

Terms of Reference

Review of the Ramsar Convention's fourth Strategic Plan (2016-2024)

1. Introduction

The 13th Conference of the Parties in adopting Resolution XIII.5 established the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) to conduct a review of the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024, as requested in Resolution XII.2 for report to COP14 in 2021. The purpose of the review is to assess the implementation of the Strategic Plan from 2016 to 2021 and identify for COP14 any necessary amendments.

The fourth Strategic Plan covers nine years, being three triennial period between meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COPs). It finished in 2024, which is the year when COP15 will take place. However, as the review will be conducted at COP14, in accordance with Resolution XII.2, it is effectively a mid-term review and will focus on assessing the implementation of the Strategic Plan from 2016 to 2021, and on identifying for COP14 any necessary amendments. Any amendments to the plan will cover the remaining period, from 2022 to 2024.

Consistent with this resolution, the Ramsar Secretariat is now seeking a suitably qualified consultant to synthesize information sources and conduct appropriate analyses to inform the SPWG's review of the fourth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention. The SPWG will guide the work of the consultant. The successful consultant will provide its work product to the Secretariat, which will share it with SPWG members.

2. Scope

This consultancy will review, analyse, and synthesize existing information sources to facilitate and inform the review of the fourth Strategic Plan being conducted by the Strategic Plan Working Group as outlined in Res. XIII.5, Annex 1. The purpose of the review is to assess the implementation of the Strategic Plan from 2016 to 2021 and identify for COP14 any necessary amendments.

The consultancy will:

- Review, compile, and synthesize input received from Contracting Parties in response to the request for submissions - Annex 1, 9a) i).
- Review the Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention: Global implementation (COP13 Doc. 11.1).
- Review the results of input received from IOPs, NGOs and the STRP, as facilitated by the Secretariat.
- Review the conclusions of the Global Wetland Outlook, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel's 2018 assessment of the state of the world's wetlands and their ecosystem services, and relevant reports and assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and compare them with Parties' progress according to the indicators in the 4th Strategic Plan to:
 - Identify any notable discrepancies that may point to gaps or inadequacies in the Strategic Plan or its indicators (e.g., does the Global Wetland Outlook identify a key driver of wetland loss that is not highlighted in the Strategic Plan? Or, if 70% of Parties are reporting that they have effective management plans in place for Ramsar sites, but wetlands are still degrading at a high rate, does the indicator need to be changed to better reflect the target of maintaining ecological character?)
 - Identify opportunities to more closely focus the Strategic Plan review on a set of key priorities relevant to the Convention over the coming triennium.

- Identify opportunities for including CEPA activities in the Strategic Plan, based on the outcomes of the work of the CEPA Oversight Panel related to the integration of CEPA into the Ramsar Strategic Plan being conducted as requested in Res. XIII.5.
- Review the scope of the National Reports in relation to the Strategic Plan and identify any potential gaps between the scope of those Reports and the Strategic Plan (e.g. reporting on water birds).

The review is also to take account of:

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its Sustainable Development Goals and Targets.
- The post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted by the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to that Convention, in 2020.
- The refinements to the indicators suggested by the expert group in September 2015 and relevant indicators developed by the Biodiversity Indicator Partnership, the outcomes of the relevant assessment of the intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (global assessment, regional assessments, land degradation and restoration assessment, etc.).
- Development of relevant indicators in fora of other multilateral environmental agreements (e.g. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; Convention on Migratory Species, African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds Agreement, UNFCCC), and other relevant fora;

3. Additional requirements

- The Consultancy should aim to carry out their work from July 2019 until November 2020 (depending on the COP14 preparations deadlines) within a budget allocation of 44,000 CHF (including travel costs).
- The Consultancy may be required, budget permitting, to attend at least two meetings in person in Gland, Switzerland.

4. Key Selection Criteria

Suitable Candidates should demonstrate:

- Experience in conducting mid-term reviews of strategic plans.
- Understanding of Ramsar as well as other relevant MEAs and global agenda that could inform / complement the Ramsar Strategic Plan.
- Expertise in collation and analysis of surveys.
- Capacity in agile project delivery.
- Fluency in the English language, including the ability to write professional and fit for purpose reports in English.
- Experience in developing and evaluating effective indicators for monitoring progress is desirable.

5. Work Method

- The work will be conducted by the appointed Consultant under the supervision of the SPWG and its chair.
- The Consultant will include a desktop review of relevant materials.
- The consultant will utilize an established methodology and approach for undertaking a review

- The Consultant will produce reports in the English language for the review by deadlines as agreed between the consultant, the SPWG, and the Secretariat.
- The Consultant will also produce a comprehensive body of deliverables in the English language as detailed in section 7.

6. Work Schedule

The review will commence by July 2019 at the latest.

A detailed work schedule will be established by the SPWG during its meeting on 24 June 2019 prior to the 57th meeting of Standing Committee.

7. Deliverables

The Consultant's output to the SPWG will include:

- i. A summary report on review progress four weeks ahead of SC58 for the SPWG Chair to report verbally.
- ii. A final report synthesizing key elements of the relevant information sources, identifying areas where they align well, and identifying areas where discrepancies were noted that may warrant attention in the review of the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan and the development of the fifth Ramsar Strategic Plan, including:
 - a. gaps in the priorities identified in the fourth Strategic Plan,
 - b. weaknesses in the indicators,
 - c. description of the potential risk context at the commencement of the Strategic Plan (e.g. political, economic, environmental, social, technological risks). This could help set the context for the focus of the Strategic Plan.

8. Application Requirements

Responses to this application must be in line with these ToR and must clearly set out:

- A broad proposed project plan including key tasks, methodology and timeline.
- A budget including:
 - total cost;
 - disbursements (e.g. for travel);
 - other expenses.
- Personnel specified to work on this consultancy.
- Daily rates for specified personnel, applicable for any variations proposed by the Consultancy.
- Details of other relevant consultancies / projects the consultancy team have completed.
- Details of two referees who can speak to past work on a similar project

9. Supplier responsibilities

The SPWG is responsible for:

- Providing guidance to the consultant in relation to scope, direction, deliverables.
- Providing comments to the consultant on deliverables in a timely manner.

The Ramsar Secretariat is responsible for:

- Organising the consultant recruitment process.
- Providing material requested and/or comments on deliverables to the consultant in a timely manner.
- Facilitating engagement with the SPWG.

- Administering this consultancy, such as arranging payments and other relevant tasks.

10. Consultant responsibilities

The consultant is responsible for:

- Providing deliverables as set out in the agreed project plan, or subsequently agreed by the SPWG.
- Notifying the Secretariat point of contact as soon as practicable of any unforeseen delays.

11. Lodgement

Responses are to be lodged electronically in Word format to applications@ramsar.org by 19 June 2019 (Midnight Swiss time). Any enquiries relating to these Terms of Reference should be directed to Mr Tobias Salathe (salathe@ramsar.org).