



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**To:** **Ahmed Djoughlaf** **Fax No.:** +1-514- 288 6588  
Executive Secretary of the CBD  
Montreal, Canada

**Date:** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009

**From:** **Mahmoud Babaei** **Fax No.:** +98-21-66704176  
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**Our Ref. No.:** 622/113-1/121187

**Subject:** Guidance for the Submission of Information for the Review of Implementation  
of the Programme of Work on the Biodiversity Inland Water Ecosystems

**The Number of sheet(s) including this cover is (are):** 2

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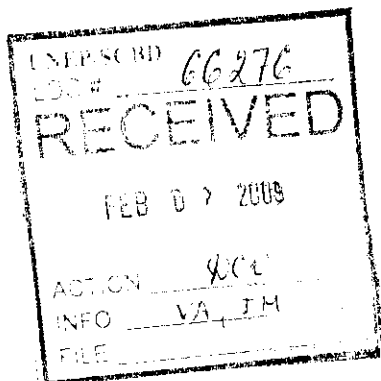
Dear Mr. Djoughlaf,

In response to the notification dated September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (Ref.: SCBD/STTM/DCO/va/64933) on the above-mentioned topic, please find attached the responses of the Department of Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the questions referred to in the said notification.

It is hoped that this information could provide some contribution to the in-depth review of thematic programmes included in the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010 by the Secretariat.

Sincerely

**Mahmoud Babaei**



**ANNEX****Guidance for the submission of information for the review of implementation of the programme of work on inland water biodiversity****Information required from respondents:**

**Name:** Masoud Bagherzadeh Karimi  
**Party (or organisation if responding from an organisation):**  
Ecology of wetlands section – protected areas burue – natural environment and biodiversity  
deputy  
**Institution:** Department of the Environment  
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**General guidance**

1. In collecting and compiling relevant information for submission, refer to "Guidelines for the review of the programmes of work (POW) on the Convention" as contained in Annex III of decision VIII/15.
2. Provide case-studies, good and bad practices, success and failure stories, and lessons-learned from the implementation of the programme of work, which can illustrate and give insights on: (i) the contribution the POW has provided to Parties in implementing the Convention; (ii) the contribution of the POW in reducing the rate of biodiversity loss; and (iii) the effectiveness of the POW in the context of the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
3. Provide suggestions for modification of the existing POW, if necessary.
4. Provide information on the mobilization of the necessary financial resources, in particular those facilitated by the Convention Secretariat and other partners.
5. If you are a developed country Party it would be useful to have indications of both the national perspective and the extent to which the following subjects, as appropriate, have a bearing on your country's development assistance programmes.
6. Organisations, as appropriate, should provide commentary on global and/or regional perspectives and, if using the format suggested below, tailor responses and/or modify questions to reflect this. Please distinguish clearly between comments on specific cases and global/regional considerations.
7. An option is to respond by using this document as a template (boxes are provided for this purpose), alternative means are acceptable and welcome.

**Guidance on considering issues in more detail**

The following are some more specific questions for guidance. For each subject area please try to be specific, elaborate on the nature of the constraints and propose ways and means to address these. This is not a full list of issues – but indicates some of the general areas where feedback would be very valuable.

Some of these questions are inter-related. They are provided to illustrate the nature of subjects of interest. They can also be used as background to formulate more simplified responses as above.

1. What is the overall situation regarding the status and trends of inland water ecosystems in your country?

Main climate of all of inland waters in IRAN especially in high plateau are arid and semi-arid and except coastal and marine wetlands, the others have big challenge with drought-ness.

Global warming and water demand are two main reasons to this challenge.

Trend of this situation is negative, because water stress will be increase with increasing water footprint in the country continuing global warming.

a. steady, declining, declining fast, improving, improving rapidly?

In some part of the inland waters for example in marine and coastal wetlands the situation is steady or declining(because water pollutions), in another cases the situation usually is declining and in some cases is declining fast.

We had improving trend in just a few wetlands.

b. how does this compare to other major biomes? (same, better than others and which ones, worse than others and which ones, the worst?)

unfortunately the worst

2. Which are the main direct drivers of loss of inland waters biodiversity (list the most important, or in order of importance if possible/necessary)?

a. over use of water? High impacts

b. unsustainable land based practices (pollution, siltation, eutrophication)? High impacts

c. habitat (wetland) conversion? High impacts

d. over-exploitation of species? Medium impacts

e. invasive alien species? Medium impacts

f. other (specify)? drought-ness (High impacts), unsustainable agriculture(High impacts), illegal hunting(High impacts)

3. Do you generally tend to try to manage inland water ecosystems as a functioning ecological unit?YES

a. are catchment/basin based approaches (or sub-catchments for larger systems) widely used?; i.e., is the land within the catchment generally considered and managed as part of the inland water ecosystem? Not yet, but we have some national and international projects based on ecosystem approach

b. to what extent is the relevant estuary/coastal region considered as part of the "inland water" ecosystem (if applicable)? According to Ramsar convention definition, apart of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six meters are coastal waters and considered as part of the "inland water" ecosystems.

4. Does the POW have a significant influence on policies and management in your country?:

a. yes, no, difficult to assess? No, because until now we have not national mechanism to jointing this programme to wetland management in the country.

b. do other policy and management frameworks result in outcomes relevant to the POW but these are not influenced directly the POW?; what are these (e.g., other regional frameworks; national measures/mechanisms but not directly influenced by the POW)? Yes off course, for example according to Iranian wetland conservation project, we use a big part of objectives in biodiversity inland waters POW.

5. Has the POW had a significant impact on relevant water-related policies in your country?:

a. on water use policies – particularly water use by the sectors (agriculture including irrigation; hydropower; navigation; urban/industrial water supply and use etc.)?  
not directly

b. on water quality?; not directly

c. does this include adequate consideration of groundwater?; e.g., interactions between groundwater and surface water (e.g., how groundwater recharges other wetlands)? ; impacts of unsustainable groundwater use on terrestrial biodiversity (e.g., vegetation cover, forests)?  
not directly

6. Are the linkages between inland water biodiversity and sustainable human development (and poverty reduction) adequately understood and considered in relevant policy making?:

a. regarding the importance of the direct use of inland water fauna and flora (e.g., fisheries, medicinal uses etc.)? YES, in umbrella of sustainable development national committee, Ramsar convention sub-committee works with other disciplines.

b. regarding the role of inland water biodiversity (ecosystems/wetlands) in sustaining freshwater for human uses? Yes, one of the delegates of Ramsar convention sub-committee is fisheries organization

c. regarding the role of inland water ecosystems in the provision of other services (nutrient recycling, flood management, adaptation to extreme weather events)? In case of nutrient recycling, flood management there is a same mechanism between DOE and power ministry(responsible to water quality and quantity), but in case of adaptation to extreme weather events, there is not current mechanism.

d. is the problem lack of awareness of these, and other, roles that inland water ecosystems play or lack of appreciation of their values (or both)?  
Awareness and appreciation is not same between different stakeholders. For example there are a lot of NGOs with high sensitive to wetlands situations in the country, instead of other stakeholders for example farmers, fisher mans, rural people, apart of local and national level governmental managers, and ... have a little information about wetlands values and functions.

7. What is the level of awareness and attention to the importance of inland water biodiversity in relation to climate change?

a. are people adequately aware that the main impacts of climate change are on water, therefore, not only are inland water ecosystems particularly vulnerable to climate change but their functions play a key role in adaptation measures to deal with the impacts of climate change (for example, responding to the increasing frequency and severity of droughts and floods)? Adequately aware usually is very low.

b. and therefore, is there adequate attention to the fact that climate change significantly increases the importance of the POW in relation to sustainable human development?

Just in government level, sustainable development national committee try to established new mechanism for this case.

8. Is there adequate awareness at policy and planning level of the need to consider managing the "ecosystem services" provided by inland water ecosystems?: there is just an article of law about ecosystem services in 4<sup>th</sup> development programme.

a. do relevant policy makers (including in all relevant sectors) understand the concept of "ecosystem services" (even if using similar but alternative terminology) and do they use this as a framework for planning? For example, this approach would involve some level of trade off decision making in order to balance the services that are provided. Yes, by using similar but alternative terminology

b. alternatively - do policy makers and planners still manage water on a sector basis (and relatively independently of each other) and by looking at tangible products such as food produced, or water extracted for direct human use, e.g., urban water supplies), largely disregarding other services? This approach would tend to give less attention to trade off decision making. Partly yes

c. is there adequate awareness of the importance and value of the many other services provided (particularly those which currently have no "formal economic value" – such as climate regulation, freshwater regulation, nutrient recycling, mitigating the impacts of extreme weather etc.)? A few

d. is the problem the decision making process in terms of infrastructure/governance/dialogue, or lack of awareness of values of services? If we had better valuations – would it automatically lead to better outcomes? Systematically not yet, but apart of decision makers have update view about wetland values and functions.

9. Which convention has the most influence on relevant inland water related policies and policies in areas which impact water (e.g., agriculture) in your country?

a. CBD?, Ramsar?, CBD and Ramsar jointly?, or none? (if other more influential regional conventions/agreements are applicable please specify) Ramsar convention

b. If you are not a Party to Ramsar – is Ramsar guidance still used as a means to guide relevant policies and activities? -

10. The CBD has many other programmes of work, the majority of which also influence the status and trends of inland water ecosystems:

a. is there adequate attention to the objectives and activities of the POW on inland waters in these other POWs (e.g., agricultural biodiversity; marine and coastal; mountains; dry and sub-humid lands; forests)?

11. Has your country shifted policies (within the past 10 years or so) towards the rehabilitation and/or restoration of the functions inland water ecosystems? If so – what was the *main* driver of (reason for) this shift in policies? Yes, but not completely, we can established joint mechanisms between several organizations and sectors and decide new articles in development laws.

a. "economic" reasons, for example - based on financial cost-benefit considerations (which ones? e.g., more cost effective water management – including flood regulation?, more cost

effective water supplies for human uses? etc.) This is new strategy in next 5 year development programme in national level.

b. to rehabilitate rural livelihoods among the poor (e.g., rehabilitating food supply from fisheries, to rehabilitate drinking water supplies etc.)? This is new strategy in next 5 year development programme in national level.

c. recreation/tourism/cultural reasons (including recreational fisheries)? This is new strategy in next 5 year development programme in national level.

d. "nature conservation" in its own right ( e.g., endangered species protection) not yet

12. What is the level of importance (balance) placed on this programme of work/subject in appropriate biodiversity related policy arenas in relation to other POWs/subject areas?:

a. in relation to the conservation of threatened species? (high, medium, low) low

b. in relation to importance for human development (and development targets)? (high, medium, low) medium

c. should the *relative* importance of this subject area be higher or lower? should be higher

d. if this subject area needs a higher profile – what are best grounds (basis/arguments) and the key ways and means to achieve this? In below subjects: legislation level, public awareness, integrated management, ecosystem approach and ecosystem benefits.

13. What is the level of attention to this programme of work beyond the "environment sector"?:

a. amongst the production sectors (agriculture, forestry, fisheries etc.)? agriculture, forestry, fisheries, water management and industry

b. is the private sector actively engaged in this POW? (please provide examples) ?

14. What areas in the programme of work:

a. are the most critical? In sectors of water, forest, wetland, pasture, coastal zone and desert

b. are missing or need to be strengthened? yes

15. Please summarise what the critical issues are with this programme of work in terms of:

a. enhanced implementation? Public awareness, poverty reduction, ecotourism, ecosystem approach

b. addressing barriers? Non-updated legal, poverty, cultural issues

c. technical or political constraints?

a: at your own national level?

b: (if appropriate) – globally/regionally?

16. Please suggest the best strategies to address the critical issues identified, for example through:

- a. highlighting status and trends in species? High priority
- b. addressing linkages to human development/livelihoods/poverty reduction? High priority
- c. improved valuations of ecosystem services provided? High priority
- d. technical solutions (which technical areas)? High priority
- e. improved decision/policy making processes (how?)?  
a: at your own national level? By legislation and awareness rising  
b: (if appropriate) – globally/regionally? By international agreements

17. What are the critical capacity building needs for this POW?

a. please specify the target group and subject area  
Legislation for governmental managers and experts  
Public awareness for all of stakeholders

b. given that additional financial resources are invariably required (in all programme areas) – how can the provision of better resources/capacity be best promoted for this POW ? Which arguments will have the best outcome?

a: at your own national level? Using of NGOs potential  
b: (if appropriate) – globally/regionally? Ranking, according to regional priorities not just national priorities