



*"People and Wetlands: The Vital Link"*  
7<sup>th</sup> 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 XI: Issues arising from Resolutions and Recommendations of previous meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

Issue 1:

**Resolution VI.11: Consolidation of Resolutions and  
Recommendations of the previous COPs**

**Action Requested:** This document does not require specific action by COP7, unless the Contracting Parties should wish to comment upon it and/or give further instructions to the Ramsar Bureau on this matter.

**Background**

1. Resolution VI.11 of COP6 called for the consolidation of the Resolutions and Recommendations from all previous COPs. This amounts to 79 Recommendations and 41 Resolutions in total. The Annex to Resolution VI.11 specified a range of themes for this consolidation of past decisions of the COPs, further indicating that other themes should be included if appropriate.
2. At its 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Standing Committee urged that "the Bureau should begin work on a compendium or compilation of all decisions taken at the six meetings of the Conference of the Parties held so far, organized by the themes of the Strategic Plan" (Decision 19.24).

**Action taken**

3. In responding to Resolution VI.11 and SC Decision 19.24, the Bureau has reviewed all 120 of these past Recommendations and Resolutions and established a "**key concepts list**" consistent with, but more detailed than, the themes indicated in the Annex to Resolution VI.11. This index has 164 key concepts (and cross-references) which have been referenced and linked to those past decisions of the COPs to which they apply, as well as to relevant objectives and actions in the Strategic Plan. This allows the user to identify a topic of interest from the list and quickly locate those past decisions which show how the issue was considered by the previous meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
4. In addition to the key concepts list, the Bureau has established a **menu system** based on the eight General Objective themes of the Strategic Plan and the sub-themes under each

(Operational Objectives and Actions), and has annotated the Strategic Plan with these same links to key concepts. This allows the user to interrogate the past decisions by entry through a more generic set of key concepts or themes drawn from the structure of the Strategic Plan.

5. For the present this consolidation has been established on the Convention's World Wide Web site, but could also be easily produced in hard copy as required. On the Web site, there are direct links to each of the appropriate Recommendations and Resolutions which relate to each key concept, so it is a simple matter to quickly follow the evolution of each subject through the six COPs and the Strategic Plan.
6. It is also foreseen that after receiving comments on this undertaking at COP7, the Bureau will develop a Web and hardcopy publication in which the most important of the Convention's central issues are joined with reprinted extracts of the most relevant passages from the operative paragraphs of the Recommendations and Resolutions bearing upon them. In this way, the hard copy will better serve the needs of those who have no effective access to the Internet.
7. Attached is a printed copy of the Web page "Key Concept Index to Ramsar Decisions and the Strategic Plan" and the "Annotated Strategic Plan 1997-2002" (the two first chapters only, by way of example).