



*“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**

**Technical Session V:  
The framework for regional and international cooperation regarding wetlands  
Paper 3**

**Guidelines for international cooperation under the Convention<sup>1</sup>**

1. At the 6th Conference of the Contracting Parties, the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) was approved. Action 7.3.4 of the Plan directs that the Standing Committee and the Bureau should “*develop, for consideration at a Technical Session of the 7th COP (1999), guidelines for Contracting Parties on how to carry out their obligations in the field of international cooperation, particularly as regards obligations concerning national funding agencies which provide assistance that may affect wetlands in developing countries.*”
2. In responding to Action 7.3.4 of the Strategic Plan, the Bureau engaged a consultant (Mr Faizal Parish, Global Environment Network) to review all relevant aspects of bilateral and multilateral donor support for wetland-related development assistance projects and, based on this, to formulate appropriate draft recommendations and guidance. The Bureau also prepared the first draft of the document called *Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Convention*, which was reviewed by the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee in October 1998. The Bureau’s draft document indicated that the section of the *Guidelines* relating to bilateral and multilateral donor support would be derived from the report prepared by the consultant Mr Parish.
3. After reviewing the draft *Guidelines* at its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Standing Committee decided “*to establish a drafting subgroup composed of representatives of Argentina (subject to confirmation), Australia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Switzerland, Uganda, the USA, BirdLife International, Wetlands International, and WWF. The subgroup was charged, together with the Bureau, with producing a more complete draft of guidelines for international cooperation, as well as a draft decision, for submission to COP7*”(Decision SC21.21).
4. Members of this drafting subgroup were invited to provide comments on the draft *Guidelines* in December 1998. The document was modified according to these comments, and also the detailed comments received from the Oceania Regional meeting held in New Zealand in early December 1998. In February 1999 the consultant’s report from the project reviewing bilateral and multilateral donor aspects of international cooperation was received by the Bureau and the recommendations were incorporated into the revised version of the *Guidelines*, which along

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<sup>1</sup> See also the associated draft resolution, Ramsar COP7 DOC. 15.20.

with a draft Resolution was then circulated to the members of the Standing Committee for consideration. The document was finalised based on the comments received and approved subsequently by the chair of the Standing Committee for transmission to the Contracting Parties as a COP7 document.

5. Technical Session V at COP7 has the theme of *The framework for regional and international cooperation regarding wetlands*, and in this Session the proposed Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Convention will be presented in two parts. The first paper will introduce the Resolution and the annexed *Guidelines*, and the second paper will examine in detail those aspects relating to bilateral and multilateral donor support for wetland conservation and wise use projects.