



"People and Wetlands: The Vital Link"
**7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971),
San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999**

Agenda item X

Regional overview of implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan 1997-2002 in Africa

The National Reports upon which this overview is based can be consulted on the Ramsar Web site,
http://ramsar.org/cop7_natl_rpt_index.htm

Contracting Parties in Africa: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia.

Contracting Parties yet to submit National Reports: Gabon, Guinea Bissau and Mauritania

§I. Major achievements since COP6 and priorities for the next triennium

The following have been prepared based on the advice provided by the National Reports submitted for COP7 as summarised in Sections II and III.

A. Main achievements since COP6

- A1. National Wetland Policy/Strategies/Action Plan development has been completed or is planned in eight countries.
- A2. Wetland issues are now being considered through Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, National Environmental Action Plans and other sectoral strategies or policies in fifteen countries.
- A3. Seventeen Contracting Parties have some mechanism in place for regular dialogue between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and those personnel working with the other environment-related conventions.
- A4. Twenty countries have government environmental education programmes that consider wetlands.
- A5. Ten new sites have been listed as Wetlands of International Importance since COP6.

- A6. Consultations are under way and some steps have been taken in order to develop joint action and common approaches for the management of shared wetlands.
- A7. Twenty Contracting Parties are receiving donor support for wetland conservation and wise use.
- A8. NGOs are increasingly active in the area of education and public awareness relating to wetland values and functions.

B. Priorities for the next triennium

- B1. Continue to promote membership of the Convention in the Africa region, especially in Central Africa, Southern Africa, and the island states.
- B2. Encourage formulation and implementation of National Wetland Policies / Strategies / Action Plans.
- B3. Encourage legislative review and practices which have positive impacts on wetlands.
- B4. Promote legislative instruments and actions which address the impacts of toxic chemicals and pollution.
- B5. Encourage production and dissemination of “Wise Use” publications.
- B6. Promote actions that incorporate economic valuation of wetlands into national planning processes.
- B7. Encourage preparation and implementation of management plans which include wetland restoration and rehabilitation practices.
- B8. Encourage private sector involvement in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- B9. Promote inventories of wetlands which include a directory of important wetlands in each Contracting Party
- B10. Promote further designation of Ramsar sites and encourage Contracting Parties to provide appropriate and updated information on all Ramsar sites.
- B11. Encourage and facilitate twinning activities between Ramsar sites and joint management plans for shared wetlands
- B12. Take action to promote training within institutions and of individuals on wetland issues.

§II. Description of activities undertaken

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 1
To progress towards universal membership of the Convention

1. The following seven Contracting Parties have joined the Convention since COP6: Botswana, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Malawi and The Gambia. Mauritius and Burundi have ratified the Convention but have not completed the process of accession. The African region has 54 countries in total, of which 28 are at present Contracting Parties.
2. Many of the Contracting Parties have supported the efforts to encourage the accession of the remaining 26 countries to the Convention. Those efforts have mainly been made through various meetings and consultations at regional, subregional and bilateral levels. In this regard, the following Contracting Parties have been very active in communicating with potential Contracting Parties and organizing the meetings such as the Subregional Meetings held in Senegal (12-14 May, 1997) and in South Africa (2-5 February, 1998) and the Pan-African meeting held in Uganda (6-11 July, 1998).
3. Other meetings, as well as subregional and bilateral consultations, have also been used by Botswana, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Kenya to discuss accession with Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Meetings such as that organized by Wetlands International in Dakar, Senegal, in November 1998 and the second Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification also in Dakar, Senegal, in December 1998 served as major venues where information about the Ramsar Convention was disseminated.
4. Visits organized by the Bureau to Benin, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe were intended to facilitate accession. Liaison with Permanent Missions of non-Contracting Parties based in Geneva were also intended to provide facilitation in the process of accession. The Convention's Partners; BirdLife International, IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International have provided assistance through their headquarters and regional offices.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 2
To achieve the wise use of wetlands by implementing and further developing the Ramsar Wise Use Guidelines

National Wetland Policies/Strategies and their implementation

5. In the African Region, only Uganda has a National Wetland Policy in place. An implementation strategy was adopted in 1995 and the policy is now being implemented at the national, district and community levels. Ghana has recently developed a draft National Wetlands Strategy: "Managing Ghana's Wetlands: Policy, Strategy and Action Plan". The following countries are drafting Wetland Policies: Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa,

and Zambia. Egypt advises that it is planning to develop a National Wetland Strategy/Action Plan in the near future. South Africa is proposing a set of nine guiding principles and eight implementation themes in order to encourage the implementation of the policy.

6. At the Pan-African Regional Meeting, it was also concluded that the Ugandan experience could be used as a model working document. Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Republic of Comoros, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, The Gambia and Togo do not have a National Wetland Policy. Wetlands issues are considered through Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, The Gambia, Malawi, Mali and Niger. In Tunisia, the conservation and wise use of wetlands form part of water management policies. National Environmental Action Plans are integrating wetland issues in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Republic of Comoros, Guinea, Senegal and Togo. In South Africa, the wetland conservation policy will complement and strengthen a number of other national policies and draft policies or white papers. Other sectoral strategies or policies are also used to integrate wetland concerns:
 - Strategy for protected areas in Morocco,
 - Action Plan to Combat Desertification in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger;
 - National Environment Strategy in the Federal Republic of Comoros,
 - Agriculture Policy in Congo;
 - Master Plan for Mangroves and National Action Plan for coastal areas in Guinea.
7. In Namibia, there are two policies which are directly relevant to wetlands: "Land-use planning: towards sustainable development" and the policy on "Conservation of biotic diversity and habitat protection".
8. Coordination for the implementation of those various Strategies/Policies that incorporate wetland matters is undertaken through cross-sectoral committees in most countries. The Federal Republic of Comoros is the only country with a federal system of government, and in this country there are no specific strategies or policies at provincial level which deal with wetland issues.

Reviews of legislation

9. Most of the countries (14) are having their legislation reviewed prior to Wetland Policy preparation. This is a continuous process for most of them. South Africa has undertaken the review of some 11 national acts which have effects on wetlands. This review has resulted in the drafting of the Wetland Conservation Bill which is currently undergoing revision to ensure that conservation of wetlands receives the necessary attention. Ghana has undertaken a review but changes would only be made after the Strategy is adopted. Kenya's government has established a commission to review legislation and practices in order to adapt them to the present situation and trends. Some of the legislative instruments which have been reviewed include such pertinent sectors as the Water Act, Wildlife Act, Forest Act and the Fisheries Act.

10. Some of the legislative reviews have put wetland conservation into focus. Congo and Guinea are reviewing their environmental legislation following the formulation of a National Environmental Action Plan along with a National Forest Action Plan. In both countries, this will bring about new principles and new rules in the area of environment and forest conservation which impact on wetland conservation and utilisation. Senegal has carried out a review of legislation as part of the process of formulating a National Forest Action Plan. This review has brought about a new Environmental Legislation and new hunting regulations. Zambia has undertaken a general legislative review and a specific review which relates to wetlands management. In Algeria, the revision of environmental legislation is under way as part of the process of developing a National Environmental Action Plan and this will have some impact on wetland issues.
11. In Botswana, Comoros, Morocco, Namibia and Uganda a comprehensive review of legal instruments relating to environmental issues and natural resources is also under way and this process will have an impact on wetlands, taking into account the obligations of these Contracting Parties to the Convention.
12. The National Report of the Democratic Republic of Congo points out that a review of legislation carried out through the formulation of the Biodiversity Strategy has proved to be a useful tool for assessing the impact that policies can have once their major tenets have been translated into legal instruments. Mali indicates that there is a new law which strengthens the efforts for the implementation of the Convention. This new law clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the central government, the decentralised local administrations, the private sector, and local communities in terms of conservation of freshwater resources, including aquatic plants and animals. In Niger, there is a process under way to formulate a new legislative framework, the Rural Code, which will integrate and harmonise various legal instruments pertaining to nature conservation and the uses of all natural renewable resources.
13. Four Contracting Parties indicated that they had not undertaken any review of legislation and practices which impact on wetlands, namely, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt and Togo. Chad did not give any information on this matter.

Integrated approaches to wetland management

14. Of the 24 national reports received from 28 Contracting Parties on the continent, 20 indicated that they are pursuing an integrated approach to catchment management. Below are some examples of what has been done or is being done in some countries:
 - integrated basin-wide management for shared water courses, taking into account inland water and coastal ecosystem relationships (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea and South Africa);
 - integrated land/water and coastal zone planning and management processes (South Africa);
 - wetlands incorporated into coral reef and mangrove management (Egypt);
 - coastal zone profile and strategy aiming at ensuring the conservation of the coastal strip using an integrated approach (The Gambia);

- conservation and wise use initiatives for wetlands are part of national environment and development plans (Uganda);
- recognition of the ecological, biological, hydrological, economic and socio-cultural importance of wetlands in the National Environmental Action Plan (Kenya);
- conservation and wise use initiatives of wetlands as part of national environment development plans (Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia).

Wise use publications produced

15. Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia have produced some publications or documented some practices which could assist other countries to promote and improve the application of the Ramsar wise use concept. South Africa has produced more than 17 publications on various aspects of wise use of wetlands in that country. Kenya reports that “the publications are too many to be listed individually but include such categories as books, water resource assessment programme reports, workshop reports, panels, posters, etc.”

Toxic chemicals and pollution

16. Various actions have been taken by some Contracting Parties to remedy or prevent pollution impacts affecting Ramsar sites or other wetlands. In this regard, South Africa has adopted an Environmental Management and Pollution Control Policy, the National Water Act, which sets principles relating to water quality, the Coastal Management Green Paper and some measures that have been taken on specific Ramsar sites. Egypt’s legislation has provisions for protection of the environment from water pollution from ships and land-based sources. Ghana has put in place a set of guidelines on the use of chemicals and to ensure pollution control. Kenya indicated that the Lake Nakuru Ramsar site has been a scene of pollution for many years but this problem has been remedied through construction of a modern sewage treatment works.
17. In the Uganda and Tunisia National Reports it was indicated that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is now a requirement for any development involving toxic chemicals and pollution. Botswana indicates that a Waste Management Strategy and legislation are in operation. In Morocco, pollution is a reality in many rivers due to urban waste disposal. A survey is under way to generate information and allow decision makers to take action. Senegal has established a special committee for advising the government on actions to be taken. The Democratic Republic of Congo has taken many actions to prevent or alleviate pollution, including legal instruments, environmental impact assessment procedures, education and public awareness, and the establishment of a marine and coastal National Park to counteract dumping of oil wastes into the mangroves. Zambia has put in place measures to minimise pollution and this could have positive impacts on wetlands, particularly the Kafue flats, a Ramsar site which is threatened by toxic chemical pollution. For some countries such as Algeria, Chad, Comoros, Congo and Mali, pollution is not considered as a major problem although it remains a real threat.

Economic valuation techniques

18. Although this is a new field of work in Africa, some Contracting Parties are using economic valuation as a tool to explain and illustrate the various benefits that can be derived from conservation and wise use of wetlands. In this regard, the Democratic Republic of Congo has undertaken a cost/benefits analysis to understand and demonstrate the values that are attached to some coastal wetlands by local communities. This proved to be a powerful tool in assisting decision-makers when they decided to establish a Mangrove National Park.
19. In Botswana, the Environmental Economics Programme, which is part of the National Conservation Strategy Action Plan, has water as one of the priorities for which Natural Resources Accounts are being developed. In Uganda, wetland valuation is carried out as part of the inventory process and a detailed wetland valuation exercise is planned. The Southern African Subregional Meeting held in Pretoria in 1998 recommended to carry out a programme to conduct a valuation of wetland systems within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. This programme is now in its initial phase. Two other pilot studies are planned in South Africa to enhance the capacity of relevant authorities to be able to make informed decision, taking wetland values into account. In Ghana, a national workshop to introduce wetland experts and planners to methods of economic valuation of natural resources has been organized by the government.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

20. The following 17 Contracting Parties, namely Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Uganda, South Africa, The Gambia, Togo, Tunisia and Zambia, indicate that it is required under legislation to carry out EIAs for any actions potentially impacting on wetlands. In Egypt, the law specifies that EIA must be conducted for coastal tourism developments and should assess the impacts on coastal and marine habitats, particularly coral reefs and mangroves.

Wetland Restoration and Rehabilitation

21. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, Tunisia and Zambia all indicate that there are some ongoing projects related to wetland restoration and rehabilitation. Typical examples are the following actions undertaken in South Africa:
 - wetland rehabilitation and conservation in the north eastern Free State, Blesbokspruit and Orange River Mouth Ramsar sites restoration schemes;
 - St Lucia System - determination of a procedure to establish the freshwater requirements of the lake, saving a wetland and a marine mussel resource impacted by bacterial toxins, biological and physical control of alien invasive species;
 - Rennies Wetlands Project and Forest industry involvement in wetland conservation.
22. In Ghana, as a pilot project, the two most polluted wetlands, Korle and Chemu Lagoons, are currently being cleaned up in a bid to rehabilitate them. In Kenya wetland restoration and rehabilitation has been recognised as one of the important features of the National Wetland

Policy. In Egypt wetland restoration and rehabilitation was considered a national priority by the Environmental Action Plan produced in 1992. Several wetlands were identified as “blackspots” in need of urgent action, especially Lake Maryut and Manzalla.

Encouraging active and informed action by local stakeholders

23. This is occurring in 17 Contracting Parties in Africa (71% of the 24 Contracting Parties which have submitted National Reports). The countries involved are: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zambia. A number of these actions have been government-initiated but some others have been initiated by NGOs both national and international. Some Contracting Parties such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Comoros are planning to undertake pilot projects in this direction. In some countries such as Uganda and Zambia, deliberate efforts have been made to apply a gender strategy that involves women in wetland areas where there is community-based natural resource management. Some other countries, like Kenya, are using a variety of strategies to encourage active and informed participation of local communities. These strategies include Participatory Rapid Appraisal, recognition of the traditional and cultural rights, indigenous knowledge, skills and practices, rights of access, ownership and management of wetlands, capacity building, development or review of policies and legal instruments.

Private sector involvement

24. This is a new area of work in Africa but eight Contracting Parties are taking steps to encourage the private sector to invest in wetland management and sustainable use. Egypt reports that “there has been encouragement of private sector conservation and wise use of wetlands with regard to coral reefs and mangroves along the Red Sea.” The Government of Kenya has waived duty on any machinery or equipment meant for amelioration and conservation of the environment. In Zambia, tourism operators are involved in the preparation of management plans. Uganda has initiated consultations with the private sector.
25. Senegal indicates that consultations are under way with tourism operators so as to encourage them to make financial contributions to National Park management and conservation, including Ramsar sites. Likewise, the Democratic Republic of Congo is undertaking discussions with three oil companies regarding the disposal of oil wastes into the sea through a mangrove area. These discussions are aimed at stopping this action and encouraging collaboration with wetland managers and the local communities. In addition, legislative instruments have been adopted, following the formulation of the National Environmental Action Plan, to create incentive measures for the private sector to invest in nature conservation, including wetlands. Botswana is considering private sector involvement under the policy and strategy formulation process. Ghana is also considering this issue through its “Development Options Studies”.
26. No actions have apparently been taken so far to encourage the involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Congo, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Morocco, Mali, Niger, Tunisia and Togo.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective3**To raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels****Education and Public Awareness programmes (EPA)**

27. Twenty countries in Africa report that they have government-run environmental education programmes that consider wetlands. For instance, in Kenya, several government-run education and awareness initiatives are managed by various sectors including the National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, the Permanent Presidential Commission on Soil and Water Conservation, and the National Environmental Secretariat. Uganda has established a Policy Awareness programme along with radio broadcasts and schools programmes. Zambia has a number of initiatives for stimulating widespread interest and investments in environmental and natural resource management, including wetlands. Some governments actually contract local NGOs to carry out conservation education programmes. Typical examples are Ghana and Burkina Faso where in this case the governments have contracted the Ghana Wildlife Society and Naturama respectively to carry out such activities.
28. Algeria's government is undertaking a set of activities aimed at raising awareness on wetland issues. In Guinea, a regional programme on environmental education and public awareness is operating mainly in coastal areas with local communities as the target group. Morocco has established a centre in a Ramsar site for education and public awareness on wetlands. Niger has an environmental education programme run by IUCN and the relevant provincial administration in the eastern part of the country. Senegal is undertaking environmental education and public awareness raising activities with an emphasis on government institutions, including the parliament, local administrations and technical services. Egypt has education and awareness raising programme on wetlands which target decision-makers, scientists, children, and the general public.

Wise Use as part of formal education curricula

29. Sixteen out of twenty four (24) Contracting Parties which have submitted National Reports (66%) indicated that this is either being implemented or likely to be implemented in their respective countries. In Uganda, for instance, support materials such as teacher's guides and booklets on wetlands are being developed and wetlands are now included in the school curricula. In Kenya, school programmes and curricula include environmental education together with wetland conservation, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. In Botswana, and Tunisia, an environmental education programme which is part of an overall environmental action plan incorporates and targets all levels of society and is both formal and informal. In Egypt, education with regard to wetlands is mostly at tertiary level as part of university science and environment programmes. Zambia has established the Curriculum Development Centre within the Ministry of Education and this is designed to promote, *inter alia*, modification of selected school curricula. Plans are under way to include wetland issues and Ramsar wise use principles in the curricula of educational institutions.

30. West African Sahelian Contracting Parties, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger and Senegal are sharing a regional programme on environmental education which is integrating environmental issues, including wetland concerns, into the formal primary school programmes. Guinea and Niger have introduced a wetland component into post graduate curricula at university level. In Namibia, wetlands were included in the national curricula for primary schools in 1996. The Democratic Republic of Congo is testing a pilot initiative on the relationships between health and environment which may be into primary school curricula. On the other hand, NGOs such as WWF have in Zambia helped develop school publications that have the wise use of wetlands included.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 4

To reinforce the capacity of institutions in each of the Contracting Party to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Institutional coordination and cooperation

31. Sixteen Contracting Parties have established National Wetlands Committees or similar mechanisms. South Africa was one of the first Contracting Parties to establish a National Ramsar Committee, in 1991, which subsequently, in the spirit of rationalisation, was incorporated into the Biodiversity Subcommittee of the Committee for Environmental Coordination. Kenya has many collaborative mechanisms that bring various public and private sectors together to discuss environmental and wetland conservation issues. The National Wetland Standing Committee, the National Biodiversity Committee and Biodiversity Working Group, the Integrated Coastal Zone Management and the Kenya Wetland Working Group are some of these mechanisms. Malawi has established a National Steering Committee on Wetlands. Togo has established a formal National Ramsar Committee which is a coordinating mechanism bringing together government and non-government experts working on wetland issues. Guinea indicates that the National Ramsar Committee will be restructured so as to include the private sector in its composition and to redefine the functions of the committee.
32. Uganda has an Inter-Ministerial Committee which also serves as the National Ramsar Committee. Ghana has established a National Wetland Committee which is a technical committee within the Ministry of Lands and Forestry. This committee is intended to facilitate inter-ministerial, inter-departmental, inter-district and other forms of collaboration of stakeholders. Namibia has recently established the “Namibian Wetlands Working Group” to facilitate cooperation between scientists working on wetland issues. Côte d’Ivoire and The Gambia are currently establishing National Wetland Committees. Zambia has established the Zambia Wetlands Steering Committee which has four task forces.
33. Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal have established National Wetland Networks in collaboration with the IUCN office in each country. The Democratic Republic of Congo, the Federal Republic of Comoros and Niger have adopted some “global mechanisms” to coordinate all sectoral actions relating to environment and sustainable development, including wetland issues. Algeria does not have a National Ramsar Committee but there is a “Wetland Group” which will be restructured in the near future to become a National Ramsar

Committee. In Botswana, a National Wetlands Coordinating Committee, whose membership is drawn from all the stakeholder Ministries and Departments, provides the mechanism for ensuring the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Training needs and opportunities

34. Training of wetland managers has taken place in some of the countries, mostly in Europe and North America. There have been, however, some short seminars and short courses held within specific regions. Algeria, Kenya and Senegal indicate that they have developed training programmes specifically for wetland managers. Training has been provided to wetland managers of Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, The Gambia, Uganda and Zambia.
35. Assessment of training needs is something that has been lacking in most of the countries and has not been given the needed attention. Indeed, Kenya, Morocco and South Africa are the only Contracting Parties which have undertaken a review to identify the training needs of institutions working on conservation and wise use of wetlands. A training needs assessment is also under way for the National Wetlands Programme in Uganda. Some other countries have partially defined training needs. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo has identified the training needs for one Ramsar site ("Parc National des Mangroves").
36. Guinea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco and Senegal have reported that a review has been undertaken to identify training opportunities for wetland managers.

Coordinated implementation of international conventions

37. Several countries in Africa have specified contacts for the various international environmental conventions that they have ratified. However, most are generally coordinated by a single line ministry like the Ministry of Environment or related departments. Seventeen of the 24 Contracting Parties which have submitted National Reports (71%) mentioned that they have some mechanism in place for regular dialogue between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and personnel working with the other conventions. Using the framework of the National Wetland Policy formulation process, Botswana is creating a synergy between environment-related conventions.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 5
To ensure the conservation of all sites included in the list of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List)

Status of management plans for Ramsar sites

38. Refer to the table in Section 1 and also to Ramsar COP7 DOCS. 13.3 and 15.2.

Change in ecological character at Ramsar sites

39. These are considered in Ramsar COP7 DOCS. 13.3 and 15.2.

Montreux record sites

40. These are considered in Ramsar COP7 DOCS. 13.3 and 15.2. In summary, there are nine Ramsar sites out of 76 sites in Africa (12%) which are currently included in the Montreux Record. These are Lac Tonga (Algeria), Lake Bardawil and Lake Burullus (Egypt), Djoudj and Basin du Ndiael (Senegal), Blesbokspruit and Orange River Mouth (South Africa), Ichkeul (Tunisia) and Lake George (Uganda). Two Ramsar sites have so far been removed from the Montreux Record: Lac Oubeira (Algeria), removed in 1997, and St. Lucia System (South Africa), removed in 1996. Since its inception, the Management Guidance Procedure has been applied seven times in Africa: twice in Lake Ichkeul (Tunisia) and once for the following Ramsar sites: Lac Oubeira and Lac Tonga (Algeria), Lake Bardawil and Lake Burullus (Egypt), Djoudj and Basin N'diael (Senegal) and the St Lucia System (South Africa). It has not been possible to undertake Management Guidance Procedure Missions for Lac Tonga in Algeria and Lake George in Uganda in this triennium, due to security reasons.

Sites referred in COP6 Recommendations 6.17

41. These are considered in Ramsar COP7 DOCS. 13.3 and 15.2. In summary, this applies to Mauritania (no National Report received as yet) and South Africa. On this issue, South Africa's report states "The three sites (Natal Drakensberg Park, Ndumo Game Reserve and Seekoeivlei) were designated in 1996. Two other sites were proposed: Nylsvley Nature Reserve and Limpopo/Luvuvhu floodplains and pans. The designation of Nylsvley Nature Reserve has been completed and it has been added on the List in 1998."

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 6

To designate for the Ramsar List those wetlands which meet the Convention's criteria, especially wetland types still under- represented in the List and transfrontier wetlands.

National inventories and directories of "important" wetlands

42. Botswana, Malawi and Tunisia have completed a national inventory of their wetlands and Zambia has almost completed one. Kenya has many wetland inventories that are being developed at various sectoral levels. Namibia indicates that a national inventory is in preparation and a first edition will be available at COP7. Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, The Gambia and Uganda have planned comprehensive national wetland inventories for the near future. Ten countries have directories of 'important' wetlands already, namely, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal, Uganda, Tunisia and Zambia.

Estimates of wetland area and rates of loss and conversion

43. The following are the estimated wetland areas for the respective countries: Kenya (2.5%), Malawi (33%), Namibia (4-5%), The Gambia (17.4%), Uganda (13%), Zambia (13%). A

number of countries have indicated that there is some loss of wetland area happening; however, actual estimates were given only by South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda. Even in this case, the report indicates that “for most of South Africa, the extent and degree of wetland loss have not been determined. There is however evidence to suggest that over 50% of the wetlands in the country ‘s wetland area has been lost.” In Uganda, about 7% of the wetlands have been lost, according to the National Biomass Study. Tunisia indicates a loss of 15% between 1981 and 1989. However, by way of compensation, 22 400 ha (17%) have been created as artificial wetlands in this country.

COP6 priorities for Ramsar listing and statements of intent

44. Nine new sites have been listed as Wetlands of International Importance since COP6. Steps have been taken in Kenya to have Lake Bogoria listed as a Ramsar site but this has not been achieved due to administrative considerations. Namibia’s report points out: “Although Namibia did not explicitly state that it would list further sites, there are plans to list probably two further sites within the near future”. In Uganda, consultations have started with the district authority to designate Lake Nabugabu as Uganda’s second Ramsar site. In addition, Lake Oplala and Lutembe Bay are under study for possible designation. The Gambia is currently listing two additional sites for designation: Niuni National Park and Tanbi Wetland Complex. Zambia would like to include Liuwa, Lukanga, Busanga, Mweru-wa-ntipa, Luapula-Mweru, Lower Zambezi and Luangwa wetlands as possible Ramsar sites.

Transfrontier sites

45. Orange River Mouth is a wetland that forms the border between Namibia and South Africa. These countries have designated their respective parts of the Orange River Mouth Wetland as Ramsar sites. The “W” National Park is also a wetland that forms the borders between Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. Burkina Faso and Niger have designated their respective parts of this wetland as Ramsar sites and steps have been taken to facilitate Benin’s accession to the Convention and the designation of the whole wetland as a transfrontier Ramsar site. Sango Bay, which borders Uganda and Tanzania, is being considered by Uganda as potential Ramsar site. Lake Chilwa, a Ramsar site in Malawi, is shared by Malawi and Mozambique. The Bao Bolong wetland reserve in The Gambia and the Delta du Saloum in Senegal are two Ramsar sites which form the border between these countries. Consultations are under way in order to develop collaboration for a joint Ramsar site and a Biosphere Reserve. The Djoudj National Park (Senegal) and the Banc d’Arguin National Park are two Ramsar sites which form the border between Senegal and Mauritania. An agreement is under discussion between Guinea and Guinea Bissau for formulating joint management plans for transfrontier sites.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 7

To mobilise international cooperation and financial assistance for wetland conservation and wise use in collaboration with other conventions and agencies, both governmental non-governmental.

Bilateral/Multilateral activities for shared wetlands, watersheds and species

46. The Okavango delta system, a Ramsar site in Botswana, is part of a transfrontier water-course shared by Angola, Botswana and Namibia. Consultations are under way for an integrated management plan which could be under the aegis of the Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM). The government of Ghana has already contacted the government of Côte d'Ivoire regarding the joint management of the Aby Lagoon that is shared between the two countries. A similar procedure is under way between Namibia, South Africa and Botswana since all three share common borders between them. Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger and Togo are taking steps for a common approach to the conservation and wise use of shared water, wetlands and biodiversity of the Niger Basin.
47. A regional project is planned covering an area that encompasses two Ramsar sites sharing the same border between Burkina Faso and Niger. South Africa indicates that a protocol on Shared Water Course Systems developed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been accepted by South Africa, along with 10 other SADC member states. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania are making efforts to manage Lake Victoria through a GEF-funded programme. Likewise, again Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania are undertaking a transboundary conservation programme in which a number of shared wetlands and water-courses will be beneficiaries. The proposed East Africa Rift Valley Lakes Biodiversity Conservation project will address conservation of lakes in Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania. The UNEP Regional Sea Programme for Eastern Africa will address marine and coastal conservation issues in Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Mozambique and several Indian Ocean islands States.

“Twinned” sites

48. So far the only twinned Ramsar sites are Djoudj (Senegal) and the Camargue (France). There are future possibilities for more twinning of sites, for instance, between Kenya and Austria, since there is currently an ongoing project in Kenya related to migratory birds.

Coordinated implementation of conventions

49. Refer to General Objective 4 above (paragraph 37).

Support from Bilateral or Multilateral donors

50. In total 20 countries out of the 24 Contracting Parties that have submitted National Reports indicated that there are bilateral and/or multilateral donors supporting some wetland-related projects in each of the respective countries. The following are the countries that report they are receiving donor support; Burkina Faso, Botswana, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, The Gambia, Uganda, Tunisia and Zambia. Some examples of the donor organizations identified in National Reports include: ADB (African Development Bank), CIDA (Canada), DANIDA and DANCED (Denmark), DFID (UK), DGIS (The

Netherlands), GEF/World Bank, GTZ (German Technical agency), JICA (Japan), NORAD (Norway), SDC (Switzerland), the European Union and UNDP and USAID (USA).

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 8

To provide the Convention with the required institutional mechanisms and resources.

Budgetary allocations for wetlands conservation and wise use in the country

51. Generally, all countries have mentioned that they have budgetary allocations for "Environment and natural resources management" in which wetlands are included.

Annual and voluntary contributions

52. Only seven Contracting Parties have totally paid their annual contributions up to 1998, namely Burkina Faso, Egypt, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia, and Morocco and Uganda have partially paid their annual contributions for 1998. The National Report from Kenya indicates that "Kenya has paid its annual contributions to the Ramsar Convention up to the year 2002". None of the African Contracting Parties indicate information about additional voluntary contributions.

Optional section - Participation of non- governmental organizations in the implementation of the conventions.

NGOs which have wetlands as part of their "business" in the country

53. There are quite a number of NGOs either international, regional or national that have wetlands as part of their 'business' in a number of the African Contracting Parties. In this regard, the International NGO community includes: BirdLife International, IUCN, WWF and Wetlands International and others. Sixteen Contracting Parties indicated the presence of NGOs working on wetland issues. Overall, there are 11 Contracting Parties which have international NGOs present in their countries; five Contracting Parties indicated having been involved with regional NGOs and 13 indicated they had national NGOs working on wetland issues within the respective countries.

Consultative mechanisms involving NGOs for wetland conservation and Ramsar implementation

54. Only nine of the 24 (37.5%) Contracting Parties indicate that they have some consultative mechanisms through which NGOs can express their views on wetland conservation and wise use.

NGO representative on official delegation to Ramsar COPs

55. Ghana and Zambia indicate that the government includes an NGO representative in the official delegation to Ramsar COPs.

NGOs as part of site management committees

56. The Ghana Wildlife Society is represented on the site management committee of each of the five Ramsar sites. In South Africa, five Ramsar sites are used by local communities through the work of a joint management committee which can include NGO members. In Kenya, at both Ramsar sites NGOs are involved as members of the site management committees.

Areas of work where NGO's are most active

57. Eleven Contracting Parties have indicated that the area of work where NGO are most active is related to General Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan: "To raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels". In addition, other areas of work have been mentioned by the following countries:

- Objective 2: Burkina Faso, Comoros, Guinea and South Africa;
- Objective 4: Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Kenya and South Africa;
- Objective 5: Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, South Africa and Uganda;
- Objective 6: Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda;
- Objective 7: Burkina Faso, Guinea and Kenya.
- Objectives 1 and 8 were not mentioned.

Other comments and suggestions:

Ramsar Strategic Plan 1997-2002

58. Comoros, Senegal and Uganda indicate that the Ramsar Strategic Plan is an important tool which has provided a more focused approach for the implementation of the Convention.

Standing Committee

59. Uganda, which is the current alternate for Africa, indicates that the Standing Committee is effectively discharging its role of carrying out interim activity between the meetings of the Conference of the Parties. Other Contracting Parties such as Kenya and South Africa mention that they have had almost no contact with the Standing Committee since the last COP except for brief meetings during the Kampala meeting (Uganda) and in Dakar (Senegal) at the Wetlands International meeting. South Africa welcomes the proposed initiative to increase the number of representatives from Africa which will be considered at COP7.

The Ramsar Scientific and Technical Panel (STRP)

60. Kenya and South Africa indicate that there has been no direct contact between the African Representative on the STRP and the Ramsar Administrative Authorities in these countries. South Africa suggests a major review of the system.

The Ramsar Bureau

61. Some Contracting Parties such as Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Togo, South Africa and Zambia indicate that several useful and fruitful contacts have been made and the Bureau has provided important guidance on Convention activities and wetland conservation. Uganda indicates that the Bureau is now more focused in the development and implementation of the annual work plan. Ghana indicates the need for collaborative work with the Bureau in National Wetland Policy. Guinea is requesting technical and financial assistance from the Bureau in order to undertake wetland inventories.

The Ramsar NGO partners

62. Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and Zambia mention that there are very useful and fruitful interaction and collaboration with these partners and these interactions should thus continue. Some Contracting Parties, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Morocco, would like to have more input from the NGO Partner Organizations.

General comments and recommendations for the future

63. According to Uganda "The Ramsar Convention is an important intergovernmental treaty which has focused national attention to the conservation and wise use of wetland resources.

The convention needs to be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Contracting Parties and to demonstrate there is more to gain by joining the Convention.” Zambia and Guinea would like to stress the need for assistance in capacity building. Ghana mentions that the Bureau should provide technical assistance to Contracting Parties in Africa by collaborating with Wetlands International and the Netherlands-based Wetland Training Advisory Centre to organize short courses on wetlands at some regional centres. South Africa has provided a set of recommendations from the Subregional Southern African Meeting. Some of these recommendations could be in the form of draft resolutions to be submitted to COP7.

§III. Summary statistics

This Summary statistics section has been prepared based on the responses to each question asked in the National Reports prepared by each Contracting Party from the region. In Section I more detailed information is provided and the corresponding paragraphs are indicated in the “Nos” column below. In the table below the response of each Contracting Party to the key questions asked in the approved National Report format have been scored as either Y=Yes or N=No. In some cases the total of these responses may not be as great as the number of the National Reports submitted for this region because not every question was answered by all Contracting Parties.

This summary table is designed to give a clearer view at both the regional level of those areas of the Convention’s Strategic Plan 1997-2002 which have been addressed since the 6th Conference of the Contracting Parties and conversely, where the National Reports indicate there has been little or no activity. Those areas of activity where the National Reports have indicated little activity are shown shaded and in **bold text**.

| Nos | Strategic Plan General Objectives and (Actions) | Y | N |
|-------|--|-----------|-----------|
| | General Objective 1 - Universal membership | | |
| 1 - 4 | Actions taken to encourage accession by non-Contracting Parties (Actions 1.1.1- 2) | - | - |
| | General Objective 2 - Promoting the wise use of wetlands | | |
| 5 - 8 | National Wetland Policy/Strategy/Action Plan in place (Action 2.1.2) | 1 | 23 |
| 5 - 8 | National Wetland Policy/Strategy/Action Plan is being developed (Action 2.1.2) | 10 | 14 |
| 5 - 8 | Conservation and wise use of wetlands forms part (or will) of other national environmental / conservation planning initiatives (Action 2.1.2) | 18 | 3 |
| 8 | For countries with a federal system of government, there are Wetland Policies/Strategies/Plans in place, being developed or planned for the provincial/state levels of Government (Action 2.1.2) | 0 | 9 |
| 9-13 | Review of legislation and practices which impact on wetlands has been carried out (Action 2.1.1) | 14 | 9 |
| 9-13 | Legislative or similar amendments have been made (Action 2.1.1) | 12 | 9 |
| 14 | Efforts are being made to have wetlands managed as integrated components of land/water and coastal zone resources and environments (Action 2.2.2). | 19 | 2 |
| 16-17 | Actions taken to address the impacts of toxic chemicals and pollution on wetlands (Action 3.3.1) | 11 | 13 |
| 15 | Production of “Wise Use “ publication (Action 2.3.2) | 10 | 13 |
| 18-19 | Actions taken to incorporate wetland economic valuation techniques (Actions 2.4.1, 2.4.3) | 9 | 12 |

| | | | |
|-------|--|-----------|-----------|
| 20 | Environmental Impact Assessment is required (Actions 2.5.2, 2.5.3) | 20 | 3 |
| 21-22 | Wetland restoration and rehabilitation is being undertaken (Actions 2.6.1- 3) | 10 | 12 |
| 23 | The participation of local stakeholders is being encouraged (Actions 2.7.1 - 4) | 17 | 5 |
| 24-26 | Private sector involvement in the conservation and wise use of wetlands is being encouraged (Actions 2.8.1-4) | 8 | 15 |
| | General Objective 3 - Raising awareness of wetland values and functions | | |
| 27-28 | There exist government-run programmes for Education and Public Awareness in this country which include wetlands (Actions 3.2.1-2) | 20 | 4 |
| 27-28 | There exist non-government-run programmes for Education and Public Awareness in this country which include wetlands (Actions 3.2.1-2, 8.3.1) | 9 | 10 |
| 29-30 | Wetlands issues and Ramsar's Wise Use principles are included as part of the curricula of educational institutions. (Action 3.2.5) | 16 | 5 |
| | General Objective 4 - Reinforcing the capacity of institutions | | |
| 31-33 | Mechanisms are in place, or being introduced, to increase cooperation between the institutions responsible for wetlands management (Actions 4.1.1-2, 8.1.9-10) | 21 | 1 |
| 31-33 | A National Ramsar/Wetland Committee exists - government only (Actions 4.1.1-2, 8.1.9-10) | 7 | 8 |
| 31-33 | A National Ramsar/Wetland Committee exists - it includes non-government representatives (it is cross-sectoral) (Actions 4.1.1-2, 8.1.9-10) | 7 | 5 |
| 35 | A review of training opportunities has been completed (Action 4.2.2) | 7 | 13 |
| 36 | Training modules or training programmes specifically for wetland managers have been completed, or are being developed (Action 4.2.3). | 8 | 13 |
| 34-36 | Nationals of the country have gained wetland-related training either within or outside the country (Action 4.2.4). | 18 | 5 |
| | General Objective 5 - Management of Listed sites | | |
| 38-41 | See the table below and Ramsar COP7 DOCS. 13.3 and 15.2 | | |

Status of management plans for Ramsar sites (Actions 5.1.2, 5.2.3)

| Contracting Party | Number of Ramsar sites | Plans being prepared (or updated) | Plans fully prepared | Plans being implemented | Plans include monitoring |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Algeria | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Botswana | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Burkina Faso | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chad | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Comoros | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Congo | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Congo DR | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Egypt | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Gabon* | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| Gambia | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ghana | 6 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Guinea | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Guinea-Bissau* | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Kenya | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Madagascar* | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| Malawi | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Mali | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mauritania* | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| Morocco | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Namibia | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| Niger | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Senegal | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| South Africa | 16 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 6 |
| Togo | 2 | 0 | 2 | - | 2 |
| Tunisia | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Uganda | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Zambia | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTALS | 76 (68*) (67*) | 15 (22%) 21%) | 24 (35%) (36%) | 16 (23%) (24%) | 25 (37%) (36%) |

* National reports from these Contracting Parties have not been received and therefore their sites have not been included in calculating the percentage figures.

| Nos. | General Objective 6 - Designation of Ramsar sites | Y | N |
|-------------|--|----------|-----------|
| 42 | A national inventory of wetlands has been completed (Action 6.1.2) | 6 | 17 |
| 42 | A national inventory of wetlands is planned for the near future (Action 6.1.2) | 13 | 11 |
| 44 | Actions been taken to list under-represented wetland types on the List or in response to the various related decisions from COP6 (Actions 6.2.1, 6.2.3) | 9 | 12 |
| 45 | The country has sites included in the Ramsar list which are transfrontier sites (Actions 6.2.5, 7.1.1) | 12 | 7 |
| | General Objective 7 - Mobilising international cooperation and financial assistance | | |
| 46-47 | Bilateral or multilateral activities have been taken, are under way, or are planned for the management of transfrontier wetlands or their watersheds/catchments (Actions 6.2.5, 7.1.1) | 16 | 4 |
| 48 | Countries which have Ramsar sites that are “twinned” with others (Action 7.1.2). | 1 | 18 |
| 37 | Mechanisms in place to promote cooperative actions between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the focal points for other international environment Conventions to which the country is a signatory (Actions 7.2.3-5, 7.2.7-8) | 17 | 2 |
| 46-47 | The country is cooperating as part of bilateral or multilateral activities directed at the conservation of migratory wetland species (Action 7.2.5). | 16 | 6 |

| | | | |
|-------|---|----|----|
| 50 | Multilateral and/or bilateral donors are supporting projects which contribute to implementation of the Ramsar Convention in this country (Actions 7.33, 7.4.2, 7.4.4) | 20 | 4 |
| 51-52 | The government makes an annual budgetary allocation to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands within the country (Action 7.4.1). | 16 | 7 |
| - | The country has a development assistance programme (Action 7.4.2) | 0 | 20 |
| - | There is a formal process in place for consultation between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the development assistance programme (Action 7.4.2) | 0 | 20 |