



10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Healthy wetlands, healthy people”

Changwon, Republic of Korea,
28 October-4 November 2008

Resolution X.30

Small Island States and the Ramsar Convention

1. RECALLING that during the 4th Pan-American Ramsar Regional Meeting (2007) and the Caribbean Regional Meeting on the Implementation of the Convention (2008), the Caribbean States all supported the conclusion that they should be viewed as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in terms of their vulnerability to development, climate change, and loss of wetlands;
2. AWARE that funding support from the Ramsar Convention is currently based on the Parties' economic status by reference to the OECD Development Assistance Committee list and that the Parties at the meetings referred to above believe that such eligibility for support for SIDS should be based rather upon their vulnerability to climate change, as is the case with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;
3. RECOGNIZING that among the expected impacts of climate change are sea level rise, disruption of the global hydrological cycle, increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and increased vulnerability of coastal areas to flooding, erosion, loss of mangroves and other wetlands, and seawater incursion into freshwater areas, and ACKNOWLEDGING the potential negative impact of these phenomena on the economic status of many small islands;
4. RECALLING that in Resolution IX.9 (2005) the Parties acknowledged that “both conservation of natural wetland ecosystems such as mangroves, as well as wise use of such wetlands in the coastal zone, contribute to natural flood prevention” and recognized “the significance of synergies with the other multilateral environmental agreements and agencies with a particular focus on the impacts of natural disasters, especially the joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit and including the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), The World Health Organization (WHO), The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) . . . the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and also recognized the role that can be played in the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster by . . . non-governmental organizations (NGOs) . . . especially the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs)”; and
5. ALSO RECALLING the Mauritius Declaration (2005), which affirms that “small island developing States continue to be a ‘special case’ for sustainable development”, and RECOGNIZING that one of the Key Messages of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

in *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands & Water* (2005) indicates that “the status of both freshwater and coastal wetland species is deteriorating faster than those of other ecosystems”;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat, in considering the eligibility of projects in small island States for funding under the Ramsar Small Grants Fund, to take into account, in addition to their economic status, the vulnerability of such States to climate change and loss of wetlands, and to treat all such States for this purpose in a manner analogous to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), whether or not they are formally classified as such on economic grounds in the DAC list of the OECD; and
7. URGES Contracting Parties and others involved as proponents or funders of infrastructure and other development activities in small island areas to have special regard to the particular environmental vulnerability of wetlands in such areas, including through application of the Ramsar Convention’s guidance on vulnerability assessment contained in the forthcoming Ramsar Technical Report.