



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTEGRATION OF RAMSAR PRINCIPLES WITHIN NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

**EDWARD NETSHITHOTHOLE
REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR AFRICA ON
UPDATING NBSAPs
ADDIS ABABA, 27 FEBRUARY - 1 MARCH 2012**

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Ramsar Convention in SA
- Administration of the Convention
- Management of Ramsar sites
- National Wetland Policy and legislative situation
- Mainstreaming
- NEMA EIA regulations
- Recommendations



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

+ Ramsar Convention in SA

- South Africa signed the Ramsar Convention in 1971 at its inception;
- Membership was formalised in 1975 when South Africa ratified the Convention and became the fifth contracting party, thus being considered a founding member.



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

+ Administration of the Convention

- DEA is the AA of the Convention, i.e. It is entrusted with the responsibility for national implementation of the Convention;
- National Focal Point - keep in touch with the Convention Secretariat on the affairs of the Convention – Edward Netshithothole;
- CEPA National Focal Point – educating and raising awareness – Stanley Tshitwamulomoni;
- National Ramsar/Wetland Committee – established in 2009;



+ Management of Ramsar sites

- The management of Ramsar sites is carried out by the authorities under whose jurisdiction each site falls, generally the provincial government departments and public entities responsible for biodiversity conservation/management, and SANParks;



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

+ Management of Ramsar sites

- As of 28 February 2012, South Africa has designated **20 Ramsar sites, 553,178 hectares**. These are Barberspan, De Mond State Forest, De Hoopvlei, Kosi Bay System, Lake Sibaya, Langebaan Lagoon, uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park, Wilderness Lakes, Blesbokspruit, Ndumo Game Reserve, Turtle Beaches and Coral Reefs of Tongaland, Seekoeivlei, St. Lucia System, Nylsvley Nature Reserve, Verlorenvlei, Verloren Valei Nature Reserve, and Orange River Mouth Wetland, Makuleke Wetlands, Prince Edward Islands, and Ntsikeni Nature Reserve;



[environmental affairs](#)

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

+ National Wetland Policy??

- South Africa does not have a stand-alone wetland policy, but wetland issues are explicitly addressed in a range of biodiversity, water, and environment policy instruments, including:
 - National Water Policy (1997);
 - National Policy on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (1997);
 - National Policy on Environmental Management (1997);
 - Marine Fisheries Policy for South Africa (2005);
 - Coastal Management Policy (2000);



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

+ Legal mechanism for Ramsar sites?

- No specific legislative tool recognising Ramsar sites as protected areas, e.g.;
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (2004);
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (2003);
- National Water Act as Amended (1999) – defines wetland as a watercourse, i.e. for water flow and not biodiversity;

+ Biodiversity mainstreaming

- NBSAP (2005): Mainstreaming implies that the full value of biodiversity should be recognised, so that activities that conserve biodiversity or use it sustainably should be rewarded economically and/or in other ways, while activities that destroy biodiversity should bear the associated cost. Critical for mainstreaming is an integrated planning framework that integrates and aligns biodiversity and development planning. It is especially important that spatial planning at national, provincial and local levels takes note of biodiversity priority areas





NEMA EIA regulations

- List activities where environmental authorisation is required prior to commencement of that activity in “sites or areas identified in terms of an International Convention”
- **“site or area listed in terms of an International Convention” means any area** and its buffer, unless specifically defined, of 5 kilometres extending from its listed boundary, listed in terms of an international convention but does not include world heritage sites, and shall include but not be limited to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



Recommendations

- There is a need to develop a wetland policy;
- Provide better legal protection of Ramsar sites as protected areas;



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ndi a livhuwa



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA