



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

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Contributions of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to the Post 2020 Framework

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I am pleased to present the contributions of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

I would like to highlight three aspects of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

1. Nature and status of the Convention
2. Where we are in the respective Convention process with regards to planning and implementation of the post 2020 framework
3. Key messages

1. Nature and status of the Convention

- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty signed in Iran in 1971 focused on wetlands –water related ecosystems such as freshwater (marshes, pools, swamps, lakes, rivers) and marine and coastal wetlands (mangroves, coral reefs).
- Currently the Convention has 170 countries that are Contracting Parties to the Convention. The Convention’s mission is the conservation and wise use of wetlands as a contribution to sustainable development.

Contracting Parties make three main commitments:

- Designation and management of wetlands of International Importance, also known as Ramsar Sites: there are currently 2,300 sites representing 250 million hectares, approximately, the size of Mexico. The network covers 13-18% of the existing global area of wetlands.
- Conservation and wise use of all their wetlands.
- International cooperation, which includes 19 Ramsar Regional initiatives and 20 transboundary Ramsar Sites.

2. Where is the Convention with regard to the post 2020 biodiversity framework process

Three aspects will be considered: where is the Convention regarding its strategic planning processes, the status of collaboration with CBD, and processes of assessment, monitoring and reporting that are relevant to the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

1) Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2016-2024

The Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention for 2016-2014 was adopted in 2015 and has 4 Goals and 19 targets:

- a. Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss and Degradation
- b. Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network
- c. Wisely Using all Wetlands
- d. Enhancing Implementation

The Strategic Plan is fully aligned or compatible with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP13) in October 2018 we reported how Contracting Parties are implementing these targets as part of the National Reports contributions.

COP13 adopted the scope and modalities of the Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan. COP14 in 2021 will consider the mid-term review to be aligned with the post-2020 biodiversity framework, thus ensuring consistency with the emerging framework.

2) Long term collaboration with CBD

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands has a long history of collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), especially:

- CBD Programme of Work on Inland Waters – Ramsar designated as lead partner for wetlands for the CBD (through CBD decision III/21).
- The 5th CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan covers the time-period of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020).

3) Assessment, monitoring and reporting important for post 2020

The status of the Convention on assessment, monitoring and reporting is also important for the 2020 biodiversity framework process, in particular:

- Global Wetlands Outlook: the first-ever global assessment of the status of wetlands was launched at COP13 in October 2018. The launch generated around 1800 articles in journals across the world, reaching an audience of around 1.2 billion people.
- The Outlook showed that wetlands provide huge services, such as biodiversity with 40% of all species either living or breeding in wetland; providing the indirect or direct source of most freshwater used for consumption, irrigation or energy; and being the most efficient ecosystem in terms of carbon storage.
- Despite these services, wetlands are the most threatened of all ecosystems. 87% of wetlands have been lost since 1700 AD. 35% of wetlands have been lost between 1970-2015. Wetlands are being lost three times faster than forests. Further, 81% of the

populations of freshwater species have declined globally, that is a higher percentage than for other species.

- In addition to the sense of urgency and need for action to conserve wetlands as part of the post 2020 agenda, it is important to take into account the existing assessment, monitoring and reporting processes under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands that are relevant for the post 2020 framework.
- In particular, the Ramsar Convention is co-custodian with UNEP of SDG Indicator 6.6.1 on extent of water-related ecosystems, under Goal 6 on water. Contracting Parties to the Convention started to report on extent of these ecosystems as part of their National Reports, thus providing a source of nationally validated data. Also, Contracting Parties to the Convention have been developing inventories of all their wetlands, which is the basis for their National Reports on water-related ecosystems. This information is critical for the post 2020 biodiversity framework. Further, the Convention also contributes data for other indicators, such as on protected areas, and marine and coastal ecosystems.

3. Key messages

Key messages from the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands with regard to the post 2020 biodiversity framework are the following:

- 1) The Strategic Plan of the Convention 2016-2024 is fully aligned with the Aichi targets and the Mid-term review of the Strategic Plan is designed to ensure alignment with the post 2020 biodiversity framework.
- 2) It is important to ensure that the post-2020 biodiversity framework provides a common scheme for the biodiversity-related conventions and that it is aligned with relevant SDG indicators (e.g. SDG 6.6.1.) to avoid duplication, leverage existing work and promote collaboration and synergies. Such collaboration is particularly important among National Focal Points to biodiversity-related conventions and SDG processes at national level.
- 3) Wetlands are currently the most threatened ecosystem. Thus, inland waters ecosystems should be better highlighted in the post-2020 biodiversity framework.
- 4) The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands has important contributions to a common post-2020 biodiversity framework, especially through the alignment of its Strategic Plan, as the lead partner for the CBD **Inland waters** Programme of Work and through the Joint CBD-Ramsar Work Plan. Also, the Ramsar Convention makes significant contributions to the **marine and coastal biodiversity** Programme of Work, a role that needs to be further strengthened.
- 5) It is important to ensure consistency and coherence in assessment efforts under different Conventions (such as the Global Wetlands Outlook), as well as in the use of relevant indicators and reporting efforts (for example on extent of particular ecosystems such as SDG 6.6.1. “change on the extent of water-related ecosystems”, for which the Ramsar Convention provides data through National Reports from Contracting Parties).

Thank you