



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

Roles and Responsibilities of a Youth Focal Point

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Strengthening Ramsar Connections through Youth

[Resolution XIV.12](#) adopted at COP14:

- ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to explore and support strategies to engage, collaborate with and involve youth in the implementation of the Convention, such as:
 - i. **appointing national NGO or government Youth Focal Points** to the Convention, as outlined in Annex 1, to strengthen the voice and representation of young people;



Role of a Youth Focal Point (YFP)

The Youth Focal Point is an emerging leader in the wetland space, and/or a dedicated younger officer within the Administrative Authority.

Opportunity for the appointee to:

- build a network of young people engaged in wetlands in your country
- include youth voices in national wetland policy development
- to gain experience engaging with international and domestic work on wetland conservation.
- to kickstart projects that they think will lead to better wetland conservation and youth engagement in their country



Selecting a Youth Focal Point (YFP)

- **Internal:** identify a young professional within the Administrative Authority who is demonstrating leadership on wetlands

OR

- **External:** appoint a young person involved in a wetlands community group/environmental NGO or a young researcher focussed on wetlands
- **Selection criteria:**
 - Passionate about wetlands
 - Experience working on wetlands
 - Understanding about the Convention
 - Willing and motivated to devote time to the work



- Appointment Process:
 - Formally appointed by a letter from the Head of Administrative Authority to the Secretariat of the Convention
 - Provide the name, title and contact details of YFP
- Reporting:
 - Report in COP15 National Report due **20 October 2024**
- Term of appointment:
 - We would suggest appointing a YFP for the period between COPs, and engaging the next YFP before COP
 - Alternatively, yearly appointments are possible
 - Handovers and ceremonies are encouraged



FOR CONTRACTING PARTIES: Incentives of appointing a YFP

- Youth are highly creative, digitally aware, capable of responding intuitively to the fast-paced change and flow of information, as well as engaged with cultural conversations intimately, and in a way that can help accelerate cross-sectoral actions
- Build up the capacity of young professionals with expertise of the Convention on Wetlands, for career development, transitioning into the role, and preserving institutional knowledge.
- Youth are the future of the Convention and therefore vital for institutional strengthening.
- Youth not only bring fresh perspectives, but also new science and research as they are recently graduated from university and in touch with recent knowledge.
- The YFP can bring fresh perspectives and facilitate intergenerational dialogue, complementing the roles and experience of other National Focal Points.
- A YFP will help with the workload.
- Engaging with the YWG will simultaneously advance CEPA objectives.
- Potentially attract more internal government attention and funding for the youth work.
- Support other internal government youth objectives and creates opportunity to collaborate with other government departments such as ministry of education or youth.

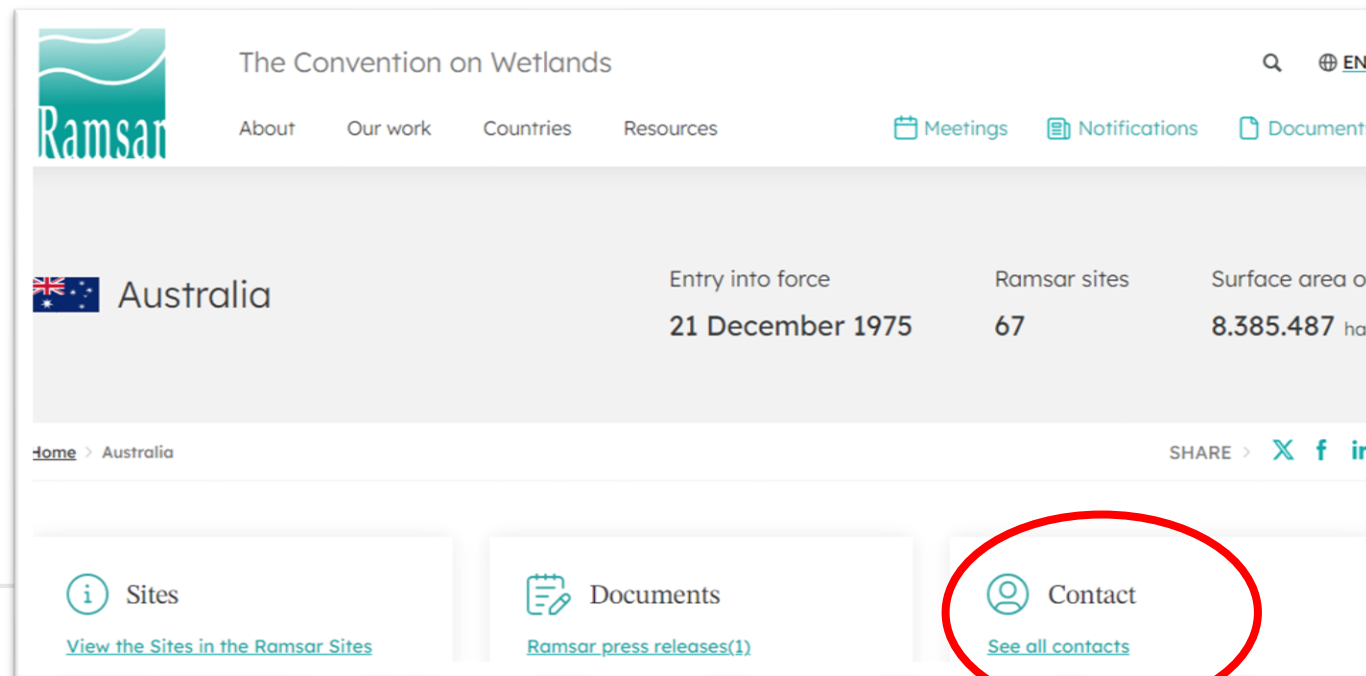


FOR CONTRACTING PARTIES: Sensitivities of appointing a YFP

- If you have concerns about the political or reputational sensitivities of giving a platform to a youth, then it is recommended that you appoint an internal candidate with existing knowledge of government processes. Alternatively, appoint an external youth with existing experience of working with your government.
- If you are interested in appointing an Indigenous/First Nations youth to the role, ensure that the position aligns with Indigenous engagement principles and is culturally safe.

FOR YOUTH: How to approach your National Focal Point about appointing a YFP

- If you would like to encourage your government to appoint a youth focal point, including if you would like to be considered for this role, you can find the contact details of your National Focal Point here: [Countries | The Convention on Wetlands, The Convention on Wetlands \(ramsar.org\)](https://www.ramsar.org/countries)



Responsibilities of the Youth Focal Point (YFP)

The roles of Youth Focal Points are set in [Annex 1 of COP14 Youth Resolution 12](#). Key items include:

- participate as an observer in the Ramsar Youth Working Group
- support the implementation of the [Youth Workplan](#)
- provide leadership for the inclusion of youth perspectives in the implementation of the Convention
- be the main point of contact on youth inclusion in Ramsar programmes
- be a key member of the National Ramsar/Wetland Committees or similar national structures
- assist in the practical development and implementation of Ramsar policies and programmes
- promote development of projects with the active participation of youth
- establish and maintain youth contacts and networks



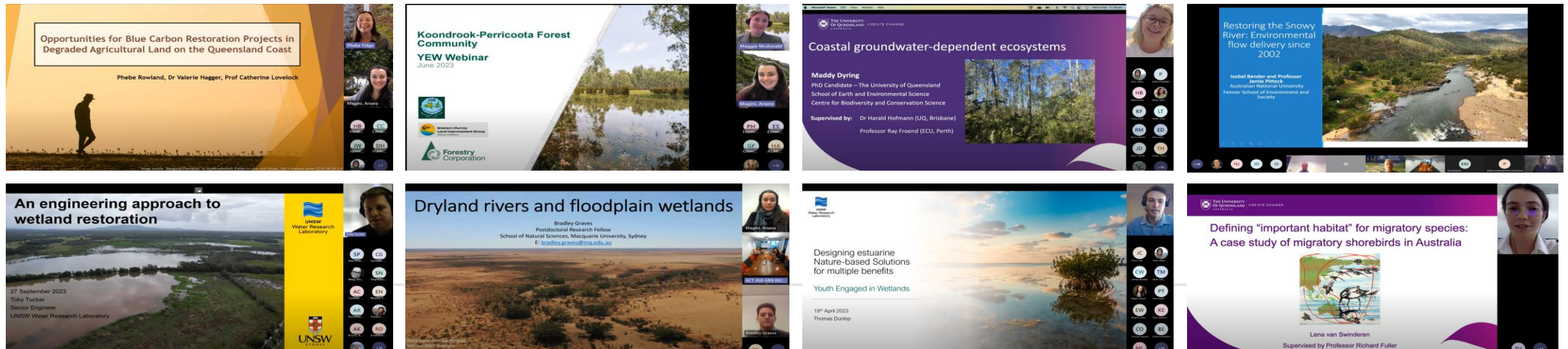
Key activity for Youth Focal Points – engage with the Convention on Wetlands



1. Educate yourself about the Convention and its processes: <https://www.ramsar.org/>
2. Sign up to the Convention's mailing lists: <https://contacts.ramsar.org/subscribe>
3. Follow the Convention's social media pages
4. Read the Youth Resolution: <https://www.ramsar.org/document/resolution-xiv12-strengthening-ramsar-connections-through-youth>
5. Read the Youth Workplan: <https://www.ramsar.org/document/youth-working-group-workplan>
6. Option to participate in the Youth Working Group (YWG) meetings
7. **Workplan Task 1.6.4:** Link the work of the YWG to other working groups of the Convention on Wetlands including the STRP, IAC for WCA, CEPA Oversight Panel, etc
 - Nominate to join another working group and be the liaison

Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Build a youth wetlands network

- Build a network of youth engaged in wetlands in your country. One way to do this:
- Host a youth webinar series – for example: the Australian Youth Engaged in Wetlands webinar series
- The series explores the wetland research and conservation insights of early career wetland researchers and professionals, while bringing science to policy
- Capacity building: Youth presenters can showcase their work to policy-makers and build their network
- Presenters join a mailing list for future youth working group opportunities
- **Workplan Task 1.4.2:** Create a contact database with focal point contacts from each youth organisation



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Youth Engagement Principles

- **Workplan Task 3.1.2:** Develop a set of Youth Engagement Principles and examples
- Work with Contracting Party Government including other Ministry departments engaging with you
- Australian example: [Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make](#)
 - The strategy sets out three priority areas for youth engagement with government:
 1. We will recognise and listen to young people.
 2. We will empower young people to advocate and engage with government.
 3. We will support government to work with young people.



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Liaise with youth groups

- **Workplan Task 1.4.5:** Establish systems/ processes to make it is easy for Contracting Parties (CPs) to know how to engage with the collective of youth organisations, to enable them to bring youth into spaces
- The Youth Focal Point should be the CP's point of liaison and access to the YWG platform and other youth organisations
- Create guidance on how the CP Youth Focal Point can connect with other youth delegates in their government department, to connect with other youth initiatives in their region
 - For example, the Australian Government Ministry of Environment has an internal youth network of all employees working on youth within the Department, including: wetlands (Ramsar), biodiversity (CBD), climate change (UNFCCC), Oceans, IUCN, UNEP, etc.
 - This network is also connected with the Office of Youth in Ministry of Education
 - This internal youth network has a Community of Practice on Microsoft Teams to communicate, share resources such as youth initiatives in the country, set up monthly meetings and coordinate the department's youth engagement activities.



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Youth Workplan Subgroups

- **Join a Subgroup** – focusing on the implementation of a subset of tasks
 - Subgroup 1: Outcome/ Output 1.1: Online Community Platform
 - Subgroup 2: Outcome/ Output 1.2: Create a Programme of Engagement
 - Subgroup 3: Outcome/ Output 1.4: Build the interface with other Youth Organisations
 - Subgroup 4: Outcome/ Output 2.1: Know which spaces to be in
 - Subgroup 5: Outcome/ Output 2.3: Empower youth to ‘BE’ in negotiating and decision-making spaces
 - Subgroup 6: Other Theme 2 tasks
- Subgroups can organise meetings separate to the YWG
- Nominate as the **subgroup lead** to organise and facilitate meetings
- OR nominate to be a lead on one of the tasks within the subgroup



Youth Working
Group Workshop for
the Implementation
of the Work Plan

27 May 2024,
13:00 to 15:00 CET.

Scan QR
to Register



www.ramsar.org



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Engage with the online community platform (once formed)

- **Workplan Task 1.1.5:** Nominate to be a platform host/admin
- **Workplan Task 1.1.4:** Help to design the structure of the platform
 - Create multiple thematic areas for young people working on specific issues to connect
 - Explore different channels for different languages/regions and/or wetlands types
- **Workplan Task 1.1.6:** Help to design and develop content for the platform
- **Workplan Task 1.2.1:** Create a plan for engaging youth (young professionals and volunteers) to join the platform
 - Create a plan specific for your country
 - Send personal invitations to your youth wetlands network to join the platform
 - Share existing social media posts
 - Create your own social media posts (from your Government/organization and/or personal accounts)



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Find youth opportunities

- Find and share event, training, job, funding and grant opportunities for youth in your country
- **Workplan Task 2.1.2:** Create a rolling calendar/s in the online community platform, listing strategic events for the YWG to participate, noting what sort of participation is suggested, the level of commitment/ attendance/ organisation required, etc.
 - Australian example: key events identified – Global Nature Positive Summit and IUCN Oceania Regional Conservation Forum, then contact and connect relevant partners (event organisers, interested NGOs and youth) to propose and co-organise youth side events at each event (propose agenda, speakers, funding sources etc)
- **Workplan Task 2.3.5:** Create spaces to connect youth delegates attending the same event as well as post-event peer-to-peer learning to up-skill future youth delegates
- **Workplan Task 2.3.6:** Set targets to increase the number of youth delegates to Standing Committees and Conferences of the Parties including with gender, regional and diversity considerations
 - Australian example: source funding to send youth to attend COP15 – prioritise marginalised youth in the region



Key activity for Youth Focal Points – Reporting and Monitoring

- Report on the results of your activities in two places:
1. The Youth Workplan Gantt chart tracking spreadsheet available on the YWG OneDrive SharePoint
 - update the notes and results columns
 2. Report in COP15 National Report **due 20 October 2024**
 - Each Contracting Party must submit a report to COP15
 - New requirements to include youth reporting including:
 - Naming the Youth Focal Point
 - Listing the strategies and actions your country is implementing to support youth participation in the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan or in wetlands management
 - Refer to: https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/sc62_21_cop15_national_report_e.pdf

Metric/s for reporting	Result
Platform set up – Yes/No	