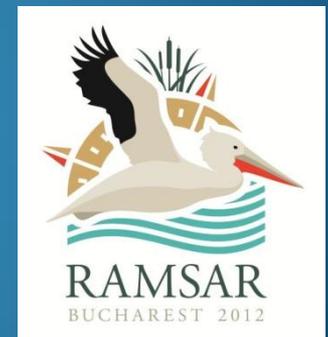




The Ramsar Convention
on Wetlands

SWS-Ramsar collaboration: moving forward
George Lukacs (SWS President) and
Nick Davidson (Ramsar Deputy S-G)



Ramsar and SWS profiles

- The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. Established in 1971, 161 Contracting Parties & 2,010 sites listed.
- Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) is an international organization dedicated to fostering sound wetland science, education, and management. Established in 1980 with over 3,000 members.

SWS-Ramsar collaboration

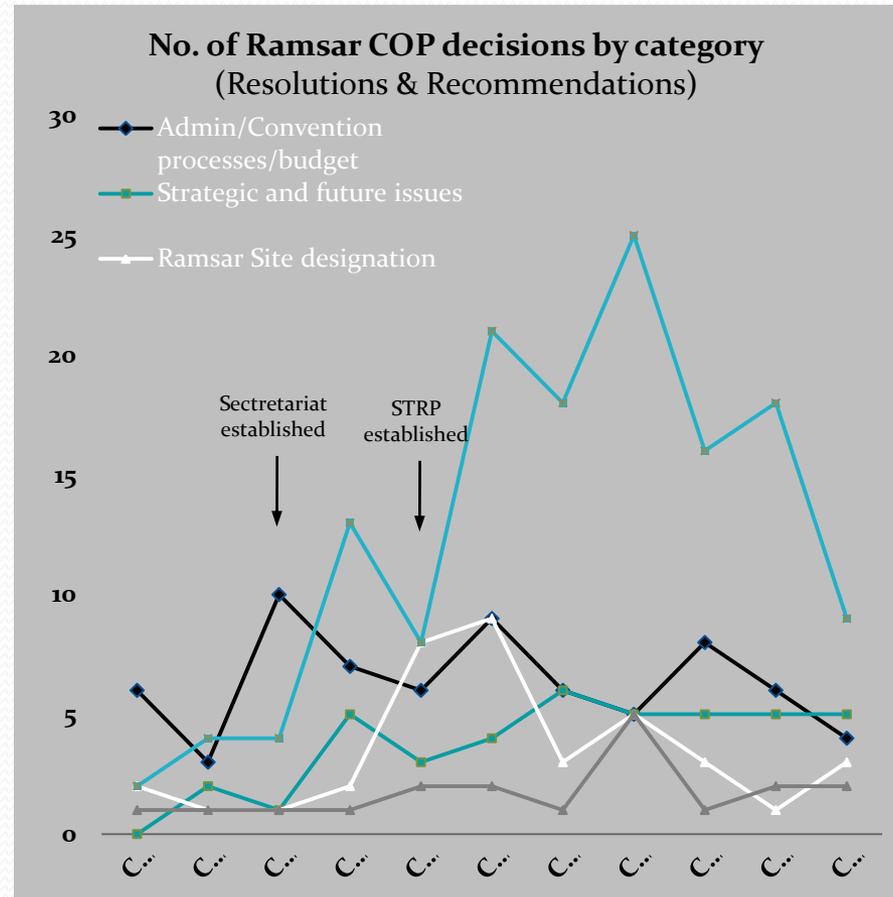
- Formal collaboration started in 1999:
 - Memorandum of Cooperation
 - Updated in 2004, and again in July 2011
 - Available on: www.ramsar.org/pdf/moc/Ramsar_SWS_MoC-July-2011.pdf
 - Provides framework for collaboration, to bring SWS and its members' technical and practical expertise into supporting Ramsar implementation
- Chiefly scientific and technical expertise into the work of Ramsar's Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP)
 - SWS is formally invited observer organisation to STRP
 - Led preparation of STRP's "*Principles and guidelines for wetland restoration*" (adopted by Ramsar COP8 in 2002 – Resolution VIII.16)

SWS-STRP work 2009-2012

- SWS STRP representatives and members significant contribution to STRP's work in preparing advice and guidance in current triennium:
 - Lead in preparation of COP11 DR11 *“Principles for the planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands”*
 - Lead in preparation of COP11 DR15 *“Agriculture-wetland interactions: rice paddy and pesticide usage”*
 - Lead in preparation of COP11 DR14 *“Climate change and wetlands: implications for the Ramsar Convention on wetlands “*
 - Co-lead in review of Ramsar wetland restoration guidance: *Scientific & Technical Briefing Note No. 4 “The benefits of wetland restoration”*
 - Contribution to COP11 DR9 *“An integrated Framework for avoiding, mitigating & compensating for wetland losses”*

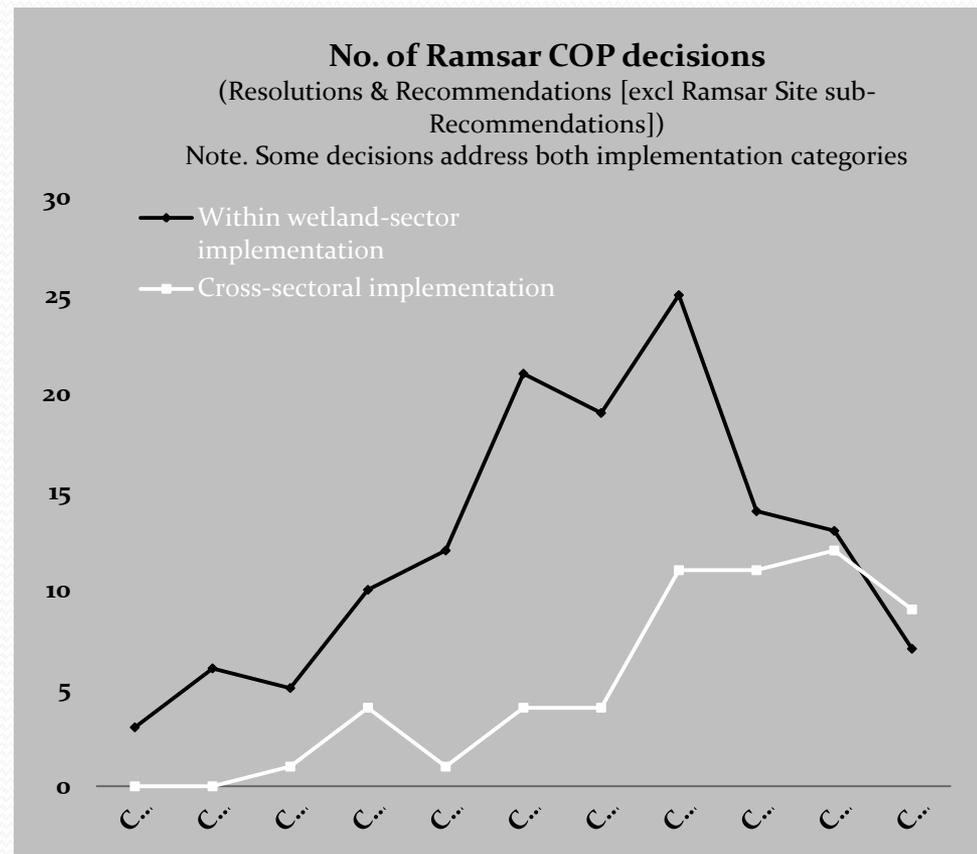
Trends in types of scientific & technical decisions and guidance adopted by Ramsar COPs

- How have the implementation focus and priorities evolved since the start of the Convention?
 - Early focus on Ramsar Site designation and management
 - More focus from mid-1990s on broader wise use policy and technical implementation
 - Since COP8 (2002) progressive reduction in overall number of decisions at each COP



Trends in types of scientific & technical decisions and guidance adopted by Ramsar COPs

- Early: more focus on “within-wetlands” conservation and wise use
 - Ramsar Site designation, wetland management etc.
- Since early 2000s: increasing attention to “cross-sectoral” implementation
 - Interactions between other sectors benefiting from wetlands, but also affecting wetland status
 - e.g. water management, extractive industries, human health, tourism, poverty eradication, urban planning etc.



Future scientific & technical priority issues ...

- On STRP's agenda, and which SWS could contribute
- COP11 DR17: recommends 18 top priority tasks for 2013-2015
 - Tasks not funded by core budget: STRP's work relies on voluntary contributions, pro bono and institution support to deliver
 - SWS Ramsar section Chair should be conduit for interest from membership (as Rob!)

Future scientific & technical priority issues

- Include:
 - Capacity-building for Parties & wetland managers in applying Ramsar guidance
 - Invasive species and wetlands
 - State of the World's Wetlands, and Ramsar effectiveness reporting
 - Development of Global Wetland Observing System (GWOS)
 - Change in ecological character
 - Further guidance on wetlands and human health – for health sector
 - Climate change: advice on adaptation, REDD+ implications, carbon sequestration
 - Wetlands in the global water cycle
 - Ramsar, water and wetlands strategy
 - Wetlands and aquaculture
 - Wetlands and poverty eradication
 - Economics of wetland ecosystem services/benefits
 - Building on TEEB “water & wetlands synthesis” report being prepared in 2012

Strategic SWS-Ramsar activities

- Establishment of SWS Ramsar Section
 - Important conduit for SWS providing input to Ramsar work
 - Might be better facilitated through e.g. a Ramsar Section ‘wiki’ discussion forum?
 - Rather than relying largely on SWS Ramsar lead focal point to maintain network contact
- Joint SWS Ramsar Regional Meetings
 - Collaboration between proposed various SWS Chapters meetings eg Asia, South America with Ramsar regional activities

What else can be done?

- Discussion, please

Thanks