



## 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

“Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future”  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 21-29 October 2018

Ramsar COP13 Doc.18.8 Rev.1

### Draft resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2019-2021

1. RECALLING that Regional Initiatives under the Ramsar Convention, which include regional centres for training and capacity building and regional networks to facilitate cooperation, are intended as an operational means to provide effective support for improved implementation of the Convention in specific geographic regions, through voluntary international cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern;
2. ALSO RECALLING that the Conference of the Parties has recognized the importance of Ramsar Regional Initiatives in promoting the objectives of the Convention in several Resolutions; and
3. FURTHER RECALLING that, at its 12th meeting (COP12), the Conference of the Parties<sup>1</sup>, instructed the Standing Committee, through Resolution XII.8, to undertake a review of the existing *Operational Guidelines for Regional Initiatives* and to formulate recommendations for their improvement, and that the work undertaken to this end led to the *Operational Framework* included in Standing Committee decision SC52-16; and

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

4. DECIDES that Regional Initiatives from now on are called Ramsar Regional Initiatives, with the acronym RRI;
5. REAFFIRMS the effectiveness of regional cooperation through networks and centres, grouped under the term Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs), in supporting improved implementation of the Convention on Wetlands and its Resolutions;
6. DECIDES that any RRI run jointly by several Contracting Parties for improved implementation of the Convention should comply with the principles listed in paragraph 8 of the present Resolution in order to be formally recognized under the Convention as a Ramsar Regional Initiative, and that the *Operational Guidelines* adopted through Decision SC52-16 can be applied as appropriate for each RRI, taking into account that they will be revised at the 14th meeting of the Conference of Contracting Parties (COP14);
7. REQUESTS that Contracting Parties participating in any existing or future RRI endeavour to achieve full compliance with the principles listed in paragraph 8 of the present Resolution;

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of Turkey, which entered a reservation.

8. DECIDES that RRI, to maintain their formal recognition as an RRI, have to be in line with the following principles;
  - a. RRI have to be endorsed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP), or interessionally by the Standing Committee if they are new;
  - b. RRI have to be subject to review by each COP;
  - c. RRI have to develop terms of reference, which deal with their own rules of procedure, structure, governance and membership, including the status of the Ramsar Convention's Secretariat's participation in the RRI, and should be consistent with the decisions and resolutions of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention;
  - d. RRI have to be financially accountable;
  - e. RRI should undertake tasks that have to do with the implementation of the Convention in their region and can speak in its own name only, using their own logo only;
  - f. RRI have to submit to the Secretariat, according to the format approved by the Standing Committee, an annual report of progress on their work and a financial summary at the end of each year, together with a work plan and budget for the following year;
  - g. RRI established for fewer than six years, that want to apply for financial support from the Ramsar Convention core budget start-up funding, must request it in their budget submitted for the following year;
  
9. RE-ESTABLISHES the (open-ended) Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group under Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, to draft new *Operational guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives*, and submit their recommendations to the Standing Committee at its 58th meeting, which should include, a draft resolution for consideration by the Standing Committee; the draft resolution must take into account the principles listed in paragraph 8 of the present Resolution as well as the diversity of RRI and their specific needs;
  
10. REQUESTS the Standing Committee to consider the recommendations on *Operational guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives* from the re-established Ramsar Regional Initiatives Working Group, and submit them for consideration at COP14, and FURTHER REQUESTS the Standing Committee at its 56th meeting to facilitate the functioning of the Working Group and allocate in core budget surplus, and;
  
11. ENDORSES the existing RRI listed below as operating in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands until the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14). This list includes:

Four regional Ramsar centres for training and capacity building:

- Ramsar Centre for Eastern Africa (RAMCEA),
- Ramsar Regional Centre for Training and Research in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO),
- Ramsar Regional Centre – Central and West Asia (RRC-CWA),
- Ramsar Regional Centre – East Asia (RRC-EA), and

Fifteen Ramsar networks for regional cooperation:

- Ramsar Regional Initiative for West African Coastal Zone Wetlands (WaCoWet),
- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Niger River Basin (NigerWet),
- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Senegal River Basin,
- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of High Andean Wetlands,
- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of the Plata River Basin,
- Caribbean Wetlands Ramsar Regional Initiative (CariWet),
- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs,

- Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Amazon River Basin,
  - East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership,
  - Ramsar Regional Initiative for Central Asia,
  - Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative,
  - Mediterranean Wetlands Ramsar Regional Initiative (MedWet),
  - Carpathian Wetland Ramsar Regional Initiative (CWI),
  - Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Ramsar Regional Initiative (NorBalWet),
  - Ramsar Regional Initiative on Black and Azov Seas Coastal Wetlands (BlackSeaWet);
12. REQUESTS that the Standing Committee endorse proposals for new initiatives submitted intersessionally before COP14, based on a positive assessment of the compliance of their structure and work plan with the principles in paragraph 8 of the present Resolution;
  13. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to open the call for proposals for new RRIs, to be endorsed by the Conference of the Parties at COP14 or by the Standing Committee at its meetings before COP14;
  14. NOTING that Resolution XIII.xx on *Financial and budgetary matters* includes within the Convention core budget for 2019-2021 a budget line “Support to Ramsar Regional Initiatives”, to provide start-up support for the running costs of RRIs established for fewer than six years;
  15. DECIDES that the levels of financial support from the Convention core budget to eligible RRIs for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 will be determined annually by the Standing Committee, based on their most recent annual reports and updated work plans to be submitted in accordance with the required format and timetable, and informed by the specific recommendations made by the Subgroup on Finance to the Standing Committee;
  16. URGES RRIs that receive financial support from the core budget for 2019-2021 to consider using part of this support to seek sustainable funding from other sources, particularly during the last years in which they qualify for such support;
  17. REQUESTS the Secretariat within its existing legal framework and mandate to assist, as appropriate, Contracting Parties in the administration of non-core funded projects, including, but not limited to successful fundraising for RRIs; and FURTHER INSTRUCTS Secretariat staff, identified in Resolution XIII.xx Annex 4 as supported with core funds, not to be involved in the day-to-day administration of non-core funded projects, as this role would be the responsibility of any Secretariat staff supported with non-core funds for that specific purpose;
  18. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties and INVITES other potential donors, bilateral or multilateral, to support RRIs, whether or not they are also receiving funding through the Convention’s core budget, and INVITES Contracting Parties that are geographically related to an RRI to consider giving financial support, as appropriate;
  19. RECOGNIZING that the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative RRI is financially independent of the Convention and has its own provisional budget for the next triennium, which is annexed to the present resolution for information purposes in response to a request by MedWet and does not constitute a precedent for RRIs (see Annex 1, Tables 1 and 2);
  20. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to publicize RRIs at the global level as a mechanism to provide international cooperation and support for the implementation of the objectives of the

Convention, that complement the efforts of the Ramsar Administrative Authorities and the National Focal Points at the national level;

21. REQUESTS that the RRIs maintain active and regular contact with the Secretariat, and INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to advise RRIs on how to reinforce their capacity and effectiveness;
22. REQUESTS that the Secretariat continue publishing on the Convention's website information provided by the RRIs, including reports on their successes and work plans;
23. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, as appropriate, to invite regional intergovernmental, international and non-governmental organizations, and organizations of indigenous peoples and local communities, and may also invite transboundary river and groundwater basin organizations, to participate in or collaborate with RRIs;
24. ENCOURAGES the Contracting Parties concerned to invite National Focal Points designated by the Parties for scientific and technical matters (for the STRP) and for the Convention's programme on communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA), to take an active part in the RRIs' organization, work and projects, when appropriate;
25. ENCOURAGES the Contracting Parties concerned to take the necessary steps to achieve financial sustainability of the RRIs, preferably from a variety of sources, as well as to establish mechanisms and procedures to ensure their sustainability beyond specific project periods, and try to avoid RRIs from becoming dependent on a single major donor, thus improving the possibility for financial stability for the RRI;
26. ENCOURAGES the Contracting Parties concerned to identify donors that are willing to provide additional support to the RRI, notably through specific projects and cooperation programmes;
27. INVITES the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) to partner with and support RRIs in their undertakings, including in particular through capacity building and fundraising efforts;
28. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to prepare a summary assessment of the operations and success of the RRIs operating during the period 2019-2021 for consideration by the Standing Committee and submission to COP14;
29. DECIDES that previous Resolutions and decisions concerning RRIs are no longer valid to the extent that they are inconsistent with the present Resolution.
30. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat's legal adviser to review existing relevant Resolutions and decisions, identifying the ones that are inconsistent with the present Resolution and relevant decisions, and propose which ones should be retired or repealed, and FURTHER DECIDES that the results of the review may be shared with the RRIs Working Group, to be consolidated and presented at SC58 for approval, which can be included in a new draft resolution on RRI may be retired afterwards, *inter alia*,
  - Resolution VIII.30 (2003-2005),
  - Resolution IX.7 (2006-2008),
  - Resolution X.6 (2009-2012),
  - Resolution XI.5 (2013-2015), and
  - Resolution XII.8 (2016-2018).

**Annex 1 – Budget for the triennium 2019-2021, for MedWet**

**Table 1. Budget for the operations of the MedWet Initiative for 2019-2021**

<b>BUDGET LINE</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>COORDINATOR</b>			
Coordinator on a part-time basis	48,000	48,000	48,000
<b>STAFF COSTS</b>			
All salaries including taxes and social charges	90,000	90,000	90,000
<b>EXPERTS &amp; CONSULTANTS</b>			
Regular needs (STN, MeRSiM-Net and Com)	29,000	29,000	29,000
Other experts	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>OFFICIAL TRAVEL</b>			
MedWet Coordinator	6,000	6,000	6,000
MedWet Secretariat Staff	4,000	4,000	4,000
MedWet/Com and MedWet/SG	3,000	3,000	15,000
<b>OFFICE COSTS</b>			
Office management	18,000	18,000	18,000
<b>COMMUNICATION SERVICES</b>			
Website & dissemination	1,500	1,500	1,500
Communication tools	3,500	3,500	3,500
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
Miscellaneous expenses	2,000	2,500	2,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>208,000</b>	<b>211,500</b>	<b>220,000</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
MedWet countries contribution	129,378	129,378	129,378
Agence de l'Eau	15,000		
To be secured from other donors	89.122,00	107.622,00	116.122,00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>208,000</b>	<b>211,500</b>	<b>220,000</b>

**Table 2. Countries Contribution according to the 2016-2018 UN Scale (in Euro)**

Country	UN 2018 All Countries	UN 2018 Med Countries	Euro	Percentage
Albania	0,008	0,056	514	0,4%
Algeria	0,161	1,123	1,466	1,1%
Andorra	0,006	0,042	514	0,4%
Bosnia & Herzegovina	0,013	0,091	514	0,4%
Bulgaria	0,045	0,314	514	0,4%
Croatia	0,099	0,690	901	0,7%
Cyprus	0,043	0,300	514	0,4%
Egypt	0,152	1,060	1,384	1,1%
France	4,859	33,889	44,235	34,2%
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0,007	0,049	514	0,4%
Greece	0,471	3,285	4,288	3,3%
Israel	0,43	2,999	3,915	3,0%
Italy*	3,748	26,140	28,500	22,0%
Jordan	0,02	0,139	514	0,4%
Lebanon	0,046	0,321	514	0,4%
Libya	0,125	0,872	1,138	0,9%
Malta	0,016	0,112	514	0,4%
Monaco	0,01	0,070	514	0,4%
Montenegro	0,004	0,028	514	0,4%
Morocco	0,054	0,377	514	0,4%
Portugal	0,392	2,734	3,569	2,8%
Serbia	0,032	0,223	514	0,4%
Slovenia	0,084	0,586	765	0,6%
Spain	2,443	17,039	22,241	17,2%
Syrian Arab Republic	0,024	0,167	514	0,4%
Tunisia	0,028	0,195	514	0,4%
Turkey	1,018	7,100	9,268	7,2%
	14,338	100	<b>129,378</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Under the condition of annual approvals in compliance with the Italian legislation, as a voluntary contribution. The UN 22% threshold has been applied to the Italian contribution at the request of Italy.

**Note.** Annual contributions from the countries participating in the MedWet Initiative are calculated using the UN Scale of Assessment 2018. When the UN Scale of Assessment will be updated through adoption by the UN General Assembly, the countries contributions will be modified accordingly.