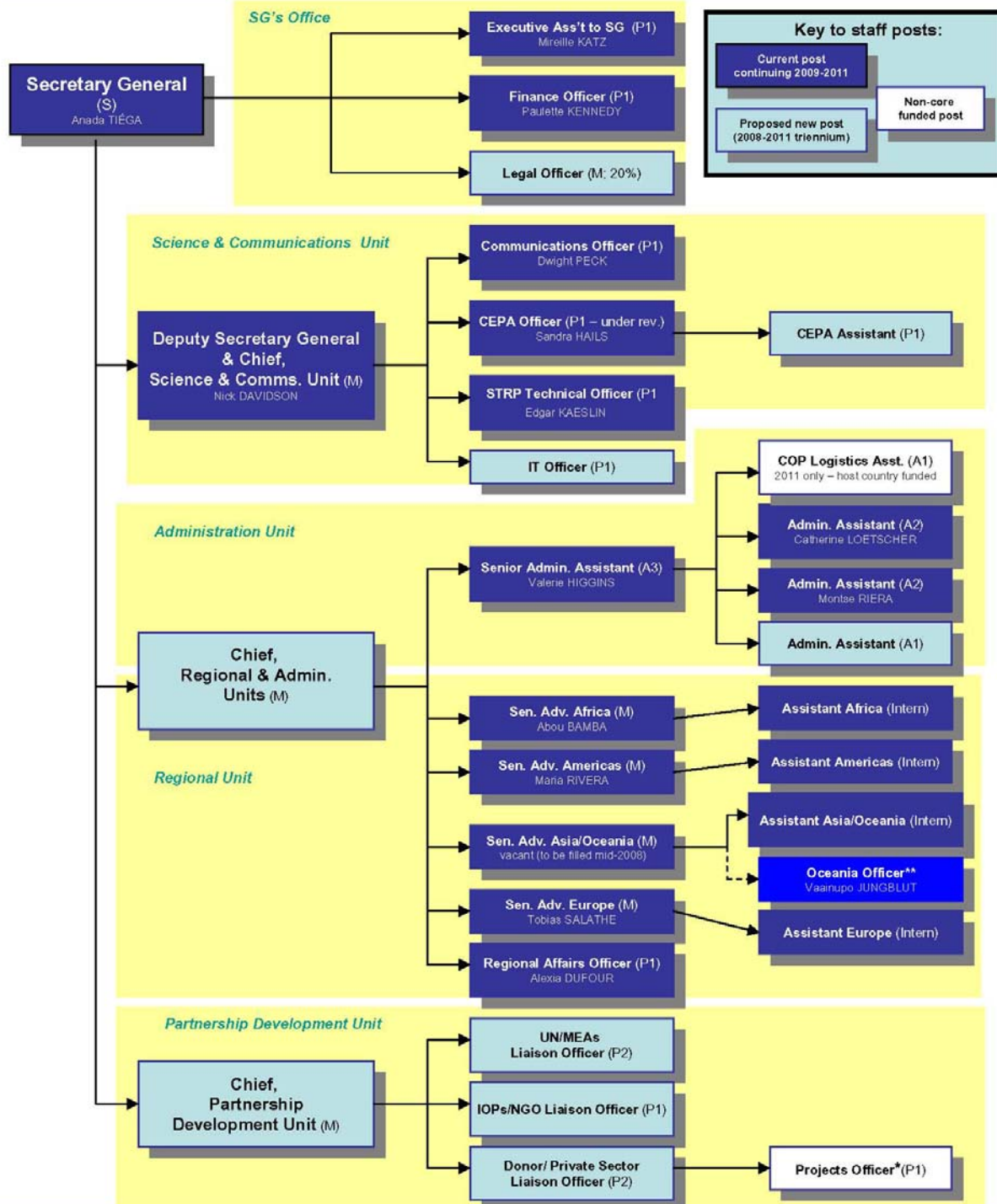
2. The IUCN function group grade of each current post and each proposed post is in parentheses after the post title.

3. Yellow boxes indicate the staffing of each of the proposed function units of the Secretariat.

Annex 2 Proposed Secretariat staffing and structure 2009-2011

[a more readable version of this chart is available as a separate PDF:
www.ramsar.org/sc/36/key_sc36_doc16_anx2.pdf]

Annex 2. Ramsar Convention Secretariat – proposed staffing & structure 2009-2011



* Danone-funded in 2008; continuation 2009-2011 to be determined

** Oceania Officer is funded from core budget but is directly employed and line managed by SPREP (Samoa) under contract.

1. Black lines and arrows indicate the proposed line-management structure. But note that many staff work across function units as teams to deliver specific work areas.

2. The IUCN function group grade of each current post and each proposed post is in parentheses after the post title. Grades of proposed posts are provisional.

3. Yellow boxes indicate the staffing of each of the proposed function units of the Secretariat.

Annex 3

Rationale, responsibilities and outline terms of reference for a Partnership Development Unit in the Secretariat

Background

1. The Ramsar Secretariat, on behalf of the Convention, has entered into collaborative agreements with a diversity of organizations, including five International Organization Partners (IOP), four global conventions, one regional convention, four UN agencies, four global programmes, four river/lake basin organizations, one institute, one regional programme, one regional UN agency, seven other NGOs, one university center, one private company, and one private alliance of companies.
2. Although the Ramsar Convention receives recurring voluntary funding from some developed Contracting Parties in addition to their prescribed financial contribution to the budget, there is no signed agreement about funding from governments. The only financial agreement signed so far is with a private company.
3. Today, all major conventions, including the Ramsar Convention, recognize that civil society and, more generally, Non-State Actors have become indispensable development partners. Therefore, it is crucial that, in addition to the leadership role played by governments, the Ramsar Convention must be closely associated with the non-state actors and support their contribution by facilitating participation. Accordingly, coordination among all Ramsar partners is useful to increase the effectiveness of their support.
4. It is time to evaluate the existing partnerships and to use the results of this evaluation to assess the added value of each agreement. The evaluation will highlight the lessons learned with regard to the relevance, the efficiency, the effectiveness, the impact and the sustainability of each partnership. The evaluation will also consider the coverage (spatial and thematic areas of collaboration), the coordination mechanism, and the coherence of the working relationships with existing partners. The overall result of the evaluation will be used to focus upon realistic partnership that is effective and efficient.

Justification

5. The significant expected results of the Ramsar Partnership Development Unit are based on the assumption that collaboration is more effective in achieving the Ramsar mission than efforts carried out by single agencies. The Partnership Development Unit is proposed to define a clear perception of the approach that accounts for the collaborative advantage, as well as a way to measure it to test this assumption and to strengthen the capacity of partnerships to realize the full potential of collaboration. The Ramsar Convention already recognizes that the mechanism that gives collaboration its unique advantage is synergy. For this reason, it is proposed to establish a Partnership Development Unit within the Ramsar Secretariat to enhance and assess partnership synergy through the identification of its likely determinants, in order to be used to address critical policy, evaluation, and management issues related to our collaboration with many partners at national and global levels.

6. In addition, with the increasing global attention being paid to the Ramsar Convention and its work, and the increasing size and complexity of its meetings of the Conference of Contracting Parties, there is a need to increase the capacity of the Secretariat to prepare and deliver each COP in an efficient and smooth manner. In particular much of the additional work of developing and delivering the COP in partnership with the host country currently falls to the Secretary General, which means that for a significant period of each triennium, the Secretary General's need to focus on COP preparations impairs his/her capacity to deliver the other major leadership and representational roles expected. It is therefore proposed that the "Chief, Partnership Development Unit" would assume the lead role in the Secretariat for COP preparations, under the direction of the Secretary General.
7. Another fundamental reason for establishing a Partnership Development Unit is the urgent need to draw up a fundraising strategy and plan, followed by the implementation of the activities that are needed to gain better access to funding. This will enable the Secretariat to better assist and strengthen the capacity of the Contracting Parties to implement the Convention. The Secretariat will propose to the Contracting Parties a fundraising strategy and a plan, along with the details and the scope of related activities in line with the requirements and objectives of the Strategic Plan 2009-2014.
8. The Secretariat believes that having a fundraising strategy is essential to clarifying and guiding our funding applications. The strategy will greatly enhance our chances of raising funds, and in the long run it will save us time and energy by having a framework in place to use and adapt for future funding applications. The first requirement for this strategy is in place since the Convention has its overall strategic plan. This strategic plan confirms the Convention's mission and vision, and it clarifies the aims and objectives, specific tasks and targets. We need to assess and find the required resources through a fundraising strategy.

Strategic Priorities

9. The following should be the strategic priorities of the Partnership Development Unit:
 - i) to strengthen the Secretariat's ability to review and monitor progress on the strategic priorities and targets and to assist in defining a long-term and annual action plan for partnership development with key players, including governments, the Ramsar IOPs, UN agencies, other environmental conventions, research institutes, river/lake basin organizations, business sector, the media, and the civil society at large;
 - ii) to assist Ramsar Contracting Parties in an integrated state/civil-society approach at the national, regional and local levels;
 - iii) to strengthen the existing networks and information exchanges to enable the Ramsar International Organization Partners to coordinate their actions, to communicate better and to agree and implement joint actions on wetlands, water, biodiversity, climate change, and poverty reduction with both governments and the public at large;
 - iv) to prepare and implement a fundraising strategy to reinforce the capacity of developing Ramsar Contracting Parties to implement the Convention;

- v) to develop a policy or strategies for the development of partnership with relevant corporate and business organizations;
- vi) to identify and select relevant potential partners and achieve greater alignment between the policy/strategies of the selected corporate and business partners and the Ramsar policy/strategies;
- vii) to ensure that we have the same understanding of the definition and the values of all wetland systems and types with all organizations working on wetland and water issues, and to involve them in our work in order to focus upon those partnerships that are worth spending our time on; and
- viii) to lead preparation of the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, in close partnership with the host country of each COP.

Role and responsibilities of the Chief, Partnership Development Unit

10. Under the supervision of the Secretary General, and in consultation with the Deputy Secretary General and the other Ramsar senior staff members, the Chief, Partnership Development Unit will:
 - undertake the evaluation of the existing partnerships;
 - use the results of this evaluation to assess the added value of each agreement;
 - highlight the lessons learned with regard to the relevance, the efficiency, the effectiveness, the impact and the sustainability of each partnership;
 - consider the coverage (spatial and thematic areas of collaboration), the coordination mechanism, and the coherence of the working relationships with existing partners;
 - use the lessons learned to propose realistic partnerships that are effective and efficient;
 - propose a draft policy or strategies for the development of partnerships with relevant corporate and business organizations;
 - propose a list of relevant potential partners to achieve greater alignment between the policy/strategies of the selected corporate and business partners and the Ramsar policy/strategies;
 - promote the same understanding of the definition and the values of all wetland systems and types with all organizations working on wetland and water issues, and involve them in our work in order to focus upon those partnerships that are worth spending our time on;
 - be committed to the principles of participation, collaboration, partnership and learning;
 - promote a common understanding of all wetland systems and wetland types with all partners;
 - consider partnership development as a process in which we undertake effective partnerships continuously and evaluate their performance through a feedback loop;
 - ensure that the Ramsar values and norms are respected in the development of partnerships, especially with the corporate and business sector;
 - propose a list of key partners and maintain the focus on the most important areas of work with them;

- propose strategic and operational advice to Contracting Parties regarding fundraising activities;
 - develop policy/strategies and new initiatives, identify trends and provide advice in the development of new initiatives;
 - help to build the capacity of Ramsar Administrative Authorities, especially in developing countries, with regard to proposal development;
 - provide policy/strategy input in the development of partnerships with the civil society;
 - provide strategic and operational links with the Ramsar IOPs, the UN system, and civil society;
 - compile the lessons learned from existing partnerships and propose innovative actions that capitalize upon those lessons learned; and
 - lead preparation of the meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, in close partnership with the host country of each COP.
11. This is a senior post and requires an officer with at least 10 years' experience and demonstrable success at managing and developing successful relationships with various organizations and the public at large, preferably including working with MEAs, the UN system, governments, NGOs and/or donors and the private sector.
12. In addition, the officer should have at least five years' experience in preparation of proposals; at least five years' experience in developing relationships with donors and raising funds; excellent communication skills and proven experience in communication with a wide range of other stakeholders; full fluency in English, with high-quality writing and reporting skills, and with a working knowledge in French and/or Spanish as an advantage.

Role and responsibilities of the Donor/Private Sector Liaison Officer

13. Under the supervision of the Chief, Partnership Development Unit, the role of this fundraising officer will be will be to:
- develop and maintain relationships with a range of selected donors, including multilateral, bilateral and business sector;
 - develop well-targeted appeals and proposals;
 - secure funding to reach agreed targets;
 - prepare reports and feedback briefings and drawing lessons from them;
 - assist in the implementation of strategies, budgets and plans to generate a long-term, sustainable funding system for the overall work of the Convention;
 - build the capacity of Ramsar Administrative Authorities in developing countries to develop high-quality proposals that can draw the attention and interest of donors;
 - develop a policy or strategies for the development of partnerships with relevant corporate and business organizations;
 - select relevant potential partners and achieve greater alignment between the policy/strategies of the selected corporate and business partners and the Ramsar policy/strategies; and
 - ensure that we have the same understanding of the definition and the values of all wetland systems and types with all organizations working on wetland and water

issues, and involve them in our work in order to focus upon those partnerships that are worth spending our time on.

14. For this post the officer should have at least five years' experience in preparation of proposals; at least five years' experience in developing relationships with donors and raising funds; and be fluent in English, with high-quality writing and reporting skills, with a working knowledge in French and/or Spanish as an advantage.

Role and responsibilities of the UN/MEAs Liaison Officer

15. Under the supervision of the Chief, Partnership Development Unit, the role of the UN/MEAs Liaison Officer will be to:
 - develop and maintain relationships with the UN system in general;
 - develop well-targeted liaison with relevant UN bodies, including agencies and conventions dealing with wetland, water, land degradation and land use, biodiversity and climate change;
 - prepare meetings with UN agencies and UN conventions, including UN Water, the Environmental Management Group (EMG), and the intersessional meetings preparing the UN General Assembly to help integrate wetland issues in the UN debate;
 - secure funding to reach agreed targets;
 - prepare reports and feedback briefings and draw lessons from them;
 - assist in the implementation of strategies, budgets and plans to generate a long-term, sustainable funding system for the overall work of the Convention; and
 - build the capacity of Ramsar Administrative Authorities in developing countries to develop high-quality proposals that can draw the attention and interest of UN agencies and UN conventions, together with the related funding mechanisms, including GEF.
16. For this post, the officer should have at least five years' experience in working with the UN system and/or multilateral environmental agreements; a clear understanding of the legal, administrative and organizational aspects of the UN system; fluency in English, with high-quality writing and reporting skills; excellent skills in oral and written communication, and with a working knowledge of French and/or Spanish an advantage.

Role and responsibilities of the IOP/NGO Liaison Officer

17. Under the supervision of the Chief, Partnership Unit, the role of the IOP/NGO Liaison Officer will be to assist in:
 - developing and maintaining relationships with the civil society in general;
 - developing well-targeted liaison with the Ramsar IOPs, including their field-based programmes and projects on wetlands, water, land degradation and land use, biodiversity, climate change and protected areas;
 - preparing the meetings with IOPs;
 - ensuring the coordination of the implementation of the agreed actions with the IOPs;

- proposing and encouraging specific actions with selected other NGOs working with the Ramsar Administrative Authorities;
 - preparing reports and feedback briefings, and drawing lessons from them;
 - assisting in the implementation of strategies, budgets and plans to generate a long-term, sustainable funding system for the overall work of the Convention; and
 - building the capacity of Ramsar Administrative Authorities in developing countries to develop high-quality proposals that can draw the attention and interest of the IOPs and other NGOs, together with their respective partners, including the related donors.
18. For this post, the officer should have at least five years' experience in dealing with the civil society at large; a clear understanding of the legal, administrative and organizational aspects of civil society, and experience in working with the NGO sector; excellent skills in oral and written communication; fluency in English, with high-quality writing and reporting skills, and with a working knowledge in French and/or Spanish an advantage.

Annex 4

Rationale and outline terms of reference for other proposed Secretariat posts

IT (information technology) Officer

1. In an increasingly technological world, there is a growing need (and opportunity) to utilize modern technologies to make the running of the Secretariat and Convention as smooth and efficient as possible. To date, the Secretariat has not had professional staff expertise in information technology applications, and it has rather had to rely on staff who have developed aspects of such skills in an informal way and/or on external contractors to develop IT applications (such as on-line COP registration), which has led to difficulties in resolving subsequent problems with such applications. This is making the Secretariat and Convention increasingly vulnerable to the failure of an IT application at a critical time, such as, for example, during COP registration.
2. Examples of the increasing number of IT applications which need to be developed and maintained by the Secretariat include:
 - on-line COP delegate pre-registration system;
 - COP registration database;
 - Contracting Party contributions database;
 - Convention contacts database;
 - COP National Reports database;
 - STRP Support Service Web site.
3. In addition, there will be a need for IT support in relation to the future software maintenance and developments related to the imminent major redesign and development of the Ramsar Web site, as well as to build capacity to capitalize on future opportunities for streamlining Convention processes, such as the potential for developing on-line National Reporting, as is being done by some other MEAs.
4. This post is for a junior professional with IT training and experience in database (e.g. Microsoft Access) development and maintenance and database-driven Web site software and scripting languages, with an ability to work wholly reliably with on-line database servers and good knowledge of the three Convention languages, but in particular fluent English.

CEPA Assistant

5. One of the key current Secretariat capacity issues and concerns that was made clear by the IUCN/Secretariat staff survey and review was the current capacity of the Communications team to deliver in a timely manner some of their key products – maintenance of CEPA Web pages in all three Convention languages, World Wetlands Day materials, Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks, Ramsar Technical Reports, etc. This has led to delays in production of timely materials and limited capacity to maintain and keep updated Web sites. With the anticipated wider scope of content of the redeveloped Ramsar Web site, there will also be a

need for more capacity, working with the Communications Officer, to create new content for the Web site.

6. This is a junior professional post, for an officer with good communications (CEPA) experience, including fluency in editing and writing clear and simple English, with Spanish a particular advantage. Work tasks would include, under the direction and identification of need by the Communications and CEPA Officers, preparation of World Wetlands Day materials, contributing to information content in redeveloped Web sites, and editing further editions of Ramsar Handbooks and other publications such as Ramsar Technical Reports. Experience of rapporteuring meetings would also be an advantage.

Administrative Assistant

7. The Secretariat's current small Administrative team are fully stretched in delivering their roles and responsibilities to support the Secretariat and Convention on a wide range of administrative, personnel and logistics work. In view of the proposed establishment of a number of additional Secretariat posts, as outlined above, it would be necessary also to have a concomitant increase in the administrative capacity of the Secretariat in order to provide support to an increased staffing, through establishing an additional junior "Administrative Assistant" post.
8. The post would provide additional administrative capacity on whichever areas of Secretariat support work are deemed necessary at any given time by the Senior Administrative Officer. The precise terms of reference of this post would be developed following further review, and possible reassignment, of the allocation of roles of the current administrative staff.

Legal Officer

9. The Secretariat has recognized increasing need for professional legal advice to the Convention on matters such as the future status of the Secretariat, the hosting agreements with IUCN, any legal and procedural issues arising during COPs and other meetings, and on-going project and contractual matters. It is anticipated that this post would not need to be a full-time staff post, and it is indicated for 2009-2011 at 20% on a retainer basis, but this would need funding from core budget.
10. Precise terms of reference, and the experience and expertise needed for the creation of this "Legal Officer" post, will be further developed following discussions at SC36.