



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy for Policy Review and Plan Development Fifth Convention on Wetlands Strategic Plan

Background

The [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 [Strategic Plan](#) is the key document guiding implementation of the Convention. It informs the work program of the [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 [Resolution XIV.4](#).

The 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 (date TBC). The SP5WG has met twice on 23 May 2022 ahead of resumed SC59 in Gland and on 4 November ahead of COP14 in Geneva. It has broad-based regional representation of Parties, as well as the International Water Management Institute and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, representing the International Organization Partners, the STRP and Youth Working Group.

Standing Committee has approved the Terms of Reference for the SPWG (see Attachment A). One of the first tasks of the Working group is to prepare a workplan and engagement program for the development of the fifth strategic plan, and a consultancy is underway to assist the Working Group with these tasks.

The next 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 the Convention's 50th 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 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 smaller Parties.

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.

The Framework and key elements for development of the Strategic Plan were agreed at COP14 as found in [Resolution XIV.4](#) and reflected in the policy review and scoping activities in Phase 2.

THE CONSULTANCY SERVICES

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

The services required encompass skills and experience in:

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

Suitably qualified and experienced consultants are invited to submit an Expression of Interest to undertake **Phases 2. and 3.** below, to undertake research and analysis, engagement and consultation activities and prepare planning documentation, as detailed below.

Detailed Task Description

Phase 1. Preliminary scoping and work planning: timeline: COP14, post COP to June 2023. COMISSIONED

Key tasks for this phase include:

- a. Deliver an engagement program at the 14th 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.
- b. Assist the SPWG to prepare a work plan for SP5 for consideration by Standing Committee (SC61 TBC).
- c. 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 iterative stakeholder engagement in each phase and across the project;
- d. Work closely with the Secretariat to curate a webpage for SP5 and schedule consultation events.

Phase 2. Document review and research: Timing; by December 2023

Key tasks for this phase include:

- a. 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 Convention on Wetlands and CBD; RRI's etc)
- b. Apply a regional lens to the review to identify priority conservation activities and capability requirements for developing Country Parties;
- c. Identity the key policy focus areas for SP5 that align wetland conservation activities with the key global environmental priorities and outcomes (CBD; SDG's UNFCCC etc.) to 2030;
- d. Identify options for a more tightly focused Plan, streamlining and integration rather than creating additional activity (e.g. CEPA; Gender) removing repetition and overlap;
- e. Provide a report of the Policy review, summarising the analysis and findings, scoping the policy focus for SP5 and key elements (goals, targets and indicators) including feedback from stakeholder engagement.

The consultant will implement an iterative process to undertaking these tasks, seeking views and input of key stakeholders, consistent with the engagement and consultation strategy for SP5, and working closely with the Secretariat and Working Group.

Phase 3. Plan development: Timing: by December 2024 (inc.SC 63 date TBC 2024)

Key tasks for this phase include:

- a. 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 (date TBC 2024), and make any amendments to Plan required by SC for transmittal to COP15.

The consultant will implement an iterative process to undertaking these tasks, seeking views and input of key stakeholders consistent with the engagement and consultation strategy for SP5, and working closely with the Secretariat and Working Group.

Consultancy Outputs

- SP5 Work Plan [Phase 1 underway]
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy and Report [Phase 1 underway]
- Policy Review and options report
- Draft Strategic Plan

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

The Consultancy is to commence as soon as possible will conclude upon satisfactory and timely completion of all tasks to be undertaken, but no later than the Standing Committee Meeting ahead of November 2024.

Consultancy Proposals

Consultants should submit an Expression of Interest addressing the project brief that includes the following:

- 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 to be involved, and contact details of at least two referees;
- Evidence of capacity to complete the project as specified within the agreed timeline;
- A fixed-priced quotation for each deliverable associated with facilitation and completion of the project, inclusive of all costs (including travel and materials), and with fees itemised in accordance with each relevant activity and reporting task;
- A statement regarding pecuniary, actual or potential conflict of interest.

The closing date for Expressions of Interest is 17 February 2023.

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.

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

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Terms of Reference and Work Plan

Strategic Plan Working Group for Strategic Plan 5 (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. 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 Convention on Wetlands;
- 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. Current members of the working Group include; Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil (proposed Co-Chair), Canada (proposed Co-Chair), Chad, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Eswatini, Finland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Oman, Republic of Korea (interested Party), Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Zambia (interested Party), STRP representative, IWMI representative, WWT representative, YEW representative.

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 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,
 - iii) The Strategic framework containing the basic elements for development of the plan - see [Resolution XIV.4](#)
- 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 Convention 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 SP5, bring Parties up-to-date with the latest international policy developments (CBD, UNFCCC, Stockholm +50 etc) and focus their thinking on the new Strategic Plan (SP5) for this critical period to 2030.

The priority tasks of the Working Group are 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 14th 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.

6. Project Budget

To support the process to develop SP5, unspent funds from the SP4 budget (18K CHF) have been redirected to SP5. Standing Committee through Decision SC59-32, allocated a further 90K CHF to support development of SP5, in accordance with Decision SC59-20 by the Standing Committee to establish a new working group.

* An Updated work plan is to be agreed and presented to SC62 scheduled for 4-8 September 2023.