



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Consultancy for Facilitation and Planning Services Ramsar Strategic Plan

#### Background

The [Ramsar Convention on Wetlands](#) is an intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It was the first of the modern global multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and remains the only MEA dedicated to the conservation of a specific critical ecosystem.

The [Ramsar Strategic Plan](#) is the key document guiding implementation of the Convention. It informs the work program of the [Ramsar Secretariat](#), the [Scientific and Technical Review Panel](#) and the activities of Contracting Parties and International Organization Partners (IOPs) for 6 years or two trienniums. The plan provides the structure for National Reporting and the Global Implementation Report produced for every COP, as well as guiding how the Convention engages with other MEA's and key policy positions in international fora.

A mid-term review of implementation of the fourth Strategic Plan (for the period 2016-2021) has been conducted by the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) to Standing Committee. The outcomes of the review and proposed refinements to SP4 will be considered by Parties at COP14 along with the broad elements to inform development of the fifth Strategic Plan (SP5) See: [Doc SC59.10](#); [SC59/2022 Doc 10](#) and [COP14 Doc 18.4](#)

The Ramsar Standing Committee agreed in June 2021 to establish a new Strategic Plan Working Group (SP5WG) for SP5 ahead of COP14, to ensure there is sufficient time to develop the new strategic plan for consideration and adoption by Parties at COP15 in 2024. <sup>1</sup>

The new SP5WG held its first meeting on 23 May 2022 ahead of resumed SC59 in Gland. It has broad-based regional representation from Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Chad, China, Finland, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Oman, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland and Tunisia, as well as the International Water Management Institute and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust on behalf of the Convention's International Organization Partners and an expert of the STRP (to be nominated).

Australia was elected interim Chair of the Working Group until COP14 and Standing Committee has approved the Terms of Reference for the SP5WG (see Attachment A). One of the first tasks of the new Working group is to prepare a workplan and engagement program for the development of the fifth strategic plan.

The next Ramsar Strategic Plan will provide the framework and strategic direction for the work of the Convention for two trienniums to 2030. The 2021 Global Wetland Outlook released in Ramsar's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, reveals wetlands continue to be lost globally at alarming rates and business as usual is not enough. It has become critical to position the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the context of the urgent global challenges we face – to reverse biodiversity loss and mitigate global climate change.

The fifth Ramsar Strategic Plan will need a tighter focus on priority wetland activities that respond to these challenges and leverage the strengths of the Convention, so it remains relevant. It should enable Parties to align their wetland activities with other MEA obligations to leverage multiple conservation outcomes, make best use of resources and reduce the international reporting burden, particularly for developing Countries.

Importantly, through genuine engagement and collaboration, the process to prepare the plan should build the broad coalition of relevant actors necessary to implement the new Plan to 2030 and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision SC59-20: The Standing Committee established a new working group with membership from Contracting Parties, the STRP and International Organization Partners, to commence preparation of the Fifth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention, with the terms of reference and work plan to be agreed intersessionally, and be designed to accommodate the key elements and any additional priority elements and modalities for the Fifth Strategic Plan that may be agreed at COP14. The Standing Committee encouraged the participation of members of the Working Group on the Review of the Fourth Strategic Plan in the new working group, for continuity purposes.

## THE CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The consultancy will support the SP5WG to prepare a new Ramsar strategic plan for the period 2024 -2030 to be considered by Parties at COP15 (date TBC).

The services required encompass skills and experience in:

- Facilitation, engagement and networking:
- Project planning and management:
- Research and analysis:
- Strategic planning and strategy development:

Suitably qualified and experienced consultants are invited to submit an Expression of Interest to undertake Phase 1. as detailed below. Proposals will be invited for Phases 2 and 3 of the Consultancy services once the framework for the development of SP5 has been agreed by Parties at COP14.

### Detailed Task Description

#### Phase 1. Preliminary scoping and work planning: Timing: October 2022 to June 2023

Key tasks for this phase include:

- Deliver an engagement program at the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties to:
  - build awareness and interest in the Plan among Parties, IOP's and other stakeholders
  - elicit preliminary views and issues for SP5; and,
  - identify consultation needs of Parties, regions, Convention bodies, IOPs and external stakeholders.
- Assist the SPWG to prepare a work plan for SP5 for consideration by Standing Committee (SC61 TBC).
- Develop an engagement and consultation strategy for SP5 that:
  - is tailored to the needs and preferred means of engagement of key stakeholders, drawing on views and insights from the COP14 engagement;
  - identifies opportunities to consult around scheduled meetings of SC and working groups and relevant international meetings; and
  - allows for stakeholder engagement in relevant phases across the project;
- Work closely with the Secretariat to curate a webpage for SP5 and schedule consultation events.

#### Phase 2. Document review and research (Timing TBC: subject to decision at COP14]

Key tasks for this phase include:

- Review existing information including but not limited to:
  - the mid-term review of SP4 (inc. survey of parties);
  - GWO 2018 and 2021;
  - Global Implementation Report to COP13 and COP14;
  - Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at CBD COP15;
  - Resolutions Policy briefs etc. since drafting of SP4 that create obligations for Parties
  - Indicators Expert Working Group report (2015);
  - strategic plans of IOP's;
  - existing programs and partnerships (e.g.: Joint Work Plan Ramsar and CBD; RRI's etc)
- Apply a regional lens to the review to identify priority conservation and sustainable use and management activities and capability requirements for developing Country Parties;
- Identify policy focus areas for SP5 that align wetland conservation and sustainable use and management activities with key global environmental priorities, sustainable development and poverty alleviation strategies and outcomes to 2030 (CBD; SDG's UNFCCC etc.);
- Identify options for a more tightly focused Plan, streamlining and integration rather than creating additional activities (e.g., CEPA; Gender) removing repetition and overlap;
- Provide a report of the Policy review, summarising the analysis and findings, the proposed policy focus for SP5 and key elements (goals, targets and indicators) including feedback from stakeholders.

#### Phase 3. Plan development: [Timing TBC; subject to decision at COP14]

Key tasks for this phase include:

- Provide the proposed content and structure of the Plan for review by the SPWG prior to commencement of drafting; and

- b. Prepare a draft Strategic Plan for SC63, and make any amendments to Plan required by SC for transmittal to COP15.

### **Consultancy Outputs**

- SP5 Work Plan {Phase 1}
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy and Report [Phase 1]
- Policy Review and options report [Phase 2]
- Draft Strategic Plan [Phase 3]

Draft final versions of the Plan, and any reports and related material, are to be made available in electronic form (both PDF and Microsoft Word)

### **Consultancy Timeline**

Phase 1 of the Consultancy is to commence as soon as possible and will conclude upon satisfactory and timely completion of all tasks to be undertaken, but no later than 30 June 2023. The timeline for Phases 2 and 3 will be confirmed following a decision by Parties on the framework for SP5 by Parties at COP14.

### **Consultancy Proposals**

Consultants should submit an Expression of Interest addressing the Terms of Reference that includes:

- Demonstrated understanding of the project and the required outcomes;
- Details of the proposed approach to the project;
- Examples of previous experience and relevant projects, and experience and roles of team members, and contact details of at least two referees;
- Evidence of capacity to complete the project as specified within the indicative timeline;
- A fixed-priced quotation for each phase of the project, inclusive of all costs (including travel and materials), and fees itemised for core tasks;
- A statement regarding pecuniary, actual or potential conflict of interest.

The closing date for Expressions of Interest is 19 September 2022. Please submit your written proposal (in one PDF document) to [salathe@ramsar.org](mailto:salathe@ramsar.org)

### **EXPERTISE AND PROFILE OF THE CONSULTANT/S**

The Consultant/s should have the following qualifications, experience and skills:

#### **Education**

Graduate degree in ecology, natural resources management, environment policy, environmental communication, development studies or international relations.

#### **Required Experience**

- Minimum 10 years of experience in a relevant field;
- Good knowledge of the governance and policy frameworks underpinning multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Wetlands;
- Experience in similar planning projects and strategic consultations is desirable.

#### **Required Skills**

- Demonstrated experience in analysing and interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data;
- Facilitation and consultation experience with diverse stakeholders;
- Demonstrated experience in developing strategies and writing reports on complex subjects;

Fluency in spoken and written English is required, working knowledge of another language of the Convention (French or Spanish) is desirable.

#### **Other conditions**

In order to participate in this procurement, the Consultant must also meet the following conditions:

- Registered on the relevant professional or trade register of the country in which you are established (or resident, if self-employed)

- In full compliance with your obligations relating to payment of social security contributions and of all applicable taxes

**Further Information: Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands:**

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**Chair of SP5WG**

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Attachment A

**Terms of Reference and Work Plan to COP14**

**Strategic Plan Working Group for Ramsar SP5**

1. Background

The Strategic Plan Working Group for the review of SP4 recommended to Standing Committee (59) in June 2021, that a new Working Group be established ahead of COP14, to ensure there is sufficient time to develop the new strategic plan for adoption at COP15 in 2024.<sup>2</sup> Standing Committee through Decision 59-20 agreed:

- to establish a new working group with membership from Contracting Parties, the STRP and International Organization Partners, to commence preparation of the Fifth Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention;
- the terms of reference and work plan to be agreed intersessionally, and be designed to accommodate the key elements and any additional priority elements and modalities for the Fifth Strategic Plan that may be agreed at COP14;
- Encourage the participation of members of the Working Group on the Review of the Fourth Strategic Plan in the new working group, for continuity purposes

In early 2022, the Secretariat issued a call for nominations of members for the new Working Group.

The following Parties nominated to become members of the new Working Group to prepare SP5 during the period leading up to COP15: Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Chad, China, Finland, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Oman, Slovenia, South Africa, and Tunisia, plus the International Water Management Institute and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust on behalf of the Convention's International Organization Partners and an expert of the STRP. At the first meeting of the WG on 23 May 2022, Iran and Switzerland became members of the working group. Japan also confirmed its membership subsequently.

2. Purpose of the SPWG for SP5

The Strategic Plan Working Group for SP5 established by the Standing Committee (Decision SC59-20) is to:

- a) develop for consideration at COP15, the fifth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2025-2030, taking account of:
  - i) input from Contracting Parties; Convention bodies, working groups and IOPs,
  - ii) the outcomes of the review of the fourth Strategic Plan,

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<sup>2</sup> Legal advice obtained by the Secretariat confirmed the Standing Committee has the authority to establish Working Groups.

- iii) The Strategic framework containing the basic elements for development of the plan [to be agreed at COP14 - see [Ramsar COP14 Doc.18.4](#) para's 17- 24]
- b) develop a comprehensive program of consultation and engagement for SP5 that is tailored to the needs of the Contracting Parties, regions, and other Convention bodies, IOPs and external stakeholders;
- c) appoint facilitators to undertake preparatory engagement prior to COP14 and facilitate a program of engagement with key stakeholders at COP14; and
- d) regularly report its progress to the Standing Committee.

The Secretariat shall under the guidance of the Working Group, assist with contracting appropriate consultant/s to support the work of the Strategic Plan Working Group.

### 3. Composition and regional representation

- The working group will have membership from Contracting Parties, with all regions represented;
- The Chairs of the STRP and CEPA Oversight Panel will liaise with the Working Group, and if they find it suitable, they or any appointed member of the STRP and CEPA can join the Working Group as members;
- Interested International Organization Partners representatives are welcome to be members;
- The Working Group may invite relevant external parties to observe and attend meetings as required.

### 4. Structure, meetings, and Secretariat support

- The Working Group will appoint among itself a Chair, and a Vice Chair and any other roles that it deems necessary;
- The Working Group will hold meetings using means that allow the full and active participation of all members and/or regions in the group. These may be face-to-face (in association with other Ramsar meetings) hybrid or virtual, the latter using an agreed platform to which all members have access;
- The Working Group will take decisions by consensus;
- The Chair and Vice Chair will liaise and work closely with other bodies of the Convention and relevant working groups and/or external parties as necessary for development of SP5;
- The Secretariat will provide secretariat services for the Working Group (meeting invites and minutes) and act as a point of contact within the Secretariat.

### 5. Work plan to COP14

COP 14 will bring together Contracting Parties, their Focal Points and IOP's, presenting an excellent opportunity to commence consultations on Ramsar SP5, bring Parties up-to-date with the latest international policy developments (CBD, UNFCCC, Stockholm +50 etc) and focus their thinking on the new Ramsar Strategic Plan (SP5) for this critical period to 2030.

The priority tasks of the Working Group is to:

- I. Develop the project scope to engage a consultant/s with a working knowledge of the Convention and demonstrated communication and facilitation expertise to lead the consultation on SP5;
- II. Design a program of consultation and engagement on SP5 at the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties, working closely with Subgroup on COP14 and the host country;
- III. Develop a work plan and schedule for the preparation of the SP5 for COP15 that can take effect once the strategic framework containing basic elements for development of the plan are agreed at COP14.