



*"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**

## **Invasive species and wetlands**

1. AWARE of the severe threat that alien species pose to the ecological character of wetlands, and to wetland species, terrestrial and marine, if they become invasive;
2. ACKNOWLEDGING that adequate control of invasive species is often expensive and eradication is usually impracticable once these species are established, and that prevention and early intervention are the most cost-effective techniques that can be employed against invasive species;
3. ACKNOWLEDGING the role that the accidental or deliberate movement and transport of alien species plays in the global spread of new invasive species;
4. RECALLING Resolution 5.6 on *Additional guidance for the implementation of the wise use concept* and Resolution 5.7 on *Guidelines for management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands*, which include references to control of the introduction of invasive species, measures to avoid accidental introductions, eradication of introduced species and damages for unlawful introductions;
5. NOTING Background Document No. 24 on *Invasive species and wetlands* presented at this Conference, which included definitions for alien and invasive species, the effects of invasive species on the ecological character and functions of wetlands, examples of organisms that can become invasive, methods of control, and solutions for combating invasive species;
6. ACKNOWLEDGING the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Joint Ramsar-CBD Work Plan endorsed at the 4th CBD Conference of the Parties, and the obligation in the Convention on Biological Diversity to "prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species" (Article 8(h));
7. NOTING that the 4th Conference of the Parties to CBD adopted a number of relevant decisions on invasive species, including Decision IV/4 which called for the compilation of case studies on the impact and management of invasive species for inland waters, and Decision IV/5 which set out to achieve a better understanding of alien species and their impact on marine and coastal ecosystems;
8. RECOGNIZING that the CBD's COP4 requested its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to develop guiding principles for the prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts of alien species and to report on those principles and any related work programme to the CBD's COP5;

9. NOTING the work of the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), coordinated by the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE), which is developing a global strategy and action plan and a set of practical tools to deal with invasive species, and the work of the IUCN-The World Conservation Union in preparing draft Guidelines for the Prevention of Biological Diversity Loss due to Biological Invasion;
10. APPLAUDING significant initiatives on invasive species being undertaken in a wide range of regions by Contracting Parties and partner organizations, including for example the U.S. Presidential Executive Order on Invasive Species (3 February 1999), the current project in the five Nordic Countries on invasive and alien species under the Nordic Council of Ministers, and the IUCN/Ramsar Invasive Species Awareness Programme for Africa; and
11. ALSO NOTING the outcomes of the workshop on invasive species at the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum, which immediately preceded this Conference;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF CONTRACTING PARTIES

12. CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to wherever possible address the environmental, economic and social impact of invasive species on wetlands within their jurisdictions;
13. ALSO CALLS UPON Contracting Parties to take account of the methods of control and solutions for combating invasive species outlined in the special intervention on *Wetlands and invasive species* presented at this Conference for the management of invasive species (background document Ramsar COP7 DOC. 24);
14. INVITES Contracting Parties to provide the Ramsar Bureau with information on databases which exist for invasive species, information on invasive species which pose a threat to wetlands and wetland species, and information on the control and eradication of invasive wetland species;
15. DIRECTS the Ramsar Bureau to:
  - a) advocate the high priority given by the Ramsar Convention in addressing invasive species in wetland ecosystems to the CBD, SCOPE's GISP, global trade and transport organizations and other relevant organizations and initiatives, to ensure that the impact on wetlands from invasive species is prominently addressed;
  - b) bring this Resolution to the attention of other Convention secretariats and international organizations, to ensure cooperation with existing programmes and to initiate new partnerships;
  - c) work with existing programmes in establishing a practical data system that identifies invasive species which pose a threat to wetlands and wetland species, and includes methods for and advice on the control and eradication of invasive wetland species; and
  - d) prepare case studies where invasive species have adversely affected the ecological character and the social and economic benefits of wetlands, in particular Ramsar sites;
16. DIRECTS the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to:

- a) prepare wetland-specific guidelines for identifying, establishing priorities for action, and managing alien species which potentially pose a threat to wetlands and wetland species, in cooperation with the SBSTTA of CBD, SCOPE's GISP, and other programmes established under international conventions, and taking account of IUCN's draft Guidelines for the Prevention of Biological Diversity Loss due to Biological Invasion; and
  - b) consult with relevant parties to prepare, for the benefit of the Contracting Parties, guidance on legislation or other best practice management approaches that incorporate 'risk assessment', in order to minimise the introduction of new and environmentally dangerous alien species into a jurisdiction, and the movement or trade of such species within a jurisdiction;
17. INVITES Contracting Parties to make voluntary contributions to support the activities of the Ramsar Bureau and STRP outlined in this Resolution, noting that the implementation of this Resolution is subject to the availability of adequate financial and human resources;
18. URGES Contracting Parties to:
- a) prepare, within their jurisdictions, an inventory of alien species in wetlands and to assess them so as to identify and prioritise those which pose a threat to wetlands and wetland species ('risk assessment'), and those which may be adequately controlled or eradicated;
  - b) establish programmes to target priority invasive species with a view to control or eradication, as well as to implement other related international programmes;
  - c) address, wherever possible in their actions, the environmental, economic and social impact of the movement and transport of alien species on the global spread of invasive wetland species;
  - d) review existing legal and institutional measures pursuant to Resolution VII.7 and, where necessary, to adopt legislation and programmes to prevent the introduction of new and environmentally dangerous alien species into their jurisdictions and the movement or trade of such species within their jurisdictions;
  - e) develop capacity for the identification of new and environmentally dangerous alien species (including those being tested for agricultural and horticultural use) and the promotion and enforcement of legislation and best practice management;
    - f) facilitate awareness of, and resource the identification and control of, new and environmentally dangerous alien species; and
    - g) collaborate with other Contracting Parties with a view to exchanging information and experience, increasing overall capacity to deal with wetland invasive species and promoting regional coordination of invasive species programmes.