



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy



# **AUSTRALIA'S RAMSAR CEPA NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2016-2018**

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE FIRST TRIENNIUM OF  
THE RAMSAR PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY-  
BUILDING, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)  
2016-2024**

## AUSTRALIA'S RAMSAR CEPA NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2016-2018

Australia will implement the Ramsar Communication, Capacity building, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Programme 2016-2024 through a series of National CEPA Action Plans, with the first covering the triennium, 2016-2018.

**CEPA roles and responsibilities:** Australian national, state and territory governments are responsible for promoting the conservation of Ramsar sites and wise use of all wetlands in their jurisdictions. The Australian Government is also responsible for leading the development of national guidance and approaches on implementing the Ramsar Convention in Australia and reporting on implementation. The Australian Government leads national CEPA activities and helps coordinate CEPA initiatives with state and territory governments. CEPA activities are also an important component of Ramsar site management which is the responsibility of site owners or legal managers who may be the Australian or state/ territory government, an individual, a community entity, trust, Traditional Owners, a company or other organisation. Non government organisations with a wetland conservation or education focus also play important roles in delivering CEPA activities.

**Ramsar CEPA Programme Vision:** The vision of the Ramsar Convention's CEPA Programme is the same as the vision of the Strategic Plan: "Wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognized and valued by all".

**Goals and targets:** The over-arching Goal of the Ramsar Convention's CEPA Programme is "People taking action for the conservation and wise use of wetlands". The Programme identifies nine Goals and 43 targets to achieve the vision. The programme covers full range of CEPA actors but not all goals and targets apply at every level.

CEPA Programme Goals	Targets (set in Convention's CEPA Programme)	Actions for Australia for 2016-2018	Output/outcome measures	Priority (H, M, L)
1. Ensure leadership to support effective implementation of the Programme by providing institutional mechanisms and establishing and supporting relevant networks.	<p>1.1 Appropriately experienced people to fill the roles of National Government and Non-governmental Organization CEPA Focal Points (see Appendix 2) nominated by Contracting Parties and communicated to the Ramsar Secretariat. {AA , CSO}</p> <p>1.2 National Ramsar/Wetland Committees established to collaborate with relevant</p>	<p>1.1 Appoint appropriate people as National Government and NGO CEPA National Focal Points (NFPs) and advise Secretariat (AG, ongoing)</p> <p>1.2 Wetlands and Aquatic Ecosystems Sub Committee (WAESC) to continue acting as the national Ramsar Committee (AG, ongoing) (National Report Q16.4)</p> <p>1.2 Outcomes of VIC Audit to be shared with WAESC members (Vic)</p> <p>1.3 Invite CEPA NGO National Focal Point and</p>	<p>NFPs appointed</p> <p>WAESC meetings held (National Report Q16.4)</p> <p>NFPs attend meetings</p> <p>Extent of networking with wetland stakeholders (National</p>	H

	<p>government departments and institutions to mainstream wetlands and their ecosystem services. {AA, NRC}</p> <p>1.3 National Focal Points (AA, CEPA and STRP) included as members of National Ramsar/Wetland Committees where these exist. {AA, NRC}</p> <p>1.4 Email networks that connect and support Administrative Authorities, National Focal Points, Site managers and other Ramsar implementers established and supported at global and national levels. {RamSec, AA, STRP, IOPs}</p> <p>1.5 Relationships developed and maintained with those organizations that can support Ramsar objectives through their expertise, their traditional knowledge, their human resources or through funding established and fostered. {RamSec, AA, IOPs}</p> <p>1.6 Effectiveness of strategies, especially regarding development and distribution of materials on wetland education and management, the success of campaigns under WWD evaluated. {RamSec, AAs, NRC, NFPs}</p>	<p>STRP National Focal Point to specific WAESC meetings (AG, proposed).</p> <p>1.4 Utilise existing email networks (such as Australian Wetland Network, NFPs, Wetland Education Centres) to promote Ramsar-related activity, events and resources (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>1.5 Build and foster relationships between governments, NGOs and Indigenous organisations, including through regular wetland stakeholder forums (AG/states, proposed).</p> <p>1.5 Participate in and support the East-Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (AG/states, ongoing)</p> <p>1.5 Build stakeholder relationships through engagement activities such as advisory groups, program governance groups and practitioner networks (AG/states, ongoing)</p> <p>1.6 Evaluate reach and success of WWD initiatives and material, including <i>Wetlands Australia</i> magazine, and information/educations websites such as <i>WetlandInfo</i> (AG/states, ongoing)</p>	<p>Report Q15.1, 15.2, 18.9)</p> <p>Emails to wetland stakeholders, World Wetlands Day (WWD) website hits and media/social media coverage (National Report Q16.6, 16.7)</p>	
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<p>2. Integrate CEPA processes, where appropriate, into all levels of policy development, planning and implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>2.1 CEPA expertise involved in the development of guidance by the Convention's bodies including the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and Standing Committee (SC). {RamSec, STRP}</p> <p>2.2 Wetland communication (CEPA) plans developed at the appropriate level by Parties (national, basin or site) to support Ramsar implementers. {AA, NRC, CSO}</p> <p>2.3 Where appropriate, wetland CEPA integrated into national policy and planning relevant to wetlands. {AA, CEPA, NRC}</p>	<p>2.2 Develop National CEPA Plan (AG, proposed) and implement actions within Plan (AG/states, proposed)</p> <p>2.3 Integrate CEPA into actions within the Ramsar Implementation Plan (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>2.3 Promote wetland values through: Protected area policy and planning Murray Darling Basin (MDB) Plan Great Barrier Reef (GBR) planning and strategies Heritage policy and planning Other policies and planning</p>	<p>National CEPA Plan and basin/site plans developed and published online (National Report Q16.1)</p>	<p>M</p>
<p>3. Provide support to implementers of wise use principles, especially those with a direct role in site management.</p>	<p>3.1 The Strategic Plan 2016-2024 adopted by COP12 disseminated and promoted.</p> <p>3.2 Appropriate guidance materials that support and encourage the wise use of wetlands produced for use at Ramsar Sites and other wetlands and by wetland networks. {RamSec, STRP, IOPs, CSO}</p> <p>3.3 Websites, including the Convention's website, to be further developed to be fit for purpose and be a useful platform for the sharing of information and resources, including the sharing of information and experiences</p>	<p>3.1 Disseminate and promote the Strategic Plan to relevant stakeholders (AG/states, ongoing)</p> <p>3.2 Disseminate Ramsar and other materials such as National Guidance, <i>Wetlands Australia</i> and fact sheets to Ramsar site managers and wetland networks (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>3.2 Develop and disseminate communication materials and educate stakeholders about the Ramsar Convention and wetlands (states, ongoing)</p> <p>3.3 Develop and better integrate wetland information on AG and state/territory website and link with other stakeholder websites (AG/states, NGOs, ongoing).</p> <p>3.3 Information on Australia's Ramsar wetlands provided to Secretariat, including</p>	<p>Number of recipients of Ramsar materials (National Report Q16.5a)</p> <p>Number and distribution of wetland publications (National Report Q18.5)</p> <p>Extent of liaison with MEA NFPs (National Report Q16.5b, 18.1))</p> <p>Number of wetland</p>	<p>H</p>

	<p>among CEPA National Focal Points. {RamSec, STRP, AA}</p> <p>3.4 Appropriate Ramsar Sites and other wetlands to be celebrated as “demonstration sites” for the wise use principle, and these sites suitably equipped in terms of capacity, signage, and interpretive materials. {AA, CEPA, IOPs, CSO, STRP NFPs}</p> <p>3.5 Secretariat requested to share CEPA stories which illustrate how integration of CEPA can improve wetland management. {RamSec}</p> <p>3.6 Collaboration on CEPA with other Conventions, Ramsar IOPs, other NGOs, UN agencies and others ensured through sharing of CEPA experiences and the encouragement of synergies. {RamSec, IOPs, CSO, AA, CEPA}</p>	<p>uploads to RSIS, for use by Australian and international wetland stakeholders (AG, ongoing)</p> <p>3.4 Promote specific Ramsar sites and all wetlands through publications, brochures, fact sheets, and work with Wetland Education Centres and site managers to promote wetlands(AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>3.5 Disseminate material provided by the Ramsar Secretariat and STRP to relevant stakeholders including WAESC members, site managers and NGOs (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>3.6 Work with other Convention staff to integrate wetlands into their national implementation strategies (AG, ongoing).</p>	<p>demonstration sites/ case studies recognised.</p>	
<p>4. Build the individual, institutional and collective capacity of people with a direct responsibility for Ramsar implementation.</p>	<p>4.1 Managers supported to build communication, education, participation and awareness into their management plans. {RamSec, STRP, AA, CEPA, SM, RRCs, CSO, STRP NFP}</p> <p>4.2 Current needs and capacities of wetland site managers and National Focal Points assessed and the results used to define training and capacity-building</p>	<p>4.1 Promote Ramsar Management Principles, promote and continue to develop guidelines, assist site managers to prepare ECDs and encourage the preparation of management plans that contain CEPA activities for Ramsar wetlands (AG/states, ongoing). See also action 3.3.</p> <p>4.2 Maintain a watching brief on current training availability and potential training needs (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>4.2 Assess capacity needs through regular</p>	<p>Extent of inclusion of CEPA in new/updated management plans (National Report Q9.4)</p> <p>Extent of wetland training offered (National Report Q19.1, 19.2, 19.3)</p> <p>Progress on</p>	<p>M</p>

	<p>priorities at regional and national levels. {RamSec, STRP, AA, CEPA, SM, RRCs, STRP NFP}</p> <p>4.3 Resources provided to produce appropriate wetland management training and capacity building materials and carry out the prioritized training and capacity building as identified in 4.2. {RamSec, AA, CEPA, STRP, SM, RRCs, CSO, STRP NFP}</p> <p>4.4 A network of Ramsar Regional Centres working to agreed standards (such as peer reviewed materials) supported to deliver capacity building to site managers, National Focal Points and other relevant stakeholders. {RamSec, RRCs, STRP}</p> <p>4.5 Partnerships with tertiary education institutions and other relevant organisations are developed to support the production and delivery of wetland management training and capacity building materials and programmes. {RamSec, STRP, RRCs, CSO, PS, AA, CEPA, STRP NFP}</p> <p>4.6 National strategic plans that strengthen the technical capacity and management of local authorities to incorporate environmental benefits and</p>	<p>stakeholder forums (see actions 1.5 and 3.3) and convey to relevant areas of DoEE (e.g NESP, NRS and Climate Adaptation) (AG, proposed).</p> <p>4.3 Provide wetland management training through courses, workshops and online modules (states/educational institutions/NGOs, ongoing)</p> <p>4.4 Investigate development of a Ramsar Regional Centre for the Oceania (AG, S/T, wetland stakeholders).</p> <p>4.5 Explore options for partnerships through NESP (AG, proposed).</p> <p>4.5 Continue to engage with and promote CEPA actions through MDBA and MDFRC (through EWKR project). Develop relationships with a range of institutions to foster CEPA actions. (AG, proposed)</p> <p>4.5 Partner with a range of organisations to deliver improved capacity to manage wetlands (state/organisations/NGOs, proposed)</p> <p>4.6 Implement wetland wise use through MDB Plan and GBR plans (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>4.6 Integrate wetland conservation in EPBC Act strategic assessments (AG, ongoing).</p>	<p>development of RRI proposal (National Report Q15.1, 15.2)</p> <p>Number of relevant research projects</p> <p>Extent of promotion of research results</p> <p>Number of assessments incorporating wetland advice</p>	
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	services of wetlands as strategies for local and regional development promoted. {AA, CEPA}			
5. Develop and support mechanisms to ensure multi-stakeholder participation in wetland management.	<p>5.1 Participation of major stakeholders used by site managers and others as an effective process for selection of Ramsar Sites and management of all wetlands, including at basin level. {AA, SM, CEPA, CSO, STRP NFP}</p> <p>5.2 Participation in wetland management of stakeholder groups with cultural, spiritual, customary, traditional, historical and socio-economic links to wetlands or those communities who depend on wetlands for their livelihoods is given a high priority. {AA, SM, CEPA, CSO, RRI}</p> <p>5.3 The use of practices and traditional knowledge systems that embody appropriate wetland cultural management by Indigenous peoples and local communities recovered, strengthened and encouraged. {AA, CEPA}</p> <p>5.4 Encourage community participation in wetlands through volunteer programmes which support the delivery of management objectives. {AA, SM,</p>	<p>5.1 Promote consultation requirements in national Ramsar nomination guidelines (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>5.1 Through MDB Plan and programs such as NLP, encourage whole of catchment approach to wetland management including irrigators, water managers, conservation groups, Indigenous people (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>5.1 Engage site managers and stakeholders in forums including advisory groups and NRM bodies (States, ongoing)</p> <p>5.2 Foster joint management with Indigenous people encourage adherence to Ramsar Management Principles, continue to promote consultation in implementation of the MDB Plan and continue to promote Indigenous management of wetlands through Working on Country and other programs (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>5.3 Collaborate with NESP Hubs to support the integration of Indigenous ecological knowledge to build collaborative opportunities and capacity for wetland management (AG/states, proposed).</p> <p>5.4 Promote engagement of communities, including Indigenous communities, in wetland conservation through AG programmes such as NLP, Green Army, Reef Trust and state programs (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>5.4 Promote and encourage engagement of</p>	<p>Extent of stakeholder consultation in nomination processes (National Report Q16.3b)</p> <p>Incorporation of catchment approaches in program guidelines (National Report Q16.3a)</p> <p>Local and Indigenous participation in management of Ramsar Wetlands (National Report Q10.3, 16.3a)</p> <p>Case studies/projects on cultural aspects of wetlands (National Report Q10.2)</p>	H



	<p>CSO}</p> <p>5.5 Relationships with the private sector are sought &amp; developed, including non-traditional sectors and those sectors whose activities have a major impact on wise use of wetlands. {AA, NRC, SM, PS}</p>	<p>community groups (eg BirdWatch, FrogWatch, Seagrass Watch, Mangrove Watch, Landcare) in monitoring of Ramsar wetlands via relationships with Ramsar site managers, NGOs and WECs and through relevant e-news publications (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>5.5 Promote wetland values to local government and industry sectors through Fact Sheets and targeted information (AG/states, proposed).</p>		
<p>6. Implement programmes, projects and campaigns targeting diverse sectors of society to increase awareness, appreciation and understanding of wetlands and the ecosystem services they provide.</p>	<p>6.1 Wide-reaching programmes, projects and campaigns, including World Wetlands Day, undertaken with diverse partners to raise awareness, build community support, and promote stewardship approaches and attitudes towards wetlands, in particular through the use of social media. {RamSec, AA, NRC, CEPA, SM, IOPs, RRCs, PS, CSO}</p> <p>6.2 Awareness enhanced on the monetary and non-monetary values of wetlands and their ecosystem services to improve understanding of the benefits which wetlands provide. {RamSec, STRP, AA, CEPA, SM, STRP NFP}</p> <p>6.3 Photo libraries, promotional videos and other similar tools developed and/or maintained to support awareness raising and</p>	<p>6.1 Promote WWD and related wetlands information and publications, promote migratory bird conservation); develop/promote wetland Indigenous calendars; promote wetlands through other relevant activities and national/ international days (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>6.1 Start planning for 50th anniversary of Ramsar signing (2021)</p> <p>6.2 Undertake economic valuation study of services provided by Australian coastal wetlands (AG, proposed).</p> <p>6.2 Promote outcomes of research and policy work relating to blue carbon (AG, proposed)</p> <p>6.2 Integrate values of wetlands through initiatives and programs such as Walking the Landscape and whole of catchment management (states, ongoing)</p> <p>6.3 Promote Ramsar photographic competitions and exhibitions (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>6.3 Maintain and provide access to Commonwealth and state wetland images and videos (AG/state, ongoing).</p>	<p>See Goals 1 and 3</p> <p>Number of Australian WWD events (National Report Q16.6, 16.7)</p>	H



	<p>appreciation of wetlands and their ecosystem services. {RamSec, AA, CEPA}</p> <p>6.4 Collaboration with the media, including social media, carried out to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands and recognition of their ecosystem services to decision-makers, key wetland users and the broad public. {RamSec, AA, CEPA}</p>	<p>6.4 Promote wetlands and related activities (e.g. WWD) through departmental communications, social media platforms and other stakeholders' websites, newsletters and social media platforms (AG/states, ongoing).</p>		
<p>7. Recognize and support the role of wetland centres and other environmental centres as catalysts and key actors for activities that promote Ramsar objectives.</p>	<p>7.1 Wetland education/ interpretation or visitor centres and similar facilities established in all countries as resources permit. {AA, IOPs, WEC}</p> <p>7.2 National CEPA Focal Points communicating directly with wetland education/visitor centres to support their delivery of Ramsar messages. {AA CEPA, WEC}</p> <p>7.3 Wetland education/visitor centres linked nationally and internationally through, global mechanisms and national expertise in CEPA, to share experience and resources, for example through the Wetland Link International (WLI) programme of the Wildfowl &amp; Wetlands Trust, WWT (UK) and other initiatives. {AA, CEPA, WEC}</p> <p>7.4 Partnerships established with</p>	<p>7.1 Keep updated list of major Australian WECs (AG, ongoing)</p> <p>7.2 Communicate and disseminate regular updates and information to WECs, and promote key events and publications (WWD; Ramsar publications, <i>Wetlands Australia</i>) (AG/states, ongoing).</p> <p>7.3 See 1.5 and 7.5</p> <p>7.4 Regularly disseminate information and updates to marine discovery centres and sustainable schools (AG, ongoing).</p> <p>7.5 Undertake national survey of Australian wetland education centres and provide results to WLI. (AG, completed).</p>	<p>See Goal 6</p> <p>Number of WECs (National Report Q16.2)</p> <p>WEC Survey undertaken and results provided to WLI</p>	M

	<p>other education centres that could play a role in promoting wetlands and Ramsar objectives. {AA, CEPA, RRCs,WEC}</p> <p>7.5 A comprehensive database of wetland education centres set up, to be managed through the WLI network. Contracting parties to be encouraged to provide information on wetland centres as part of their national reporting. {RamSec, CEPA, IOPs, CSO, STRP NFPs}</p>			
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<p>8. Support the development and distribution of education materials that build awareness of ecosystem values and services and the value of wetlands for use in formal education settings, at Ramsar Sites and by all Ramsar actors.</p>	<p>8.1 Wetland education materials that build awareness of the values of wetlands and their ecosystem services developed, promoted and distributed among relevant target audiences. {STRP, AA, CEPA, WEC, STRP NFP}</p> <p>8.2 Tertiary education institutions, especially those with water and wetland programmes, contributed to the production of targeted wetland education materials. {STRP, AA, CEPA, WEC}</p> <p>8.3 Cultural and traditional wetland knowledge and practices are incorporated into wetland education materials. {WEC, CEPA}</p> <p>8.4 Key messages about wetlands and their ecosystem services regularly reviewed through dialogue and feedback with all Ramsar actors. {RamSec, AA}.</p>	<p>8.1 Disseminate Ramsar and AG/state fact sheets to stakeholders (AG/states, ongoing)</p> <p>8.1 Build on 2016 fact sheet series and Ramsar fact sheets to develop information material targeted at specific sectors e.g. urban developers, local government, tourism operators, industry (AG, proposed).</p> <p>8.1 Include CEPA key messages in Ramsar Management Plans and Summaries (states, ongoing)</p> <p>8.2 Prepare materials on GBRMPA wetland ecosystems, species and conservation to support the National Curriculum (AG, ongoing)</p> <p>8.3 Incorporate Indigenous values and knowledge into educational materials (eg Kakadu, Northern Australia, MDB, EAAFP sites) (AG/states, proposed)</p> <p>8.4 Undertake review of messages through CEPA evaluations and regular WAESC meetings (AG, ongoing) and proposed stakeholder forums – see also actions 1.3 and 1.5 (AG, proposed).</p>	<p>Number of products</p> <p>Extent of dissemination</p> <p>Evaluations undertaken</p>	<p>H</p>
<p>9. Ensure that the guidance and information provided by the STRP is developed in line with adopted Resolution and in close collaboration with the</p>	<p>9.1 A series of information fact sheets developed based on identified and agreed large scale questions as key awareness raising outreach tools. {RamSec, STRP}.</p> <p>9.2 The Ramsar Briefing Notes and Ramsar Technical Reports</p>	<p>9.1 N/A – responsibility for development with Secretariat and STRP</p> <p>9.2 N/A</p> <p>9.3 N/A</p> <p>9.4 N/A</p>		<p>L</p>

<p>CEPA programme and dissemination to the identified target audiences is ensured through the most effective communications channels.</p>	<p>developed and disseminated as pragmatic, working advisory documents targeting policy-makers or wetland practitioners and to ensure consistency and Ramsar branding. {RamSec, STRP}</p> <p>9.3 The content of Wise Use Handbooks reconfigured as training resource materials that summarize wise use site management and effective policy-making. {RamSec}.</p> <p>9.4 The current STRP website integrated into the Ramsar website. {RamSec}.</p>			
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## Abbreviations

AA:	Administrative Authority in each country, including the AA National Focal Points
CEPA:	Convention's CEPA National Focal Points, both government and NGO
NRC:	National Ramsar Committees / National Wetlands Committees (or equivalent bodies), where they exist
RamSec:	Ramsar Convention Secretariat
STRP	Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel
STRP NFP	STRP National Focal Points
IOPs:	International Organization Partners, at present BirdLife International, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), IUCN, Wetlands International, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
MDB:	Murray darling basin
NESP:	National Environmental Science Programme
RRCs:	Ramsar Regional Centres endorsed by the Convention as Ramsar Regional Initiatives
SM:	Site managers
WEC:	Wetland education/visitor centres
PS:	Private sector organizations whose activities directly or indirectly affect wetlands
CSO:	Civil Society Organizations such as national and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)
RRI:	Ramsar Regional Initiatives