INDO-BURMA RAMSAR REGIONAL INITIATIVE (IBRRI)
Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024

2. Strategic Plan

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Annex 1

independently governed and are not authorised to speak or act on the Convention's behalf, but they work in close contact with the Secretariat. Some initiatives receive start-up financial assistance from the Secretariat's core budget.

1.2. The Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative (IBRRI)

Decision SC52-20 of the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention endorsed the Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative (IBRRI) in June 2016[2]. Details of the initiative are described in document SC52-12, June 2016.

The concept for IBRRI was developed jointly by the Ramsar National Focal Points (NFPs) of the five Contracting Parties: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam (Fig. 1) and IUCN's Asia Regional Office. The initiative was based on specific needs identified in these countries. The initial objective of IBRRI was to support the effective implementation of the Ramsar Convention among the five Contracting Parties (CPs) by coordinating implementation of the objectives of the 4th Strategic Plan 2016–2024.

Figure 1. IBRRI Contracting Parties and approximate locations of Ramsar Sites (ysrox71(ocw1.9(p)-4.7(t)-7(r)3.3

The Inception Workshop of the IBRRI was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 30th March 2017. The principal aims of the Inception Workshop were: a) to share the objectives of IBRRI with a wider community working on wetlands in the region; b) to discuss the priorities that should be included in a sub-regional Ramsar strategic plan; and c) to explore linkages with existing Ramsar-related programmes and initiatives in the Indo-Burma Region.

The workshop was attended by the Ramsar NFPs (or their representatives) from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam; Ramsar Scientific and

neighbouring states such as India, Bangladesh, China and Malaysia (Fig, 3 and Table 1).

Figure 3. Freshwater Ecoregions (FEOWs, in green) and Marine Ecoregions (MEOWs, in blue) of the Indo-Burma Region.

The wetlands of the region are not only important for supporting a vast diversity of fauna and flora; they are also crucial to the well-being of millions of people. Across the region, the diverse wetlands provide human [illegible]

efforts should focus on maintaining these stocks while also focussing on replanting and regenerating lost mangrove systems so that improved aboveground biomass productivity can catalyse future carbon storage.

The river systems of Indo-Burma are predominantly characterised by a flood-pulsed hydrology. The natural floodplain wetlands of these rivers have the capacity to store water and buffer downstream impacts on communities and infrastructure. However, decades of poor land-use planning, and structural interventions, such as channel modification, diversions and dam construction, have profoundly influenced vulnerabilities to flood events, from the household to the scale of the regional economy[11]. Future risk management strategies need to consider the potential role of wetlands, not just in the physical attenuation of flooding, but also (as in the case of parts of the Mekong Delta) in combination with other livelihood activities, such as aquaculture or jute production. The development of such integrated strategies have the potential to address wider issues such as disaster risk reduction and food security.

The seasonal flooding of wetlands across the region, which accompanies the monsoon, also plays a vital role in recharging groundwater. In Cambodia, the Mekong, Tonle Sap and Bassac Rivers inundate their floodplains on an annual basis. Modelling has demonstrated that the slow infiltration through the wetlands of these river systems during times of flooding is a crucial mechanism for recharging groundwater and main

the Sanskrit term *sarasa*, which means 'bird of the lake'. There are multiple myths and legends associated with the bird, particularly as an eternal symbol of unconditional love, devotion and good fortune[15]. The stylised image of the Sarus crane can be found in many temples in Viet N

suggest that only 35% of the historical peat swamp forest area in some parts of Asia remains[18].

Human population is growing rapidly across the region. This has resulted in growing demands on agriculture and food production, and a subsequent physical conversion of natural wetlands into farmed land, as well as increased use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers which impact aquatic 6(b)19equento(t)2.1(0 Tc 0 TwTJ0.(.

(13th September 1998) and Cambodia (23rd October 1999) instigated a stepped increase in the number of Ramsar Sites in the region over the early 2000s, with a marked increase in the area of coverage in 2002 as a result of the designation of the Kaper Estuary - Laemson Marine National Park - Kraburi Estuary Ramsar Site in Thailand which covers more than 122,000 hectares. Since the early 2000s the number of Ramsar Sites designated each year has slowly increased as Myanmar (accession on 17th March 2005) and Lao PDR (accession on 28th September 2010) acceded to the Convention. Since 2010 there has been a steady and increasing number of designations and a growing area of coverage across the region.

Figure 6. Number and area of Ramsar Sites in the Indo-Burma Region since 1998. (Red line=number of Ramsar Sites; blue line= total area of Ramsar Sites).

Ramsar Sites across the region have been designated for a variety of the nine designation Criteria (Fig. 7). Criterion 2 (supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities) has been applied to all 32 Ramsar Sites across the region. Criterion 1 (contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region) has been applied to more than 70% of the Ramsar Sites, and for both of the designated Sites in Lao PDR.

The Contracting Parties in all five countries have designated Sites based on Criterion 4 (supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions) and Criterion 8 (an

Figure 7. Percentage of Ramsar Sites in each of the IBRRI countries qualifying under the nine designation criteria.

The specific Criteria based on waterbirds (Criteria 5 and 6) have not been applied in Lao PDR. In Thailand, Criterion 6 (1% of the individuals in a population on one species or subspecies of waterbird) has not been applied, and Criterion 5 (regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds) has only been applied at one Site. However, in Myanmar all four Ramsar Sites have applicability under Criterion 6, while Criterion 5 is applicable to three.

3. Information and data review

3.1. National reporting

Analytical approach

The extent of Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan implementation by the five Contracting Parties (CPs) covered by the geographical scope of the IBRRI can be investigated based on the National Reports (NRs) submitted to COP12. These reports were compiled and submitted by all five IBRRI Parties mostly during 2015. COP12 and COP11 NRs are also available for all IBRRI CPs, and these have been used to assess progress in implementation extent between COP11 and COP12 reporting. The analyses of COP11 and COP12 NRs use 74 selected NR indicator questions that apply to all CPs.

The Strategic Plan Goals and actions in most parts of this situation analysis are those of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009–2015, since the implementation reported by Parties in their COP12 NRs concern implementation of this Strategic PqPso

Figure 8. Percentage implementation for COP12 (dark columns) and COP13 (light columns). Percentage implementation values shown.

The overall extent of Strategic Plan implementation differs greatly across all Asia CPs, and between the five Indo-Burma CPs (Fig. 9). Viet Nam reported the highest implementation extent (84%) of any Asia CP, with Thailand also reporting extensive implementation (70%). In contrast, Myanmar, Lao PDR and Cambodia each reported to COP12 less than

Analysis of progress on the 74 individual actions under the four Goals reported to COP12 highlights possible gaps in implementation and potential needs for capacity building and targeted activities under the IBRRI. The Goal-by-Goal analyses identified 20 actions as potential high priorities for consideration by IBRRI for future Ramsar implementation support to CPs, since attention to these actions would deliver most widespread capacity support to IBRRI CPs. In summary, these 20 actions cover:

- Establishing a National Wetland Policy;
- Undertaking research on agriculture/wetland interactions;
- Ensuring water resource management treats wetlands as natural water infrastructure;
- Implementing wetland restoration programmes/projects;
- Encouraging private sector activities/actions for wise use: Ramsar Sites and all wetlands;
- Incentive measures: actions to implement positive incentives, and removal of perverse incentives;
- Undertaking comprehensive national wetland inventory;
- Establishing management planning for future Ramsar Sites;
- Undertaking management effectiveness assessments for Ramsar Sites;
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place for reporting all Article 3.2 cases (of human-induced negative change to Ramsar Site ecological character);
- Establishing cross-sectoral management committees for Ramsar Sites;
- Establishing networks for knowledge-sharing and training for wetlands;
- Identifying all transboundary wetland systems;
- Developing CEPA Action Plans at national, sub-national and catchment/basin levels;
- Assessing national and local training needs;
- Establishing mechanisms for sharing Ramsar implementation guidelines and other information between the Administrative Authority and Ramsar Site managers.

Providing capacity support for these 20 actions would support IBRRI CPs as follows:

- Cambodia: 18 actions
- Lao PDR: 18 actions
- Myanmar: 13 actions
- Thailand: 6 actions
- Viet Nam: 3 actions

CPs are required to report on their greatest difficulties in implementing the Ramsar Convention in their NRs to the COP. Through this process, IBRRI CPs reported a wide range of implementation difficulties as a consequence of a lack of capacity, resources, knowledge and institutional frameworks and mechanisms.

Despite the presence of several well-funded initiatives within the region, lack of funding was reported by all five IBRRI CPs. Lack of wetland/spatial planning laws and regulations was reported by four CPs (Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam), while a general lack of implementation capacity and assistance with addres15.5(2.8(ep)2.)io.7(d)/163Td(2(d)1.7(V)-3.7(i)7.3(et)2(N)-sg)5.9TJ0.197(g5cd866

suggestions were broad and generic;

Ramsar Regional Centre -East Asia

The 40th Meeting of the Standing Committee in May 2009 approved the formation of the Ramsar Regional Centre - East Asia (RRC-EA) as a new regional initiative. As of August 2017, the RRC-EA works with 17 countries that are Contracting Parties (CPs) of the Ramsar Convention (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam). The five CPs of the IBRRI all belong to the South Eastern Asia sub-region of the RRC-EA.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by CPs in December 2015 states the

migratory waterbirds, their habitat, and the livelihoods of people dependent upon them. As of June 2018, there are 35 Partners, including 17 countries, six intergovernmental agencies, 11 international NGOs, and

- To promote IWRM for sustainability of water resource, equitable accessibility, and sufficient water quantity of acceptable quality to meet

conserve the water and related resources of the Mekong in order to deliver on the goals of the 1995 Agreement.

The strategic priorities for the Lower Mekong Basin development are:

- x

Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Leaders' Meeting. The meeting identified the following priority areas for practical cooperation across the region: connectivity, production capacity, cross-border economic cooperation, water resources, agriculture, and poverty reduction. The Sanya declaration defined 26 measures, which would be required to deliver on the priorities. These measures included, *inter alia*:

- Enhancing cooperation among LMC countries in sustainable water resources management and utilisation through activities such as the establishment of a centre in China for Lancang-Mekong water resources cooperation to serve as a platform for LMC countries to strengthen cooperation in technical exchanges, capacity building, drought and flood management, data and information sharing, and joint research and analysis related to Lancang-Mekong river resources;
- Carrying out technical exchanges and capacity building cooperation in agriculture; establishing more agricultural technology centres and high-quality, high-yield demonstration stations (bases) in Mekong countries; strengthening cooperation in fishery and animal husbandry, as well as food security; and enhancing agricultural development;
- Strengthening cultural exchanges among member countries; supporting exchanges and cooperation among cultural organisations and artists; exploring the possibility of building a Lancang-Mekong cultural exchange platform; maximising the role of cultural centres set up by governments; and carrying out various forms of cultural exchanges;
- Increasing tourism exchanges and cooperation; improving the tourism environment; enhancing regional tourism facilitation; and striving to establish a Lancang-Mekong tourist cities cooperation alliance; and
- Encouraging closer exchanges among government agencies, local provinces and districts, business associations and non-governmental organisations of the six countries to discuss and carry out relevant cooperation.

Opportunities exist through this cooperation framework to strengthen sustainable socio-economic development objectives and deliver the wise use of wetlands. Multilateral or bilateral projects with China and the IBRRI partner countries could be developed to assist with the delivery of the goals of the Strategic Plan.

International dialogue partners

The IBRRI should also seek to take advantage of the strengths of the two contiguous major countries in the wider region, namely India and China.

Links with other c onventions and international f

- Empower key stakeholders to engage in decision-making in support of sustainable management of coastal ecosystems; and
- Enhance coastal governance to promote integrated and inclusive management.

The work of MFF addresses vital coastal wetland systems. The objectives of MFF demonstrate multiple synergies with the ambitions of the IBRRI. Opportunities exist for mutual delivery across all three of MFF's objective areas and als3 -1.34R4.6(v)4(am0 Td

Other project -based opportunities

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have finite funding and fixed implementation periods. Some of these projects are being delivered by national or international NGOs in one or multiple countries, while others are being implemented by national governments.

Funding for these projects comes from a variety of sources including intergovernmental funds, national governments from outside the region, development banks, aid agencies, foundations, and the private sector. For example, in Myanmar, a bilateral project between the governments of Myanmar and Norway – *Conservation* of *Biodiversity and Management of Protected Areas in Myanmar* – is being funded and implemented through the Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA), working closely with the Myanmar Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) and its Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division (NWCD). Similarly, the Australian Government's development assistance programme (Australian Aid) has provided AUD30 million between 2014 and 2019 to support the Greater Mekong Water Resources Program which aims to provide more equitable, transparent and effective water resources management while contributing to food and energy security and sustainable economic development in South East Asia.

Programmes of the United Nations (UN) are also active across the region. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organiz

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x To reduce unnecessary competition among different stakeholders and to optimise resource efficiencies x To act as an exemplar in order to demonstrate to other Ramsar Regional Initiatives a pro-active and robust approach to strategic delivery	

Table 3. Opportunities and threats for future activities of the IBRRI.

In developing and delivering a strategic plan, it can be useful to consider some underlying principles in order to provi[illegible]ig8/nd delo

wetland management, and supports research and dissemination of scientific information relating to drivers of wetland loss and degradation. The RI engages in advocacy, policy development and improving of capacity and awareness."

With regards to specific activities and objectives, SC52-12 states that:

"*The RI will promote the implementation of the Ramsar objectives, reinforce capacities, develop adaptive management of Ramsar Sites, transfer knowledge, and coordinate with other international initiatives.*"

Specific roles and responsibilities are described so that the IBRRI:

"*will be a transboundary facilitation platform. The* [Ramsar] *Secretariat provides support to organise and undertake events and activities, produce regular communication, raise funds and ensure the timely delivery of work plans. Synergies with the existing water and wetlands programme of the IUCN regional office will be created, in close cooperation with the Ramsar National Focal Points, and with other existing RI in Asia (East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, Ramsar a3.56Tm( )T.3(()]TJ0*

be considered in the strategic planning for the RI. This will ensure that it is operating in full compliance to the mandate agreed by the Ramsar Convention.

1.1.6 Develop and implement an IBRRI scientific and technical research initiative, specifically

	1.3.2 Develop a harmonised wetland inventory across the five IBRRI countries	¾ By 2024, a standardised pan-Indo-Burma wetland inventory which is accessible to multiple stakeholders has been established	IBRRI STRP National Administrative Authorities

Operational Objective 2	Support integrated management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands and ensure conservation of key wetlands species in the region
Target What has to be	

2.2 Ramsar Sites are managed effectively	2.2.1 Review current status of management plans across the region and identify gaps	¾ By 2020, a review of all Ramsar Sites has been conducted and the status of management plans has been summarised in a report	National Administrative Authorities Ramsar Secretariat IBRRI Secretariat
	2.2.2 Develop management plans for Ramsar Sites (including wetland delineation and zoning arrangements, and sites with multi-jurisdictional arrangements and multiple designations)	¾ By 2024,	

2.3 Action plans are implemented for conservation of key wetland-dependent species for the Indo-Burma Region	2.3.1 Identify key wetland species and habitats based on internationally agreed criteria (such as IUCN Red List, Ramsar criteria, etc.)	¾ By 2021, a workshop to identify key wetland-dependent species requiring action plans, and develop agreements on a tar.008 Twe 0 Tp173p173p173hBT0.Bnee

2.4 Best practice in integrated management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands in the Indo-Burma Region is documented and promoted	2.4.1 Document best practices in wetland management from the Indo-Burma Region, particularly those that target multiple values and delivery of the objectives of other multilateral environmental agreements or wider international frameworks, such as the SDGs or Paris Climate Change Agreement.	¾ By 2021, a workshop which aims to develop a reporting and dissemination protocol to ensure best practice examples are identified and captured (especially of exempld6e3(i)17.4(e)0.6(d

Operational Objective 3	Assist with the development and/or strengthening and implementation of policy frameworks, taking into account wetlands management and conservation across sectors and at all levels		
Target What has to be achieved?	Activities What has to be done?	Indicators Demonstrators of success	Responsibility Who will take the lead on delivery?
3.1 All IBRRI countries have adopted an effective policy framework ensuring the wise use of all wetlands	3.1.1 Review the status of regional, national and local policies across the region and their inclusiveness of wetland wise use	¾ By 2021, a review workshop for each IBRRI country, which identifies relevant policies and the role that the wise use of wetlands should be playing in such policies, has been conducted ¾ By 2022, regional review workshop, with a workshop report, which identifies the status of the wise use of wetlands in local, national and regional polices, has been conducted	IBRRI Secretariat National Administrative Authorities NGOs National and regional Government representatives
	3.1.2 Develop and disseminate best practice guidance on the development and implementation of an effective policy framework promoting and supporting wise use of wetlands policies through publications and policy forums 3.1.3 Support the 83.38 254.04 315.36 q4 28	[redacted]	IBRRI Secretariat National Administrative Authorities IBRRI STRP National experts NGOs

Operational Objective 4	Support wetland communication, capacity building,

4.7 Synergies are optimised between Ramsar Regional Initiatives across the region	4.7.1 Actively and routinely engage and communicate with the two other Ramsar Regional Initiatives in the region	¾ By 2021, information is being routinely shared and reported among the three Ramsar Regional Initiatives through electronic and paper-based media ¾ By 2022, participation by RRI representatives in other RRI's meetings is established	IBRRI Secretariat NGO CEPA focal points RRC-EA EAAFP
	4.7.2 Actively and routinely engage and communicate with the pan-regional bodies present in the region including, but not limited to, UN bodies, MRC, MFF and ACB	¾ By 2021, IBRRI has been represented in at least three meetings with other pan-regional bodies	IBRRI Secretariat NGO CEPA focal points
4.8 Participate in side events to promote and celebrate IBRRI achievements at Ramsar COPs	4.8.1 Deliver side events at COP14 and COP15 to highlight the successes of the Regional Initiative	¾ By 2021, a COP side event in order to promote the achievements of the IBRRI has been organised and delivered ¾ By 2024, a COP side event to demonstrate the effectiveness of the IBRRI, has been organised and delivered	IBRRI Secretariat National Administrative Authorities NGO CEPA focal points
4.9 The state of the wetlands in Indo-Burma report (Target 1.1.5) disseminated to decision-makers and media	4.9.1 Dissemination and promotion of the IBRWO and its key messages to regional, national and local decision-makers, and media	¾ By COP15, the key messages for policy makers from the IBRWO u.6(f)-7(W)-4(O)8	

Operational Objective 5	Ensure sound and sustainable governance and management of the Regional Initiative and its contribution to the effectiveness of the Ramsar Convention		
Target What has to be achieved?	Activities What has to be done?	Indicators Demonstrators of success	Responsibility Who will take the lead on delivery?
5.1 The key governance bodies (Steering Committee and Technical Committee) are functioning	5.1.1 Establish an overarching institutional strategy	¾ In 2019, an agreed institutional strategy for the governance of IBRRI has been produced in multiple languages	IBRRI Secretariat

5.7 The IBRRI is achieving its objectives	5.7.1 Develop a clear monitoring and evaluation framework (quantitative and qualitative) that includes activities-based indicators and interviews with key stakeholders (e.g. including the most significant changes approach)	¾ By 2020, a clear monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed	IBRRI Secretariat Steering Committee
	5.7.2 Conduct a midterm review of progress against the Operational Objectives	¾ In 2021, a review using the monitoring and evaluation framework has been conducted to assess the progress of IBRRI	IBRRI Secretariat Steering Committee
	5.7.3 Conduct a review of progress against the Operational Objectives in 2024	¾ In 2024	

3 ANNEXES

Annex 1: IBRRI Contracting Party implementation analyses

Introduction

1. The five Ramsar Contracting Parties covered by the geographical scope of the Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative (IBRRI) are Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

2. This situation analysis of the extent of Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan implementation by the five Contracting Parties covered by the geographical scope of the IBRRI is derived primarily from Contracting Parties (CPs) NRs to COP12, which were compiled and submitted by Parties mostly during 2015. All five IBRRI CPs submitted COP12 NRs.

3. COP11 NRs are also available for all IBRRI CPs, and these are used to assesse progress in implementation extent between COP11 and COP12 reporting.

4. The analyses of COP11 and COP12 NRs use 74 selected NR indicator questions, which apply to all CPs.

5. The Strategic Plan Goals and actions in most parts of this situation analysis are those of the Ramsar Strategic Plan ing

6. COP13 NR

Q6. What are the main difficulties in implementing the Ramsar Convention reported by IBRRI Contracting Parties?

Q7. What are IBRRI Contracting Parties' future priorities for implementation?

Q1. What is the extent of Ramsar implementation by Asian Contracting Parties compared to global implementation extent?

8. COP12 NRs. Goals 1–4 combined, and by each Goal (average % implementation):

	(148)	(28)
–		
SP Goal 1: Wise use	53.42	53.38
SP Goal 2: Ramsar Sites	53.94	56.79
SP Goal 3: International cooperation	50.19	47.81
SP Goal 4: Implementation capacity	46.87	49.66

- The average extent of Ramsar implementation by Contracting Parties in the Asia region is very similar to global average implementation, both overall and for each of the four implementation Goals.
- In Asia there is slightly more, on average, implementation for Ramsar Sites and for Implementation capacity actions, and slightly less for International cooperation actions, than globally.

Q2. What is the extent of Ramsar implementation by IBRRI CPs compared to other Asian CPs?

	(28)	(5)
–		
SP Goal 1: Wise use	53.38	46.12
SP Goal 2: Ramsar Sites	56.79	60.00
SP Goal 3: International cooperation	47.81	52.73
SP Goal 4: Implementation capacity	49.66	52.73

- Average % implementation by IBRRI Contracting Parties is similar to the average for all Asia CPs;
- Average IBBRI CP implementation is higher than average for SP Goals 2 (Ramsar Sites), 3 (International cooperation), and 4 (Implementation capacity); but
- Average IBBRI CP implementation is lower than average for SP Goal 1 (Wise use);
- However, average % implementation is not a particularly helpful indicator for IBRRI CPs since there is a big range of implementation extent reported across these five Contracting Parties (see below).

Q3. Has there been progress in Ramsar implementation by IBRRI CPs from COP11 to COP12, and from COP12 to COP13?

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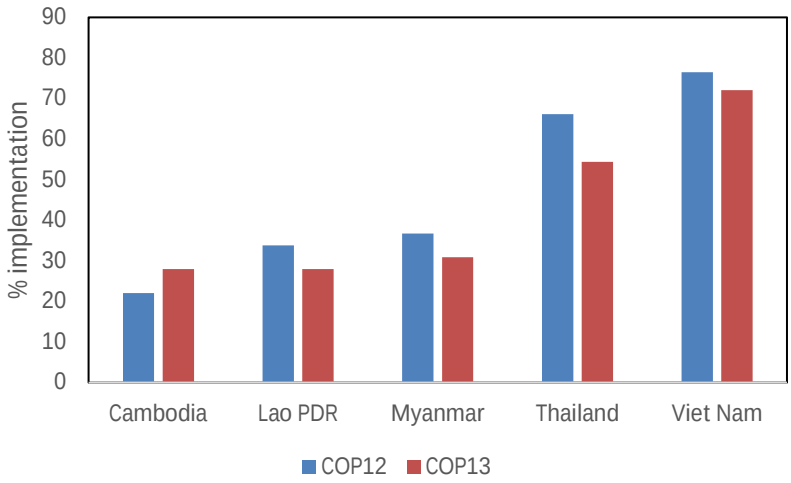
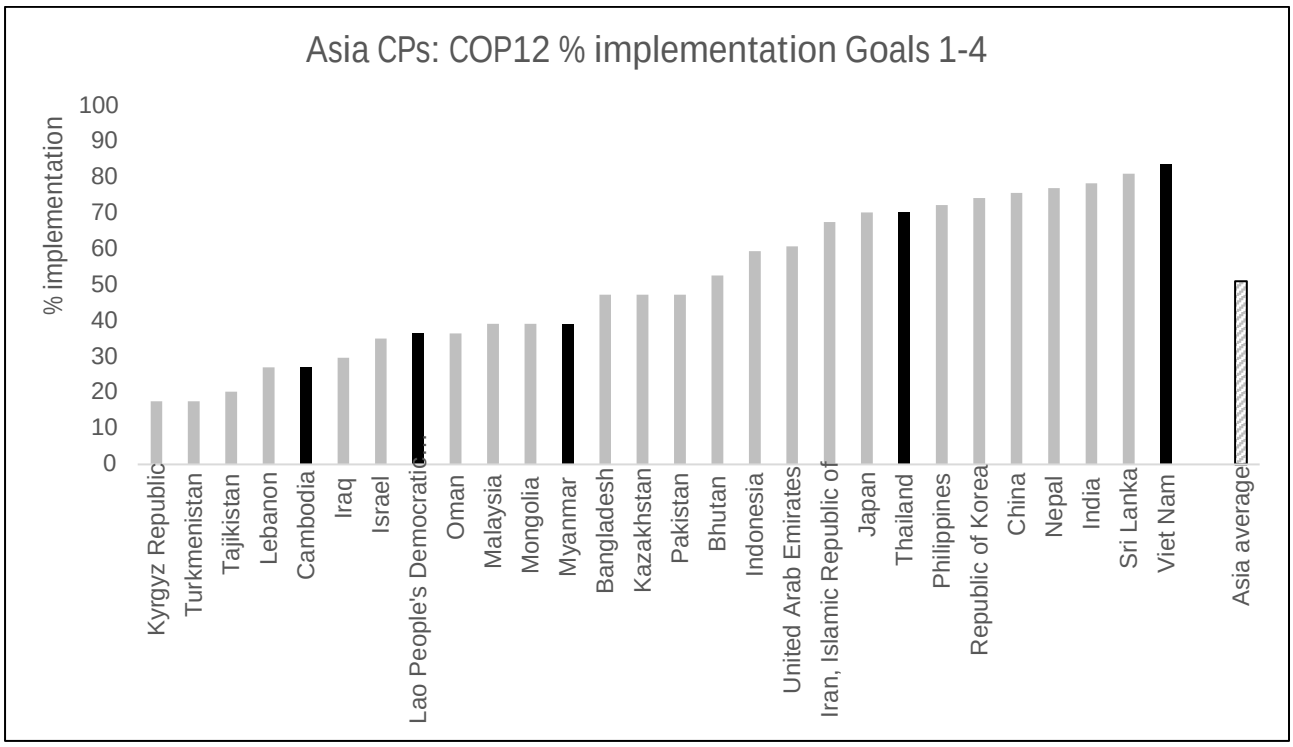
9. It is encouraging that comparison between the extent of Ramsar implementation reported to COP11 (2012) and COP12 (2015) indicates that four IBRRI CPs reported increased implementatioen01COo ieMo en i51 1t?Hen9ceenn



Q4. What is the extent of Ramsar implementation by different Asian and IBRRI Contracting Parties?

A. Strategic Plan Goals 1–4 –Asia and IBRRI CPs



14. The overall extent of Strategic Plan implementation differs greatly across all Asia CPs, and between the five Indo-Burma CPs. Viet Nam reported the highest implementation extent (84%) of any Asia CP, with Thailand also reporting extensive implementation (70%). In contrast, Myanmar, Lao PDR and Cambodia each reported to COP12 less than 40% implementation, well below the regional average of 51%, with Cambodia reporting the least implementation (27%).

15. The relative implementation extent reported to COP13 across IBRRI Parties is similar to

implementation is reported by Lao PDR, Myanmar and Cambodia, with Cambodia (14%) having undertaken very little such implementation.

C. Strategic Plan Goal 2 Ramsar Sites – IBRRI CPs

17. As for Goal 1 implementation, there is a difference between two IBRRI CPs with extensive Ramsar Sites (Goal 2) implementation – Viet Nam and Thailand each reporting 83% implementation – and the other three IBRRI CPs (Myanmar, Lao PDR and

protected areas and wetland wise use project has been specifically designed to support increased Ramsar implementation.

23. IBRRI might consider focussing attention to implementation capacity particularly to:

- Indo-Burma Parties, and particularly Cambodia (27.0%) and Lao PDR (36.5%), which have the lowest extent of implementation of any RRC-EA parties.

- Strengthening Wise use implementation capacity, which is particularly low among the IBRRI CPs(average 46.1%); and

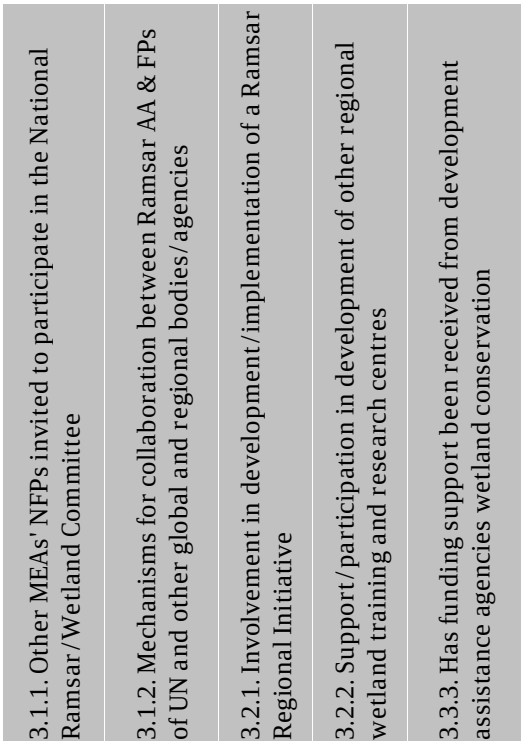
- Implementation support to Cambodia focussed on Wise use (13.8% implementation) and International cooperation (18.2%); and implementation capacity support to Lao PDR focussed on Wise use (27.6% implementation) and Implementation capacity (36.5%) actions.

Q5. What is the extent of RRC-EA CPs implementation of Strategic Plan individual actions, by each SP Goal?m%) tra-4.04Tj /TT2( )Tj EMC 35e22Woe;3impps(a)0.8( )]TJ -0.009TJ

2.4.1. Management plan in place
2.4.1 + 2.4.3 Management plan in place or in preparation
2.4.2. Management plan being implemented
2.4.4. Cross-

designation processes to those CPs with the smallest numbers of currently designated Sites, notably: Lao PDR, Cambodia and Myanmar.

C. Strategic Plan Goal 3: International Cooperation



*4.1.2a and b ask for numbers of sites; and 4.1.5a and b for numbers of training opportunities. Coded: some = Yes; none = No
** Myanmar established a National Wetland Committee in 2016.

34. Five aspects of Goal 4 (Implementation capacity) implementation have limited execution in IBRRI countries, so that capacity-building

Wetland management information sharing network						1	0	0	1
Funding						5	4	4	5
Clear (non-overlapping) mandates of government ministries/ local government						2	1	1	2
Wetland conservation agency						1	0	0	1

40. There are some similarities and some differences in the greatest Ramsar implementation difficulties reported by IBRRI Contracting Parties in their COP12 and COP13 NRs. However, overall these implementation difficulties are significantly correlated between the two sets of NRs.

41. IBRRI Contracting Parties reported a wide range of such implementation difficulties, which can be grouped into two categories of issue:

    - Four CPs reported drivers affecting the wise use of wetlands; and
    - All five CPs reported issues of lack of capacity to implement Strategic Plan actions.

42. IBRRI Contracting Parties reported a wide range of implementation difficulties as a consequence of a lack of capacity, resources, knowledge and institutional frameworks and mechanisms. All such difficulties reported concerned within-country Ramsar implementation (under SP 2008–2015 Goals 1, 4 & 4), with none be5.9(nau)0.6(5)0.0.6(&)4.2( )10.5(4)

Ramsar Administrative Authority reorganisation						1	0	0	1

47. As for implementation difficulties, there are similarities and some differences in the future implementation priorities reported by IBRRI Contracting Parties in their COP12 and COP13 NRs. However, COP13 NR future priorities significantly differ from those listed in COP12 NRs ($r = -0.208$; $P = 0.295$).

48. The eight most frequently reported future implementation priorities, for which capacity support would be delivered to the most IBRRI CPs, are:

Wetland inventory	4	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam
National Wetland Policy/strategies/plans	4	Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam

Annex 2: Outputs from the IBRRI Inception Workshop

Summary of the exercise on other programmes and initiatives in the region

Ramsar Strategic Plan Goals	Related programmes, projects and initiatives
Goal 1: Drivers of wetlands loss	x Lao PDR: Climate Change Adaptation in Wetland Areas (CAWA) project x Myanmar: Community-led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama (GoMP) project x Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam: Mekong WET project x Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam: Mangroves for the Future (MFF) Initiative Regional Steering Committee x National Coordination Bodies x LMB countries: Nexus study on trade-offs between energy, water and food security.
Goal 2: Conservation and management	x Cambodia: Designate new Ramsar site x Cambodia: Monitoring of globally threatened and near threatened species of waterbirds x Cambodia: Wetland/habitat management x Lao PDR: Climate Change Adaptation in Wetland Areas (CAWA) project, MRWP project x

Summary of the group discussion on the development of an IBRRI Ramsar strategic plan

Goal 1: Drivers of wetlands loss

Provide assessment and evidence on benefits provided by wetlands in IBRRI areas through the development of economic valuation, pointing out the costs of alternatives and calculating the monetary investment that would be needed to compensate for the loss of wetlands.

Prepare policy briefs, blue prints, and planning frameworks.

Provide support and guidance for the development of National Wetlands Committees, with representatives from all sectors.

Key specific opportunities identified included:

- Influence the Environmental Code in Cambodia;
- Influence Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) guidelines Cambodia;
- Support Natural Capital accounting in Myanmar;
- Provide inputs to the MRC's preliminary design guidance for hydropower; and
- Support trainings on tools for the rapid assessment of wetlands services (e.g. Rapid Assessment tool, TESSA).

Support the development of an annual report on the State of Wetlands, similar to the MRC State of the Basin report.

Share information on minimum flows and environmental flows for key wetlands in IBRRI areas.

The approach toward the private sector should focus on the identification of incentives for the use of best practice guidelines and safeguards. Lecturing the private sector is not effective. The Ramsar network worldwide, through its large number of Contracting Parties and sites, is an important opportunity for companies to gain visibility on their best practices.

The development of PES may be a tool to effectively engage the private sector.

The development of the Environmental Code in Cambodia is an opportunity to work on best practices for companies.

The IBRRI could support the development of practical guidelines, co-drafted by Ramsar stakeholders and key private sector companies in the region.

There is a need to develop an inventory and a better understanding of impacts of invasive alien species (IAS) (e.g. mimosa, hyacinth, tilapia, golden apple snails).

The IBRRI could work on the development of guidelines on IAS management.

These technical guidelines could be complemented by guidelines on policy, legislation and institutional approaches to prevent and manage IAS.

Goal 2: Conservation and management

Goal 4: Enhancing implementation

IBRRI could translate key handbooks/guidelines in local languages (simple ones, on wise use, monitoring, management, restoration, participation).

IBRRI could provide a platform to revise action plans and management plans for countries.

IBRRI could support the development of National Wetlands Strategies and Action Plans (NWAP).

IBRRI could provide guidelines on the integration of local knowledge and mechanisms in management processes for Ramsar sites.

IBRRI could develop or support the dissemination of capacity building programmes on wetlands, training of trainers, Ramsar site 1 ar

Annex 3

2.1 A representative network of internationally important wetland sites is established	2.1.1 Review existing network of Ramsar Sites and other internationally important wetlands and make recommendations for enhancing the site network	7,500
	2.1.2 Develop a region-wide prioritised Ramsar Site designation strategy	10,000
	2.1.3 Designate new Ramsar Sites and (wherever required) extend existing sites	10,000
	2.1.4 Ensure that RSIS are updated every six years for existing sites and that RIS for new sites are complete	10,000
	2.1.5 Develop a regional strategy for sustainable financing of Ramsar Site network	5,000
2.2 Ramsar Sites are managed effectively	2.2.1 Review current status of management plans across the region and identify gaps	7,500
	2.2.2 Develop management plans for Ramsar Sites (including wetland delineation and zoning arrangements, including for sites with multi-jurisdictional arrangements and multiple designations)	35,000
	2.2.3 Support development of cross-sectoral governance arrangements	10,000
	2.2.4 Ensure that management of Ramsar Sites is mainstreamed within developmental and regional planning (such as river basin or coastal zone planning)	10,000
	2.2.5 Track management effectiveness at Ramsar Sites and adapt management-based outcomes	25,000
2.3 Action plans are implemented for conservation of key wetland-dependent species for the IBRRI areas	2.3.1 Identify key wetland species and habitats based on internationally agreed criteria (such as IUCN Red List, Ramsar criteria, etc.)	10,000
	2.3.2 Support Red Listing of data deficient wetland-dependent species, with a particular emphasis on fish	5,000
	2.3.3 Develop and implement species action plans	50,000
2.4 Best practice in integrated management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands in the IBRRI areas is documented and promoted	2.4.1 Document best practices in wetland management from the IBRRI areas, especially those that target multiple values and delivery of the objectives of other multilateral environmental agreements or wider international frameworks, such as the SDGs or Paris Climate Change Agreement.	15,000
	2.4.2 Share experiences, lessons learnt and best practices, especially through 'model sites' as exemplars of particular aspects of wetland management.	20,000
	2.4.3 Produce best practice guidance on integrated wetland management for the IBRRI areas	20,000

Operational Objective 3	Assist with the development and/or strengthening and implementation of policy framework taking into account wetlands management and conservation across sectors and at all levels

Indicative budget summary 2019–2024

Operational objectives		Indicative Budget (USD)
Operational Objective 1	Facilitate and promote wetland knowledge and experience sharing	187,000
Operational Objective 2	Support integrated management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands and ensure conservation of key wetlands species in the region	250,000
Operational Objective 3	Assist with the development and/or strengthening and implementation of policy framework taking into account wetlands management and conservation across sectors and at all levels	35,500
Operational Objective 4	Support wetland communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA)	142,500
Operational Objective 5	Ensure sound and sustainable governance and management of the Regional Initiative, and its contribution to the effectiveness of the Ramsar Convention	97,000

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