



Clarion Congress Hotel

Programme and Annotated Agenda

Aims of the Meeting

This regional “pre-COP” meeting provides the 48 European Ramsar Contracting Parties with an opportunity to prepare themselves for the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP13) taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 21-29 October 2018. The European Meeting focuses on the goals and targets of the Ramsar **Strategic Plan 2016-2024** and how their implementation contributes to the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

Focus on European wetland projects and policies

The European Meeting aims to identify areas of successful cooperation between different sectors of society, administration and private business. Ramsar Convention National Focal Points (NFPs) from the Ministries, experts on scientific, technical and site management issues, in charge of communication, education, awareness and capacity building, from Ramsar International Organisation Partners (IOPs) and from other organisations will – together – look at progress made with the implementation of the Ramsar Convention, and how to support the efforts of the Ramsar Parties, partners and other stakeholders in preventing, stopping and reversing the global decline of wetlands.

Focus on Draft Resolutions for COP13

The participants will look at, and discuss substantial aspects of the draft texts for Resolutions to be submitted by Standing Committee for final negotiation and adoption at COP13. The initial texts of **Draft Resolutions** are published on the Ramsar website. They are numbered as documents for the 54th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee (*Doc. SC54-00*) and can be accessed and downloaded [here](#) – or by visiting > www.ramsar.org > DOCUMENTS (*menu: upper right corner*) > Standing Committee (*menu: left-hand column*) > 54th Meeting (Gland, 2018).

Draft Resolutions are discussed in interactive sessions. The conclusions from the group discussions are summarized by the moderator (or rapporteur) of the session. During the 54th meeting of Standing Committee (23-27 April 2018), a European representative will report the conclusions from the discussions at the European Meeting orally to the Standing Committee, in view of possible amendments to be included to the draft texts by the Standing Committee, before their submission to COP13.

Flow of the interactive sessions

Interactive sessions were successfully used during the 8th European Ramsar Meeting in 2014. They provided well-received opportunities for all participants to discuss and exchange their experiences and ideas. The structure of the interactive working sessions during this 9th Meeting will again be similar, with short presentations in plenary, followed by interactive exchanges, and a brief reporting back:

Brief introduction in plenary – Each session starts for 30 minutes in plenary with an introduction of two different themes (*2x8 minutes*) and their illustration with concrete aspects. The introduction is provided by the facilitators who moderate the following two group sessions.

Discussion in 2 smaller groups – Then the audience splits for 60 minutes into two groups. The two moderators welcome each a group in parallel (½ of the participants) and discuss with them key questions related to the theme they introduced before in plenary. For each group, a rapporteur takes bullet-point notes of the discussion (on flip charts). After 30 minutes, the groups switch to the other moderator (and theme). The moderators remain at their place and receive the second group for another 30 minutes. Each participant is thus able to participate in both thematic groups subsequently (*2x30 minutes*).

Reporting back – After the group discussions, the two moderators compile the flip-chart notes prepared by the rapporteurs and prepare a concise bullet-point report on the recommendations reached which they present subsequently to the plenary (*5 minutes, 1-2 slides*), followed by a brief discussion in plenary (*up to 5 minutes*).

Monday 19 March

- 10:00 **Opening of the Ramsar Sites photo exhibition** Josef Veselský
> in front of the Olomouc Regional Administration building
by the head of the Department of Environment and Nature Protection
of the Olomouc Regional Administration
followed by interviews with the media
- Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Sites network in the Czech Republic**
(Strategic Goal 2 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024)
- 14:00 **Opening and Welcome** Vladimír Dolejšky
Deputy Minister of the Environment of the Czech Republic
Governor of the Olomouc Region
Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention
Ladislav Okleštěk
Martha Rojas Urrego
- 14:25 **Evaluation of the ecological status and trends of the Czech Ramsar Sites** David Pithart
Is the ecological character of the 14 Czech Ramsar Sites improving or getting worse?
The results of a mapping and monitoring programme provide answers.
- 14:45 **Wetlands and climate change** Jan Pokorný
Evapotranspiration from wetland vegetation cools the air and provides water
vapour for local water cycles. This advantage is often overlooked or ignored.
- 15:05 **Water lost and returned** Ivana Bufková
Hydrological restoration of mires and wetlands, including mountain headwaters,
is undertaken at landscape level with a holistic approach, using various methods.
- 15:25 *introduction to the practical flow of the interactive sessions* Tobias Salathé
- 15:30 *coffee break*
- 16:00 *interactive session:*
1 Enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention Sibylle Vermont
An introduction to the DR¹ on enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention
(Doc. SC54-09); and the DR on improving the efficiency of structures and
processes of the Convention (Doc. SC54-21.8); with reference to the DR on
roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee (Doc. SC54-10).
(Switzerland)
- 2 Assuring that Ramsar remains relevant** Bettina Hedden-Dunkhorst
An update on the DR to enhance the Convention's visibility and synergies with
other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international institutions
(Doc. SC54-14); with a reference to the DR on World Wetlands Day (Doc. SC54-
21.11).
(Germany)
- 17:30 film screening: *Mysterious World of Wetlands* Libuše Vlasáková
- 18:30 time for parallel meetings of the **Ramsar Regional Initiatives** (RRI) in Europe
(according to their own agendas) RRI chairs/coordinators
- 20:00 **Welcome Dinner Buffet** at the Clarion Hotel Ministry of the Environment

¹DR indicates that the interactive session is focusing on proposed text of a **Draft Resolution** submitted for consideration by COP13.

Tuesday 20 March

On-site visits to experience Ramsar Sites management in the Czech Republic

(Strategic Goal 2 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024)

08:30 *buses leave in front of the Clarion Hotel:*

three groups visit different Ramsar Sites in the region, according to a separate programme
(*> wear sturdy shoes and adequate clothing to cope with the [weather](#) of the day*)

17:00 *buses return to the Clarion Hotel*

18:00 *departure from the Clarion Hotel on foot:*

for a guided visit of the historical centre of Olomouc and the Holy Trinity Column, a cultural property listed by the [World Heritage](#) Convention

19:00 *end of the guided visit* - enjoy the evening to discover typical restaurants - or set up individual meetings

Ramsar Sites Information System - if you wish to receive a hands-on demonstration how to use this online tool, please contact Kasia Nikraszewicz to fix a time.

Wednesday 21 March

Wisely using all wetlands in Europe – policies and projects

(Strategic Goal 3 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024)

08:30 **Implications of the EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy**

Following a thorough evaluation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, the European Commission has adopted an [Action Plan](#) to improve their implementation and boost their contribution towards reaching the biodiversity targets for 2020.

András Demeter
(European Commission)

08:50 **Restoring the lateral and longitudinal connectivity in the Rhine basin**

The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine ([ICPR](#)) coordinates the basin-wide implementation of the EU Water Framework and Floods Directives, and its “Rhine 2020” programme targets to reactivate 1000 km² of floodplains.

Laura Gangi
(ICPR)

09:10 *interactive session:*

3 Using the EU Water Framework Directive for wetland management

This innovative legislation adopted in 2000 is increasingly used, also beyond the European Union (e.g. in the Danube basin). This year a process to review the Directive starts to decide about possibly needed improvements.

András Demeter
(European Commission)
Eva Hernandez (WWF)

4 Ramsar Resolutions: how to translate policies into local action

The *WetNet* project partners work in 6 Mediterranean countries, supported by the EU Interreg programme, to test the effectiveness of wetland contracts for the active inclusion of public and private stakeholders in site governance and management.

Giancarlo Gusmaroli
(Italian Centre for River Restoration)
Cy Griffin
(Wetlands International)

10:40 *coffee break*

11:00 *interactive session:*

5 Waterways and wetlands – how to find mutually acceptable solutions?

The EU considers waterway transport as an environment-friendly alternative to road and rail. Waterway development plans should be compatible with the management of Ramsar Sites and with guiding principles, such as the [Joint Statement](#) on the development of inland navigation and environmental protection in the Danube basin.

Volha Kaskevich (NGO Bahna)
Zoltan Kun
(Frankfurt Zoological Society)

6 Integrated wetland ecosystem monitoring and management

PANACeA acts as a science-policy platform to build synergies for biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean, supported by the EU Interreg programme. A specific working group is addressing freshwater, wetlands and coastal ecosystems with a strong focus on Ramsar issues.

Dania Abdul Malak
(European Topic Centre – University of Málaga)

12:30	<i>light lunch</i>	
14:00	<i>three bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 3, 4, 5</i>	A. Demeter, E. Henandez, V. Kaskevich, Z. Kun, G. Gusmaroli, C. Griffin
14:30	<i>interactive session:</i> 7 A practical tool to assess wetland ecosystem services Ramsar adopted in 2015 (with Resolution XII.15) a tool to track wetland site management effectiveness (R-METT); now a DR proposes a complementary tool for the rapid assessment of wetland ecosystem services (<i>Doc. SC54-21.1</i>). 8 Implementing Ramsar at regional level Introducing the DR on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021 and their new Operational Framework. RRI are considered effective implementation tools for the Convention at regional level (<i>Doc. SC54-20.2</i>).	Wolfgang Pelikan (Austria) Jenny Lonnstad (Sweden)
16:00	<i>coffee break</i>	
16:30	<i>interactive session:</i> 9 Helping to solve human-induced problems at Ramsar Sites Based on the analysis by STRP experts, a DR on Ramsar Advisory Missions (<i>Doc. SC54-21.4</i>) proposes how to modernise this successful Ramsar tool helping Contracting Parties to find solutions to restore the ecological character of their Ramsar Sites. 10 Supporting Contracting Parties with scientific and technical aspects Recalling the recent work and outputs of Ramsar's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and introducing the DR on future implementation of scientific and technical aspects of the Convention (<i>Doc. SC54-23</i>). Which are the priorities that help Parties most to implement the Convention?	Jan-Petter Huberth-Hansen (Norway) Jari Ilmonen (STRP) David Stroud (STRP)
18:00	<i>two bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 6 and 7</i>	D. Abdul Malak, W. Pelikan
18:20	time for report writing and bilateral meetings	
19:40	<i>buses leave in front of the Clarion Hotel:</i> for the Conference Reception at the Archbishop's Palace a formal evening reception in the Baroque Palace, with a concert, buffet dinner and guided tours of the Palace (> <i>business suit</i>)	<i>hosted by the</i> Ministry of the Environment
22:00	<i>buses return to the Clarion Hotel</i>	

Thursday 22 March

Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation

(Strategic Goal 1 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024)

08:30	<i>three bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 8, 9, 10</i>	J. Lonnstad, J.P. Huberth-Hansen, J. Ilmonen, D. Stroud
09:00	<i>interactive session:</i> 11 Wetlands and water management in agricultural basins Focusing on the DR on agriculture in wetlands (<i>Doc. SC54-21.5</i>); with references to the DR on wetlands, peace and security (<i>Doc. SC54-21.15</i>); and the DR on wetlands in West Asia (<i>Doc. SC54-21.7</i>) covering the Euphrates and Tigris basins. 12 Creating awareness with the Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 2 The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory of the RRI MedWet is preparing its second monitoring report with indicators of wetland status and trends, and provides science-based evidence for decision-makers to enhance wetland conservation.	Martina Eiseltová (Czech Republic) Christian Perennou (Tour du Valat Institute)

- 10:30 *coffee break*
- 11:00** *interactive session:*
13 Wetlands helping us to cope with climate change Jari Ilmonen (STRP)
 Presenting the DR providing guidance on identifying Ramsar Sites for global climate change regulation (*Doc. SC54-24*); DR on restoration of degraded peatlands to mitigate and adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity (*Doc. SC54-25*); and the DR on urbanization, climate change and sustainable wetlands (*Doc. SC54-21.12*).
- 14 Coastal wetland ecosystems, climate change and biodiversity** Stephan Glatzel (STRP)
 Focusing on the DR that promotes conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue carbon ecosystems (*Doc. SC54-21.9*).
- 12:30 *light lunch*
- 13:30 *side-event:*
SWOS – the Satellite-based Wetland Observation Service Kathrin Weise (Jena Optronik Ltd)
 The Horizon-2020 EU project provides services and freely available tools for wetland monitoring, management guidance, and for national reporting on the extent of wetlands according to the indicator 6.6.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 14:00** *three bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 11, 12, 13* M. Eiseltová, C. Perennou, J. Ilmonen
- 14:30 *interactive session:*
15 Cultural and gender issues relevant for the wise use of wetlands Gordana Beltram (Slovenia)
 Focusing on the DR on cultural values, local communities and climate change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands (*Doc. SC54-21.2*); the DR on gender and wetlands (*Doc. SC54-21.16*); with reference to parts of the DR on assessment of ecosystem services (*Doc. SC54.21.1*); the DR on agriculture (*Doc. SC54-21.5*); and the DR on urbanization (*Doc. SC54-21.12*).
- 16 Polar and sub-polar wetlands coming under stress** Jenny Lonnstad (Sweden)
 Introducing the DR on wetlands in polar and subpolar regions (*Doc. SC54-21.14*); with reference to the work of the Arctic Council's CAFF working group and the Antarctic Treaty.
- 16:00 *coffee break*
- 16:30** *interactive session:*
17 Coastal wetland ecosystems essential for migratory species David Stroud (STRP) Ghislaine Ferrère (France)
 Introducing the DR on promoting the conservation and wise-use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically-associated habitats (*Doc. SC54-21.13*); and the DR on the enhanced protection and management of sea turtle breeding, feeding and nursery areas and their designation as Ramsar Sites (*Doc. SC54-21.10*).
- 18 Small wetlands - the first victims of human impacts** Thanos Giannakakis (WWF)
 Introducing the DR on small and micro wetlands (*Doc. SC54-21.3*), and presenting progress with the implementation of Resolution XII.14 *Conservation of Mediterranean Basin island wetlands* through the project Med-Is-Wet.
- 18:00 *two bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 14 and 15* S. Glatzel, G. Beltram
- 18:20 time for report writing and bilateral meetings
- 19:00** **Opening of the public wetland evening** Tobias Salathé
 poster presentations by their authors (at their posters)
 exhibits and stands (wetland NGOs, programmes, projects, etc.)
- 20:00 **Public video contest:** screening of nominated short videos (cf. separate list)
- 21:30 announcement of the winning video
- 22:00 *closure of the public evening*

Friday 23 March

Enhancing Ramsar implementation

(Strategic Goal 4 of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024)

- 08:30** *three bullet-point reports by the facilitators or rapporteurs of sessions 16, 17, 18* J. Lonstad, D. Stroud, G. Ferrère, T. Giannakakis
- 09:00** **Ramsar Sites in Europe – trends and challenges**
An update of the European part of the COP13 report pursuant to Article 8.2 (*Doc. SC54-19*). Nearly half of all 2300 Ramsar Sites are in European countries. Maintaining their ecological character and keeping information on them up-to-date is a challenge for the Contracting Parties and for the Secretariat. Kasia Nikraszewicz
- 09:20** **Visibility, effectiveness and governing bodies of the Convention**
Reporting back from the interactive sessions 1 and 2 on Monday, with further discussion on the proposed operational and governance changes. Adoption of bullet-point recommendations to be submitted to SC54. S. Vermont, B. Hedden-Dunkhorst
- 10:20** **Submitting European recommendations on DRs to SC54**
Bullet-point recommendations from each interactive session are integrated into a short Meeting report, to be posted on the Ramsar website. Recommendations on DRs need to be reported by European representatives to SC54. Tobias Salathé
- 10:40** *coffee break*
- 11:10** **What scientific and technical support do Parties need?**
An opportunity to discuss further the recommendations from the *interactive session 10* and to clarify issues that need so. *chair:* Gerhard Schwach (Austria)
- 11:40** **Any other business needing urgent attention or further clarification**
Including references to the latest DR on financial and budgetary matters (*Doc. SC54-7.3*); and DR on a Ramsar language strategy (*Doc. SC54-13*).
- 12:00** Closure of the 9th European Ramsar Meeting Martha Rojas Urrego Libuše Vlasáková
- 12:30** *light lunch*

The Ramsar Secretariat thanks the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic for its generous offer to host the 9th European Ramsar Meeting, together with the Olomoucký Region and the City of Olomouc. The Secretariat is also thankful to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, and to the Norwegian Environment Agency, for their financial support to sponsor the participation of delegates from eastern European countries.

