



**COP14**  **2022**

## **14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

**“Wetlands Action for People and Nature”  
Wuhan, China, and Geneva, Switzerland 5-13 November 2022**

### **Resolution XIV.11**

#### **Wetland education in the formal education sector**

1. ACKNOWLEDGING that the Convention on Wetlands has long recognized and promoted a role for education in its work; and ACKNOWLEDGING also the role of the communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) Oversight Panel in supporting the planning, implementation and review of CEPA-related work, including formal education, as part of the Convention’s ongoing work;
2. RECALLING that the role of education and communication to increase public awareness was featured at the 3rd meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP3) in Regina, Canada; with progressive steps taken at COP4 (Montreux, Switzerland), COP5 (Kushiro, Japan), and COP6 (Brisbane, Australia) to more formally recognize the role of education and to work towards a dedicated Ramsar education programme;
3. ACKNOWLEDGING that the first COP-approved CEPA resolution was Resolution VII.9, *The Outreach Programme*, in 1999, which identified the general public, schools, indigenous communities and the private sector as different groups with different communication needs;
4. CONCERNED that specific guidance regarding the formal education sector in successive CEPA Programmes has been minimal and that, while schools and formal education are clearly featured in Resolution VII.9 with related recommendations, subsequent CEPA Programmes (approved through Resolutions VIII.31 and X.8) only mention the “The Education Sector” as a stakeholder; ALSO NOTING that in the current CEPA Programme (approved through Resolution XII.9), Goal 8 encourages the development and distribution of wetland education materials “for use in the formal education sector”, but no additional guidance on suggested approaches is provided;
5. NOTING that environmental education has been evolving as an interdisciplinary field with focus on environmental literacy as well as an understanding of the relationship people have with their environment, and that it has also expanded to recognize various types of knowledge (e.g. Indigenous, local, scientific, etc.), to consider diversity, equity, and inclusion in conversations about environmental sustainability, and to include specific focus areas such as education for sustainable development (ESD) and biodiversity education;
6. ACKNOWLEDGING that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published “Education for Sustainable Development Goals” in 2017 to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and that the United Nations

General Assembly endorsed Resolution A/C.2/74/L48 on *Education for sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*;

7. FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that UNESCO is currently inviting inputs from its Member States and stakeholders towards the new ESD for 2030 roadmap, which aims to provide guidance for Member States and other stakeholders for the implementation of the new global framework “Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs”;
8. EXPRESSING GRATITUDE to Contracting Parties and Wetland Link International for supporting the global expansion of wetland centres and wetland parks, which act as hubs for wetland education and contribute valuable services to the formal education sector, both at wetland sites and in the school setting;
9. RECOGNIZING that while many Contracting Parties have CEPA action plans and programmes that include wetland education, further consideration can be made on how to effectively promote wetlands in formal education;
10. RECOGNIZING that responsibility for formal education is not always uniform across national jurisdictions, and that there can be differences in how school education is delivered or how curricula are introduced or mandated in Contracting Parties;
11. ALSO RECOGNIZING that formal wetland education can complement and, in turn, be complemented by non-formal and informal wetland education, further enhancing public awareness;
12. ACKNOWLEDGING that environment-focused education in the formal school setting provides students with a foundation of environmental and conservation awareness, appreciation, literacy, skills, motivations, and responsibility, and provides a means to influence the mindset of students, youth, and educators towards the better understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of ecosystems in general;
13. FURTHER RECOGNIZING the vital importance of wetland education focused on ecosystem services in facilitating the understanding of the importance of wetlands, including but not limited to reducing disaster risk; and as such, in promoting their protection;
14. FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that learning about the environment both in the school setting and in nature can support life-long learning including vocational education, particularly through experiencing wetlands;
15. AWARE that further guidance on supporting wetland education in the formal education sector may redirect attention to this important component of the CEPA Programme in recognition of the opportunity to reach the younger generation in the formative years; and
16. AFFIRMING that education is equally as important as other components of the CEPA Programme and that synergy among components can facilitate a more effective implementation of the Convention;

## THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

17. URGES Contracting Parties to recognize the benefits of promoting wetland education topics in formal education and other sectors in order to encourage a greater understanding of wetlands and their values;
18. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to explore and support strategies to further integrate wetland education in formal education settings and to increase wetland education opportunities in their schools and learning institutions, such as:
  - i. identifying their institutions responsible for formal education and, if appropriate, coordinating actions in accordance with communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) national action plans or with other national planning tools;
  - ii. inviting government authorities responsible for education to join the National Ramsar Committee, National Wetland Committee or other similar mechanisms as a member to explore opportunities to introduce wetland topics and programmes into existing curricula;
  - iii. adopting a national or sub-national level approach to introducing wetland education topics in school curricula for schooling that are widely available and accessible for schools and teachers;
  - iv. establishing partnerships with wetland centres and wetland parks to enhance the development and implementation of school-based learning;
  - v. adopting demonstration-school models, and school-to-school and network-of-schools models;
  - vi. partnering where appropriate with the private sector to support dedicated grant schemes and various practical activities;
  - vii. identifying partnerships from existing programmes and initiatives such as the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention and mobilizing resources through such partnerships;
  - viii. enhancing communication among the stakeholders on wetland education through CEPA National Focal Points; and
  - ix. encouraging participation of schools in the celebration of World Wetlands Day;
19. ALSO ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to recognize the critical role of teachers in improving the effective inclusion of wetlands in school curricula and to support capacity building of educators in wetland science, including school teachers, instructors and eco-interpreters in wetland centres;
20. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to take into account other partners and sectors in education, such as curriculum development authorities, universities and in-service trainers, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, museums, community centres, and national and international teachers' associations where appropriate, that may assist in the introduction of wetland topics in formal curricula, as well as in non-formal and informal education;

21. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to seek opportunities to support citizen science initiatives including traditional knowledge that are focused on wetlands and delivered by wetland-focused organizations and Indigenous Peoples and local communities;
22. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to utilize existing online education platforms offered by international and regional organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme's "Learning for Nature" and the UN Environment Programme's "Earth School" and models of existing educational programmes with quality educational materials repackaged for schools and online access;
23. INVITES the International Organization Partners of the Convention to review their programmes and identify aspects that can be repackaged and used in school and other education;
24. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to share examples of good wetland education materials, programmes or curricula for the school education sector through the Convention website or through other media in cooperation with the Ramsar Regional Initiatives, especially the Ramsar Regional Centres, and with other relevant programmes and networks such as Wetland Link International, the global network of wetland centres;
25. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to utilize Ramsar National Reports to report on progress regarding wetland education in schools and learning institutions, as appropriate;
26. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to analyse the progress of development and implementation of wetland education programmes based on National Reports in cooperation with a small working group consisting of CEPA experts especially created for this purpose, and report the progress to the Contracting Parties through the COPs, towards the goal of mainstreaming wetland education in formal education; and
27. REQUESTS the Secretariat to coordinate with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and work to synergize the Convention on Wetlands' goal of integrating wetland education in formal education with UNESCO's ESD for 2030 roadmap.