

Memorandum of Cooperation

between

The Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands

and

BirdLife International, and

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, and

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, and

Wetlands International, and

WWF International, and

International Water Management Institute

hereafter referred to as

“The International Organisation Partners of the Convention of Wetlands” or “IOPs”

Preamble

Whereas this Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Secretariat) and its International Organization Partners (IOPs) (hereinafter referred to as “parties”) is a renewal of the previous Memorandum of Cooperation dated 23 April 2018, and reflects the desire of the IOPs to continue to collaborate with the Secretariat to support Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Convention.

Whereas the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, Ramsar, Iran, 1971 (the Convention on Wetlands, the Convention) is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Whereas Contracting Parties to the Convention commit to designating Wetlands of International Importance and ensuring their effective management; working towards the wise use of all their wetlands; and cooperating internationally in implementing the Convention.

Whereas the Convention mission statement is *Conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.*

Whereas within the general obligations set out by the convention, Contracting Parties, meeting as the Conference of the Parties (COP), review and evaluate progress made in the implementation of the Convention and agree on future priorities for action under the

Convention's Strategic Plan. The 4th Strategic Plan, 2016-2024, was adopted in COP Resolution XII.2, with its term extended through Resolution XIV.4; the 5th Strategic Plan is under preparation for adoption at COP15 in 2025.

Whereas opportunities for collaboration and joint activities in accordance with the Convention's mandate and instructions from Contracting Parties are identified within the framework of the Strategic Plan as well as COP Resolutions.

Whereas the formal status of the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) was established in 1999 in COP Resolution VII.3, which recognized the important and long-term contribution that international organizations played in the creation of the Convention and continue to play in its implementation. It conferred the status of IOP on four organizations: BirdLife International, IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), Wetlands International and WWF International, and established rules for conferring the status on other international organizations (non-governmental or intergovernmental) that meet the criteria set out in the resolution. Subsequently, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) was recognised as an IOP through Resolution IX.16, and Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) through Resolution XII.3. Further organizations may seek IOP status, subject to the approval of Contracting Parties through a COP Resolution.

Whereas as spelled out in the Annex to Resolution VII.3, "... the status of Partner shall be conferred to international intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations taking into account the following characteristics:

1. Have a programme of activities that is global or at least covers many countries in one or more regions of the world.
2. Have a statement of purpose that explicitly, or by clear implication, includes the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
3. Have a track record of experience in providing support to and/or implementing on-the-ground projects that contribute to wetland conservation and sustainable use.
4. Have demonstrated experience in implementing partnership ventures such as training and education, technical and/or scientific expertise, policy development, and/or evaluation and assessment, particularly where such ventures would bring new and additional benefits to the functioning of the Ramsar partnership.
5. Have a positive reputation for being willing and able to cooperate with national and international bodies, including both governmental and non-governmental ones.
6. Have stated their readiness to actively contribute on a regular basis to the further development of the policies and tools of the Convention on Wetlands and their application on the ground, particularly by assisting Contracting Parties to meet their obligations under the Convention.
7. Are prepared to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention, where the partnership agreement should be spelt out fully."

Now therefore the parties agree as follows:

A. Objective

1. This Memorandum of Cooperation reaffirms and formalizes the ongoing partnership between the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands and the IOPs. The overall objective of the partnership is to support Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Convention and protection, restoration and wise use of wetlands and their resources, and through this contributing towards the achievement of relevant global goals and targets including for sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and climate change.

B. Overarching Areas of Collaboration

1. Overarching themes for collaboration include:
 - a. raising the visibility of the convention and fostering wide support for wetlands;
 - b. influencing policy and promoting synergies through common messaging in key policy processes;
 - c. enabling and supporting action to include wetlands into relevant national strategies and plans, including but not limited to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, Nationally Determined Contributions, Land Degradation Neutrality plans and Sustainable Development plans;
 - d. strengthening the designation, conservation and management of Wetlands of International Importance;
 - e. promoting and supporting wetland restoration, including in the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration; and
 - f. identifying and addressing emerging issues and opportunities.

C. Partnership Approach and Roles

1. The Convention shapes governmental policies and programmes and intergovernmental cooperation regarding the conservation and wise use of wetland and water resources. The Secretariat carries out the day-to-day coordination of the Convention's activities, and provides administrative, technical and scientific support to the Contracting Parties as they implement the Convention. The Secretariat establishes its work plan and priorities for collaboration according to the Strategic Plan, subject to its capacities and in line with the mandate given by the Contracting Parties.
2. The IOPs, as key stakeholders for the Convention, will help to identify ongoing and emerging issues, contributing to the identification of priorities for governmental attention, and facilitating and implementing programmes that address these, working with all relevant sectors. As set out in Resolution VII.3, IOPs have the opportunity to contribute at multiple levels, by contributing on a regular basis and to the best of their abilities to the further development of the policies and technical and scientific tools of the Convention and to their application; by participating in an observer capacity and as advisors in all activities of the Convention, including the meetings of the Conference of Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, as well as regional and subregional meetings; by contributing to the evaluation of project proposals, project implementation, and the

evaluation of project results; and by participating in the development of policy and technical and/or scientific instruments for the application of the Convention.

3. The Secretariat and the IOPs will develop the partnership, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in order to bring together complementary capacities and combine resources to achieve mutually agreed outcomes.
4. Each IOP will develop a specific programme of collaboration according to its own priorities, capacities and programme of work. The IOPs will work within the Convention bodies, and where possible with Contracting Parties to support national implementation of the Convention, and also collaborate with each other to further the goals of the partnership.

D. Instruments and Mechanisms for Collaboration

1. The Secretariat will work to facilitate the bilateral and multilateral collaboration with IOPs on a range of issues including but not limited to project development, technical exchange, policy and partnership initiatives and associated resource mobilization, communication and outreach. This will be achieved inter alia through regular liaison and information exchange as well as by arranging partnership meetings (electronically or face-to-face), which are expected to include:
 - a. monthly meetings between IOP communication teams and the Secretariat;
 - b. quarterly liaison group meetings between IOP focal points for the Convention and the Secretariat; and
 - c. annual meetings of chief executives.
2. The Secretariat and the IOPs will each identify individuals to act as focal points for this collaboration, and will notify each other of any changes to a designated focal point.
3. IOPs will endeavour to ensure that all relevant programmes of their organizations support the specific objectives and the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands, including implementation of its Strategic Plan, and to take action in response to COP Resolutions and requests to IOPs in these. In doing so, attention will be given to maximizing synergies with other relevant Conventions.
4. IOPs will consult with each other to share information and coordinate activities through their respective networks, with a view to avoiding duplication and increasing their combined capacity.
5. The Secretariat and the IOPs will share information on their respective networks and encourage their focal points at all levels to share information and to collaborate, especially regarding the active implementation of the Convention at national and international level.
6. IOPs will be invited to participate in an observer capacity and as advisors in activities of the Convention, including meetings of the COP and the Standing Committee, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), and other regional and sub-regional meetings.

7. IOPs are encouraged to actively participate in and contribute to activities such as Communication, Capacity-Building, Education, Participation, and Awareness (CEPA), Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRI), Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAM), Wetland City Accreditation (WCA), and World Wetlands Day (WWD).
8. As appropriate, the Secretariat may be invited to engage in relevant fora and advisory bodies established by individual IOPs or through collaboration among IOPs.
9. The Secretariat will consult with the IOPs should other organizations request IOP status.
10. Details of activities will be set out in workplans agreed by the parties and updated according to need.

E. Benefits

1. Contracting Parties, Convention bodies and the Secretariat will continue to benefit from the active involvement and the expertise of the IOPs, in the development of policy and technical tools, in their facilitation role to enable society to take action, and in their direct support to Contracting Parties to implement the Convention.
2. The IOPs will work through the Convention as a vehicle for achieving mutual objectives, and benefit from facilitation provided by the Secretariat in terms of technical exchange, partnerships, resource development and recognition. The IOPs can take credit for their valuable contributions to sustainable development through wetland conservation and wise use. They can expect to increase their visibility and their influence with governments and at intergovernmental level, and may, as appropriate, utilize their IOP status and profile in developing projects, jointly or individually, for donor funding.
3. All parties will benefit from the recognition of their respective achievements and the increased visibility and representation internationally and from synergies at all levels.
4. The extent to which the partnership and joint activities are implemented will be subject to the availability of resources. However, improved resource mobilization is anticipated to be an outcome of the partnership.

F. Miscellaneous Provisions

1. Representation

This Memorandum of Cooperation constitutes an expression of shared intent. However, each party's actions will be considered to be that party's sole and separate action, for all purposes, and no party shall claim to be acting on behalf of, or as agent for another party to this Memorandum of Cooperation.

2. Term and Termination

The term for this Memorandum of Cooperation is six years as of the date of signature by the parties. It will be reviewed mid-term, or more frequently at the request of any party. Any party may withdraw from this Memorandum at any time, subject to six months' notice in writing, noting that any such withdrawal from the Memorandum of Cooperation would mean that this organization would no longer comply with requirement No 4.7 of the Annex to Resolution VII.3. Withdrawal of one or more IOP parties from the Memorandum of Cooperation will not prejudice the involvement of the remaining parties.

3. Adding new parties

This Memorandum of Cooperation will be open to signature by any additional IOP that may be approved by the Convention on Wetlands COP.

4. Amendment

This Memorandum of Cooperation may be amended only by a writing signed by the parties.

5. Intellectual property

Nothing contained in this Memorandum of Cooperation may be construed as conferring to a party or parties any rights to use any name, logo, visual identity, trademark (registered or unregistered), or other designation of another party or parties without written authorization.

6. Dispute Resolution

Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this Memorandum of Cooperation will be settled by amicable negotiation between the parties. Should the parties be unable to negotiate an amicable settlement, the dispute shall be submitted to mediation following procedures to be agreed by the parties.

7. Personal Data

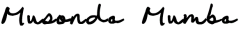
It is not foreseen that the parties will process any personal data between them in the implementation of this Memorandum of Cooperation. In the exceptional situation that they will, the Parties will do so in compliance with the applicable principles of law or regulatory framework. Personal Data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual. If during the term the parties decide that more detailed arrangements are needed regarding the processing of personal data, the Parties will agree on a separate data processing agreement that will in that case be appended to this Memorandum of Cooperation.

8. Execution

This Memorandum of Cooperation constitutes the entire understanding of the parties pertaining to all matters contemplated hereunder at this time.

Done in Gland, Switzerland on 28 June 2024

for the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands

DocuSigned by:

9958E250D2EC450...
Name: Musonda Mumba
Position: Secretary General

for Wetlands International

DocuSigned by:

84B4EE56BB1347C...
Name: Han de Groot
Position: Chief Executive Officer

for BirdLife International

DocuSigned by:

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Name: Martin Harper
Position: Chief Executive Officer

for WWF International

DocuSigned by:

D48E42C5A778406...
Name: Kirsten Schuijt
Position: Director General

for IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

DocuSigned by:

C2F49C58F60841A...
Name: Grethel Aguilar
Position: Director General

for International Water Management Institute

DocuSigned by:

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Name: Mark Smith
Position: Director General

for Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

DocuSigned by:

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Name: Sarah Fowler
Position: Chief Executive

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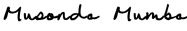
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Musonda Mumba
 mumba@ramsar.org
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Dr. Grethel Aguilar Rojas
 Grethel.Aguilar@iucn.org
 IUCN Director General
 IUCN
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)


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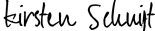
Han de Groot
 Han.deGroot@wetlands.org
 CEO
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Kirsten Schuijt
 kschuijt@wwfint.org
 Director General
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

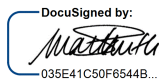
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 mark.smith@cgjar.org
 Director General
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 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)
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Martin Harper
 martin.harper@birdlife.org
 CEO
 BirdLife
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)
Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
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Sarah Fowler
 Sarah.Fowler@wwt.org.uk
 Chief Executive
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)
Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
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P. Leonard
 pleonard@wwfint.org
 Deputy Leader, Freshwater Practice
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)
Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
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Angie Porter
 angie.porter@birdlife.org
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)
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To contact us by email send messages to: patrick.reybet-degat@iucn.org

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Required hardware and software

The minimum system requirements for using the DocuSign system may change over time. The current system requirements are found here: <https://support.docusign.com/guides/signer-guide-signing-system-requirements>.

Acknowledging your access and consent to receive and sign documents electronically

To confirm to us that you can access this information electronically, which will be similar to other electronic notices and disclosures that we will provide to you, please confirm that you have read this ERSD, and (i) that you are able to print on paper or electronically save this ERSD for your future reference and access; or (ii) that you are able to email this ERSD to an email address where you will be able to print on paper or save it for your future reference and access. Further, if you consent to receiving notices and disclosures exclusively in electronic format as described herein, then select the check-box next to ‘I agree to use electronic records and signatures’ before clicking ‘CONTINUE’ within the DocuSign system.

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