

Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative



The purpose of the Caribbean Regional Initiative of Wetlands is to facilitate the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the Caribbean, through the development of a Regional Strategy.



The initiative encourages participation of national and local government organizations, local communities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions, working in coordination with international organizations such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Cartagena Convention, international partner organizations to the Ramsar Convention, and technical networks related to the management and wise use of natural resources that operate in the region.

Main goals

The main strategic and operational goal of the initiative for the period 2009-2012 has been the formulation of the Regional Strategy to Implement the Ramsar Convention in the Caribbean Sub-region and its formal agreement by the Contracting Parties, non-Contracting Parties and other stakeholders. A secondary goal will be the development of strategic interventions that can be implemented across the sub-region.

The initiative contributes to all the objectives defined in the Strategic Plan 2009-2012, including:

1. To promote the conservation and wise use of natural and cultural resources in wetlands of the Insular Caribbean through an appropriate management.
2. To complete and improve the scientific and technical knowledge on wetlands in the Insular Caribbean and other ecosystems that are functionally related to these, in order to support their conservation and sustainable use
3. To support countries in the region to develop coordinated conservation policies.
4. To strengthen training, education and communication processes to increase public awareness on the importance and value of wetlands and coastal areas in general.

5. To design and implement a system to monitor, follow up and assess the strategy in order to ensure its sustainability in the medium and long term at regional, national and local level.
6. To set the basis for the development of cooperation activities.
7. To identify common measurable goals in the short and medium term for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the Insular Caribbean Region.
8. To identify common implementation mechanisms for the countries in the region.
9. To encourage collaboration with international organizations related to wetlands and environment.

Endorsement and members

The 40th Standing Committee endorsed the Regional Initiative of Caribbean Wetlands in 2009. The initiative includes the following Contracting Parties: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago; the overseas territories of the Netherlands (Caribbean Netherlands, Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao), United Kingdom, and France. The non-Contracting Parties of: Haiti, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; and the forthcoming Contracting Party, Grenada are also part of the initiative. UNEP Caribbean Environmental Program, through the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, the Caribbean Institute of Natural Resource (CANARI), Stetson University, and other International Organizations Partners of the Ramsar Convention, BirdLife International, and the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) also participate in the initiative.

Coordination

The initiative is coordinated by Jamaica and Cuba, with the Ramsar Secretariat support. The initiative's structure was defined by the members and observers during the Santo Domingo meeting in 2010. It considered a three tier structure, whose upper level consists on the Caribbean Contracting Parties plus Belize and Surinam, the Ramsar Secretariat and other interested stakeholders. The second tier is the Regional Initiative Committee. This committee is coordinated by Jamaica and Cuba and includes each of the Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Secretariat and the Caribbean Sub-regional representatives at the Standing Committee (past, present and future). The third level includes small working groups which will be formed with participants under the initiative to address particular issues of interest.



Activities

The Regional Committee of the Caribbean Initiative meets annually to follow up the implementation of the initiative and its action plan. Besides the establishment of the governance body of the initiative, the initiative has prepared a 3-years work plan including priorities.

Meetings



20-24 May 2013, Paramaribo, Suriname. *III Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative.*

5-8 July 2011. Kralendijk, Bonaire. *II Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative (right).*

3-7 February 2010. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. *I Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative.*

8-10 April 2008. La Habana, Cuba. *Caribbean Regional meeting for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.*



Working groups, Bonaire Meeting

Ramsar site Klein Bonaire



Participants with Minister Ginmardo Kromosoeto, Paramaribo, Suriname 2013

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