



"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**

Partnerships and cooperation with other Conventions, including harmonized information management infrastructures

1. RECALLING Operational Objective 7.2 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 which identifies a range of actions to strengthen and formalize linkages with other international and/or regional environment Conventions;
2. RECALLING IN PARTICULAR Action 7.2.1 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 which instructs the Standing Committee and the Ramsar Bureau to *"participate in, or initiate, consultations with related conventions to foster information exchange and cooperation, and develop an agenda for potential joint actions"*;
3. NOTING the benefits to be gained from synergy and integrated implementation, where appropriate, of environment-related conventions, at all levels: global, regional, national and local;
4. NOTING WITH PLEASURE Decision IV/15 of the 4th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions which *"endorses the Joint Work Plan with the Convention on Wetlands . . . as a framework for enhanced cooperation between these conventions and encourages its implementation"*;
5. NOTING ALSO Decision IV/4 of CBD's COP4 relating to the conservation of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems, which urged Contracting Parties, when requesting support from the Global Environment Facility, to give priority to a) identifying inland water ecosystems taking into account the Ramsar criteria for Wetlands of International Importance, b) preparing and implementing integrated watershed, catchment and river basin management plans for these, and c) investigating the processes contributing to the loss of biological diversity of inland water ecosystems;
6. WELCOMING Decisions IV/5 and IV/10 of CBD COP4 relating to marine and coastal biodiversity and impact assessment, respectively, and the joint actions and collaboration in these fields which they propose;
7. ALSO WELCOMING the actions proposed by the Ramsar Bureau to develop appropriate joint actions with the Convention on Migratory Species and to open dialogue with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to progress future cooperation;

8. ACKNOWLEDGING WITH APPROVAL the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention Bureau and the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification signed on 5 December 1998, and also the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ramsar Bureau and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre as signed at this COP; and
9. CONVINCED of the advantages to be gained from harmonising the information gathering and handling activities of the international and regional environment-related conventions, and having considered the recommendations in this regard contained in the report prepared by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) entitled "*Feasibility study for a harmonised information management infrastructure for the biodiversity-related treaties*";

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

10. ENDORSES the Joint Work Plan with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as appended in Annex I, and instructs the Ramsar Bureau, as resources allow, to give priority to its implementation in the forthcoming triennium;
11. ENDORSES IN PARTICULAR the proposed collaboration and cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the CBD in the areas of inland water ecosystems, marine and coastal biodiversity, impact assessment and incentive measures;
12. URGES eligible Contracting Parties of both the Ramsar Convention and the CBD to develop projects suitable for consideration by the Global Environment Facility, in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of Decision IV/4 of CBD's COP4, relating to inland water ecosystems and communicate details of progress on these to the Ramsar Bureau;
13. REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau to give priority in its programme of work for the next triennium, as resources allow, to the development of joint actions with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the implementation of the Memoranda of Cooperation signed with the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) and the World Heritage Centre (WHC), as appended in Annexes II and III respectively, and the development of a Memorandum of Cooperation with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
14. CALLS UPON the Contracting Parties to the above Conventions to take into consideration the Joint Work Plan with CBD, and the Memoranda of Understanding and Cooperation in place with the CMS, CCD and WHC, respectively, to strengthen their internal, regional, and international mechanisms and policy instruments so as to enhance the coordinated implementation of these treaties, where appropriate, so that wetland conservation and wise use can be considered within the broader frameworks of environmental management and sustainable development;
15. DIRECTS the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), in accordance with Resolution VII.2 and the availability of funds and human resources, to exchange information, cooperate and coordinate activities, where appropriate, with the equivalent expert bodies of the CBD, CMS, CCD and relevant regional fora, and to report, through the Standing Committee, to the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties on the results of such actions;

16. REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau to continue its participation in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the WCMC report on harmonising information management among the environment-related Conventions, and in particular to assist, where resources permit, the proposed pilot testing of a streamlined approach to National Report preparations as suggested in Section 5.2 of the report;
17. FURTHER REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau to encourage the involvement of the secretariats of CCD, UNFCCC, and the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the WCMC report on harmonising information management, taking into account the initiatives within the CBD Clearing-House Mechanism; and
18. ALSO REQUESTS the Ramsar Bureau to explore developing partnerships, including joint work plans if appropriate, with the Apia Convention on the Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific and the subsequent Noumea Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific, and the Cartagena Convention on the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean, to extend participation in the Ramsar Convention by small island developing states.

Addenda

Annex I - Joint Work Plan with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Annex II - Memorandum of Cooperation with the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

Annex III – Memorandum of Understanding with UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre (WHC)