



"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**

Background Document

**The tools for implementing the Convention on Wetlands
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)**

Introduction

1. The Ramsar Convention aims to provide a framework for actions to be taken at the international, regional, national, provincial and local levels which will result in the long term conservation and wise use of wetlands.
2. Each Conference of the Contracting Parties reviews the global achievements and priorities of the Convention and considers for adoption guidelines or other 'tools' to assist the Contracting Parties with their implementation of the Convention.
3. At COP6 in 1996 the Strategic Plan of the Convention was adopted for the period 1997-2002. It described under eight General Objectives an ambitious programme of work for the ensuing six years. The progress with implementing the Strategic Plan is described in Ramsar COP7 DOC. 14 (Annex1), and, based on this review, a Work Plan for the Convention for the period 2000-2002 is proposed.
4. The agenda for COP7, and especially the programme of the Technical Sessions, has in large part been determined by the actions specified in the Strategic Plan 1997-2002. More than any COP before, COP7 will see a range of new 'tools' of the Convention under consideration. These will serve to complement the existing 'tools' and to provide the Ramsar Convention with an increasingly detailed 'tool box' of frameworks, guidelines and mechanisms for advancing its work. In the section which follows these 'tools' are presented, showing their relationship to the themes of the Convention's work as set out in the Strategic Plan 1997-2002.
5. At the 7th meeting of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel in 1998, the members developed a diagram to summarise how the various Convention tools relating to the management of Ramsar sites should work together as an integrated package. The Bureau was requested to refine this diagram further and provide it to COP7. This is shown in Annex 1.

The evolving Ramsar Convention 'tool box'

Strategic Plan General

Existing (*shown in italic*) and proposed 'Tools' of the Ramsar

Objectives	Convention
1 - Universal membership	
2 - Wise use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guidelines for implementation of the wise use concept (Recommendation 4.10)</i> • <i>Additional guidance for the implementation of the wise use concept (Resolution 5.6)</i> • Guidelines for reviewing laws and institutions to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands (COP7 DOC. 15.7) - Operational Objective 2.1 • Guidelines for developing and implementing National Wetland Policies (COP7 DOC. 15.6) - Operational Objective 2.1 • Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management (COP7 DOC. 15.19) - Operational Objective 2.2 • Restoration as an element of national planning for wetland conservation and wise use (COP7 DOC. 15.17) - Operational Objective 2.6 • Guidelines for establishing participatory processes to involve local communities and indigenous people in the management of wetlands (COP7 DOC. 15.8) - Operational Objective 2.7 • Global action plan for the wise use and management of peatlands (COP7 DOC. 15.18) • <i>See also 5 below - Guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands (Resolution 5.7) (see also COP7 DOC. 13.3 and 15.12)</i> • <i>See also 5 below - A framework for designing an effective wetland monitoring programme (Resolution VI.1)</i> • See also 5 below - Wetland Risk Assessment Framework (COP7 DOC. 15.10)
3 - Raising awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ramsar Convention's Outreach Programme (COP7 DOC. 15.9) - Operational Objectives 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 • See also 2 above - Guidelines for establishing participatory processes to involve local communities and indigenous people in the management of wetlands (COP7 DOC. 15.8)
4 - Reinforcing the capacity of institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See also 7 below - Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Convention (COP7 DOC. 15.20) • Wetlands for the Future training initiative (COP7 DOC. 15.32)

<p>5 - Conservation of Listed sites (See Annex 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands (Resolution 5.7)</i> (see also COP7 DOC. 13.3 and 15.12) • <i>Guidelines for describing and maintaining the ecological character of listed sites (Resolution VI.1)</i> - Operational Objective 5.1 • <i>A framework for designing an effective wetland monitoring programme (Resolution VI.1)</i> • <i>Guidelines for operation of the Montreux Record (of sites where change in ecological character has occurred, may occur, or is likely to occur) (Resolution VI.1)</i> - Operational Objective 5.1 • Wetland Risk Assessment Framework (COP7 DOC. 15.10)
<p>6 - Designation of Ramsar sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance (COP7 DOC. 15.11) - Operational Objectives 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 • Guidelines for identifying and designating karst and other subterranean hydrological systems as Wetlands of International Importance (COP7 DOC. 15.13) - Operational Objectives 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 • See also 2 above - Draft Global action plan for the wise use and management of peatlands ((COP7 DOC. 15.18)
<p>7 - International cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for International Cooperation under the Convention (COP7 DOC. 15.20) - Operational Objectives 7.1, 7.2, 7.4 and 7.4 • Partnerships and cooperation with other Conventions, including harmonized information management infrastructures (COP7 DOC. 15.4) • See also 8 below - Partnerships with international organizations (COP7 DOC. 15.3)
<p>8 - Institutional mechanisms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional categorisation of countries under the Convention and composition, roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee, including tasks of Standing Committee members (COP7 DOC. 15.1) - Operational Objective 8.1 • Composition and <i>modus operandi</i> of the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (COP7 DOC. 15.2) - Operational Objective 8.1 • Critical evaluation of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use and its future operations (COP7 DOC. 15.5) - Operational Objective 8.1 • Partnerships with international organisations (COP7 DOC. 15.3) - Operational Objective 8.3

Annex 1

Summary diagram of the integrated package of Convention tools for the management of Ramsar sites

