



Attachment 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to conduct a comprehensive scoping study to enhance youth engagement in the decision making processes of the Convention on Wetlands

BACKGROUND

The [Convention on Wetlands](#) (hereinafter referred as the Convention) is an intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It was the first of the modern global multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and remains the only MEA dedicated to the conservation of a specific critical ecosystem.

The Secretariat of the Convention (hereinafter referred as the Secretariat) has its headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, where the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) provides legal status and related administrative services for the Secretariat support Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Convention.

The 14th Meeting of the Convention on Contracting Parties adopted [Resolution XIV.12](#), which mandated the establishment of the Youth Working Group (YWG). The priority tasks of the Working Group are to:

- i. advise and participate, where appropriate, in the Working Group to develop the new Strategic Plan (SP5);
- ii. identify capacity-building activities to assist Contracting Parties to implement strategies to engage youth (see paragraph 13 of the present Resolution);
- iii. report to the Standing Committee, including making any recommendations about capacity building and policy guidance for Contracting Parties; and
- iv. develop a joint work plan with the Secretariat that aims to support Ramsar national Youth Focal Points; align the youth activities of the Convention on Wetlands with the youth networks, programmes and consultative bodies under other United Nations environmental bodies and multilateral agreements; coordinate a youth-focused side event and enable youth participation at meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties; and develop youth-focused messaging and programme materials for World Wetlands Day.

The Youth Workplan was finalised and endorsed in February 2024 and is available online [here](#). The Youth Workplan was developed from a consultancy report of the outcomes from two youth workshops (funded through the Convention) in March 2023, followed by a series of draft consultations over the next 10 months. The workplan is structured into 4 themes aligning with the main activities identified in the Youth Resolution. Under the themes, key outcomes/outputs are identified, with tasks listed to achieve them. There is a total of 48 tasks. Some tasks are without co-contributors; however, we expect that more Contracting Parties (CPs) will volunteer as implementation progresses and more contributors have confidence in it.

PURPOSE

The Secretariat seeks a consultant or consulting agency to assist the Secretariat with some of the governance tasks of the Youth Workplan, by conducting a scoping study that identifies and analyses effective strategies for increasing youth engagement in the decision-making processes of the Convention, including guidance on youth engagement at national and Convention processes. The consultant should assess the experiences and the best practices of youth engagement from other MEAs and environmental UN organisations, particularly those related to biodiversity and water, and make suggestions applicable to the Convention on Wetlands, within the context of the Youth Workplan.

The outputs of the consultancy should support the progress of the following [Youth Workplan](#) tasks:

- 1.4.5: Establish systems/ processes to make it easy for Contracting Parties (CPs) to know how to engage with the collective of youth organisations, to enable them to bring youth into spaces
- 2.1.1: YWG to produce guidance on which negotiating and decision-making spaces to access (and why) and share with the Community of Practice over the next 2-3 years. Discuss and develop the guidance via the Community of Practice activities.
- 2.2.1: Undertake research to learn from other youth engagement activities, such as in Stockholm 50, about why, how and what to bring to the table to make impact
- 2.4.2: Engaging with government on government-owned wetlands
- 2.4.3: Co-design with government on projects
- 2.4.4: Leadership for today and the future - Consider creating a training module to explore together what leadership in wetlands conservation looks like today as young people, in different roles
- 3.3.1: Engage CPs in the discussion around recognising wetlands conservation and restoration roles as core to youth employment strategies
- 3.6.1: Identify and explore with CPs ways to integrate youth considerations into existing and new wetlands policies, strategies, processes and programmes

SCOPE OF WORK

At the end of the consultancy, the consultant or the consulting agency will have undertaken the following activities, with a report presenting the outcomes (e.g., the guidance and processes described below), and a short presentation to the Youth Working Group:

2.2.1: Undertake research to learn from other youth engagement activities:

- Collected and analysed information, including through a literature review, from the following MEAs and UN organisations, including but not limited to: CBD, CITES, CMS, World Heritage Convention, UN-Habitat, UNFCCC, UNCCD, UNDP, UN FAO, UNEP and UNEA.
- Sourced information from both the perspective of the MEA or UN organisation and the relevant youth organisations, such as: YOUNGO, Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GBYN), UNEP Children and Youth Major Group (CYMG), CITES Global Youth Network (GYN), UNCCD Youth Caucus, Youth Co:Lab, Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (GIYC), etc.
- Where further information was required, interviewed a representative number of individuals working directly on building youth participation at the multilateral processes.
- Produced a consultation report that:
 - Identifies major youth groups working in the MEA space that have systematically engaged youth, and summarises their current organisational structure and activities;
 - Analyses as to how youth are currently involved in the MEA decision making processes and what legal provisions exists to facilitate these processes. This should be done in reference to specific agencies or treaties and should include a comparison of their approaches;
 - Evaluates the progress and success of involving youth in decision making within the MEA space, highlighting best practices and the lessons learned;

2.1.1: produce guidance on which negotiating and decision-making spaces to access (and why):

- Based on assessment of successful engagement in other MEAs, recommends on how these best practices could be applied within the context of the Convention on Wetlands, considering current opportunities and challenges.
- Suggests mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness and progress of youth engagement in decision making processes within the framework of the Convention.
- Lead the discussion with the YWG to finalise a draft guidance. (Expectation (for internal purpose: executive summary of 2-4 pages and body of text of 18 pages max. (excl. summary, annexes and bibliography))

1.4.5: Establish systems/ processes to make it is easy for Contracting Parties to know how to engage with the collective of youth organisations, to enable them to bring youth into spaces:

- Conduct a literature review of best practices in youth engagement at the national level.
- Suggests generalised processes for how the guidance can be implemented by Contracting Parties within their national government context
- This includes recommending mechanisms specific to the following activities:
 - 2.4.2: Engaging with government on government-owned wetlands
 - 2.4.3: Co-design with government on projects
 - 2.4.4: Leadership for today and the future - Consider creating a training module to explore together what leadership in wetlands conservation looks like today as young people, in different roles
 - 3.3.1: Engage CPs in the discussion around recognising wetlands conservation and restoration roles as core to youth employment strategies

3.6.1: Identify and explore with Contracting Parties ways to integrate youth considerations into existing and new wetlands policies, strategies, processes and programmes

- Research common examples of pathways for integration among all Contracting Parties
- Develop generalised guidance for all Contracting Parties, with consideration of differences between developing and developed countries, and with the feedback of Contracting Parties

Other Responsibilities:

- Collaborate with the YWG (and participating Contracting Parties) to gather input and ensure outputs are practical.
- Maintain communication and provide timely updates on the work to the Secretariat.
- Be available to present the report to YWG meeting or an event, which shall be discussed and scheduled during the consultation period.

CONSULTANCY TIMELINE

Start Date: 24 September 2024

Submission of Draft guideline: 15 October 2024 (draft guidance should be submitted by this date for further input)

Consultation with the YWG: 15 November 2024

Submission of the 1st Draft of the Report: 30 November 2024

Submission of the 2nd Draft: 15 December 2024

Feedback on the 2nd Draft: 15 January 2025

Submission of the final Report: 1 February 2025