

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

Proceedings of the 6TH Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (Brisbane, Australia, 19-27 March 1996)

RESOLUTION VI.23: RAMSAR AND WATER

1. RECOGNIZING the important hydrological functions of wetlands, including groundwater recharge, water quality improvement and flood alleviation, and the inextricable link between water resources and wetlands;
2. FURTHER RECOGNIZING the paucity of hydrological data which exists for the determination and quantification of the hydrological functions of wetlands;
3. REALIZING the need for planning at the river basin scale which involves integration of water resource management and wetland conservation;
4. RECALLING the Themes for the Future paper from IUCN entitled “Reconciling water management and wetland conservation: a key challenge for Ramsar in the 21st century” presented in Plenary Session at the present meeting on 20 March 1996; and
5. FURTHER RECALLING the following Operational Objectives in the Strategic Plan 1997-2002:
 - 2.2 to integrate conservation and wise use of wetlands into decision-making on land use, groundwater management, catchment/river basin and coastal zone planning;
 - 2.4 to provide economic evaluations of the benefits and functions of wetlands for environmental planning purposes;
 - 2.7 to encourage active and informed participation of local communities, including indigenous people, and in particular women, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
 - 4.2 to identify training needs, particularly in developing countries, and to implement follow-up actions;
 - 6.3 to keep under review the Ramsar Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance;
 - 7.2 to strengthen and formalize linkages between Ramsar and other international and/or regional environmental conventions and agencies;

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6. EMPHASIZES the need to ensure that the Scientific and Technical Review Panel includes or has access to hydrological expertise and develops links with organizations with technical skills in hydrological science and management; and
7. CALLS on the Contracting Parties:
 - (a) to link with organizations such as the World Meteorological Organization, to support the development of hydrological monitoring networks on wetlands throughout the world, to ensure the availability of reliable data;

- (b) to encourage the study of traditional systems of water management to investigate their relevance to the concept of wise use of wetlands;
- (c) to encourage more studies of the economic value of water within wetlands, through dissemination of the forthcoming Convention publication on *Economic valuation of wetlands: guidelines for policy makers and planners*;
- (d) to ensure that National Ramsar Committees are involved in national water planning and the development of river basin management strategies;
- (e) to ensure that wetland users, as well as management authorities and technical experts, participate directly in the decision-making process;
- (f) to continue and strengthen support under Article 4.5 of the Convention for multi-disciplinary training, with a major focus on hydrological science and management;
- (g) to ensure, through partnerships with water related organisations such as the World Water Council, that the Ramsar Convention becomes an audible voice in water debates.