



*“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

**Sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance:  
official descriptions, conservation status, and management plans,  
including the situation of particular sites in the territories of  
specific Contracting Parties**

1. RECALLING Article 2.1 which states that *“each Contracting Party shall designate suitable wetlands within its territory for inclusion in a List of Wetlands of International Importance”* and that *“the boundaries of each wetland shall be precisely . . . delimited on a map”*;
2. AWARE of Article 3.1 which specifies that *“Contracting Parties shall formulate and implement their planning so as to promote the conservation of the wetlands included in the List”*;
3. ALSO AWARE of Article 3.2 which provides that *“each Contracting Party shall arrange to be informed at the earliest possible time if the ecological character of any wetland in its territory and included in the List has changed, is changing or is likely to change”* and that *“information on such changes shall be passed without delay”* to the Ramsar Bureau;
4. NOTING Recommendation 4.7 which adopted the ‘Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands’ (hereinafter referred to as ‘Ramsar Information Sheet’, RIS) as the means for presenting site descriptions for the Ramsar Database;
5. FURTHER NOTING Resolutions 5.3 and VI.13, as well as Operational Objective 5.3 of the Convention Strategic Plan 1997-2002, which requested Contracting Parties to ensure that RISs and maps have been submitted for all sites;
6. ALSO NOTING Action 5.2.3 of the Convention Strategic Plan 1997-2002 aims to *“ensure that by the 8<sup>th</sup> COP (2002), management plans or other mechanisms are in preparation, or in place, for at least half of the Ramsar sites in each Contracting Party”*, and WELCOMING the indications provided in National Reports for this Conference that this is the case for 416 sites, or 44 per cent of those included in the Ramsar List;
7. ALSO WELCOMING the advice provided in the National Reports for this Conference that for 358 Ramsar sites (37%) there exists some form of monitoring regime to help guide management actions and assist detection of changes in ecological character, pursuant to Article 3.2 of the Convention;
8. RECOGNIZING that Recommendation 6.13 called upon the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to monitor the use of the Ramsar *Guidelines on management planning for*

*Ramsar sites and other wetlands*, as adopted by Resolution 5.7, and to review the most recent advances in this area;

9. RECALLING Recommendation 6.17 which referred to numerous actions urged for addressing issues of ecological change affecting specific sites in the territories of several Contracting Parties;
10. CONSIDERING Recommendation 4.8 and Resolution 5.4 which established the 'Montreux Record' of Ramsar sites where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur, and Resolution VI.1 which provided further guidance for the operation of the Montreux Record; and
11. HAVING ALSO CONSIDERED the recommendations contained in the document for this Conference Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3 relating to the improved application of the Montreux Record and Management Guidance Procedures;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

12. WELCOMES the statements made in the National Reports or during this Conference concerning the impending, or planned, extensions to existing Ramsar sites, and designations of new Ramsar sites in the near future or during the next triennium, from the following 56 Contracting Parties: Albania (1 site), Algeria (4 sites), Argentina (1 site), Australia (4 sites), Austria (1 site), Bangladesh (1 site), Belgium (1 site), Brazil (2 sites), Canada (3 sites and extension of 2 existing sites), Costa Rica (2 sites), Ecuador (5 new sites and 1 extension), Estonia (10 sites), Finland (50 sites), France (3 sites), Germany (1 site), Guatemala (3 sites and 1 extension), Guinea-Bissau (2 sites), Honduras (7 sites), Hungary (4 sites), India (25 sites), Indonesia (3 sites), Islamic Republic of Iran (2 sites), Israel (4 sites), Ireland (19 sites), Kenya (1 site), Latvia (1 site), Madagascar (1 site), Malawi (2 sites), Mongolia (6 sites), Namibia (2 sites), Nepal (3 sites), Netherlands (27 sites), New Zealand (3 sites), Nicaragua (3 sites), Niger (1 site), Norway (12 sites), Panama (2 sites), Papua New Guinea (2 sites), Philippines (3 sites), Poland (5 sites), Republic of Korea (1 site), Romania (8 sites), Russian Federation (90 sites), Slovak Republic (2 sites), Slovenia (4 sites), Sweden (21 new sites and 9 extensions), Suriname (2 sites), Switzerland (2 sites), The Gambia (2 sites), Trinidad and Tobago (1 site), Uganda (3 sites), Ukraine (10 sites), United Kingdom (7 sites in Bermuda, 1 site in the British Indian Ocean Territory, 1 site in the British Virgin Islands, and 1 site in Scotland), Vietnam (3 sites), and Zambia (7 sites); and encourages these Contracting Parties, if they have not already done so, to forward completed Ramsar Information Sheets and boundary maps for these 13 site extensions and 398 new sites to the Bureau as soon as possible;
13. ALSO WELCOMES the advice received during this Conference of the accession of Lebanon (the 115<sup>th</sup> Contracting Party) with the designation of 3 Ramsar sites, and the impending accession of Cuba with the proposed designation of Ciénaga de Zapata, the largest wetland in the Caribbean island countries;
14. EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN that there remain a number of Ramsar sites for which an official description has not been provided or updated, or has not been provided in one of the three official working languages of the Convention, and/or for which a suitable map has not been submitted;

15. CALLS UPON the following Contracting Parties, as a matter of the highest priority, to submit site descriptions conforming with the Ramsar Information Sheet format, and in one of the Convention's three official languages, for a total of 54 Ramsar sites within their territories where no such descriptions have yet been provided (as indicated in Annex 1 of document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3): Algeria (1 site), Belize (1 site), Gabon (3 sites), Germany (10 sites), Ireland (23 sites), Islamic Republic of Iran (1 site), Mauritania (1 site), Monaco (1 site), Netherlands (10 sites), Spain (1 site) and Yugoslavia (2 sites);
16. FURTHER CALLS UPON the following Contracting Parties, as matter of the highest priority, to provide suitable maps for a total of 8 Ramsar sites where no such maps have yet been submitted (as indicated in Annex 2 of document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3): Bahrain (1 site), India (4 sites), Netherlands (2 sites), and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1 site);
17. URGES the following Contracting Parties to provide to the Bureau as soon as possible Ramsar Information Sheets, in one of the Convention's official working languages, for a total of 21 sites where only other language versions have so far been submitted (as indicated in Annex 3 of document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3): Germany (18 sites) and The Netherlands (3 sites);
18. FURTHER URGES the following Contracting Parties that have yet to provide updated Ramsar site descriptions, using the current Ramsar Information Sheet, to do so as a matter of priority for a total of 29 sites (as indicated in Annex 4 of document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3): Bulgaria (2 sites), Denmark (11 sites), Ghana (1 site), Guinea-Bissau (1 site), India (6 sites), Ireland (1 site), Kenya (1 site), Mali (3 sites), Spain (1 site), Uganda (1 site), and the United Kingdom (1 site); and NOTES the statement of Denmark that the Greenland Home Rule Administration, which has competence for implementation of the Convention in Greenland, will complete the process of updating Ramsar Information Sheets for the 11 Ramsar sites in Greenland by the year 2000;
19. AGREES to raise the Convention's target for management planning at Ramsar sites, as set by Action 5.2.3 of the Strategic Plan 1997-2002, and URGES Contracting Parties to ensure that, by COP8 (2002), management plans are in preparation, or in place, for at least three quarters of the Ramsar sites in each Contracting Party and to seek to have these plans being implemented in full;
20. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to adopt and apply, as part of their management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands, a suitable monitoring regime, such as provided by Resolution VI.1, and to incorporate within these monitoring regimes the Convention's *Wetland Risk Assessment Framework* (Resolution VII.10);
21. EXPRESSES ITS APPRECIATION to those Contracting Parties and others which provided their advice and experience during the STRP's review of the Ramsar *Guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands* (Resolution 5.7); REAFFIRMS the continuing value of these Guidelines, as reported by the STRP in document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 13.3, Annex 5; ACCEPTS the Panel's recommendations for areas where the Guidelines can be further elaborated; and INSTRUCTS the STRP, with support from the Ramsar Bureau, to prepare for consideration at COP8 further guidance with respect to management planning, which reviews the latest approaches to environmental, social and

- economic impact assessment and cost-benefit analysis, zonation, multiple use, design and maintenance of buffer zones, and the application of the precautionary principle;
22. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to take into consideration the Ramsar *Guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands* in developing their policy and legal instruments relating to wetlands (Resolutions VII.6 and VII.7 respectively) and in promoting the full participation of local stakeholders in the development and, where appropriate, the implementation of management plans for Ramsar-listed and other wetlands (Resolution VII.8);
  23. NOTES WITH APPROVAL that, since COP6, Management Guidance Procedures for Montreux Record sites have been conducted in Costa Rica, Denmark, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Iran (3 sites), and Italy (3 sites), and that for a number of other Montreux Record sites the Ramsar Bureau has made site visits and held discussions with government officials and others to assist Contracting Parties in addressing management issues in those sites;
  24. WELCOMES the actions taken by Algeria, Bolivia, Germany, Italy, Mexico, South Africa and Venezuela, all of which have removed sites from the Montreux Record since COP6, and URGES those Contracting Parties with sites on the Montreux Record, and especially those for which a Management Guidance Procedure has been conducted, to increase their efforts to address the management problems of these sites with a view to their early removal from the Record;
  25. ALSO WELCOMES the updates provided by Contracting Parties, through their National Reports to this Conference, on the status of their Montreux Record sites, and NOTES WITH PLEASURE that a number of these Contracting Parties have indicated their intention to seek the removal of sites from the Montreux Record in the near future;
  26. NOTES the statement of Belgium that the Ramsar site 'De Ijzerbroeken te Diksmuide en Lo-Reninge' should once more be included in the Montreux Record, owing to difficulties in maintaining adequate water quantity and quality;
  27. WELCOMES the statement of Ukraine that two Ramsar sites ('Tendrivska Bay' and 'Yagorlytska Bay') can now be removed from the Montreux Record, notes that supporting information has been communicated to the Bureau, and encourages the Ukraine authorities to continue their efforts for the conservation and wise use of these wetlands;
  28. ALSO WELCOMES the indication by Denmark that Ringkøbing Fjord Ramsar site can be removed from the Montreux Record, following implementation of a range of conservation measures, and further to the recommendations of the 1996 Ramsar Management Guidance Procedure report;
  29. NOTES WITH CONCERN that the Austrian Ramsar site 'Donau-March-Auen', referred to in Recommendation 6.17, cannot be removed from the Montreux Record owing to the plans for construction of a waterway linking the Danube, Oder and Elbe rivers, which could adversely affect the ecological character of this site, as well as additional Ramsar sites in Austria, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic;

30. ACKNOWLEDGES the significant efforts made by the Spanish authorities to address the impacts of the accidental release of toxic mining waste upstream of Montreux Record-listed Doñana Ramsar site, and urges the continuation of all possible measures to ensure that the ecological character of Doñana is maintained and enhanced, in particular through implementation of the 'Doñana 2005' initiative;
31. NOTES that Australia will bring forward boundary redefinitions for Coongie Lakes and Western Shoreline of Port Phillip Bay Ramsar sites and will use these as case study sites for the work on boundary definition identified in Resolution VII.23;
32. ALSO NOTES that construction of a water way to link Germany, Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine may have significant impacts on wetlands and INVITES the States concerned to undertake a full review and assessment of these impacts, in accordance with international transboundary impact assessment procedures;
33. REQUESTS those Contracting Parties with sites included in the Montreux Record, and which have not provided updates on the conservation status of these sites as part of their National Reports to this Conference or other appropriate means, to do so as soon as possible, and to advise on the likely time frame for the removal of these sites from the Record;
34. DIRECTS the Ramsar Bureau, with assistance from the STRP, to investigate and report to COP8 on the feasibility of the Convention establishing a record (the "San José Record") of sites where management plans are being implemented which are models for demonstrating application of the Ramsar *Guidelines for the implementation of the wise use concept*;
35. EXPRESSES THANKS to those Contracting Parties that provided in their National Reports advice on the actions taken in response to the issues identified with respect to particular sites by COP6 Recommendation 6.17 (including 6.17.1-5); CONGRATULATES those that have taken appropriate actions; and URGES those which have yet to provide such advice or take remedial actions do so as soon as possible;
36. NOTING Recommendation 6.17.5, warmly welcomes the statement made by Romania on behalf of the Lower Danube States of Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine concerning their initiative to establish a Lower Danube Green Corridor as a 'Gift to the Earth' in cooperation with WWF International;
37. EXPRESSES ITS APPRECIATION to those Contracting Parties which in their National Reports to this Conference provided information, in accordance with Article 3.2 of the Convention, on changes in ecological character that have occurred, are occurring, or may occur at one or more of their Ramsar sites, namely: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Comoros, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Germany, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Peru, Sri Lanka, The Gambia, Togo, United Kingdom, Venezuela and Yugoslavia; COMMENDS in particular Australia, Germany, Ireland, Japan and the United Kingdom for the detailed advice provided on this matter; and URGES all of these Contracting Parties to consider, at the earliest opportunity, the possible inclusion of these sites onto the Montreux Record;

38. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to those Contracting Parties and organizations that have made voluntary contributions for financing the cost of Management Guidance Procedures, and URGES the donor community to continue supporting this activity under the Convention;
39. DECIDES to replace the term ‘Management Guidance Procedure’ with the term ‘Ramsar Advisory Mission’ in order to make the purpose of this tool of the Convention more immediately obvious; and
40. DIRECTS the Ramsar Bureau, as resources allow, to document, publish and promote the “success stories” of the Montreux Record mechanism and its associated Ramsar Advisory Missions.

## Resolution VII.12.1

### Greek Ramsar sites

1. RECALLING Recommendations 4.9.5, 5.5.1 and 6.17.1 on Greek Ramsar sites which requested the Greek Government to submit delineation maps, to prepare management plans, to ensure wise use and to put in place Presidential Decrees for the protection of all Greek Ramsar sites;
2. NOTING that the precise delineation of the 10 Greek Ramsar wetlands and the submission of the relevant maps to the Ramsar Bureau has been realised, legislative acts (Ministerial Decisions) for the protection of eight sites have been adopted (in addition to the existing Presidential Decree for Lake Prespa National Park), and preliminary Management Schemes have been set up for all sites;
3. FURTHER NOTING that the Greek Government has made progress in implementing conservation programmes in collaboration with regional and local authorities, including elaboration of management plans and Presidential Decrees, preparation for the establishment of permanent Management Bodies, and actions promoting wise use and public awareness of wetlands, and, furthermore, that a national strategy on wetland conservation is being elaborated; and
4. TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the report of the Group of Experts, set up in the framework of the Management Guidance Procedure, for the evaluation of actions taken for the conservation of the 10 Greek Ramsar sites with the aim of removing them from the Montreux Record;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

5. ACKNOWLEDGES the efforts made by the Greek Government since the last meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to improve the condition of the Greek Ramsar sites;
6. WELCOMES the removal of the sites Lake Mikri Prespa, Artificial Lake Kerkini, and Evros Delta from the Montreux Record, in the light of the conclusions and recommendations made by the Group of Experts jointly established by the Greek Government and the Ramsar Bureau, as well as the proposed expansion of the Prespa site to include the Greek part of the Lake Megali Prespa; and STRONGLY ENCOURAGES the continuation of the positive management measures undertaken, including water level management to secure the ecological character of all Ramsar sites;
7. FURTHER WELCOMES the positive efforts being made to maintain the ecological character of Lake Volvi, part of Lakes Volvi and Koronia Ramsar site; and EXPRESSES THE HOPE that development and implementation of additional measures for Lake Koronia will enable the removal of this site from the Montreux Record in due course;
8. APPLAUDS the efforts being made by the Greek authorities to ensure the removal of solid waste from the wider area of the Axios-Loudias-Aliakmon Delta Ramsar site;

WELCOMES the intention of the Greek Government to designate the Alyki Kitrous lagoon as an additional Ramsar site adjacent to the Axios – Loudias – Aliakmon site; and STRONGLY ENCOURAGES intended measures to ensure adequate water flows in the Axios river and steps towards the removal of illegal constructions;

9. NOTES the recommendation of the Group of Experts that the Axios-Loudias-Aliakmon Delta Ramsar site could be removed from the Montreux Record following successful implementation of these measures; and EXPRESSES THE HOPE that it will be possible to do so, soon after this Conference; and
10. ENCOURAGES the Greek Government to continue its efforts by completing the management plans, establishing permanent Management Bodies, and adopting Presidential Decrees for all Greek Ramsar sites, and, in particular, to make all possible efforts to ensure and enhance the conservation values of the sites Lake Vistonis, Lake Ismaris and adjoining lagoons, Nestos Delta, Amvrakikos Gulf, Messolonghi Lagoon, Kotychi Lagoon and Lake Koronia according to the conclusions included in the report of the Group of Experts.