

## Recommendation 7.4



*"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**

### The Wetlands for the Future Initiative

1. RECALLING Article 4.5 of the Convention and Operational Objective 4.2 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 which urges Contracting Parties to promote and undertake a range of actions designed to provide training for institutions and individuals involved in the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
2. NOTING Recommendation 6.5 of COP6, which also called upon Contracting Parties and the Ramsar Bureau to pursue actions directed at fostering and supporting wetland manager training;
3. AWARE that the National Reports submitted for this Conference indicated very clearly the need for greater priority to be given to training in the next triennium;
4. NOTING WITH SATISFACTION that the Convention has been successfully implementing the Wetlands for the Future Initiative for capacity-building in the Western Hemisphere with funding provided during the past four years by the United States of America in the amount of US\$ 250,000 per year;
5. NOTING that the Wetlands for the Future Initiative has as its goals:
  - i) the development of human resources needed for the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands;
  - ii) the training of wetland managers in the professional and technical skills needed to pursue the goals of the Ramsar Convention;
  - iii) the establishment of regional technical information networks to support conservation and the sustainable management of wetlands;
  - iv) the development of local, national, or regional awareness of, and support for, the conservation of wetlands;
  - v) the advancement of ecologically sound community management; and
  - vi) the linkage of the Wetlands for the Future Initiative to other programmes that share the overall goals of wetland management and conservation;
6. FURTHER NOTING that the Wetlands for the Future Initiative has since 1995 funded 60 projects in 14 countries of the Western Hemisphere, which has significantly improved the prospects for better wetland management and coordination on wetland issues in the Hemisphere;
7. RECOGNIZING the dire need for similar initiatives or programmes in other parts of the world;

8. ACKNOWLEDGING the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy and efforts made by Contracting Parties Australia and Japan and the Convention's International Organization Partners, notably Wetlands International; and
9. ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER the efforts of countries, including Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and others and International Organization Partners which are actively engaged in similar initiatives and programmes in Africa, Asia, Oceania and other regions;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

10. URGES Contracting Parties and other organizations concerned about wetland conservation and sustainable use to initiate and support programmes similar to the Wetlands for the Future Initiative in other parts of the world, including in the African region and particularly in the francophone countries.